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**Understanding Disengagement : The Employee's Story**

**By**

**Martha Hayes**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of a  
BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management**

**2011**

## Authorship Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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## **Abstract**

This study explored the topic of disengagement by examining the experiences of a group of ex-employees from a stockbroking firm.

The research question asked what is the role of hygiene and motivator factors, as outlined in Herzberg's Two-Factor Model of Motivation, in the disengagement process.

It also sought to ascertain whether employees seek psychological contracts that are transactional or relational in nature or both, as a result of modern day expectations.

Research was conducted through interviews and analysis of personnel records and archives for eight people who left the firm in the last three years.

The findings suggest that employees seek psychological contracts that are mainly relational in nature. They also suggested that employees become disengaged when particular hygiene and motivator factors fail, either independently, or more usually when combined. The results also suggest that employees are motivated by certain hygiene factors which Herzberg had previously stated could only prevent dissatisfaction but which could not motivate.

This suggests that perhaps it is time to rethink Herzberg's Two-Factor Model of Motivation and consider if some factors which were previously categorised as "Hygiene" should now be considered "Motivator".

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to Colm who moved house and home so that I could complete my studies.

Thank you for your patience, your encouragement and for the many pots of tea.

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## CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Dissertation Topic

The topic for this dissertation is Employee Disengagement. Research shows that 84% of top executives in organizations in Europe and the Middle East believe that “disengaged employees” are one of the three biggest threats facing their business (cited in Finfacts Ireland, 2010). The same research, however, reveals that less than half of board directors discuss disengagement issues at board level. Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, “lists employee engagement as the number one measure of a company’s health” (cited in Dicke, Holwerda & Kontakos, 2007, p 5). Studies show that companies cannot overlook the disengagement phenomenon if they are to maximize their bottom line using their best and most unique resource, human capital.

Many employees are disengaged long before they actually exit the company and the disengaged employee can be as costly as the employee who has left and must be replaced. Identifying the root causes of disengagement can help to reduce turnover and increase revenues (Branham, 2005).

Studies such as Saratogas exit surveys tell us why people leave (cited in Branham, 2005, p20). Branham suggests events that trigger disengagement but does not provide empirical evidence to support these suggestions. Other studies such as The Gallup Surveys measure disengagement levels and correlate disengagement to variables such as productivity and profitability (cited in Little & Little, 2006, p111-112). O’Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell’s 1991 study attempted to distinguish between disengagement at individual, job and organizational level (cited in Holtom et al, 2008, p242). However,

there are no identified answers, supported empirically, to tell us what events actually cause or trigger the disengagement process.

## **1.2 Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to understand how different individuals experience disengagement and to examine if similar themes emerge in their stories. It was hoped that patterns could be established that could contribute to a more specific definition of the disengagement construct. This is, therefore, an exploratory study and undertakes a qualitative approach where “the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants” (Creswell, 2009, p16).

The unit of analysis is a group of ex employees from the stockbroking firm where I currently work. It was decided upon using a phenomenological design to result in a phenomenological description of themes and patterns.

A tentative definition of disengagement as I understood it before I began my research, is the action employed when an employee becomes dissatisfied with his or her job and/or company and forms an initial idea to leave the organization as a result.

## **1.3 Synopsis of Literature and Studies to Date**

Disengagement is a construct that is in its infancy relative to other theories and constructs, hence there is a lack of research on the topic. The definition of disengagement is widely debated and some researchers question its validity as a construct in its own right. However, the construct is becoming more respected due to its importance in the retention/turnover process. The lack of research available forced the

researcher to continuously refer to literature on engagement, and then consider the opposite side of the coin, disengagement.

There is much debate about what disengagement is but less debate about what actually causes it. Studies have been concerned with deciding whether engagement occurs at individual, job or organizational level and to what extent it exists. There is some research into what factors contribute to the disengagement process, whether they include behavioral, cognitive or emotional factors, or all three, but more research is required. It seems that disengagement may occur as a result of unmet personal expectations. These expectations relate to the values held by the individual and so, if identified at interview stage, could facilitate the alignment of management and HR strategies to employee expectancies, thereby reducing disengagement and improving employee retention. However, without knowing what motivates people we cannot know what their expectations are. It was reasonable to question what factors are necessary to maintain engagement and are therefore absent when disengagement occurs. A resultant question was what roles do motivation and needs have in the disengagement process. This resulted in a review of motivation and needs theories.

#### **1.4 Research Question**

The research question is based on a need for a deeper understanding of the disengagement construct. There is a traditional view within the stockbroking industry that employees are motivated by money. Hence, this dissertation is primarily concerned with motivation theory, specifically Herzberg's two-factor model of satisfiers and dissatisfiers. This model suggests that people are influenced by two different sets of factors, known as *Motivators* and *Hygiene Factors*. Motivators are intrinsic elements

such as job development, growth and responsibility. Herzberg suggests that motivators are key to motivating people to improve performance. Hygiene factors are extrinsic, environmental elements such as pay, company policies and job security. According to Herzberg, hygiene factors cannot motivate people in the long term, but they can cause dissatisfaction (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996). If this were true, it would hold that money does not motivate people in the long term. This theory is criticized by many who would argue that money can indeed motivate (Basset-Jones & Lloyd, 2005, p930). So does Herzberg's model hold true today in an industry traditionally linked to high financial rewards?

The modern workplace no longer offers traditional comforts such as a job for life or even job security. Psychological contracts are changing accordingly. They are classified into two types; transactional, based on short term, economic elements or relational, combining both economic and socio-emotional factors (Rousseau, 1990). Do the factors that motivate people provide clues as to whether the new psychological contract should be transactional or relational in nature?

If disengagement is a result of a breach of expectations within the psychological contract, do these expectations fall into Herzberg's categories of motivators, hygiene factors, or both? This study will aim to answer these questions by undertaking exploratory research to gain a holistic view of the disengagement process.

The research question for this study therefore is : *What is the role of hygiene and motivator factors in the disengagement process? Do employees' expectations suggest that employees seek a modern Psychological Contract that is more transactional or relational in nature, or a combination of both?*

The theoretical framework of Social Exchange Theory, The Psychological Contract and Motivation Theories underpin this research so in order to gain a deeper understanding of the construct of Disengagement, the feelings, thoughts and behaviours of people needed to be probed and understood, rather than measured.

### **1.5 Philosophical Framework and Research Design**

There is a lack of extant research on Disengagement and so the nature of this study will be exploratory. An interpretive approach is taken where “the research involves an inductive process with a view to providing interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular content (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p.57). The specific paradigm adopted for this research is phenomenology, which is a “critical reflection of conscious experience” (Goulding, 2005, p302).

A traditional generic methodology has not been employed. Interviews were held with leavers from the stockbroking company in question. As the leavers have already resigned from the site of employment, this does not represent a case study. There was no engagement with the company to solve a specific problem or provide feedback to the board of directors, hence this study cannot be described either as action research. This study simply attempts to broaden the understanding of the construct of disengagement. However, in keeping with a phenomenological paradigm, a qualitative approach was undertaken with a view to understanding the disengagement phenomena. Qualitative primary and secondary data was collected by analyzing material such as employee records and files, by archival research and creation of interpretive memos and by conducting in-depth interviews with leavers. A more detailed description of this process will be outlined in the methodology section.

## **1.6 Background to my Personal Interest in the Topic**

I have been employed as a HR practitioner for the past 11 years with the stockbroking firm that all interviewees previously worked for. I was interested to learn more about disengagement because of its contribution to turnover rates and because I was aware of the negative impact the disengaged but retained employee can have on the company and other employees. The issue of disengagement is rarely addressed at the time and is only discussed at exit interview stage when it is too late to rectify matters. I believe that the disengagement process is more complex than it appears on the surface. We often assume that staff become disengaged because they are dissatisfied with a certain element of their job, such as money or promotion. However, I was not satisfied that this was the case and wanted to understand if there were more layers to the process.

## **1.7 Relevance of Study**

In an industry that traditionally relies on monetary rewards to motivate employees it is generally believed that most issues regarding voluntary leavers revolves around pay. Studies by Saratoga Institute reveal that 89% of managers believe that employees leave and stay for monetary reasons (Branham, 2005, p3). The outcome of this study will address this idea and may provide the firm I work for with information to develop strategies for decreasing disengagement levels, thereby reducing high turnover rates, a phenomenon that has existed since the company's inception. It is intended that the methods used will be replicable in other companies and/or industries and so may be useful to other firms. Given the lack of existing research on disengagement, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the development of a more specific definition of disengagement. It is also hoped that the outcome of this research may increase our

understanding of the reasons for disengagement and may give researchers some further perspectives to consider when developing the construct.

## **1.8 Structure of Remainder of Report**

The remainder of this report is broken into three chapters. The literature review in Chapter Two examines the research that has been done on disengagement to date and aims to identify gaps in the research that could be addressed with new studies. The literature review will also serve to address the research question and identify if answers to the question have already been proposed. Chapter Three will explain the methodology used and outline the research design for this study so that the process is understood and easily replicable should the reader wish to apply the research design elsewhere. Chapter Four will outline the findings from the research while Chapter Five will summarise the findings and place it in context to existing theory. The implications of this research will be discussed, as will the limitations of the research and suggestions for improvements in future studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Disengagement – A Definition**

Disengagement is a relatively new construct. The lack of research and construct definition led me to constantly refer to the research on its opposite, engagement and to then consider if the invert principles apply to disengagement.

The lack of research on engagement and disengagement is noted by academics who say that “the conflicting figures and perceptions reported on the issue of worker disengagement suggest that the area has not been systematically researched” (Pech & Slade, 2006, p22). While there is a greater volume of research on engagement, it too lacks a single, concise and agreed definition of the construct (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In fact there has been very little progress in terms of theory or model development pertaining to engagement (Saks, 2006). CIPD noted the numerous existing definitions of engagement and said that there are at least fifty definitions from varying sources originating from both academic and commercial research sources (CIPD, May 2011).

It has also been reported that in the effort to learn more about the phenomenon of engagement, that research and consultation are firms are coming up with opposing definitions to those being developed by academic researchers and the result is that “both parties are saddled with competing and inconsistent interpretations of the meaning of the construct” (Macey & Schneider, 2008b, p.3).

### **2.2 Comparison of Engagement with Other Constructs**

There has been a paradigm shift as research has moved from judging organizational success in terms of measurable variables such as turnover and absenteeism. Research

now considers organizational success in terms of constructs such as job satisfaction, motivation and engagement.

There are similar predictors for turnover and engagement. Predictors for turnover include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job search, comparison of alternatives, withdrawal cognitions, and quit intentions (Griffith, Home & Gartner, 2000, p.483). Predictors for disengagement include absenteeism, tardiness and other behaviors that display general negativity, as found in Lee's research into the unfolding model of turnover (cited in Branham, 2005, p.12-16). Studies such as the aforementioned use factors that are mixed in term of behaviors and cognitions so they muddy the waters, making it difficult to develop specific theory. It is suggested that met expectations are the main factors which influence turnover (Holtom et al, 2008). Holtom et al describe withdrawal or disengagement meanwhile, as a process that encompasses a series of steps before an employee decides to leave.

Research suggests that the construct of engagement has “evolved from prior research on work attitudes” (Macey & Schneider, 2008b, p.3). Engagement is often viewed as a mix of other constructs such as satisfaction and commitment and many commentators question whether engagement is a necessary construct or whether it is “old wine in new bottles” (Macey & Schneider, 2008b, p.6). What separates engagement as a construct is that it is active. It is concerned with how people employ themselves in their job performance but also involves “the active use of emotions and behavior in addition to cognitions” (Saks, 2006. p.602). This differs from constructs such as commitment or satisfaction that refer simply to a person's attitude.

### **2.3 The Difficulty In Defining Disengagement**

The difficulty in developing constructs such as engagement and turnover using mainly quantitative research is that it leaves unanswered questions in terms of construct and definition development. Mobley asked “what are the conceptual and empirical relationships among turnover and other so-called ‘withdrawal’ criteria” and noted that “static correlations between turnover and other withdrawal behavior will not be sufficient for an understanding of these relationships” (Mobley, 1982, p111). Research suggests that those addressing turnover and criteria such as absenteeism under the label of withdrawal take responsibility for defining the term (Mobley, 1982).

Studies are now trying to measure disengagement as an indicator of organizational success. It has been measured against other constructs such as motivation and job satisfaction to try to explain the withdrawal process. However, the dearth of research on disengagement forces one to look mainly to the literature on its opposite, engagement, as a starting point.

Engagement as a construct is also riddled with confusion due to numerous definitions of the term. CIPD describe Engagement as a mixture of organizational commitment and organizational citizenship and is more than just job satisfaction or motivation. Engagement is offered by the employee rather than required as an element of the employment contract (CIPD, 2010). Organisations tend to relate to engagement in terms of “organizational commitment, values and vision” while academics tend to refer to engagement in terms of “job, role and expression of self in role” (Zigarmi et al, 2009, p.304). Other studies conclude that the emergence of multiple definitions is a result of the lack of theory and empirical research on engagement (Saks, 2006).

Disengagement does not have a one-stop shop definition either and the question arises whether disengagement is in fact the opposite of engagement or not. Khan's seminal research resulted in a definition of disengagement as "uncoupling of selves from work roles; in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances" (cited in Saks, 2006, p.601). Khan describes employees who are not engaged as "not psychologically connected to their company" and actively disengaged employees as "physically present but psychologically absent" (Khan, 2007).

Studies on these constructs are lacking as they are mainly quantitative in nature and so measure levels of engagement or its correlation to other constructs, but don't advance the development of the term as a separate construct. The Gallup Organisation undertook extensive research using measurable data related to productivity and retention and results measure engagement on a ratings scale. However, the survey provides limited information that could contribute to the development of engagement as a construct (Little & Little, 2006). The results of such studies have, however, positively correlated engagement to organizational success, hence growing interest in the term. However, as a construct, it is also a response to a need for answers to issues such as motivation and performance (Little & Little, 2006).

#### **2.4 Why Do Employees Disengage?**

A huge proportion of employees are disengaged. Gallup state that "75% of the American workforce is either disengaged or actively disengaged" (cited in Branham, 2005, p.4). Branham states that disengagement might be passive but active disengagement can be disruptive where employees may be "working actively against

the interests of the company” (Branham, 2005, p.4). Studies have not clarified whether employees are disengaged from the job itself or from the organization. There are also conflicting schools of thought as to whether disengagement occurs at the organizational or individual level. Little & Little advocate understanding the phenomenon and “its relationship to attitudes, behavioral intentions and behaviors” if it is to be developed as a construct and applied beneficially to anyone (Little & Little, 2006, p.118). A 1991 study by O’Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell found that employees were more likely to leave an organization when their individual values did not match those of the organisation’s (cited in Holtom et al, 2008). The idea that engagement is very much dependent on individual factors is favoured by Coffman & Gonzalez-Molina who state that engagement is not just about how employees think but is also about how they feel. They categorize employees into three groups: actively engaged, the non-engaged and the actively disengaged employees (cited in Little & Little, 2006, p.115).

So why do employees disengage? 90% of managers believe that employees leave companies for better money or opportunities but studies show that disengagement is not an event it is a process that does not come with a specific timeframe (Branham, 2005, p.5). This supports the idea that disengagement is a personal process. There are several steps, which Branham describes as “sequential and predictable” along the transition from disengagement to departure and range from enthusiastic start, to trying to change things, to seeking a new role, to quitting or staying and disengaging (Branham, 2005, p11). Disengagement may begin after a shock event such as being bullied or not getting an expected pay rise. There are also two time points according to Lee, which gives employers time to reverse the disengagement process; from thinking about leaving and making the decision to leave, to making the decision and actually leaving (cited in

Branham, 2005). A better understanding of disengagement could allow the employer to reduce turnover, and reverse the disengagement process amongst existing employees, thereby improving performance.

It is still not clear why employees disengage however. Disengagement is more than just a state of mind, such as being satisfied or committed. It is a negative event and is often simply described as the opposite of engagement. Another construct which is often viewed as the opposite or antithesis of engagement is burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Hence, disengagement is often confused with burnout.

## **2.5 Burnout**

Some researchers define engagement as being the positive antithesis of burnout (Saks, 2006). Burnout, like engagement, was initially a construct that had no distinct definition, it was “initially a very slippery concept” and was linked to other constructs such as job satisfaction, commitment and turnover (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001, pp.104-402). Some believe that burnout and engagement are simply opposite ends of a scale and are inextricably linked. Many researchers view engagement and burnout as “inseparable and co-dependent constructs” (du Plooy & Roodt, 2010, p.1).

Maslach & Jackson developed a scale to measure burnout. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) identified three components of burnout described as exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). As with engagement, the literature tells us that there has been debate over whether burnout is a separate and individual phenomenon or merely a mix of other constructs. Burnout is obviously viewed as a negative condition, which is why so many researchers consider it to be the antipode of engagement, some describing it as an “erosion of engagement with

the job” (cited in Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001, p.416). Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter characterize engagement as the components of energy, involvement and efficacy. They thus view engagement as a construct in its own right.

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model integrates work engagement and job burnout by defining how “working conditions produce motivation and health impairments” (Korunka et al, 2009, p.243). This model classified the working environment according to jobs demands and job resources. Job demands require sustained physical and cognitive effort. This effort can result in physical or psychological costs; in lay-mans terms, burnout. To prevent this, we should be concerned with the second facet of the employee role, access to job resources. This includes factors that contribute to achieving goals, personal growth and development.

The JD-R model suggests that job demands leading to burnout, can result in health issues, absenteeism and poor performance. Job resources, on the other hand, are motivational factors that foster engagement. Therefore, the model suggests that engagement is a “persistent positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that comprises three components : energy or vigor, involvement or decision, and absorption” (cited in Korunka et al, 2009, p.244). The literature suggests that resources are key to motivating employees towards engagement and should include intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Job demands may increase but burnout can be offset and engagement maintained if resources are adequate. This research suggests that burnout and engagement are in fact separate constructs. Different strategies are required to maintain engagement and decrease burnout but interventionist strategies for both should take place concurrently.

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework**

Perhaps due to the relative newness of engagement as a construct there is no common model or theory being used by researchers. Interlinking themes such as motivation, needs, resources and reward are evident. The idea of interlinking themes is supported by Saks who states that a “one size fits all approach to employee engagement might not be the most effective” (Saks, 2006, p.614). Disengagement is also concerned with these various themes. Branham analysed reasons that employees leave from data taken from exit surveys from thousand of exiting employees and found that employees disengage when certain needs are not being met which include Trust, Hope, Worth, and the need to feel Competent (Branham, 2005, p.19).

These interlinking and recurring themes such as motivation and reward point toward Social Exchange Theory which explains behavior in terms of cost-reward benefits.

### **2.6.1 Social Exchange Theory**

Social exchange theory suggests that in all relationships there is a cost-benefit transaction at play. Employees expect a particular outcome or reward for their efforts. Satisfaction with the reward may be reduced by the cost involved in achieving the outcome. It may also be reduced according to individual expectations regarding the reward.

The rules of social exchange theory imply an element of reciprocation and repayment and acknowledge that relationships evolve over time. This view of a two-way relationship suggests that when employees receive resources, whether economic or social, they feel obliged to reciprocate to the employer by demonstrating greater levels

of engagement (Saks, 2006). Saks contends that if the organization does not fulfill its end of the bargain and fails to deliver said resources, individuals are “more likely to withdraw and disengage themselves from their roles” (Saks, 2006, p601).

Kahn describes people who are engaged as employing themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during job performance, but disengaged people as those who “withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively or emotionally during job performances” (Kahn, 1990, p694). This suggests that to be engaged requires a full combination of three variables working in harmony at one time. However, a detachment of just one variable can lead to disengagement.

In order to be engaged then, employees need to have their needs and expectations met. These needs and expectations could be physical, emotional and/or cognitive. “The amount of cognitive, emotional and physical resources that an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of one’s work roles is contingent on the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization” (Saks, 2006, p603). Employees also have their own expectations about what they wish to see as an outcome but they work in environments operating with imperfect and limited information (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996). Not all resources can be accounted for in the written contract. Resources and rewards that employees expect but are not articulated in the written contract are governed by the psychological contract.

### **2.6.2 The Psychological Contract**

Ideally, the written employment contract would list the full set of expectations of both employee and employer but this is not possible due to bounded rationality (Rousseau & Greller, 1994). The psychological contract is the set of unwritten expectations which are

implicit between employer and employee. The psychological contract combines with the written contract to provide a multivariate contract which allows the employee to be fully engaged. Breach of either contract can result in disengagement as the employee may suffer physically, emotionally or cognitively.

There are multiple interpretations of the psychological contract. There is a general view that it involves mutuality, like any other contract, however some believe it to be based on employee's expectations only. There is a "consensus...that it represents the full set of beliefs that employees have concerning the continuing relationship with their employer" (Middlemiss, 2011, p32). Others would argue that it must contain the expectations of both the employer and employee to be valid (Herriot, Manning & Kidd, 1997).

Rousseau clarifies this confusion by arguing that while most people describe the psychological contract as a set of unwritten expectations that exist between employer and employee, it involves expectations that are actually agreed between employer and employee. The key is a belief that there is mutuality and promise, that "a reciprocal exchange exists which is mutually understood" (Rousseau, 1998, p668). This sets it apart from a general set of expectations held by an employee that might not be reciprocated by the employer. The element of promise turns expectations into obligations. Rousseau says that obligations that are not met arouse much stronger negative responses than mere expectations that are not met (Rousseau, 1998). Hence, if the expectations are not mutual and agreed to begin with, then the Psychological contract has not, in effect, been established.

However, the psychological contract is about people's perception of expectations and promises and so different interpretations can exist between employer and employee in terms of what is expected and between whom the deal is agreed (Rousseau, 1998).

Guest and Conway's model of the psychological contract demonstrated that "a positive psychological contract was associated with higher job satisfaction, higher organizational commitment, higher reported motivation and a positive evaluation of employment relations as well as lower intention to quit" (Guest, 1998, p661-662). This model organizes the contract into causes, content and consequences and measures in terms of trust, expectations, motivation, satisfaction and commitment. CIPD attest that if the psychological contract is broken there are a number of impacts including a negative impact on employee engagement (CIPD, 2010).

The psychological contract is also changing in nature. Elements of the old psychological contract such as job security are gone. This is due to economic conditions and the changing nature of employment arrangements, with fixed term and temporary contracts becoming the norm. Employers are faced with the difficulty of managing employees who are, according to Hilltop, less trusting of employers who cannot offer stability while simultaneously being expected to be more involved and more obliged to add value to the organisation (D'Art & Turner, 2006).

Employers can respond by employing high commitment strategies such as investing in employees through learning and development and involving them using communication strategies. It is critical to remember that breach of the psychological contract can lead to reduced job engagement. Chambel & Oliveira state that employee engagement depends on the resources that the individual receives. This echoes the view that is central to the

JD-R model. A study conducted on breach of the Psychological Contract on soldiers showed that depriving the soldiers of resources that they were promised resulted in reduced engagement. Demotivation turned into disengagement when promises regarding such things as well-being, job security and promotion opportunities were reneged on (Chambel & Oliveira-Cruz, 2010).

Different types of employment can influence the Psychological Contract. Transactional contracts are associated with short-term contracts where reward is exchanged for specific work. Relational contracts focus more on development and are associated with longer-term contracts, with the employee-employer relationship more dependent on factors such as commitment and trust (Middlemiss, 2011).

	<b>The Psychological Contractual Continuum</b>	
	<b>Transactional</b>	<b>Relational</b>
<b>Focus</b>	Economic	Economic & Non-economic, socio-emotional, intrinsic
<b>Time frame</b>	Close-ended, specific	Open-ended, indefinite
<b>Stability</b>	Static	Dynamic
<b>Scope</b>	Narrow	Pervasive
<b>Tangibility</b>	Public, observable	Subjective, understood
(Rousseau, 1990, p.390)		

Given the changing nature of the psychological contract, one must consider whether we should continue to treat each type of contract as a separate type, or recognize that there is a meshing or overlap between the two. Employers can no longer guarantee jobs for

life and employees must consider both short term and long term needs. Rousseau states that some employees view their role only as a stepping-stone to a better role elsewhere and therefore have more transactional than relational psychological contracts. Hence it is important to understand what individuals value in order that a psychological contract can be established in the first place. “The role of individual differences in beliefs regarding obligations merits further research” (Rousseau, 1990, p399).

Clearly, the driving factor in the psychological contract is expectation. The expectations have to be agreed however, so unless each party know what the other’s expectations are, agreement cannot be reached in the first place.

Expectation, meanwhile, is grounded in Motivation Theory. All individuals have their own unique set of needs and expectations. Although everyone may have the same basic needs or expectations, the level of needs and/or expectation will vary amongst individuals. It follows that if people are motivated by their own needs and expectations, different employees will have different motivations. How can the Psychological contract be maintained therefore, if it is not known what outcomes are important to employees? While it does not necessarily follow that the employer will reciprocate, it is necessary to understand what expectations employees have, in order to consider if mutuality can be established. Expectation is grounded in theories of motivation.

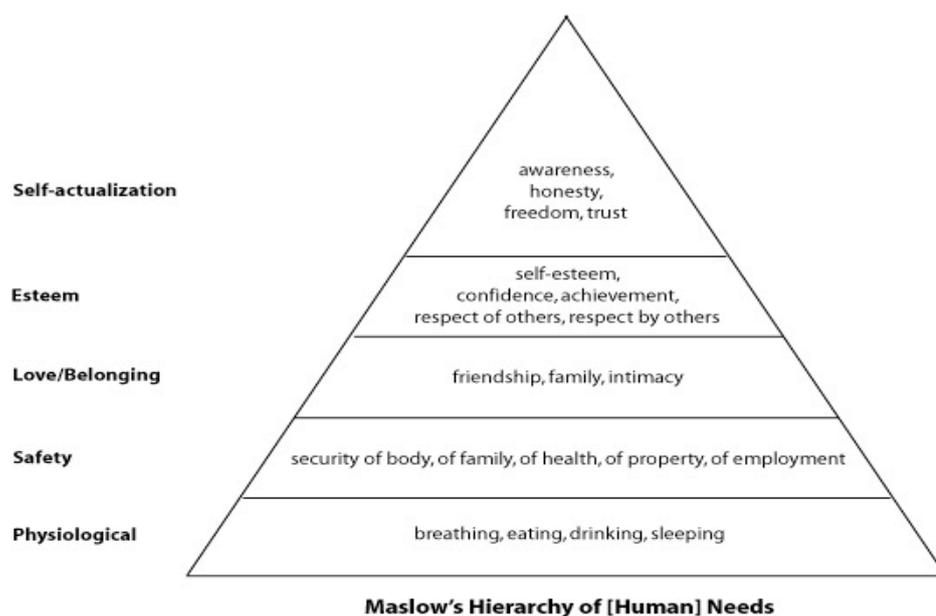
### **2.6.3 Motivation**

Motivation is regularly confused with Engagement, but they are very different constructs. Motivation relates to the reason someone does something while engagement pertains to the act of participating. The theories that underpin motivation can be broken

down into three main classifications, Instrumentality theory, Content theory and Process theory.

Instrumentality theory is closely linked to Taylorism and centers on the belief that performing a task leads to an outcome. Taking a simplistic view, this states that employees are motivated by performing work for money.

Content theory is also known as Needs Theory and is famously linked with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Model. Maslow's Needs Theory classifies needs into a five-tiered hierarchy ranging from basic physiological needs to self-actualisation needs. Maslow states that basic needs must be satisfied first. Needs on the ascending hierarchy become active when the lower need is satisfied. Higher order needs such as self-esteem and self-actualisation can never be fully satisfied as they constantly grow and evolve and so higher order needs are actually the greatest motivators. Maslow's theory is criticized for lacking in research evidence to support it and because "no clear evidence was found indicating that human needs can be classified into five distinct categories, or that these categories are structured in a hierarchical way" (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996, p.15).



Herzberg developed a two-factor model based on content theory which looked at satisfiers and dissatisfiers. **Satisfiers, or motivators**, have the ability to motivate an individual to perform better. **Dissatisfiers, or hygiene factors**, can prevent job dissatisfaction but cannot motivate employees to higher levels of performance. Motivators are intrinsic factors such as the actual work and recognition. Hygiene factors are related to extrinsic factors such as pay and benefits.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MOTIVATOR FACTORS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intrinsic</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Can improve satisfaction &amp; performance</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HYGIENE FACTORS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Extrinsic</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Can prevent dissatisfaction but cannot be used to motivate to improved performance</i></p>
<p>Achievement Recognition Work Itself Responsibility Promotion Growth</p>	<p>Pay Working Conditions Company Policies Relationships with colleagues Supervision Status Job Security Working Conditions Personal Life</p>

Herzberg's theory acknowledges that what motivates one person might not motivate another. Herzberg contended that hygiene factors can prevent dissatisfaction but they cannot contribute to long-term satisfaction, so the gains from a pay rise only satisfy in the short term. Contrarily, motivators not only cause satisfaction but also can motivate employees to achieve superior performance. Herzberg's theory was controversial and subject to significant criticism (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996). It was criticized by

academics for its assertions that while dissatisfaction with money demotivates, money does not serve as a motivator, even when employees are satisfied with pay levels (Basset-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Some academics found the assertion that money is a dissatisfier rather than a motivator “mystifying”. (Basset-Jones & Lloyd, 2005, p.933).

There are alternative cognitive theories of motivation. Expectancy Theory developed by Vroom, Porter and Lawlor theory links motivation to the perceived link between effort, performance and outcomes. Goal Theory developed by Latham and Locke theory links motivation to agreed goal setting with feedback models. Equity Theory developed by Adams states that people are motivated when they are treated equitably. Expectancy Theory states that individuals are influenced when making choices by preferences between outcomes and on the likelihood of such outcomes occurring. Motivation therefore is linked to the belief that effort will result in the desired reward, but also takes into account that individual needs are different. What employees value is linked to what they expect and what they believe they are capable of, but the reward is only of value if it matches the expectancy and the promise (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996).

Porter and Lawlor developed Vroom’s Expectancy model, concluding that motivation is linked to the expectancy that there will be a reward for the completed task. Like Herzberg, Porter and Lawlor categorized rewards into intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic rewards are of value to the employee and include security, self-actualisation, esteem and autonomy. Extrinsic factors include rewards such as pay and bonus. They also suggest that motivation is linked to the employee’s ability to perform the task at hand and the perception of the task (cited in Little & Little 2006).

Cognitive theories are discarded for the purpose of this study as they simply suggest that employees can be motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. This study aims to learn whether particular factors do in fact motivate at all as suggested by Herzberg, who believed that money can prevent dissatisfaction, but cannot motivate in the long term. This is of particular interest as the industry at the centre of this study, stockbroking, is traditionally driven by hygiene factors such as pay and benefits.

## **2.7 Discussion**

Disengagement is a relatively new construct. It may be viewed as the opposite of the positive construct of engagement but should not be confused with burnout. People suffering from burnout may be less engaged but this is usually an event-specific situation and is often related to job demands. When job demands recede, the employee can recover from burnout and re-engage.

Disengagement is more than just a state of mind, such as dissatisfaction. It is an active process, sometimes activated as a result of a shock event but is more often noted to be a process which evolves over time and can involve several variables.

Predictors for disengagement include negative behaviours such as absenteeism and poor performance. The importance of disengagement is well documented by studies which empirically link disengagement to higher levels of turnover and decreased profits.

What is not clear is what causes disengagement. Being fully engaged suggests that there is a tripartite process at work whereby employees are present physically, emotionally and cognitively. When disengagement occurs, employees withdraw in or more of these areas, no longer employing physical effort, emotional attachment or mental focus.

Social Exchange Theory states there is always a cost and reward transaction between an employer and employee. Employees expect particular outcomes from the efforts they put in and these can vary in nature, ranging from transactional elements, such as money and benefits, to relational elements that are more emotional in nature encompassing elements such as trust and commitment. It is impossible to include all of these elements in the written contract. Hence the emergence of the psychological contract, the unwritten set of mutual agreed expectations between employee and employer that is grounded in social exchange theory.

If unwritten expectations between employee and employer are agreed at the beginning of the contract, then a psychological contract can be established. Violation of this contract can result in withdrawal and disengagement.

An employee may also withdraw when disappointed with the return they are getting for their effort, even though the employee expectations have not been agreed with the employer, meaning the psychological contract has not been established at all. There is a disconnection between what the employee expected and what the employee received. When the employee realizes the two do not match, the withdrawal process begins. Alternatively, the employee may never be fully engaged in the first place in this circumstance. Whether psychological contracts are violated or fail to be established, the outcome is similar, employees are either never engaged or become disengaged.

The components of the psychological contract are changing. The traditional psychological contract made up of factors such as job security and loyalty can no longer be guaranteed. Emphasis has shifted to a more dynamic, relational contract which gives weight to factors such as employee contribution and development.

For each element of the Psychological contract, one must still be cognizant of what the individual's expectations are, as these will differ from person to person. Employees may expect the opportunity to develop their career and add to their skill sets but the degree to which each person will want to achieve this will differ. Expectations regarding pay and benefits will also differ between employees.

Violation of the Psychological contract does not mean that the employment relationship is doomed. If disengagement can be identified it can potentially be halted or reversed. However, this cannot happen if it is not known what the employee's expectations are. Understanding employees' expectations then is critical and must be considered by the employer in order to form or maintain the psychological contract.

Expectations are grounded in motivation theory and people are motivated by different things. Significant earning power might motivate some, while a pleasant working environment might be essential for others. There are a number of theories relating to motivation and these were discussed in full. It is a general assumption that people working in the stockbroking industry would have high expectations regarding financial rewards. However, this is an assumption and it is reasonable therefore to question whether in fact money plays as large a role in employee disengagement in this industry as one might think. If one were to consider the possibility that perhaps money does not play as significant a role as generally assumed, then it would be prudent to design research to ask this question.

So the theoretical framework for disengagement for this study begins with social exchange theory and the psychological contract. However, in order to understand what

expectations people have, it is necessary to include motivational theory into the theoretical framework.

The research has been designed therefore with reference to the theoretical framework and in particular, Herzberg's two-factor model of motivation which separates motivator factors from hygiene factors and suggests that money can prevent dissatisfaction but cannot cause long-term satisfaction.

## CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 The Research Paradigm

Most research studies to date on engagement have been quantitative in nature and produced data that has measured or compared disengagement levels. The goal of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and to contribute to the construct of disengagement from a descriptive point of view. The appropriate paradigm to adopt therefore was an interpretive one.

Positivism would not have been an appropriate paradigm as it is associated with research based on observation and experiment. It is based on deductive processes, it measures phenomena and “is associated with quantitative method of analysis” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p56).

Interpretivism is concerned with understanding phenomena and employs an inductive method in order to provide “interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular context (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p57).

Positivism and interpretivism are described as two ends of a scale that have a number of other paradigms in between (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p67). Phenomenology is one such paradigm and is concerned with understanding not just a phenomena, but also the experience of those who have lived through such a phenomena. It is a “critical reflection of conscious experience” (Goulding, 2005, p302). Phenomenology is the specific paradigm adopted for this research.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Adopting a phenomenological paradigm influences the way in which data is collected. Phenomenology is concerned with observation and description, rather than measurement of statistics. According to Creswell, “the focus on interpretive research, therefore, is not so much on facts and numbers, but on words, observations and meanings” (cited in Anderson, 2007, p.13). Interpretive research is concerned with “exploring the complexity of social phenomena” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p57). It should place the emphasis on data that is “rich in details and nuance” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p64). Hence qualitative data was collected and it was decided there was no use for quantitative, numerical data.

A number of methodologies are associated with the interpretive paradigm, including Hermeneutics, Ethnography, Participative Enquiry, Action Research, Case Studies and Grounded Theory. Despite giving consideration to the considerable number of generic types of research, the approach taken was not a typical methodology. This study was not concerned with historical text or a particular cultural group and so does not employ hermeneutics or ethnography. Grounded theory was not considered because of the complexity and time-consuming nature of this approach.

The most typical strategy of enquiry for a study like this would be action research or a case study. Action research aims to implement change on the back of the findings and to then observe the results. This study is not concerned with fixing a specific organisational problem and is not for the benefit of a specific client. Hence it cannot be considered action research.

The case study uses multivariate methods to acquire in-depth knowledge (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It would typically examine an event that took place, for example a change management programme. Case studies are “bounded by time and activity and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time” (Creswell, 2009, p.13).

While this study investigates the phenomenon of disengagement, there is an assumption that this actually took place before the employees left the company. The results could potentially disprove this. Furthermore, the time each leaver spent with the company differs, as does their leave dates. Hence this study cannot be described as such to be bounded by time and is not a typical case study.

The strategy of enquiry for this qualitative study does not follow a typical methodology. It adopts a phenomenological paradigm and abides by a phenomenological strategy of enquiry. Creswell describes this as “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants” (Creswell, 2009, p13). The study follows that strategy by attempting to gain a greater understanding of the experiences of a group of people during their time with a company, with a view to understanding if, and why, disengagement occurred before they left. As the company was not involved directly with this study the name of the company has been withheld throughout.

### **3.3 Collection of Qualitative Data**

Several methods can be used to collect qualitative data including observation, interviews and documentary analysis. A combination of several methods is recommended by Eisenhardt who said that it is preferable to combine methods such as

“archive searching, interviews, questionnaires and observations” (cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009, p81).

Goulding suggests that the only strategy of inquiry for phenomenological research is that which investigates the lived experiences and views of the participants. Participants must be purposefully selected to ensure that they have actually experienced the phenomena being investigated and the main instrument that should be used in order to collect data is the interview (Goulding, 2005).

The methods used in this study were archival research, self-reflection through personal note taking and interviews. Collecting data using different methods results in methodological triangulation, which can increase research validity and reliability (Collis & Hussey, 2009).

### **3.4 Secondary Research**

#### *Archival Research*

#### *Judgmental Sampling*

Archival research was used to analyse the population of leavers’ files and records. Data and personnel records for all staff were available to the researcher as Head of HR. Since inception, the company has employed over 200 staff, however it would not be practically possible to contact every person who has left.

Sample size is not an issue in interpretive research where the goal is to get descriptive data. In fact interpretivists “can conduct their research with a sample of one” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p62). However, collecting data from a population of more than one triangulates data. Although sampling is not typically associated with qualitative data

collection, it was decided to reduce the population using judgmental sampling. Judgmental sampling allows the researcher to select the research participants in advance, based on their experience of the phenomenon being investigated (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It was thought to be less likely that valid data would be collected from employees who had left the company more than three years ago, particularly if interviews were a method of data collection, due to recall ability and the passage of time. The sample was therefore narrowed by reducing the population of leavers to those who left between February 2008 and February 2011 to increase the level of interview validity.

It was also decided to collect data only from staff who had left the company voluntarily and eliminate anyone dismissed for conduct/performance issues. Those on fixed term contracts were also eliminated as they were hired for holiday cover only and did not represent employees intended as permanent staff. Judgmental sampling of 'good' leavers is justified by the desire to make this a commercially relevant study.

Given the time constraints involved in completing this study, it was decided that a maximum of 8-10 interviews would be feasible. Collis describes sample size for interpretive studies as being less important than for positivists' studies because "the goal is to gain rich and detailed insights of the complexity of social phenomena" (Collis, 2009, p62).

Ten people were then selected from the population of leavers as being the source of data collection for this study. The ten selected were chosen because they were located in Dublin, would be easy to meet up with and were easily contactable, having maintained

communication with this researcher since they left the company. The final sample was reduced to eight due to response rate.

### **3.5 Primary Research**

It was initially considered emailing a short, open-ended qualitative questionnaire to participants to elicit the reason why they left the company in order to assist with structuring the questions for the interview stage of research. However, the literature review revealed that the reasons why people left might not actually match the reasons they disengaged so I discarded the importance of pre-screening interviewees. Secondly, questionnaires are not a recommended instrument for collecting qualitative data where the goal is to elicit, rich, descriptive information so questionnaires were discarded as a research instrument.

The first method of primary research was archival research. Personnel records were analysed and interpretive memos created. The second method was personal reflection to recount my own observations in regard to the leavers. The third primary research method was interviews with the participants.

#### *A) Archival Research and Interpretive Memos*

Personnel files were accessed for the study participants. From the files, all documentation was reviewed and any information that appeared relevant to the study was copied out with a view to creating interpretive memos. Information of relevance included any details which would have given clues or details regarding the employees' experiences while working for the company.

Data was reduced using the coding process. This is described in further detail in the section on interviews. Not all participants had information that could be derived from personnel files. This was because not all participants had review performance files or other relevant documents on file. Some performance review records had no employee comments recorded.

### *B) Personal Recall of Events*

The researcher, having been employed by the firm since its inception, bore witness to events as they occurred. There was therefore a first hand account available, albeit from a personal view, of how each employee's career with the company took shape and progressed. This viewpoint was considered relevant to the study and so the researcher wrote a personal account of each employee's time with the company, describing their achievements, failures, rewards, expectations and emotions, as best could be remembered.

### *C) Interviews*

Interviews are described by Arksey and Knight as being concerned with "data on understandings, opinions, what people remember doing, attitudes, feelings and the like, that people have in common" (cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009, p.144).

The literature review revealed that disengagement is a phenomenon that has negative consequences on staff, whether they stay or leave. It was decided that researching the phenomenon with people who have left the company was likely to produce more honest answers than one might get from employees who have not yet left. Interviewing existing staff would have also entailed deciphering who, if anyone, is or has been disengaged.

This would have been too time consuming and would have distracted from the main purpose of the study. Interviewing ex employees was therefore considered more likely to increase the validity of the findings.

It was decided that conducting face-to-face, semi-structured interviews was the best approach. Using an unstructured interview is in keeping with the interpretive paradigm, but pre-preparing some of the questions allowed for consistent probing amongst interviewees. Interviewees were asked a number of open ended questions which were pre-prepared. Probing, hypothetical, comparison and summary questions were often appropriate as the interviews evolved with individuals. Transcribed interviews can be found in Appendix C.

### **3.5.1 Interview Questions**

There were no existing identified qualitative studies to guide the interview process so questions were constructed that attempted to elicit insight into how employees perceived their situation, what events negatively affected them, how these events made them feel and behave and what intentions they created. The theoretical framework of Social Exchange Theory, The Psychological Contract and Herzberg's two factor model of motivation were considered when constructing the questions in order to elicit relevant data to answer the research question. Interview questions addressed issues such as needs, expectations, career aspirations, personal safety and welfare, dissatisfaction and satisfaction. The list of questions is attached in Appendix B. Given that it was a semi structured interview process and to allow interviewees to respond as fully and descriptively as possible, diversion from the script was often necessary.

### **3.5.2 Interviewee Response Rate and Ethical Considerations**

The ten people selected for interview were easily contacted as having provided personal details upon departure. Email was the quickest mode of communication so all ten were emailed, requesting their participation. Eight responded positively, one did not respond and one responded after the interview process was complete so was not included.

This study is based on voluntary participation. The invitation email outlined the nature of the request and the purpose of the interview and the topic of the dissertation was outlined. It was made clear that all information would be kept confidential and that anonymity would be given if preferred within the report. Permission to record interviews was also requested, stating that if the interviewee objected, notes would be taken. Permission was also requested to access individual personnel files. All interview participants agreed and requested anonymity.

### **3.6 Analysing the Data**

The interviews yielded a massive amount of data, the sheer volume of which was intimidating. It was necessary to keep in mind the purpose of the data. Morse suggests that analyzing qualitative data is a three-step process as follows :

“Comprehending is acquiring a full understanding of the setting, culture and study topic before the research commences”.

“Synthesizing is the drawing together of different these and concepts from the research and forming them into new, integrated patterns”.

“Theorizing is the constant development and manipulation of malleable theoretical schemes until the best theoretical scheme is developed”. (cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009, p168).

The main step in analyzing data collected under the interpretive paradigm is to reduce the data. “Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and reorganizes data in such a way that “final” conclusions can be drawn and verified” (cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009, p167). Data reduction can be achieved by restructuring the data into suitable categories or detextualising it by summarizing the data with the use of diagrams. A general approach that is recommended is to code data. This process involves creating codes, based on the theoretical framework and/or based on the data that has been collected and emergent themes. Once codes have been created, themes, phrases and ideas can be allocated to the code and new patterns can be identified. (Collis & Hussey, 2009).

Interviews were recorded on an iPhone and transcribed by the researcher. The information gathered was read and re-read to gain general insight into the themes emerging.

Codes were created based on themes from the theoretical framework. New codes were created from themes that emerged from interpretive memos created during archival research and from personal notes. New codes were also created from interviews.

Data was detextualised with the use of matrices created with Microsoft Excel. Words and phrases were taken from the interviews and tabulated in a separate matrix for each individual. The main ideas from the phrases were interpreted and codes were then assigned. All codes were collated into one worksheet and it was then possible to see

which themes were dominant. Lists of codes were then separated into two worksheets according to whether the interviewee viewed them as a positive or negative, in order to remain focused on what satisfied and dissatisfied interviewees.

As different categories took shape, consideration was given to the theoretical framework and how the emerging data related back to the theoretical framework that emerged during the literature review.

Software such as NVivo is available to assist with the coding process. This was not used for several reasons such as limited access to the software and current lack of user knowledge of these products.

### **3.6.1 Evaluating the Analysis**

While analyzing the data, consideration was given to the recommendations made by Lincoln and Guba to use four criteria when critiquing the quality of the analysis :

Credibility : correctly identifying and describing the subject of enquiry

Transferability : whether findings can be applied elsewhere to permit generalization

Dependability : whether the research is systematic, rigorous and well documented

Confirmability : ensuring the research process has been explained in full and that findings flow (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p182).

### **3.7 Limitations of Research Design**

Concern about reliability was not a major factor as little weight is given to reliability in interpretivistic research; “under an interpretive paradigm, reliability is often of little importance or may be interpreted in a different way” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p64).

Authenticity is described by Collis & Hussey as being established through the use of protocol and procedure. Hence, the inclusion of the complete research design in this methodology.

The validity of the study was supported by the various methods of triangulation. Methodological triangulation was ensured by employing different methods of data collection through interviews, archive research and personal notes/self reflection. Data triangulation was achieved by interviewing a number of leavers from the company and by interviewing myself essentially, through self-reflection. It was also borne in mind that “validity is the extent to which the research findings accurately reflect the phenomena under study” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p.64). Hence, the interview questions were carefully structured to elicit descriptive information about disengagement and the theoretical framework was at all times considered.

Collis & Hussey describe generalizability as being able to apply the research results to beyond the original study. This is more in keeping with positivist studies where research results based on a sample are applied to the entire population. However, they argue that it is possible to generalise interpretive research also as “you will be concerned with whether the patterns, concepts and theories that have been generated in a particular environment can be applied in other environments” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, pp.65-66). It is believed that the results of this study will be generalizable at least within the same industry. However, it is acknowledged that what causes people to be disengaged in the stockbroking industry may differ significantly from that in a vocational environment such as teaching or a charity organisation. In that respect, this study may not be viewed as generalizable.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

The aim of this research was to find out if and/or how employees experience disengagement during their tenure with the company. The specific research question is “*What is the role of hygiene and motivator factors in the disengagement process? Do employees’ expectations suggest that employees seek a modern Psychological Contract that is more transactional or relational in nature, or a combination of both?*”. It was hoped to gain an understanding from each interviewee the reasons for their dissatisfaction within the company and to define what event, or series of events, triggered and contributed to the process of disengagement.

The findings from this process are discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand how different individuals experience disengagement and to examine if similar themes emerged in their stories, with a view to contributing to the development of a more specific definition of the construct of disengagement. At all times during the research process, the main research question was kept in mind :

*What is the role of hygiene and motivator factors in the disengagement process? Do employees' expectations suggest that employees seek a modern Psychological Contract that is more transactional or relational in nature, or a combination of both?*

In order to answer these questions, an interpretive approach was used. The findings from this study are derived from qualitative data collected from three sources:

- Interpretative memos created from analysis of archives (personnel records)
- Personal notes recalling the researcher's own thoughts and observations regarding employees attitudes and behaviours during their tenure
- Face to face interviews with 8 ex employees of the firm

For ease of reference, during the course of this study, all participants will be referred to as interviewee # (number) during all stages of research.

The findings are discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

## **4.2 Archival Research – Interpretative Memos**

Despite having a theoretical framework, it was decided not to analyse the information held in archives according to preconceived codes. It was not known how much information would be found during archival research so it was preferable to elicit as much information as possible from the files, rather than limiting the search according to a predefined set of codes or themes.

The files did not yield very much information. This reflects the processes within the company such as performance reviews only being done once a year. Furthermore, not all managers executed performance reviews in the same manner, despite a common review form template being used. Some managers documented employee feedback during reviews whereas others did not. Some personnel files contained other relevant material such as inter-office emails. However, some personnel files provided limited data overall and one employee's file yielded no information, merely containing the employment contract.

### **THEME 1**

The predominant theme found during archival research was :

#### **Δ Ambition.**

Five interviewees had references that suggested ambitions and desire for career development. For interviewee 2, the significance of the employee's ambition is demonstrated by four references to this theme. The employee speaks of the need to expand her career, looking forward to taking on more responsibilities, expressing interest in doing industry exams, and requesting support to pursue third level studies.

Interviewee 7 also demonstrates a strong level of ambition, stating unambiguously :  
***“Focused on pursuing a long-term career within the Financial Services industry”.***

The other interviewees mention ambition, perhaps less vociferously, and so it was considered that perhaps the references were made as a standard gesture, for example at interview. This theme however, was noted, and put aside for coding and comparison with the other sources of data.

### **Other Themes**

There were no other dominant themes throughout the personnel records. However, themes that individuals mentioned included Salary, Safety, Policies & Procedures, Relationships with Peers, Working Environment, Pride in Work, and Training. These themes were also noted for coding.

### **4.3 Personal Notes**

Having worked for the firm in question for over eleven years as HR Manager, the researcher was privy to information regarding employee’s thoughts and behaviours over the course of their employment. It was therefore felt that a personal recall of events was relevant to the study as a method of triangulation.

Despite having a theoretical framework, it was decided to put that to one side, as recalling the general picture would give a more rounded version of events rather than approaching the method in terms of preconceived codes. Over the course of several days before the interviews began, this researcher recalled and wrote a short synopsis of the attitude and behaviours of each interviewee participating in the study. Cognisance was given to personal bias and every effort was made to ensure that the recall was not a

performance review but more an exercise in observation and reflection. A full transcript of the personal notes can be found in Appendix D. The findings are summarized as follows :

### **Major Themes**

The predominant theme interpreted from my personal notes was :

#### **Δ Career Development**

It was recalled that employees were clearly concerned with career development, with five of the interviewees demonstrating interest or concern regarding career. Most interviewees demonstrated a keen desire to progress their career either through learning, training and development or through their application for promotion or interviewing for roles on offer in-house. Sub themes that fell under the Career Development theme included : Boredom, Recognition and Work Ethic.

Two secondary, but prominent themes also emerged.

#### **Δ Money/Benefits**

Strong discontent was recalled regarding money and benefits. However, it was recollected that people were only occasionally dissatisfied with money and the dissatisfaction generally did not appear to last. A typical example was employees being annoyed over not getting a bonus or a pay rise. Some exceptions stood out however. One concerned an employee who was very annoyed when the company only paid part salary when the employee underwent emergency surgery prior to the Christmas period. The company had a policy of not paying employees while on sick leave and in this case an exception was made. However, the payment was only part pay and this seemed to irk

the employee just as much as if there was no pay. The employee held a grudge about this right through to the end of employment. The second incident concerned an employee who got a substantial promotion without a pay rise and was aware that the previous post holder had a higher salary. This irked the employee greatly and the annoyance persisted throughout cessation of employment.

A sub theme that emerged here was : Inequity regarding employee rewards. Employees were annoyed over the long term when they perceived that salary or other benefits such as share allocation were decided upon in a manner that favoured some employees over others.

#### **Δ Social Element**

A surprising theme that emerged from own personal recall was the gravitas attached to the social element within the company, which only became clear when formal reflection took place. Employees enjoyed the social element within the firm and many of the interviewees were key to either organizing events or taking part in them. It was also recalled that one employee never took part in social events, despite being a young, outgoing personality who enjoyed the people aspect of the role and had good relationships with colleagues.

#### **Δ Other Themes**

Minor themes which emerged from my personal recall and which were set aside for coding were : Work Ethic, Company Policies, Boredom, Lack of Job Focus, Exams, Timekeeping, Recognition, Transactional Contracts, Personal Dignity and Relationships with Peers.

#### 4.4 Interviews

Interviews were held with the eight interviewees individually. The interview questions were semi-structured, as discussed in the methodology section. Interviews were recorded on an iPhone and transcribed as soon as possible thereafter. It was found that all interviewees were very comfortable discussing their stories and did not demonstrate any particular body language during the interviews which would have indicated particular feelings, such as annoyance over incidents or nervousness regarding issues. This may have been in part due to the friendly relationship held between researcher and interviewer and may be viewed as a positive and negative. Interviewees were open and talked freely as a result of this relationship but it could be questioned whether non-verbal language was missing which could have provided further findings.

The interviews were underpinned by the theoretical framework and guided by the overall research question. Data from the interviews were categorized under codes developed from the theoretical framework and the new codes that developed from Archival Research and Personal Notes. New codes were also created as new themes emerged from the interviews.

What was found during the research was that many themes overlapped. In some cases, themes emerged as extremely dominant. When describing experiences about these themes however, interviewees described their experiences in combination with other sub themes. For example, many interviewees who talked about Growth and Career Development talked about Training & Development at the same time. Training & Development was also a sub theme of Recognition. A sub theme of Recognition was Relationships. However, Relationships emerged as a major theme in its own right.

Major themes were identified when interviewees talked about them predominantly and they appeared regularly throughout the interviews. However, as topics overlapped, themes could appear more than once, and as a major or sub theme or both.

The findings were as follows :

### **Δ Theme 1 : Growth and Career Development**

The predominant theme that emerged from interviews was growth and career development. This was the most dominant theme throughout this research by far and was cited by most interviewees as the reason for joining the company.

*“It was different to what I’d done previously and it was probably a move forward in my career. So that was the main element”.*

*“It was made known to me from the start that if I actually stuck with it there was an actual progression and career path”.*

A clear line of sight regarding growth was very important to all interviewees and this was part of their agreed expectations. It was clear that for most interviewees, a relational psychological contract was established from the outset. There was one exception, where interviewee 5 took the role merely as a means of financial security. The interviewee did not like the role, had no interest in the industry and it was clear the psychological contract was transactional in nature only for the employee. This interviewee was the exception to the norm in this respect.

*“It was never going to be a job that I would be 100% satisfied with because in my mind I’d always wanted to achieve other goals so it was literally to keep the money coming in the bank”.*

While most interviewees cited growth opportunities as the most positive aspect of joining the company, nearly all subsequently reported dissatisfaction with career development as a major factor in their decision to leave the company. Most interviewees also cited this as a contributing factor to their unhappiness whilst working for the firm.

***“There was nowhere for me really to progress”.***

***“There was no focus and no set career development and career path”.***

A number of sub themes emerged under the theme of Growth, such as : Training and Development, Boredom, Responsibility and Work. These themes are included as sub themes for the reason that they did not emerge as dominant themes on their own, but when they did appear, they always appeared in connection with the theme of Growth. If the sub theme appeared as a positive statement, the interviewee viewed it as a positive in relation to growth opportunities.

***Question : “Did you view the company paying for your degree as a sign that they were investing in your career? Answer : “Yes definitely, definitely.”***

When dissatisfied with one of the sub themes listed, interviewees viewed this a negative in terms of growth opportunities. Most interviewees cited dissatisfaction in this regard.

***“I became bored, cause it wasn’t challenging me because I was doing the same thing day in day out”.***

***“The boredom. As in I just wanted a new challenge, something new, something fresh”.***

*They didn't put me forward for roles, that there was no kind of promotional, you know they didn't put me forward for roles that came up".*

*"I didn't feel that you could grow within the role".*

It is interesting to note that Growth and the sub themes associated with it, appeared as the predominant theme whether employees were discussing positive or negative experiences.

## **Δ Theme 2 : Money and Benefits**

Money emerged as a dominant theme in the research. However, none of the interviewees cited dissatisfaction with money as a reason for leaving the company. Dissatisfaction with money was discussed mainly in terms of short-term dissatisfaction or as a minor issue which was acceptable as other more important tangible or intangible benefits and rewards made up for any unhappiness with money.

*"We were getting very good bonuses, so that kind of made up for it".*

*"The pay wasn't great so I'd say what I was most happy about was the fact that people actually took an interest in developing me".*

What is clear from the research is that when interviewees demonstrated an absolute dissatisfaction with money that could not be overcome, it did not stand alone as an event such as not getting a pay rise or bonus. In fact, sub themes emerged which showed that money caused long term dissatisfaction when linked to another variables or theme such as : Inequity over Rewards, Loyalty, Trust, Security, Company Policies and Relationships.

If interviewees deemed issues regarding pay to be fair then it did not cause dissatisfaction.

***“We all shared the loss of the other perks and that was fair”.***

However, where there was a perceived inequity, it could lead to long term dissatisfaction. Interviewee 1 described acceptance of pay cuts when it was perceived to be fair.

***“Then we got the wage decreases just previous to that and obviously that annoys everyone but it doesn’t make you want to run out of the place”.***

However, interviewee 1 had a long standing annoyance over not being paid sick pay despite a general policy of not paying sick leave in the company. Knowing that exceptions were sometimes made annoyed interviewee 1 even further as it represented inequity and subjective, rather than objective policy, making.

***“When they brought out the sickness thing they said it’ll be done case by case and I would have thought that an emergency appendix would have qualified as.... To be honest I lost faith in the guys and it really upset me”.***

This demonstrates the link between rewards and factors such as security, loyalty and company policies. The extent of the effect this had on the employee is clear:

***“I felt that I was loyal to the company but they weren’t loyal to me”.***

Interviewees cited ***“Money. And lack of pay rises”*** as a direct cause for unhappiness. However, it was acknowledged that the company often made up for this in other ways, for example with annual bonuses. Difficulties occurred when basic pay compromised

the interviewee's personal security as in the case of Interviewee 4 who said that "basic pay" is important. This interviewee also associated pay rises with a sign of the company's loyalty to employees.

***"Their refusal to give pay rises. Even though I know they did for me at the start. But even though you were loyal and stayed there I just don't think that towards the end they rewarded people for that I suppose".***

However, interviewee 4, despite grievances over money, acknowledged the other positives about the company and would have stayed if a different issue (boredom) had been solved, despite the money issues.

***"If I had of found something that challenged me a bit more I would have stayed for the same money".***

The idea of inequity between staff causing major discontent was the most prevalent cause of discontent amongst interviewees. While salary cuts were accepted as a necessary evil, there was discontent if it was perceived that financial cuts were in any way inequitable amongst staff. The same could be said when interviewees perceived their rate of pay as unfair compared to their peers.

***"There were some cuts to the benefits because of the economic circumstances. I felt that some of the cuts were unfair to say, the women in the company".***

***"By the end of it I was doing 90% of the work but getting 2% of the pay".***

Interviewees also described how financial rewards could be perceived as a sign of the company's loyalty or acknowledgment of efforts and this was exacerbated when inequity between peers was also perceived.

*“As time went on his effort went down and my effort was increasing but I was getting no monetary value, no monetary increases. But even worse than that it wasn’t even acknowledged that I was actually doing that work which was worse than the monetary element”.*

*“Not getting shares when there was a distribution round. And less from a financial point of view but there was kind of two distinct groups of employees there”.*

The fact that it was only the inequity that annoyed both of these interviewees is highlighted by statements from each.

*“The money wasn’t a significant issue it was actually a career move”.*

*“It was a generous company to work for, bonuses were generally quite good, there were share incentives”.*

*“The pay wasn’t great so I’d say what I was most happy about was the fact that people actually took an interest in developing me”.*

*“I wasn’t looking for anything substantial I was just looking for something that was fair”.*

### **Δ Theme 3 : Relationships**

Interviewees described how their relationships with both peers and the management team were of huge importance. Breakdown of relationships was seen as a major source of dissatisfaction and a definite contributor to overall detachment. Most interviewees described good relationships held with colleagues as a massive positive and the

importance of this extended to the inclusion of a social aspect with colleagues. People also enjoyed the open door policy and informal style of management.

*“I think I described it once as a family. The people are fantastic”.*

*“Just socially, there was so much going on when we started, like as a young person, there was always nights out”.*

*“The directors knew you and they knew your work and there was no rigid type of hierarchy. It was a very open environment to work in”.*

Interviewees described how they could no longer carry on following a breakdown in relationships or how they lost interest as social structures disintegrated.

*“It was very disappointing because you have such a good relationship with these people”.*

*“It made the working environment for me uncomfortable and at best, impossible”.*

*“There was always nights out and there was so much going on all the time. And then, I suppose that became less and less and then I suppose there wasn’t the same buzz about the company”.*

*“The relationship had deteriorated so badly that nothing could have fixed it”.*

Sub Themes therefore that emerged alongside Relationships were Trust, Working Conditions, Social Aspects and the Cost of Reward.

#### **Δ Theme 4 : Recognition**

Interviewees described the importance of recognition for their work. A number of sub themes emerged such as Appreciation, Effort & Reward, Relationships, Trust and Training & Development. Interviewees experienced recognition for their worth in different ways, for some it was through financial reward, for others it was about the company recognizing an employee's unhappiness and responding to it accordingly.

*“I was really annoyed...you give so much to someone, like even organising the Christmas party. I couldn't go and one of the directors was like “yeh thanks very much”...and I was like... a bottle of wine wouldn't have gone astray”.*

*“It was the lack of acknowledgment by him, even rather than the pay”.*

*“Because I could see the end goal but there was no acknowledgement for the effort I was putting in.”*

*“I think that one of the frustrations that I would have had would have been a lack of a formal review process”.*

Failure to provide recognition resulted in feelings of detachment.

#### **Δ Theme 5 : Supervision**

Interviewees described the importance of supervision. This was not a direct statement about supervision in each individual's case, but they all described the need for support from management, direction regarding policies and feelings of isolation when left alone. Hence sub themes that emerged included Relationships, Loneliness, Training &

Development, Reputation and Company Policies. Dissatisfaction in this regard left interviewees feeling unable to cope, stressed and inclined towards leaving the company.

*“I found it difficult when I moved into my new job because you’re kind of left on your own to do your work”.*

*“Then I moved to funds and I was kind of working by myself and I just found it very monotonous so I kind of got dissatisfied maybe six months into the newer role. A bit lonely, yeh”.*

*“I felt for all intents and purposes completely isolated with no support structure around me”.*

*“As I progressed, I came under the wing initially of a senior manager who ended up taking complete advantage of me and my work”.*

*“I would have been disappointed with the support given to me in that role”.*

They also described the importance of having enough support or supervision to depend on and they viewed their supervisors or line managers failing in this respect as a breakdown that might impact on their own reputation.

*“I felt that the position that I was in, reporting to the Regulator, without having the support there, inevitably things may go wrong. And also how much of it would have fallen on to my shoulders”.*

#### **4.5 Summary of Findings**

The major themes which developed from the three sources of data (archives, personal notes and interviews) were Growth and Career Development, Money and Benefits,

Relationships, Recognition, and Supervision. A number of sub themes emerged and there was clear evidence of overlap. The major themes are summarized as follows :

### **Growth and Career Development**

Employees' priorities are Growth and Career Development. This was the driving force behind most decisions to leave the company and was most associated with unhappiness during employees' tenure. Employees viewed investment in their career such as training & developments as a positive but viewed failure in this regard as a sign that the employer was not concerned with personal development. Perception that there were no further opportunities for growth, feelings of boredom and lack of challenge were cited as the main reasons for the leaving the company.

### **Money/Benefits**

Employees only demonstrated short-term dissatisfaction when dissatisfied with pay in general. However, when there was a perceived imbalance between pay and effort, pay levels amongst peers or inequity between groups such as men/women, then this invoked longer-term discontent and breakdown in trust and relationships. It was not usually cited as a reason for departure but was mentioned by some as causing annoyance even after they had left the company. For others, money was not enough of a reason to leave, but when combined with other factors, such as growth opportunities, it was a swing factor.

### **Relationships**

Employees gave considerable weight to the importance of relationships in the workplace. Most interviewees described positive relationships as being a huge plus in their working lives. They enjoyed the support of management and peers and the social

aspect of the organisation was also very important. Where a breakdown in relationships was reported, interviewees demonstrated feelings of discontent, isolation, loneliness, stress and breakdown in loyalty and trust. This seemed to be critical to some interviewees' decisions to ending the employment relationship.

### **Recognition**

Employees did not feel valued when they were not recognized for their efforts. For some this was failure to receive appropriate financial reward or desired training, for others it was simply receiving a thank you for work done or having a manager acknowledge efforts in a formal manner, such as during a review process. Lack of recognition bred discontent amongst employees and was associated with a breakdown in trust and loyalty.

### **Supervision**

Employees demonstrated their need for guidance and support through their descriptions of lack of supervision and resultant discontent. Like the parent-child relationship, it seems that all employees want direction and management. Failure to receive this leads to stress and employees feeling unable to cope. Without suitable support, employees were inclined to give up and leave.

The implications of the findings are discussed in the final chapters : Conclusions.

## CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Purpose of Research Recalled

The purpose of this study is to understand how different individuals experience disengagement and to examine if similar themes emerge in their stories. It is appropriate to be reminded of the research question at this juncture :

*What is the role of hygiene and motivator factors in the disengagement process? Do employees' expectations suggest that employees seek a modern Psychological Contract that is more transactional or relational in nature, or a combination of both?*

### 5.2 What is the role of hygiene and motivator factors in the disengagement process?

This section aims to answer the specific questions posed about hygiene and motivator factors. The five dominant themes which emerged from the research were Growth & Career Development, Money/Benefits, Relationships, Recognition and Supervision.

According to Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Motivation, Hygiene Factors can cause dissatisfaction, but if eliminated, they simply lead to a neutral state. In other words, Hygiene Factors cannot cause satisfaction or motivation. Motivator factors however, are those which can provide long term satisfaction and can motivate employees to superior performance. (Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996).

### **5.2.1 Hygiene Factors**

The findings from this study identified three major contributors to disengagement which fall into Herzberg's category of Hygiene Factors. They are Money and Benefits, Relationships and Supervision.

It would appear that Herzberg's theory holds true in relation to Money/Benefits. Money is reported as causing dissatisfaction but is rarely described as causing significant satisfaction. Furthermore, financial dissatisfaction seemed to be short lived, while satisfactory statements regarding money are brief. Hence it is not described as a motivational factor. Money does seem to cause longer term discontent when it is associated with other factors such as Recognition, Promotion and Growth. Hence, it is in keeping with Social Exchange Theory which suggests that employees expect satisfying rewards for their effort.

The findings do not fit in with Herzberg's Theory in relation to the other two hygiene factors, Relationships and Supervision. Both of the factors caused severe discontent amongst interviewees, leading to obvious disengagement as a result. With some interviewees, the discontent was enough to sever the employment relationship. The research makes it clear however, that contrary to Herzberg's assertions, eliminating these sources of dissatisfaction did not just result in what is termed a "neutral state" (Steer, Porter & Bigley, 1996, p17). It resulted in satisfaction and appeared to be described as being of critical importance to motivating employees.

Interviewees viewed relationships as being of massive importance to their roles and could not function in some cases while relationships were not functioning positively. They associated good relationships with trust and social aspects of the job and viewed

dysfunctional relationships as too high a price to pay for the job. Interviewees also described the satisfaction they derived from good working relationships and the value they placed on positive interactions with colleagues and management.

Interviewees placed the same emphasis on Supervision. Interviewees enjoyed the open door policy and the lack of hierarchy but they also enjoyed being able to approach managers and ask for advice. Lack of supervision was cited as a major cause of disengagement. Interviewees did not place quite as much emphasis on the satisfaction they got from supervision, however, they did associate supervision with other factors they derived satisfaction from, such as Relationships and Training & Development.

### **5.2.2 Motivator Factors**

The two dominant themes that emerged under Motivator Factors were Growth & Career Development and Recognition.

Growth & Career Development was the dominant theme to emerge from Archive Research, Personal Notes and Interviews. Potential to grow one's career was the main reason why most interviewees joined the company. It was also the reason why most people left the company. Disengagement occurred for most when factors associated negatively with career development began to take hold. Hence the emergence of related sub-themes such as Training & Development, Boredom, Responsibility and Trust. It is very clear from the research that what motivates people most is the opportunity to develop one's career and removal of this motivational factor will lead to disengagement.

Interviewees placed significant importance on Recognition. They must have their wants, expectations and efforts acknowledged in order to remain engaged. Evidence of

disengagement was clear when efforts were not recognized. Recognition takes various forms for different people. This allowed sub-themes to emerge such as Appreciation, Effort & Reward, Relationships, Trust and Training & Development. Interviewees demonstrated that recognition in whatever form appropriate was partly to thank for keeping them motivated.

The results support Herzberg's theory in terms of the motivators that satisfy employees.

### ***5.3 Do employees' expectations suggest that employees seek a modern Psychological Contract that is more transactional or relational in nature, or a combination of both?***

The findings suggest that in the current post Celtic Tiger era, employees want a psychological contract that is relational in nature. There will always be exceptions, as in the case of interviewee 5, who was only looking for a job to pay the bills, a stop-gap job. In this instance, there was a mismatch in the expectations of the employer and employee and the psychological contract was not established in the first place.

The remaining seven interviewees all clearly sought relational contracts that would provide economic benefits but would, more importantly, contribute to the individual's career development. Reciprocation in this regard was viewed as a two-way system of loyalty. Employees also recognized the need for a dynamic psychological contract given the state of current economic flux. This was maintainable as long as agreed expectations were met and as long as fairness and equity remained in place.

The psychological contract was damaged and disengagement occurred when individuals perceived a breach in these expectations and when trust was broken.

#### **5.4 The Psychological Contract and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation**

Keeping the elements of the relational psychological contract in place are necessary to keeping employees motivated. As previously discussed, agreed expectations are not possible unless we know what motivates people.

Herzberg it seems, is correct that money cannot motivate people, it can only prevent dissatisfaction in the short term. Herzberg is also correct that motivators are what satisfy employees and are therefore necessary to keep them engaged. In this case the motivators identified as important to this group of employees are Growth & Career Development and Recognition.

The findings suggest however that Herzberg may be incorrect in his assertions that certain hygiene factors cannot satisfy or motivate employees to superior performance and that they can only prevent dissatisfaction. The findings suggest that the employees in this study place massive importance on Relationships and Supervision. Both factors cause dissatisfaction when operating negatively. When operating in a positive fashion however, employees seem to derive immense pleasure and support from both and are motivated to reciprocate with superior effort.

#### **5.5 Limitations of this Study**

This study focuses on the experience of employees only. It elicits opinions and thoughts in an attempt to build an understanding of the phenomena of disengagement from the employee's point of view. It was never intended to involve the employer voice, however

it is acknowledged that without this, perhaps the whole story has not been told. The employer's side of the story could have provided further data triangulation.

The researcher had a close working and cordial relationship with all interviewees. This resulted in very open and honest interviews. However, the level of comfort meant there was very little body language. Interviewees did not display discomfort even when discussing unfavourable issues, hence the findings are limited to the spoken word rather than body language.

The weakness of the interview method is that judgments may have been clouded by time. Leavers may have had rose tinted glasses on when recounting their time as an employee, or they may have exaggerated negative memories. However, it is hoped that by limiting the interviews to those who left in the last three years that the effect of the time lag will be minimized. It was also of concern to structure questions in such a way that they elicited unambiguous answers based on actual events, while also eliciting descriptive answers that pertain to how the leaver felt. Vroom (1964) stated that “when a recall methodology was deployed, ego defences would be invoked when respondents were asked to attribute the sources of dissatisfaction work, whilst attributing sources of satisfaction to personal achievement and capability” (cited in Basset-Jones & Lloyd, 2004, p933).

## **5.6 Discussion**

The findings support Social Exchange Theory as employees still expect satisfactory reward for their efforts and will reciprocate accordingly if expectations are met.

The psychological contract is alive and well and findings support the view that it is becoming more relational in nature and employers need to respect this if they are to maintain engagement.

The findings support Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Motivation only partially. Herzberg suggests that Motivators can satisfy and motivate. Hence, they can engage people and contrarily, cause disengagement if absent. This appears to be true, as all employees in this study disengaged when motivator factors that they valued were absent.

Herzberg states that hygiene factors can only prevent dissatisfaction, they cannot motivate, which suggest they cannot engage people. This appears to be true for some factors such as money. The findings show that dissatisfaction over money does not necessarily cause disengagement. However, dissatisfaction over money when coupled with dissatisfaction over other hygiene or motivator factors can cause disengagement. For example, dissatisfaction with salary is generally short lived. However, learning that one's salary is lower than a colleague who is performing the same task may cause actual disengagement due to perceived inequity.

Herzberg's theory is not supported by the findings in relation to certain other hygiene factors, such as Relationships and Supervision. The absence of positive relationships and supervision does cause dissatisfaction as Herzberg asserts. However, the presence of positive relationships and supervision appears to motivate employees and contribute to the desire to reciprocate with higher levels of effort.

Perhaps at the time Herzberg's Theory was developed, psychological contracts were more transactional in nature and intrinsic factors such as pay and work were of singular

importance. In the current environment, where relational contracts are more important for permanent staff, the role of some hygiene factors have now been elevated in importance. People rely on their peers for support and they work more in teams than they did in the manufacturing era of production line work. The list of factors that Herzberg listed as hygiene factors should not be unilaterally discarded as irrelevant in the motivation process.

Further research is recommended in order to assess whether some factors are now in the wrong category or perhaps there is a new category required to compliment the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. An interesting study could be to investigate the role of Hygiene Factors alone in the engagement or disengagement process to attempt to understand which factors actually motivate and which continue to only prevent dissatisfaction.

The findings of this report give some insight as to what factors actually contribute to and cause disengagement. The results can contribute to the development of disengagement as a construct, a construct that has been lacking in descriptive definition and which to date has been mainly measured, rather than described.

The findings will be of benefit to industry as the results give clear insight into what causes disengagement and what factors motivate people to remain engaged. It also gives credence to the psychological contract and can help employers form a meaningful relational contract based on actual, meaningful expectations.

Disengagement is a fact of life in the workplace. It probably affects every employee at one time or another. But it is preventable and more importantly, it is reversible, if the employer has the right toolbox of motivators to fix it.

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## **Appendix A – Email Invite to Participants**

**From:** Martha Hayes  
**Date:** 2nd February 2011  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Interview Request

Dear x,

I am currently completing a dissertation for partial fulfillment of a BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management with the National College of Ireland. The topic for my dissertation is “Employee Disengagement” and I wish to discuss the topic with people who may have experienced it.

I plan to interview a number of people who used to work for X Ltd and as you are an ex-employee of the firm, I would be obliged if you would consider participating.

Interviews should take no longer than 45 minutes and will be conducted face-to-face with myself. You would be interviewed individually so there will only be the two of us present.

I would request permission to record the interview on an iPhone to facilitate transcribing it afterwards. I would also request permission to access your personnel file from your time with the company with the view to eliciting information that might be of relevance to the study.

The name of the company is being withheld in the dissertation as neither the company or firm have any direct involvement in my study. I am also happy to guarantee anonymity to all participants, as preferred.

I would be delighted if you would agree to participate and would ask that you let me know by return email. If you are willing to participate, I will then contact you by phone to arrange a time and place to meet.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Regards,

Martha Hayes

## **Appendix B – Interview Questions**

**SET ONE**

**What attracted you to working for the company when you applied/joined?**

*To gauge what motivated the employee to apply to the new company*

**What were you most happy about with your new contract and position?**

*To gauge what elements of the job and/or role gave the employee most pleasure – attempts to differentiate satisfying elements.*

**Were there any parts of your role or contract that did not appeal to you?**

*To gauge what elements of the job and/or role gave the employee least pleasure – attempts to differentiate satisfying elements.*

**SET TWO** – *All questions to gauge whether dissatisfaction began as shock factor or built up over time*

**Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your job?**

**Was there a specific event or reason that led to your dissatisfaction?**

**Was this resolved, did it continue or did it resolve but then reoccur?**

**SET THREE** – *To see if disengagement builds up or can be resolved and start again*

**Were there further significant instances of dissatisfaction with your role?**

**Can you describe these to me?**

**SET FOUR** – *What variables cause disengagement as opposed to short-term dissatisfaction*

**Of the instances which caused you dissatisfaction, did any (or more than one) cause you to consider leaving the company?**

**Was your actual decision to leave based on one specific reason or multiple reasons?**

**What was your actual reason for leaving?**

**SET FIVE** – *To identify expectations and failures re same*

**Was there any element of your job and contract which appeared to differ from what you expected when you joined or signed the contract?**

**What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

**What elements of working for the firm appealed to you most?**

**Did you have all the resources you needed to perform your job?**

**Did you have the assistance and resources you needed to progress/develop your career?**

**SET SIX** – *Track changing expectations*

**Were there any significant changes to your own personal life while working for the firm?**

**Did this impact on your needs or expectations from the company?**

**Were these expectations met?**

## **Appendix C – Transcribed Interviews**

## Interview One

**Interviewee : KR**

**Employee Level : Professional**

**Date and Time : Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2011 @ 3pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you applied?**

KR : I suppose it was my first job out of college so I think I was very excited it was very....you hear the word stockbroking its glitzy it's glamorous its what you probably imagine it to be.

**MH : Did you know what it was going to be?**

KR : I had an idea....it was nothing like the idea.

**MH : What were you most happy about when you got the new contract and the position, I suppose it's the same question**

KR : As in...

**MH : When you got your contract and got the role, what appealed to you most about it? And what were you most happy about?**

KR : I think because it was my first job I was just pretty happy to have a job, out of college. But it was all learning and that was..... when you first go in you're learning everything. From even, diary management to even learning to organise your own time. I suppose it was interesting working with all the guys and that was a good part of it, at the start.

**MH : Was there any part of it that you didn't like when you started....in the early days?**

KR : No (laughs)...at the start I liked it all.

**MH : Really?**

KR : Yeah (laughs).

**MH : All of it?**

KR : Yeah, there was nothing in particular... Dealing with some people was difficult at the start cause you weren't used to dealing with people on that level.

**MH : Management, peers, clients?**

KR : No, people that wouldn't have been management but would have been more senior than me. Like somebody like EC, he wasn't my boss but....you didn't know where you stood with these people, cause are you my colleague..are....

You know you didn't know whether to take orders from these people I suppose its...

**MH :** **So that wasn't made clear enough to you?**

KR : Yeh you don't know who you should be taking orders from when you first start. Cause I would have had people like RG telling me things, what to do as well. So...I would have had that as well. So that was difficult trying realise who was who and who could tell you what to do.

**MH :** **Was this a serious negative for you or just a little bit irritating?**

KR : No, more confusing as well.

**MH :** **Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your job?**

KR : *LONG SILENCE*

*Shifted in chair, seemed confused and thinking strongly about answer.*

I think...I don't... I think... probably only towards the last year. I became bored, cause it wasn't challenging me because I was doing the same thing day in day out, which, when it was busy was really interesting cause you were kept busy,. But when it came towards the end, there wasn't the volume of what you were doing and you're time wasn't being filled in any other way. I would have thought there was an opportunities at that point for somebody to take you under their wing, you know, everybody had free capacity, but it wasn't being used up efficiently like that. That annoyed me you were just kind of sitting around, you know, for a lot of it.

**MH :** **So for you there was no specific kind of event that led to you being unhappy?**

KR : To be honest, the reason I made up my mind that I was going was that I wasn't paid sick leave pay for my appendix.

**MH :** **When was that?**

KR : That was in December.

**MH :** **Was that before realised you were bored or...**

KR : *Interrupts.* No I felt that, I dunno I know obviously I know I wouldn't have a great sickness record I'll say that for myself I know that...

**MH :** **Did the company not pay you for any of your sick leave when you got your appendix out?**

KR : They paid me in part. SN's email was real token "we're going to pay you three days" and I went, do you know what, its Christmas week and I was down a quarter of my wages. And he kind of made it out to me like this was the biggest thing they were ever doing. I don't know it was just I had no interest and I clocked off every day at 5 o'clock and I did nothing, nothing outside of.... I

was just....I was really annoyed...you give so much to someone, like even organising the Christmas party. I couldn't go and one of the directors was like "yeh thanks very much".. and I was like... a bottle of wine wouldn't have gone astray. I'm sitting at home with stitches, I went into work with stitches to LC, just to prove... Like I couldn't afford to pay my mortgage that month if I'd been out another week.

**MH :** **And so, when they did the cost cutting, did the cancellation of sick pay stick out with you or was it only when it affected you?**

KR : To be honest, I never thought about it cause I thought one or two days is fine like if you have a cold and you're not being paid that's fine. But I remember exactly, they said, when they brought out the sickness thing they said it'll be done case by case and I would have thought that an emergency appendix would have qualified as.... To be honest I lost faith in the guys and that it really upset me, and thats why....at that point.... I said to my Mum, "I'm out of there".

**MH :** **When was that in relation to when you left? A year before, six months before?**

KR : There was no talk of redundancy at that time. It would have been....I left in the October so it would have been the December before.

**MH :** **About 9 months before?**

KR : Yeh.

**MH :** **So would you say you started to become dissatisfied in your role before that, when you were becoming bored in your role?**

KR : Slightly bored just before that, but that would have been the straw that broke the camel's back. And I think, then we got the wage decreases just previous to that and obviously that annoys everyone but it doesn't make you want to run out of the place. But I have to say, and I know it was just a stupid thing and it was only a few hundred quid, but thats what was annoying me I was like.... In some ways, I think it was the time I booked the Christmas party and I'd made savings and negotiated €2 grand off the bill and the total savings of not paying me for those days was less than 2 hundred quid. And that.... really...its just a really small thing, but I was just like "I'm outta here". I was genuinely really sick and it was one of those occasions when they should have paid someone, that's just my opinion.

**MH :** **So would you say then, that your decision to leave was based on one thing or a multiple of things?**

KR : It was based on that event I wanted to leave because I felt that I was loyal to the company but they weren't loyal to me. And that was it.

**MH :** **Was there any element, and I suppose for you because you had two different jobs, we'll talk about the last one that you did, the CFD role...was there any element of that job and your contract which was**

**different from what you expected when you joined as in when you were given that role? Was there anything that was completely different that what you thought it was going to be?**

**KR :** Well no, because I had provided cover previously I knew exactly what the role was. And I was never given a job spec or a new contract at that point. So I wouldn't have had it highlighted what your role is or these are your responsibilities but I kind of knew what it entailed. The one thing I didn't realise is that when you do that job you kind of...I found it difficult when I moved into my new job because you're kind of left on your own you do your work and unless there's a problem, somebody will come and look at your work. But on a day to day, as long as there's no issues, no-one will...there's no double checking. Obviously there's the settlement of trades and everything so there is a form of checking. But it was very much like I'd only contact my boss if there was an issue and I think probably because he was in charge of so many people and so high up, you wouldn't bother him with the day to day kind of... Say you weren't having good relationships with people on the desk, you wouldn't bring it up with him. Whereas I think if you had a closer manager, like the way DW is now promoted, in that situation you'd now address it with him. You'd address things...a lot more things, so I things would run more smoothly.

**MH :** **So would you say, if someone asked you what sort of resources you were given, things like training or assistance from colleagues or anything like that, or even equipment, what would you say you got from the company to do the job?**

**KR :** It was...eh...literally a self-starter kind of thing. Like I'd come up with my own procedures. If something wasn't going well I'd go into my boss and say "look this happened and this has slipped through the net" and it would pretty much be...well you get a system and it won't happen again.

**MH :** **What resources would you have liked that you didn't get or that you think would have helped?**

**KR :** Probably a lot more training like I have to say when I sat beside...before I sat beside DW...like DW was great, he kind of took you under his wing and he did go through a lot of stuff and very good if you had a question and I mean, the stupidest questions when I first started. But he's very good he's very approachable like that. Whereas the other guys where I sat before you wouldn't really bring stuff up with them. But David was very good like that.

**MH :** **What was your biggest disappointment during your time working with the company?**

**KR :** I don't know it was probably..... Like probably my biggest disappointment... I would have said, and I know that's going on and its only a week's pay or whatever, but it was very disappointing because you have such a good relationship with these people and that was very disappointing. Also the lack of training, and I'm not saying courses externally cause if there was

something you wanted to do my boss was very happy to organise it but I mean in the way of training from your colleagues. Like I was working with one of the smartest guys in the business and he walked out of there with all his knowledge in his head. And you're sitting beside smart guys and they're so clued in but there's no sharing of the knowledge between each other.

**MH :** **So do you think that the company contributed to developing you for a career, whether it was within the company or outside?**

KR : I think that if it wasn't for the person I am that it wouldn't have happened. Do you know what I mean? Like someone could have come into the role and been like...I'll do this....and not go on and be bothered to ask questions.

**MH :** **So you felt because of your personality that you pushed forward a little bit more?**

KR : Yeh I think so

**MH :** **What elements of working for the company appealed to you most?**

KR : The team was a very good team and I mean that in the whole office. There was a great...I think I described it once as a family. There's like this really weird clique and I think that because everyone came in at a certain age....like I came in when I was 21 so I grew up with the place.. Like those years are really kind of life changing, you go through the break-ups and the babies and the marriages and even now that I've left I'm still in contact with so many people. The people are fantastic.

**MH :** **That was one of my next questions, were there any significant changes to your own personal life when you were working for the company?**

KR : *Laughs.* Significant yeh! A break-up!

**MH :** **Did it impact on your needs or your expectations from the company?**

KR : Absolutely. I would have had solicitors appointments and I would have had emotional appointments as in there were days when I was in work and I couldn't handle being at work. And I have to say the company was very good. Like friends and colleagues, you know there was always somewhere to go for a respite....you know somewhere to hide when you couldn't handle it. My boss was very good as well like you could go off...

**MH :** **So expectations you would have had from the company on a personal level were met in those circumstances?**

KR : Yeh absolutely. And the team and everyone were very good and very concerned. Everyone was very good.

**MH :** **Is there anything then that you would, if you could look back and say you wish one thing could have been different about that company....that if this element was different you might still be working for the company?**

KR : Probably like....and I know that in a smaller company that its not really feasible, but some kind of graduate scheme. Cause there's really smart people coming out of college into that place, like AW is an example. And the way AW has worked it is like a graduate scheme for her now cause she's done a bit on the trading desk and now research. But I know there can't be a full structure there, but something like that would be really good. Not even a structured thing, but I think have a mentor, like SM mentored CT and you'd have seen, CT was great at what he did, because of SM. But as I say I think there's a lot of people who.....they're not sharing the knowledge they have and I think it's a shame because, you know, SM could have...I'm not saying I could have sat beside him, but I probably could have and I could have got a lot from him. And he would speak to KC over lunch but some kind of form of "this is how I operate, this is what I do..."

**MH : And do you think that if you're biggest disappointment was the sick pay issue, but alongside that you were getting bored and there was no training, do you think that if there had of been a more structured career path in place, where you were able to move along quicker and get to where you wanted to go, that it might have overcome the whole pay issue?**

KR : Yeh it would have been cause you would have seen a kind of.....because I suppose when you're on, what I would have described at the time as a minimum wage and you get docked wages, and you don't see yourself going anywhere. Whereas if you're on that wage and it happens and you see yourself in a few years on €10k extra, you know, you can cope with that.

**MH : Do you think you would have still held the sick pay issue against the company?**

KR : Yeh. Bitter!

**MH : KR, that's all my questions, thank you very much!**

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## Interview Two

**Interviewee: CR**

**Employee Level : Administrative**

**Date and Time : Monday 20th June 2011 @ 6.20pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you applied?**

CR : It was a very prestigious company at the time, they were doing very well, they were independent. Yep, it was just a good place to work.

**MH : What were you most happy about when you got the new contract and the position?**

CR : Em....

**MH : For example, what elements of your contract or things about your new position were you most happy about?**

CR : Wasn't money anyway (*laughs*). I suppose it was the new challenge and learning about stockbroking and all the things that I just saw as a new challenge.

**MH : Was there any part of your role or contract that didn't appeal to you when you started?**

CR : No, no I was happy enough.

**MH : With everything?**

CR : Yeh.

**MH : Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your job?**

CR : Em, I suppose I was there six years, so probably.....when I worked in Client Services I got bored. Then I moved to funds and I was kind of working by myself and I just found it very monotonous so I kind of got dissatisfied maybe six months into the newer role.

**MH : Were you lonely?**

CR : A bit lonely, yeh.

**MH : If you were to say then that there was a specific reason or event which caused your dissatisfaction, was it the working on your own or....?**

CR : I think the repetition. It was the same stuff all the time.

**MH : Even in the new job?**

CR : Yeh. Like once I'd settled in, it was the same things every single day, over and over and over. Ok I'd get different queries but it was all pretty much the same thing.

**MH : So in relation to that, did you ever bring it up with anybody, was it resolved and if so did it reoccur? Or was it never resolved and just continued on?**

CR : Yeh it was never resolved. Like I did say it to my boss and he tried to give me more stuff to do but again it was just boring stuff, like legal documents and stuff, nothing really challenging I suppose.

**MH : Were there ever any other significant instances that caused you dissatisfaction or anything else that annoyed you?**

CR : Money. And lack of payrises.

**MH : All throughout your employment or ..**

CR : No, because obviously when times were good we were getting very good bonuses, so that kind of made up for it. And obviously they were very generous in their bonus pay. But, I suppose, on a month to month, on a salary basis....

**MH : Basic salary?**

CR : Yes.

**MH : From the start to the finish of your employment?**

CR : The finish was okay (*said very tentatively, "ok" said with hesitation, not conviction*). At the start definitely, like I had to say to them, 'I can't work here anymore, I just can't afford to'.

**MH : So, of those things, the things that displeased you – boredom, money – did any of them, or more than one, cause you to consider leaving the company?**

CR : *LONG SILENCE.*

Yeh well the repetition. Like I actually left to go travelling. However, if I wasn't going travelling, I would have left anyway. Definitely, just for something new, for a new challenge. I'd been there six years, so it was kind of, you know, things weren't good. There was nowhere for me really to progress I didn't think, so...

**MH : So what was your actual reason for leaving then?**

CR : At the time?

**MH : Yes.**

CR : Redundancy, the voluntary offer and to go travelling. That's why I left at that time, but I would have probably left within six months of that anyway.

**MH : Because of the boredom, the money or both?**

CR : Both.

**MH : Which one would take precedence?**

CR : The boredom. As in I just wanted a new challenge, something new, something fresh.

**MH : If you had stayed because you had not gone travelling and the company had solved the boredom issue for you, but the money problem was still there, what would you have done?**

CR : Yeah I probably would have stayed. Yeh definitely. Like I don't know what I would have liked to do or take on in there, but I suppose if I had of found something that challenged me a bit more I would have stayed for the same money.

**MH : Was there any element of your job and/or contract that appeared to differ from what you expected when you joined or signed the contract.**

CR : I suppose the job spec...*(laughs)*, it sounded more interesting than it actually was! You know there is a lot of repetition, which is true for everyone's job in fairness!

**MH : What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

CR : I suppose again, money as in their refusal to give pay rises. Even though I know they did for me at the start. But even though you were loyal and stayed there I just don't think that towards the end they rewarded people for that I suppose.

**MH : So did you think that the boredom was part and parcel of the job but not management's fault, whereas the money was management's fault?**

CR : Yes *(said VERY convincingly)*. Exactly.

**MH : What elements of working for the firm appealed to you most?**

CR : I suppose it was a great company to work for. I liked the open door policy, the CEO knew who everyone was you weren't just a number. If you had a problem you could go in and talk to any of the directors. You could probably go straight to the CEO and say 'look I'm not happy about this'. He probably send you straight to a manager but you could go into him you know what I mean! *(Laughs)*. I suppose the open door policy. And it was a small company and it was just very friendly...

**MH : I have heard it described as a big family!**

CR : Yes!! *(Exclaims and laughs)*.

**MH : Were there any significant changes to your own personal life when you were working for the company?**

CR : Don't think so. I suppose the biggest thing was that I moved to Dublin to work for the firm so that would have been a big upheaval in my life, as in being relocated.

**MH : Did this create new expectations for yourself? Would you have had different needs if you had stayed at home and not relocated?**

CR : Yes.

**MH : Did you feel that the company met those expectations?**

CR : Well yes because as I say in the first six months I had to say to them that I couldn't actually afford to live in Dublin and work on the money that they were giving me and I think I got two pay rises in the first year. Like they said, 'this is what we'll do for you we'll give you x amount of money'. So you know I was able to approach them and talk to them about it. And they sorted me out.

**MH : Do you think that the company gave you all the resources you needed while working for the firm or was there a lack of anything?**

CR : Training. I think I didn't do anything.

**MH : So there was a lack of training?**

CR : Yes, I didn't do any courses or anything. Now, I didn't ask to do anything to be honest, but...

**MH : You would have liked the company to have offered?**

CR : Yes, definitely. If the option to do things..... Now, they did pay for my degree, but I mean more day to day kind of stuff. Like as in, an Excel course, or you know just things that would make your life easier day to day, just different things like that. But they did pay for my degree so....

**MH : Did you view the company paying for your degree as a sign that they were investing in your career?**

CR : Yes definitely, definitely.

**MH : That concludes my questions. CR, thank you very much.**

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### Interview Three

**Interviewee: ET**

**Employee Level : Administrative**

**Date and Time : Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 @ 21.10pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you applied?**

ET : When I started first I had just come back from the UK and I was given an opportunity to start in a brand new organisation. It gave me a chance to cut my teeth in a business environment I hadn't experienced before and it also gave me a huge amount of opportunity to develop as.....to have a chance to grow in a new area.

**MH : So what were you most happy about with your new contract and/or the position?**

ET : I would say....I mean, I started off on a minimum salary in respect of, I suppose, my peers within the organisation. What the job and the contract gave me was an opportunity to work within different areas within the organisation, to dip my toe into pretty much everything that was going on, to be involved in everything so I could understand how things worked and got the bigger picture to see where I would like to fit in eventually. Which did happen.

**MH : Was there any part of the role and/or the contract, i.e. elements within the contract, that didn't appeal to you?**

ET : *Long Pause.* The contract, I suppose, in respect of my contract of employment was very general, so in terms of that I was a jack of all trades and a master of none. So when it suited the powers that be, I ended up doing some of the not so pleasant roles on a regular basis. Due to no fault of my own, or the employer's, just due to necessity and business.

**MH : Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied within your job?**

ET : Not specifically but I would say it was a build up of issues over say a six to eight month period. Through relationships with other employees, through I suppose as well my immaturity at the time, but a combination of those two things it developed over I'd say a six to eight month period where I then began to feel very unsatisfied and very uncomfortable in my position and very unsure of myself.

**MH : So was there any specific event that led to the dissatisfaction or that maybe was the catalyst, that you can remember?**

ET : Two major drivers. One, I had to sit an exam called the Reg Rep which allowed me to become a Registered Representative of the Irish and London

Stock Exchanges. I sat that three times and on each time I missed a grade by one or two per cent. There's no one to blame for that other than myself and the fact that I didn't put in enough of an effort but the knock on effect of that was management's attitude and perception towards me changed rather rapidly and rather aggressively which left me in a position being very unsure of myself, unable to do very much in my role within the organisation so I felt for all intents and purposes completely isolated with no support structure around me.

**MH : And that came from management or peers?**

ET : Management yes, one hundred per cent.

**MH : So then if it was an issue that revolved around an exam that you needed, it was an industry exam?**

ET : Yes.

**MH : Did you feel that you got the resources, things like training? Was there any other support that you could have got, or did get, from the company, or did you feel it was lacking?**

ET : No I would say that from my peers in the organisation, I got as much training as I needed and if I asked questions I was given the answer. But I didn't, what I found personally, and this is a perception thing, but I found that specific individuals within the management structure had decided that they didn't feel that I was capable of taking on the role that they had initially assigned to me. So they made every attempt and effort to make sure that I felt as uncomfortable as possible and made sure that they didn't give me, not intentionally, the opportunity, because obviously that's not allowed, but made anything I needed or wanted to do as difficult as possible and made it as uncomfortable as possible for me. So I got to the stage where I just, I suppose, I threw my hat at it.

**MH : At the exam?**

ET : At the exam and also the job. What was enough was enough. I suppose hindsight is a wonderful thing. I was young, I was in my early 20s. If the same situation arose now, I'd obviously tackle it in a very different way and I'd have a very different approach both to the exam but also to the approach to management, in hindsight.

**MH : What would you look for management to do differently?**

ET : I'd look for more support, I'd also deal with the issue that I had with management or that management had with me, to get it out in the open and to address what the problem was. And clear the air and put it to bed instead of leaving it fester which is what happened.

**MH : So they gave you the necessary training to sit the exam but are you saying that your confidence was undermined once you were unsuccessful the first time. Or was it subsequently?**

ET : It started after the first one and it gradually increased. I would say the emotional and psychological support was not there but again I suppose, within the specific industry, it's frowned upon probably to show that type of emotional and psychological support. It wouldn't be deemed kind of appropriate because it's for all intents and purposes, a man's environment, so it's either ship up or shape out.

**MH : Were there further significant instances of dissatisfaction with your role, other issues that you can remember?**

ET : Yeh, I mean as part of, while I was in my training phase, I would have been, I worked have worked in a support function to the reception area. The organisation had at the time, for want of a better word, retention issues with reception staff. So on most days, not consecutive days, but a lot of days I spent a lot of time on reception. So my focus on work, on my specific tasks was continually fractured and continually broken to support a different area of the organisation.

**MH : You had no sense of what your actual job was?**

ET : No, I mean from one day to the next you didn't know.....like you knew where you were meant to be, but you never knew where you were actually going to be or what you were going to be doing or who you were going to be looking after or trying to keep happy.

**MH : Of the instances that you have talked about that caused you dissatisfaction, did any or more than one or all, cause you to consider leaving the company?**

ET : Well one which I haven't actually mentioned yet, but I had issue which I had with a manager/senior director where he verbally abused me for want of a better word in his office with the door open while I was meant to be minding the dealing desk. Fortunately none of the dealers were there or unfortunately, because there was no witness to the event, but that, for me was the straw that broke the camel's back.

**MH : How did it make you feel?**

ET : Belittled, humiliated, degraded

**MH : And was that the catalyst that caused you to consider leaving?**

ET : I wouldn't even say...like that signed, sealed and delivered it for me. I said that, for me, was a reaction that I felt was untenable for me. It made the working environment for me uncomfortable and at best, impossible. So, I suppose I was left with no option but to look elsewhere.

**MH : So I suppose the question is did the initial lack of support for the exams cause you to consider maybe leaving the company and if so, then what was the actual time that you decided to definitely leave? I think the incident you just talked about was when you said, 'that's it I'm out' ?**

ET : The build up was, I'd say two key things was, the sense of a lack of support from specific individuals and secondly, while having a job description which for all intents and purposes that being irrelevant because from one day to the next while you went in to carry out a particular function you never knew whether you were actually going to be doing that or not. To build a skill set or to try and create a skill set and develop your ability when you were being pulled from billy to jack on a very regular basis.

**MH : So there was no opportunity to develop your career as such?**

ET : It was, I mean from my perspective it felt very limited and very fractured. There was no focus and no set career development and career path. There was definitely if I'd finished and gotten those exams, no question about it. But taking those exams out of the equation there was no structure for me or no focus as to where I was or where I was going to or where I could have gone to. It was a case of that was the finish line and if you didn't get over that finish line it was pretty much gates closed.

**MH : Was there any element of you job and the contract that appeared to differ from what you expected when you signed and joined up?**

ET : No. I mean I know my contract initially when I started was to be a cover, a general dogsbody. I was going to be in a few different areas. As I progressed within the organisation I ended up working within a specific area but at the same time, I was always the fallback guy for different areas, so you were again, I mean the contract covered that in that you were a jack of all trades. So I moved from private clients, administration side to reception, corporate finance. So while I mean, yes in the first twelve to eighteen months, getting that experience across a wide variety of areas is great and it gives you a whole idea of how things work. Once you start forming an idea of what you want to do and where you want to be, that becomes a barrier to your progression. But it was used...I wouldn't say it was used but it was there and it was in the background that whenever I was needed, or whenever there was a need for somebody, I was that somebody, whether it be making tea or coffee, looking after reception, ordering paper etc, I was always that person. So it was constraining in that I went one step forward and was taking ten steps back at the same time.

**MH : What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

ET : My biggest disappointment would have been that the conversation/outburst that that senior director had towards me that particular day in his office.

**MH : And that wasn't resolved?**

ET : No.

**MH : What elements of working for the firm appealed to you most?**

ET : I suppose what attracted me most was that it was a new organisation into the area of stockbroking in Dublin and I'd never worked in that area before I'd

never been exposed to an environment like that before. So I suppose it was new, it was a challenge and it was interesting. That attracted me to it.

**MH :** **But what did you enjoy most while you were there? In terms of what did you get out of the firm most, what did you like?**

ET : I loved interacting with the clients it was interesting, it was fun, it was definitely challenging. I learnt a lot about myself through the years that I was there, the good points and the bad points. It's a difficult environment to work in its challenging, its pressurised, as I found out.

**MH :** **Were there any significant changes to your own personal life when you were working for the company?**

ET : No.

**MH :** **That's fine. ET, that concludes my questions, thank you very much!**

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## Interview Four

**Interviewee: OR**

**Employee Level : Administrative**

**Date and Time : Monday 23rd June 2011 @ 7.50pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you applied?**

OR : The company had a good reputation it was one of my first jobs out of college and the people seemed lovely and it just seemed like a nice atmosphere to work in.

**MH : So what were you most happy about with your new contract and/or the position?**

OR : It was my first permanent job in Dublin. It meant I got to stay here and to begin with I suppose it was just job security which was great and then I got to meet people afterwards.

**MH : Was there any part of the role or the contract that didn't appeal to you so anything in the contract or about the job that you weren't happy about?**

OR : No, I was probably too young to know better because I hadn't had loads of experience after college so it was all kind of new to me . In general it might have been a little bit intimidating but it was exciting to get into something.

**MH : It was a little bit what? (*I wasn't sure I heard the word correctly*).**

OR : A little bit intimidating at first I suppose, just the role because I had no experience like that before but it was exciting to think of starting off in a job like that.

**MH : Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your job, if in fact you became dissatisfied?**

OR : Occasionally when I was there very late at night working on things. You could be there till maybe ten o'clock at night and I would get quite tired and kind of wonder what I was doing.

**MH : Was this resolved? Did you bring it up with a manager and was it resolved or did it just continue?**

OR : No, it was a short term thing, like it wasn't, I was never unhappy for a length of time. It was resolved it was just a timely thing. I suppose the first time I was working late I didn't know if that was the way I'd be working continuously but I realised if you were working on a big project, you could work late for a week or two and then back to normality again.

**MH :** So was that something that would just happen throughout the job on different projects?

OR : Yes, and I realised then that it would be off and on so it wasn't going to be a permanent thing.

**MH :** So would you describe that as a specific event that cause the beginnings of dissatisfaction for you within the role?

OR : I would say no. I would that was very temporarily dissatisfied I wouldn't say that it made me generally dissatisfied within the role. It was just something I was concerned about, doing those hours.

**MH :** Okay. Were there any further instances of dissatisfaction, things that caused you unhappiness in the job?

OR : I don't think so. *Pauses.* Maybe when I changed jobs again. There's always periods of stress and periods maybe when there's a lot of work on and other people are stressed and that kind of rubs off on you so you get a bit dissatisfied but when things are resolved, I mean when it was good then you kind of forget about all the bad stressful times so it just kind of resolved itself. I think that's just normal in a job though things kind of have their ups and downs.

**MH :** So of any of the things that bothered you or caused you dissatisfaction, did any, or more than one, cause you to consider leaving the company?

OR : No.

**MH :** No?

OR : No.

**MH :** So was your actual decision to leave then based on a specific event?

OR : Being offered voluntary redundancy and just because I was studying and planning on making a career in a different industry it didn't make sense for me to stay on if I wanted to pursue it I needed to move away from that kind of work.

**MH :** So if you hadn't wanted to pursue a career in a different kind of industry do you think you would have stayed with the company?

OR : I mightn't have been as tempted by the voluntary redundancy. The redundancy package was tempting for someone who is young and for who the money would go quite a long way so if you didn't see a long term career in the company it's the choice that you have to make or that you should make. That's the way I looked at it.

**MH :** Was there any element of your job and/or contract that differed from when you signed the contract or joined up?

OR : No.

**MH : What was your biggest disappointment whilst working for the firm?**

OR : *Long Pause.* Biggest disappointment? I don't know. I suppose when I joined, everything was on a high, the company was in its prime, everything was brilliant and then obviously, after, the money wasn't there anymore. I wouldn't say that was a disappointment cause that's reality like.

**MH : What do you mean the money wasn't there anymore?**

OR : Just socially, there was so much going on when we started, like as a young person, there was always nights out and there was so much going on all the time. And then, I suppose that became less and less and then I suppose there wasn't the same buzz about the company either because people might have been a bit more disillusioned and mightn't have had the money either to be going out so often. So you mightn't have been socialising as much together.

**MH : Did you feel this money issue was because people had less money themselves or that the company gave less money towards social events?**

OR : I think people went to those sorts of events to be honest because they were paid for but, so, when there were less social events people weren't that likely to go drinking on a Friday up the road, because nobody had the money to be doing it. So I suppose if it wasn't paid for, it wasn't going to happen.

**MH : So are you saying that as the social element dissolved that your emotional attachment to the company lessened.**

OR : Yes.

**MH : Were there any significant changes to your personal life while working for the firm?**

OR : I bought an apartment and met a man! I suppose I was there for so long a lot happened!

**MH : I suppose we're talking about significant changes, so of any of these things, did any impact on your needs or expectations from the company?**

OR : Well the apartment definitely did because I needed stability, I needed to pay a mortgage and I needed that income to cover myself so I suppose I went from being a renter and not having any ties to Dublin, and actually the same I suppose about the man (*laughs*), you have more ties then because of the apartment and the person.

**MH : So you needed the money and stability. Were those expectations met by the company?**

OR : I think they were steadily met the whole way through. I mean we didn't need a lot of money to, you know what I mean, it always covered the mortgage, that's not an issue, so yes, they would have been met.

**OR :** Do you think that the company provided all the resources that you needed while you were doing your job?

**MH :** I think so because they always offered training if people wanted training or if you wanted to, say, progress within accounts or something. They always offered to let you do exams and to pay for your training so I think they did, definitely.

**MH :** So there was nothing that you felt was lacking?

**OR :** Nope. I think as far as I was concerned because, like I feel if I had wanted to progress in accounts or in a role like that then there was every opportunity to do that.

**MH :** Ok great. **OR, thank you very much.**

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## Interview Five

**Interviewee: JD**

**Employee Level : Administrative**

**Date and Time : Monday 23rd June 2011 @ 9pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you applied?**

JD : I was currently out of work and the temping agency I was with told me there was a job opportunity with the company and I just went for it.

**MH : Did you know anything about the company?**

JD : I knew nothing I was actually told that it was a secret, that I wasn't allowed know the company's name, that it was a very important company that wouldn't give out their name until I arrived. So I didn't know anything about the company (*laughs*).

**MH : Bizarre!**

JD : Yes!

**MH : What were you most happy about with your new contract and position?**

JD : Just that I had a job (*laughs*). No I suppose it was that even though stockbroking wasn't something I had worked in before and that it was a reception, it was new people, a new environment, something new to look forward to. And I'd been out of work for such a long time, so....

**MH : Was there any part of your role or contract at the start that did not appeal to you?**

JD : Well I didn't really aim in life to be a receptionist, as awful as that sounds, but I didn't. And I suppose it was never going to be a job that I would be 100% satisfied with because in my mind I'd always wanted to achieve other goals so it was literally to keep the money coming in the bank, as awful as that sounds.

**MH : Normally the next question is do you remember when you became dissatisfied in your job? But for you then, were you dissatisfied from the get-go then because it was a receptionist role?**

JD : Well I wouldn't say I was dissatisfied because I genuinely did enjoy the role that I was given because I was constantly interacting with people and I would be a people person. So, yeh, I'd be chatty. So I loved my day to day work, I loved liaising with all the staff, but as far as the role itself of being a receptionist, that's probably something that I would never be satisfied with. And then I moved to Corporate Finance as a PA to a director in that department. And that was something that I thought I'd like (*bursts out*)

*laughing*) too, but that was something I was probably dissatisfied with from the beginning as well (*laughs*). But that again, I think the year that was in it, I was finished college, I think I was out for a year, and I literally needed a job. I wanted the stability and from the receptionist I had nothing going and then I got this opportunity to have a job in the same building with the same people, with the same company where I was comfortable? And I was getting that opportunity to stay longer so why wouldn't I have taken it? So I was happy with my surroundings it was just the jobs that I was given weren't for me basically.

**MH :** **Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your at a more significant level?**

JD : Well when I started off, everything was new, so I was happy, I was learning new things. I wasn't very computer savvy if you will, so I definitely learned so much there in relation to Excel and Microsoft Word and Office and all that so that allowed me to learn. So even though I was on a different page, it was something I was learning and every day I was coming in and learning something new. And then I suppose maybe four to five months into the job things started to quieten down within the industry itself and within corporate finance. So the quieter it got, the less I was needed so there was a lot of waiting around. Especially in Corporate Finance it was know and famine or feast so you'd either be bombarded with work and you could be in there really really late or else you could go Monday to Friday with nothing to do. And that's when I started getting a bit intolerant of the position.

**MH :** **Was there any specific event that led to you being unhappy?**

JD : Yes well I suppose the company itself was, well it was the middle of the recession so it was getting a lot quieter and there was a lot less work, the morale in the office wasn't too good. So at the time, people didn't know if they were coming or going there was a lot of upset. I started to get really frustrated with myself and I wanted to start going down the path which I had always wanted to do which was in the media industry so I kind of started looking at this as an out. So I suppose when things started getting tough in the beginning of the recession, that's when I started to realise that I wasn't so happy.

**MH :** **And I presume those problems and your unhappiness in the company then weren't resolved for you?**

JD : I don't think anything the company could have done or offered could have made me want to still be there.

**MH :** **Why?**

JD : Because I did not want to be in the job that I was in. Or the industry. Corporate Finance, no. Stockbroking, no. And the only thing that was keeping me there was the fact that I had a salary into my bank account. But no, there's nothing the company could have offered me.

**MH :** So was it then, that when the recession kicked in and job security decreased, you thought that while before, you weren't happy but had job security, now you were unhappy and had no job security so you couldn't be bothered, as such?

JD : I suppose as I said, when I started off I hadn't had a permanent job in a long time. Job security allowed me to be happy, to meet new people, to go down an area that I didn't know. And then when suddenly the recession kicked off and there was issues within the company such as insecurity, it just started making me question everything. And with that and knowing that I could potentially be out on my ear, it made me re-analyse myself and go, okay, what do I want? And that's what made me realise, okay, nothing within this company is actually what I'm looking for.

**MH :** Did you ascribe the difficulties that were going on to the company and the management or to the economic environment?

JD : Oh the economic environment, definitely. In all honesty I think that the company, they were doing as much as they possibly could to try and salvage what was going on. But it being a stockbroking company, that was going to be one of the main industries that was going to be affected by the economic climate. So therefore, yeh, I think it was definitely more the economic climate.

**MH :** Do you feel the company personally let you down?

JD : Oh no, not a chance. If anything they gave me more of an opportunity than I would have got anywhere. No I 100% couldn't blame the company for anything.

**MH :** So what was your actual reason for leaving?

JD : I took voluntary redundancy when it was offered. Basically I ran at it (*laughs*) with open arms. Ran at it! An unbelievable offer came in the door. This is going to sound ridiculous but I almost feel like it was what I was sitting around waiting for although unbeknownst to me. Like I didn't realise that, but the redundancy opportunity was like the golden gates and I grabbed it.

**MH :** Do you think that you would have been close to leaving anyway if the voluntary redundancy opportunity hadn't of come up?

JD : It came up with a few colleagues now and again in work that I wasn't 100% happy. But then at the time there was nothing else out there so and I almost felt guilty for moaning about having a job because times were so tough and people would think you were lucky to have one and then I suppose this was just my hanging in there moment. One or two people had been speaking about the fact that voluntary redundancies could come about and I held on until I could possibly find out whether I was eligible for it and I was.

**MH :** So potentially if that hadn't come up, you might have stayed with the company and just plod along?

JD : Yes, I hate to think so but quite possibly. Because I don't think I would have got the opportunity that I did when I got that money to go back and do a Masters, which I did. So I quite possibly now could still be there, looking to try somehow to get into the media industry. Because when I went back to college, now that I'm within a television station, its purely because I went back to college and made connections and that's what got me in. So I wouldn't have made those connections if I'd stayed with the company.

**MH : Do you think that while you were working for the company that even though you didn't like that particular job, that the company contributed in any way to your career?**

JD : Yes, I definitely learnt a lot in relation to liaising with clients, 100%. Especially in a business environment, because although now I'm in an industry, well actually especially that I'm in the media industry, I'm liaising with clients all the time. And I'm also in production so that means I'm constantly, constantly, constantly talking to people, whether they are making the tea or own the company. So working for that company allowed me to learn from that because I was on the front desk and also because I was in Corporate Finance I was dealing with clients as well. And also, I knew very little about computers, Microsoft Excel, Quark, Microsoft Word, Office, all that. Cause I knew barely anything about that cause I went into to study film and media so I knew nothing about computers.

**MH : Do you think the company gave you all the resources you needed, maybe things like training whether it was internal or external?**

JD : Yes. Well I don't think I would have been able to go forward if I wasn't properly prepared in a company like a stockbroking company.

**MH : So you got al the training you needed?**

JD : Definitely yeh.

**MH : Was there any element of your contract or job which appeared to differ from what you expected when you joined or signed up?**

JD : No.

**MH : What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

JD : I don't have one. I have nothing but nice things to say about that company and the people in it. In all honesty.

**MH : What elements of working for the firm appealed to you most?**

JD : The people.

**MH : Is that everybody or would you separate management from your peers?**

JD : No it was absolutely everybody. Like management, the nicest people ever and so were the staff. It's a really warm environment and especially for an

environment that is so money driven and would probably be considered a very competitive environment. Everybody has their good days and bad days, but 99% of the time everyone is extremely pleasant to each other.

**MH :** **Were there any significant changes to your own personal life whilst working for the company?**

**JD :** No, not at all.

**MH :** **JD, thank you very much, that concludes the interview.**

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## Interview Six

**Interviewee: SP**

**Employee Level : Administrative**

**Date and Time : Monday 24th June 2011 @ 8pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you first applied?**

SP : When I first applied to the company I was interested in progressing my career. I knew a lot about the company because I was working in another stockbrokers at the time. I thought it sounded like a good, young, dynamic company to work for and I had heard very positive things about the company. I thought it would be a great place to work and progress my career.

**MH : What were you most happy about with your new contract and position?**

SP : I was happy with the role and that it was a small team. That attracted me to the role because I just liked that it would be a small compact kind of team and that everyone could be trained up on every aspect of the job. So they wouldn't have people just responsible for payments and someone else responsible for something else. So you know I liked that it was a small team and that we would all be sharing jobs as such. With the new contract I also was happy that I had moved on into the role that I was looking for. In my new position I was happy with the team size because it suited what I felt a department such as client services needed, small teams where people are well trained on every aspect of the job. I felt I could do that in the way it was set up in the new company.

**MH : Was there any part of the role or contract that did not appeal to you?**

SP : No.

**MH : Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied in your job?**

SP : I don't think I became overly dissatisfied within the job, I did enjoy the role I was in and I left the company through a voluntary redundancy programme. I wasn't overly unhappy during my time with the company.

**MH : So were there any specific events during your time working for the company that would have caused you dissatisfaction?**

SP : Yeh I do think that when, about two years before I left, there were some cuts to the benefits because of the economic circumstances. I felt that some of the cuts were unfair to say, the women in the company. Men weren't equally treated there, like they cut the maternity pay and it was the only the women that could suffer from that cut. So I felt, maybe I would have been dissatisfied with that. But other than that, no.

**MH : Was that the only cost cutting measure that really annoyed you?**

SP : Yes.

**MH : Did that feeling of dissatisfaction go away as you got used to the idea of the cut in maternity benefit or did it continue to sit with you?**

SP : I suppose it was something that I was...*(pauses)* , well yes it would have sat with me a little bit, yes because, it was only a small, a particular group within the company that suffered that cut. So the men, being the majority of the company, didn't lose that perk if you like. We all shared the loss of the other perks and that was fair. But the maternity benefit cut wasn't fair, in my opinion.

**MH : So there's no further significant instances of events that caused you dissatisfaction?**

SP : No.

**MH : Did the event that you have discussed cause you to consider leaving the company?**

SP : No.

**MH : So what was your actual reason for leaving, I think you glossed over it earlier.**

SP : My actual reason for leaving was literally the attractive voluntary redundancy package that was on offer and it suited me and my circumstances at the time because I was going on maternity leave.

**MH : So would it be fair to say that if there was no voluntary redundancy that you probably would have stayed with the company?**

SP : Probably yes.

**MH : And that's despite the issue with the maternity benefit cut?**

SP : Despite the other issue, yes I would have stayed yes.

**MH : Was there any element of your job and or contract that appeared to differ from what you expected when you joined or signed up?**

SP : Not really because, I suppose, well maybe, I'm trying to think *(long pause)*. Well I had come from client services in another stockbroker so I was really familiar with the daily, with what's involved in the job. So there was nothing that really differed a whole lot no.

**MH : And did you have all the resources that you needed to do your job? Was there anything that you felt was lacking?**

SP : The only thing that I would think that was lacking was maybe formal training, as in courses, like IT courses. But the resources within the company were very good. So whereas another company might send you on an Excel course, the resources in-house in the company, like the IT staff would have sat down with

me and explained to me how to do the thing in Excel. And would have gone beyond just telling me how to do it. So there was training there in the company, but I suppose at the end of the day you can't put that on your CV, that somebody sat down and explained something to you, from another department. So I suppose it would be a bit lacking in sending you on formal courses, to get officially trained.

**MH :** **So are you saying that the training issue didn't affect your job development but it would have looked better for your overall career if you had formal training to add to your CV?**

SP : Yes. And I think that if I had put that forward to my manager in the company that they would have been very open to sending me on formal training. So maybe that's my own fault. They would have probably had no problem sending me on a course if I had requested it. Its just that I would have had to identify where I needed to go on a course and put myself forward rather than there being standardised courses that people go on from time to time.

**MH :** **What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

SP : Maybe that I didn't put myself forward for different jobs that came up over the years, that I stuck at Client Services.

**MH :** **What would be your biggest disappointment in terms of the company's treatment of you?**

SP : *(Very long pause)*. Well maybe kind of the reverse of that, that they didn't put me forward for roles, that there was no kind of promotional, you know they didn't put me forward for roles that came up. Maybe something like that, that they were happy to leave me working in client services indefinitely.

**MH :** **What elements of working for the company appealed to you most?**

SP : Initially that it is a small company and that there was very informal structures. That really appealed to me that you were dealing directly with everybody really in the company, from receptionists to dealers to directors. There was no barriers. If you had a problem the person to sort it out was, well it if was one of the directors then most of the time you would just go directly to them and deal with them. The directors knew you and they knew your work and there was no rigid type of hierarchy. It was a very open environment to work in. It was very young and in the department it appealed to me that it was such a busy department and every day was different. I really enjoyed that, its what I liked about it.

**MH :** **Were there any significant changes to your own personal life while working for the firm?**

SP : Yes I got married and that would have been the biggest change while I was working there. Then I was pregnant, which brings me up to when I left the company.

**MH :** How did each of those events impact on your needs and/or expectations from the company?

SP : Well I suppose more so being pregnant impacted. I was more concerned about being in a secure job going forward and there was a lot of uncertainty then. While I was pregnant there was a lot of uncertainty in the company, so that would have impacted me because I was concerned about the future. So it wasn't a good combination, the uncertainty and being pregnant.

**MH :** So I suppose the next question is were those expectations and/or needs met. I guess you have discussed this a little already?

SP : No, well no, because I left.

**MH :** SP, thank you very much for your time, that concludes the interview.

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## Interview Seven

**Interviewee: CT**

**Employee Level : Professional**

**Date : Monday 27th June 2011 @ 6.15pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you first applied?**

CT : Originally it was that it was small. I had been doing interviews for larger companies that were saying that you would have to do your time here and it just seemed like that would be a very slow progression, a slow learning curve. Whereas I felt the smaller company you were almost just likely to be thrown in to see if you could sink or swim basically. So I would get more training and I got to be more client focussed early on. So I was pushed through at a faster rate rather than be one of a number of fifty where, at my rate, I was the only one so it was a lot more pressure but I was trained and I suppose the people took an interest in training me rather than training just a number of fifty people.

**MH : Before you actually started working for the company, but when you had signed the contract to join, what appealed to you at that point?**

CT : I suppose I did a bit of research on the company, they were all professional people, they had taken a chance it was a young start up company and that probably attracted me to it.

**MH : What were you most happy about with your new contract and position?**

CT : Well the pay wasn't great so I'd say what I was most happy about was the fact that people actually took an interest in developing me. It was made known to me from the start that if I actually stuck with it there was an actual progression and career path, rather than, well you have to start somewhere and you have to learn something. But they were teaching me with something in mind rather than just for the sake of teaching me.

**MH : Was there any part of the role or contract that didn't appeal to you?**

CT : Not really. If I think about it, it was pretty much what I was sold. It turned out to be what it was meant to be. Like anything, you have to learn stuff, I was pretty realistic about that. There's times you have to do different things like accounts payable and that kind of stuff.

**MH : I guess this question really relates to before you actually started working, so when you agreed to join and signed the contract, was there any element of the role or contract at that point that didn't appeal to you?**

CT : I was a bit shocked at how low my salary was. I suppose that was the boom time, or the start of the boom times. And I had come from working for myself. So probably the salary was the thing.

**MH :** Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied with your job and/or the company?

CT : I do. I became disillusioned because in certain roles I had to ask people for stuff. Like for example I was working in accounts so I had to ask people for receipts or I was asking for the percentage of the phone bill that staff had to pay. And in some cases these guys were on huge money and were paying very, very little towards their phone bills but yet were querying their phone bills. So I was asking for things like expenses and receipts and I wasn't getting it and there was this kind of reluctance to give me the information which was something I found out why when I progressed later. But yes, it was quite early on when I was asking people for stuff and never actually got it.

**MH :** So would you attribute that dissatisfaction to your peers?

I would say it was dissatisfaction with my peers rather than the role.

**MH :** Do you think that the company gave you the necessary resources to deal with this issue?

CT : No.

**MH :** What would have helped, what resources could have helped?

CT : I don't know how they could have helped. I think it was the environment that the firm was in, because in some ways, as I progressed, I kind of became them. Because you're influenced by what was round you so I'm not sure what the company could have done to have actually changed it. Probably sharpened up on the compliance side. Or had compliance have a bit more influence on it, but that's about it.

**MH :** There's nothing that the company could have specifically given you or done for you then to change it, is that what you're saying?

CT : No, no because I was looking for stuff that was off more senior people in the company so without someone more senior doing the role I don't they would have got it. So I don't think they could have done anything about it.

**MH :** Were the people that were doing this include senior management and directors?

CT : It included everybody. It was because it was done from the top and it was seen as insignificant. Maybe it was to them but to me it wasn't and it had to be done on a monthly basis. So it was from the very top. And I appreciate that they're busy or whatever they didn't see it as significant. But when you boil it down I had to have it done on a monthly basis, which in turn affected everything to do with them including their figures. But from the top down they didn't care about it so would someone below management care about it when their manager didn't care about it.

**MH :** **And did it annoy you because it made your job more difficult or because it conflicted with your personal set of values? Did it conflict with your moral code?**

CT : It made my working life difficult because I was still asked if jobs were complete and it may have been that things were 87% complete. But then if people wondered what was holding it up I'd go into my boss and he'd, there'd be a big email or something. And then I'd eventually get the information I'd requested but that, for two or three days....*(pauses)*. It was a very male dominated environment, very testosterone driven environment so when somebody got their wings clipped a little bit they kind of tended to turn around on you.

**MH :** **So are you saying that you didn't get the resources you needed really in that the culture of the organisation prevented you from getting what you needed and the reasons for that were really coming down from the top?**

CT : Yes, but I don't know what they could have done, rather than doing it themselves and sending it on as an example. I don't know what they could have given me though, I certainly couldn't have done anything. It was a culture thing more than anything else.

**MH :** **Normally my next question is was this issue resolved. But I'm assuming this just continued from what you're saying?**

CT : Oh it continued on and it continued when I moved on to another role in the firm. The same problems that I had were also the same or continued on for the new person who took over my role. It again was the culture thing and its something maybe has changed now as we look at costs more. Everything is so focussed on cost now that something like that wouldn't be allowed.

**MH :** **Were there any further events or issues that caused you dissatisfaction while working for the company?**

CT : Well as I progressed, I was happy with the progression of my career. Like everything else, every promotion that I got had its own set of problems that I wouldn't have been aware of looking at the job initially. As I progressed, I came under the wing initially of a senior manager who ended up taking complete advantage of me and my work. By the end of it I was doing 90% of the work but getting 2% of the pay.

**MH :** **You were doing 90% of his work?**

CT : Of his work. And getting 2% of the pay, as in commission.

**MH :** **What annoyed you more, that you were doing 90% of the work or that you were only getting 2% of the pay?**

CT : 2% of the pay.

**MH :** **So if you got the pay you would have been happy?**

CT : I understand that it's a learning process but I think it was the lack of acknowledgment by him, even rather than the pay. Because I knew the ultimate pay-off was that he was going to go soon and I would take his clients on and that was my ultimate goal. But the fact of the lack of acknowledgment and I think then I eventually left the firm and I had only taken four days holidays during the year. I think it was September and he had taken six weeks holidays and was taking the month of September off. I think what was killing me was the fact that I was looking after and cleaning up all his mistakes which unfortunately there was a lot of. His client base got so big in terms of revenue that he just let things slide and I was clearing that all up. And something as simple as him answering my phone to help me, when I was answering his phone on a consistent basis would have actually satisfied me and kept me going if it had looked like it was a team.

**MH : So the same effort wasn't going in from both of you?**

CT : No. As time went on his effort went down and my effort was increasing but I was getting no monetary value, no monetary increases. But even worse than that it wasn't even acknowledged that I was actually doing that work which was worse than the monetary element. Because I could see the end goal but there was no acknowledgement for the effort I was putting in.

**MH : Was your actual decision to leave then based on one specific reason or a multiple of reasons?**

CT : It was a combination. One was the situation that I just described. Two was the chance that I could move and substantially increase my pay for doing the same amount of work. Basically I only had to come with half the amount of revenue I was bringing in for the previous employer and still get the same amount of money in my pay cheque.

**MH : So if you brought in the same amount of revenue in the new job you got double the pay?**

CT : Yes. And I saw an opportunity to substantially increase my book of clients in the new company. Because those clients which were originally my team leader's book of clients, they were in all but name my clients. Eventually people weren't even looking for him they weren't even asking for my team leader they would look for me. So I saw an opportunity, that if I left I could take all these clients with me.

**MH : So do you think if you had stayed with the company and they had fulfilled your expectations on pay, but the acknowledgement still wasn't there on a day-to-day level, would you have stayed longer term?**

CT : I think the relationship had deteriorated so I don't think I could have. But if it had been caught in time? It was brought up a year before I actually left and nothing was done about it in that year, so when it came to the following year, I was like, well nothing has been done about it in the last year, despite numerous promises.

**MH : What specifically had you asked for?**

CT : A cut.

**MH : What's a cut?**

CT : A percentage of the revenue that I was generating.

**MH : For the other guy?**

CT : For the other guy. He had given me a 1% cut, which was very small compared to the figures that he was pulling in. And I understand that it was his revenue, but when I left, in order to entice me to stay, they immediately, without me even looking for it, offered me a 50% cut.

**MH : So the financial cut that you were originally looking for, are you saying that you associate that more with reward for effort as opposed to just wanting a pay rise?**

CT : It was more for the effort I was putting in, I wanted something to show for the effort I was putting in. I wasn't looking for anything substantial I was just looking for something that was fair.

**MH : But this had to be in monetary terms?**

CT : Well that's how our business was. Like the perks are great but the perks are always in monetary terms. So the biggest insult was that without me even trying to negotiate, a figure of a 50% cut was just put on the table when I handed in my notice, which just showed what was actually going on.

**MH : Do you mean that this money had been available to you all along?**

CT : That it had been available all along but they hadn't bothered to try and deal with the situation.

**MH : So if they had acknowledged you in a different way, you mentioned you didn't take holidays, the other guy didn't help you take calls, if they had given you support in a different way, such as cover to facilitate holidays, help answering the phone and things like that, could those things have overcome the money hurdle? Or was money just the bottom line for you?**

CT : No it wasn't just the bottom line, there were several things. I worked on a desk with fourteen to sixteen people, of which, on any given day, ten to twelve of them would be late. Now I don't really care whether they're late or not because I just care what I do. But eventually it started to affect what I did because I had to pick up the slack. We used to start at 8am and one day I had a meeting at 8.10 am and I had to go in to my director and say that I was the only one on the desk and my client was waiting ten minutes for me so could I leave. That kind of shows that people just weren't, that the operation was slowly failing and that the management was either too busy or didn't really care because the revenues were coming in. So management didn't realise the desk was actually failing. And when I say the desk I mean my division.

**MH : Failing in terms of?**

CT : Well in terms of the way that it was structured. We work on the basis that we keep our clients happy and unfortunately in our business, clients are transportable or moveable. You can make a mistake or a client may be dissatisfied with something and in an instant, they can become a client of another firm.

**MH : So was the division making a profit?**

CT : The division was making a profit but it could have been an awful lot more profit. And certainly we were losing clients to other firms on the basis that they felt we weren't taking care of their needs as much as we could have. To the point that clients were saying that they were ringing and not getting their broker or ringing in and nobody was answering the phones. Which is a classic example where there's fourteen or fifteen people working on a desk and at 8.10am when our business should be up and running there was only one person on that desk. And phones would be ringing and one person can only do so much. So that was one thing that did bother me. I'm not a babysitter like people can do whatever they want but.

**MH : So does that come back to management in terms of them not managing the structure of the division and who did what and when?**

CT : Yes. Like there were guys who would stroll in, when markets opened at 8 o'clock and they would stroll in at 9am. That's fine, but when it affects the performance of, or it affects your colleagues, then you have a problem. And nothing was ever done about it.

**MH : If you were to say in one quick sentence what your reason was for leaving the company, what would it be? As in the final nail in the coffin that made you decide to leave.**

CT : The deterioration of the relationship between myself and my manager.

**MH : If there was one thing that could have been changed to make you stay what would it have been?**

CT : That's a difficult one, because the relationship had deteriorated so badly that nothing could have fixed it. It became untenable between us to work there, one of us had to go and that was me.

**MH : Was there any element of the job and contract that appeared to differ from when you joined or signed up?**

CT : No and I tell you why because I started off in one place in the firm and I progressed very, very quickly. So in my initial contract and the way that the job was detailed to me it was very precise and very , very clear. But it was also given to me that, okay it's not a great role. But if you progress and you're hard working you can move on very, very quickly. So my initial role was exactly how they said it would be. Obviously when you go into a role you hit

complications that you would just be, like personalities or whatever that you could never really see. But the role was exactly what they said it would be. But I progressed quite quickly through the ranks so that was all a new learning curve that wasn't explained to me. Like they said there was a new role there, but there was no new contract signed or anything I just progressed through the firm.

**MH : What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm? What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?**

CT : I suppose the biggest disappointment was the deterioration of the relationship with my manager. It just couldn't be worked out after several times trying to work out. It just couldn't be worked out and then right at the very end a massive monetary compensation was thrown my way so that I wouldn't leave. Or at the very end, before I signed the contract with my new firm, a new role was said to be created to keep me with the old firm. So it took all of that, me leaving etc, for them to offer me inducements.

**MH : So are you saying that it was the case that by offering you a substantial pay rise and new role when you were leaving that it insulted you because of what went before?**

CT : It insulted me because of what went on the previous two years.

**MH : What element of working for the firm appealed to you most?**

CT : I liked the fact that I was effectively my own boss within the management structure. In terms of, you worked as hard or as little as you wanted and you were compensated on the basis of effort for your own clients. Now that obviously was different for me because I was working for somebody else's clients too. But for my own clients I liked the fact that the effort I put in was reciprocated.

**MH : So really you're saying that the deterioration in the relationship was because of the work you were doing for this other person?**

CT : Yes.

**MH : So the difficulty was with a peer, as in a colleague, but your manager didn't step in to resolve those differences?**

CT : Well I think the way things were was that people were making so much money at the time that, even though there was cracks appearing, they just didn't feel it was necessary to deal with them until they actually cracked.

**MH : So management didn't mediate when they should have done?**

CT : No, absolutely not.

**MH : Were there any significant changes to your own personal life while working for the firm?**

CT : Over the course of that time I had moved house several times. It was boom times and people were buying houses, moving on and upgrading and I was the same.

**MH : Did any change in your personal life affect your needs or expectations from the company?**

CT : No.

**MH : CT, thank you very much, that concludes the interview.**

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## Interview Eight

**Interviewee: SS**

**Employee Level : Professional**

**Date and Time: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 @ 1pm**

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**MH : What attracted you to working for the company when you first applied and signed up?**

SS : It was a new company, well it had only started up three years when I joined. It had a good reputation at that stage for being quite dynamic. They had a key director in every area such as IT, finance and research. It seemed like a young organisation, there were no new brokers in Dublin at the time. I knew the settlements manager and I felt it was a good opportunity to try and broaden my career.

**MH : What were you most happy about with your new contract and position?**

SS : I think the actual job role and description was what interested me about the role within the contract. It was a key element of it, the actual job description, who I'd be reporting to and the definition of the role. It was different to what I'd done previously and it was probably a move forward in my career. So that was the main element.

**MH : Was there any part of the role or contract that did not appeal to you?**

SS : I can't say that there was. The only thing, and this is perhaps less about the contract and more about apprehension about moving into a new company is taking on a new contract. But not within the contract itself, that I recall.

**MH : Do you remember when you first became dissatisfied within your role?**

SS : I was satisfied very early on. I became dissatisfied later on but at the very start it was a challenge. Another colleague of mine started at the same time as me, there had been a weaker team in existence prior to that so there was a bit of a gap. And it didn't take very much for us to have an impact we made an impact quite quickly. So by extension it was quite positive feedback from the dealers about what we were doing. There was good interaction with settlements, good interaction with finance and I have to say that from the very start it would have been quite positive.

**MH : So going back, do you remember when you first became dissatisfied with your role?**

SS : Well, then I progressed and I got an opportunity within another division in the company. It was actually probably a wrong move for me at the time. And I would have been disappointed with the support given to me in that role.

**MH :** In terms of what? By management?

SS : By management and also by the colleagues around me. So where I'd been told that people would help me to get into new companies, you know that didn't happen and I felt a little bit isolated in the role that I was given. And maybe the role had been mis-sold to me and so I would have been a little bit disillusioned. And then I moved back into a role within Compliance, having expressed my concerns and then I was satisfied again within my role.

**MH :** Until the end?

SS : Till the end more or less I would have to say. I mean there was definitely a bit of disengagement at one point, when there was a bit of uncertainty over the financial markets so there would have been a bit of uncertainty and difficult market conditions. But the actually physical role I was doing I would have been satisfied with.

**MH :** Were there any isolated, specific events that might have caused you unhappiness at any time?

SS : I think that one of the frustrations that I would have had would have been a lack of a formal review process. It was something that always caused me great frustration and I mentioned it on numerous occasions. It would have been like a bug-bear throughout the whole time with the company. Reviews were very ad hoc and annual awards were not necessarily connected to performance it was done on a discretionary basis. So there may have been a formal review annually, but I believe it should be quarterly and while it was annually there may not have always been a link to that and your remuneration. And I always felt that was a difficulty that I had.

**MH :** Of the instances that you have described, did any or more than one cause you to consider leaving the company at the time?

SS : I think definitely while I was in the role I disliked, I was disappointed with the support that I got and the role as it was sold to me. I definitely considered leaving then. Throughout the period afterwards, when I moved back into compliance, occasions that I would have been dissatisfied with was about interaction with management, delegation I thought was sometimes difficult, so you would have been keen to look around at times like that. So for example, my line manager didn't really feed back information to me about what was going on so I didn't feel that you could grow within the role. And I think to be fair that the markets were doing very well and so there were a lot of roles out there. So everybody was always thinking about moving on. One of the things that held people back were the fact that it was a generous company to work for, bonuses were generally quite good, there were share incentives, so I think the offer to leave would have had to have been a good one for a large part of my time with the company. So it would have had to have been a very attractive offer to leave because the financial rewards with the company were good.

**MH :** In the role that you didn't like and you felt was mis-sold to you, how was that resolved? Did you ask to move away from that role or did management approach you?

SS : No I had to ask and say to my line manager that I was very unhappy and it took a while for it to resolve itself. It took a series of meetings with different managers so I had to step up and say that I felt it wasn't the right role for me or even that there was an actual tangible role there. But it was finally resolved and a position came up in Compliance and I was given the opportunity to work there.

**MH :** In your main role that you talk about within the firm, the most significant role of Compliance, do you think you got the resources you needed to do the job?

SS : I think that its fair to say that it was a small organisation and with a small organisation you're always going to have to have self-starters. So you know, training and group stuff like training and development is more for a larger organisation. An awful lot of training that you get in the smaller organisation is, by extension, on-the-job training. So I think that I wouldn't criticise that. Within Compliance, there was quite a good strong support team. Feedback into the head of the department, a director, was very strong. We were working with finance for a long time, there was quite a large team you would have had feedback between settlement and clients services. So I would have said that the support within the role I was in was quite strong. When I then moved to head up the section I would have good support originally, until a company transition occurred last year. One of my colleagues moved to another section of the firm and that was a difficulty then because the workload increased and the resources decreased. But it was also a reduction in resources and a restructuring of the company, so you had to be cognisant of that.

**MH :** What then, was your actual reason for leaving the company?

SS : I would consider myself a good leaver. An opportunity presented itself to me. I wasn't necessarily looking but at the same time I was always looking. And I thought that when this opportunity came, my workload was quite heavy, the support wasn't as strong as it had been, so an opportunity came along to look and see whether I could actually learn more and develop more and do better financially. The opportunity, I thought, was one that was too good to turn down. So I would consider myself a good leaver, I would have less negative things to say about the company and more positive things to say about my career and where I saw myself going forward.

**MH :** So was the decision to leave a combination of a better financial opportunity and a better career opportunity?

SS : Yes and maybe a little bit of, being slightly disillusioned. Not disillusioned sorry that's the wrong word. Slightly disappointed maybe in the support that I got towards the end. Resources wise.

**MH :** Do you think that if you had received better support and your career had progressed in the way you wanted it to, but the money had been the same that you would have stayed with the company? Or was money a significant issue?

SS : The money wasn't a significant issue it was actually a career move. I felt that the position that I was in, reporting to the Regulator, without having the support there, inevitably things may go wrong. And also how much of it would have fallen on to my shoulders. So there was a risk there to my career in possibly staying. So moving somewhere else appeared to me to be an opportunity to progress my career without those risks attaching to it necessarily.

**MH :** So you felt you were shouldering a lot of responsibility without, perhaps, a safety net?

Well yes and that was not necessarily a bad thing. Certain people have certain requirements they run with it and do very well and I think I was doing that. The difficulty is that the workload was quite heavy, reporting to the regulator etc., that had I got a little more support it would have been helpful. I wouldn't say that's exclusively the reason for leaving. It was more about looking at the other opportunity that came up.

**MH :** Was there any element of your job, and in your case we'll talk about the Compliance role as that was the main role that appeared to differ from when you first signed up for it?

SS : No because I wouldn't have had a new contract for that role. One of the things that I should say and I probably should have asked for it, is that I never got new terms of references when I changed roles. Even when I took over the role to head up that department, my salary didn't change, which didn't make a difference, but there was never a change as to what my new roles and responsibilities were or what my new reporting lines were. There's one thing that I do think is important within an organisation. You know it doesn't necessarily have to be a formal document, but even by way of email or just so you know and understand what your new reporting lines are. So I had no different contract from when I first started.

**MH :** And did the actual role differ from what you expected?

SS : I wouldn't say significantly, but maybe just more pressure than I expected.

**MH :** What was your biggest disappointment while working for the firm?

SS : Not getting shares when there was a distribution round. And less from a financial point of view but there was kind of two distinct groups of employees there. And I think it was a difficulty for the firm to justify to the employees who weren't included as they may have been previously. So even though there may have been very good reasons for it, that wasn't communicated very well, so it had a very demoralising effect on people.

**MH :** So do you associate the share distribution with a level of importance and the company's value of your worth?

SS : Absolutely.

**MH :** What elements of working for the firm appealed to you most?

SS : Very good people. Very, very good people I would say some of the strongest staff that I've worked with. And even though so many changed, I think a lot of the people who've been there for a long time, you know, HR, the Chief Executive, Finance, Settlements. That's a very good thing to be said for a firm, low turnover of staff is very attractive. And also, despite the fact that the work was hard, there was some kind of an element of joy within it, you know, like the social element.

**MH :** Were there any significant changes to your own personal life while working for the firm?

SS : No.

**MH :** Thank you very much, SS, that concludes the interview.

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## **Appendix D – Personal Notes and Archival Research**

## **Personal Notes**

### **KK**

This employee was very enthusiastic upon joining the company. Was very sociable and got heavily involved in organizing social events for staff. Was promoted from administrative to a more professional level position. However, did not progress at this point and seemed to lose interest in the job and company. The employee complained that processes could be improved upon but said was not getting support and was being left to come up with own ideas. Interviewed for another particular position in-house and was turned down for it and seemed to switch off even more afterwards. Seemed to think that the company was not interested in career progression. Was particularly annoyed after an incident where the company did not pay fully for sick leave, even though it was an emergency appendix and was Christmas time. The company had actually a policy of not paying sick leave but made an exception and paid part sick leave in this instance. This was not enough to placate the employee and was regularly cited as the incident that broke the camel's back.

**THEMES : Social Element, Company Policies, Career Development, Sick Pay**

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### **CR**

Complained very little while employed. Thought very highly of and was respected and viewed as someone who could be depended on. Applied for a promotion and won the role, however reported being bored with the job soon after. Line manager tried to develop the role but it was constricted in its nature and so had limitations to where it

could go. Hence the issue of boredom was not solved entirely. Occasionally expressed dissatisfaction over money but also voiced awareness that the company was paying in line with competitors and the economic environment. Took voluntary redundancy when offered but the company would have liked the employee to stay. Not clear whether reason was influenced more by the desire to go travelling or by boredom with the job.

**THEMES : Career Development, Boredom, Salary**

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**ET**

Joined the firm as a general administrative assistant. Was given a wide variety of roles and had no list of set duties to begin with. Was given an opportunity to progress to a professional level role which necessitated holding a regulatory industry qualification. Failed the exam twice and was given warnings each time about the impossibility of being kept in the role should the qualification not be achieved. At times, did not appear entirely committed to the role and was often reprimanded for being late. This did not enhance the employee's reputation with management. Was viewed as not taking the role seriously and advised that perhaps he was in the wrong industry. The employee left having failed the exam twice and deciding he was not going to pass. Before this problem, the employee was very enthusiastic and despite having a person Friday type role, was very diligent and completed all tasks regardless of the taskmaster. Tardiness was always a problem however. Do not recall any complaints regarding money or benefits. Seemed to enjoy the social aspect of working for the firm enormously.

**THEMES : Lack of Job Focus, Career Development, Failed Exam (company expectation), Timekeeping, Social Element**

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**OR**

Employed at administrative level. A steady employee. who did not display any huge ambition but fulfilled the role satisfactorily. Very sociable employee, was always at the centre of any social occasion. Got heavily involved in the social committee and organized major company events. Did perhaps not get enough credit for this work and was only assessed for performance in actual job role, for which did not rise above the minimum requirements. Seemed to disengage from the role after a few years. Took up a course in an entirely different field and this perhaps became the focus. Seemed also to have issue with the company reducing it's funding towards social events when economic times became difficult. Had a very negative attitude towards necessary cost cutting and similarly, did not equate this to financial necessity. Expected a bonus every year, regardless of company or personal performance and viewed a bonus as a "right".

**THEMES : Social Element, Recognition, Change of Career Direction, Money/Benefits**

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**JD**

Extremely happy employee, despite the fact that it was well known that this employee had little to no interest in the job. Was hired as at administrative level and was promoted to more senior administrative level. Performed well despite it being obvious that the industry was of no interest and ambitions lay elsewhere. Did not engage socially with staff or attend staff functions. However, was popular with colleagues due to very pleasant disposition. When cost cutting took effect, the employee seemed to think that

this signaled the time to start looking around. It was no surprise when this employee left.

**THEMES : Disliked job, Transactional Contract, Didn't Socialise, Salary/Benefits**

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**SP**

A very diligent employee who was well respected and could be relied on. Had no major complaints about pay or benefits, even when cost cutting took place. This employee seemed to accept decisions made at management level, when they were understood and made sense. The employee was annoyed at some measures, such as removal of maternity leave pay, viewing this as unfair to women. This employee was also known for taking offence on occasion when he/she felt that someone was being disrespectful or abusive. It seems that fairness and respect would be high on this person's list of needs.

**THEMES : Inequity re Employee Rewards, Personal Dignity, Good Work Ethic**

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**CT**

This employee joined the company as a junior professional and moved up the ranks very quickly. Was viewed as intelligent and had good qualifications which allowed easy transfer between roles. Was sociable with peers and socialized outside of office hours with them. However, had some difficulty with particular colleagues and division arose in the final team this employee was placed in. The employee seemed to think there was unfair treatment in regards to pay and had issues with other staff and their timekeeping. Staff viewed the complaints as this employee behaving like their supervisor. It was also thought that the employee was getting a golden opportunity in being mentored by a

senior member of staff and was perhaps not appreciating it. The employee seemed to become more and more dissatisfied and time progressed, despite having being promoted more than once and having increased salary substantially.

**THEMES : Career Development, Social Element, Relationships with Colleagues, Inequity re Employee Rewards, Training & Development**

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SS

Viewed as a star of the company. This employee was highly respected and viewed as having one of the best work ethics ever seen. The employee was promoted several times and was viewed as someone who could be 100% relied on in any given role. The employee was completely loyal to the management team and would not have a bad word said about any of the senior directors. The employee constantly voiced admiration for the directors and demonstrated only support at all times. The employee voiced a personal disappointment to me after one particular promotion when no pay rise was given. The employee viewed this as taking advantage as the person holding the role previously held a higher salary. The employee was also annoyed about shares not received when they were being given out to certain employees. It was viewed by the employee as a sign of not being valued and it seemed to invoke disappointment at how his efforts were viewed, rather than a reflection of a desire for money or gain. This employee was seen as a “lifer” and it was a shock to management when notice was handed in. It was also a huge disappointment for the company to lose this person.

**THEMES : Good Work Ethic, Career Development, Loyalty, Trust, Salary for Effort, Inequity re Employee Rewards.**

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## Archival Research

#	Quote	Data Source	Interpretive memo
1	<b>KR</b>  could handle more volume of work	promotion interview	ambitious, willing to work hard to progress
2	<b>CR</b>  she needs to expand her career  I appreciate it is not company policy to review salary, however I feel that my job has changed considerably since I joined X last May  I have taken on more responsibilities and look forward to this being the case going forward  the only negative for me is my salary  CR wants to do the reg reps next time they are on  CR is wondering if we support her in studies (financially)	CV  email from CR  email from CR  email from CR  employee comment in staff review  email to Chief Exec from line manager	suggests ambition  dissatisfaction with salary and under-appreciation  ambition  dissatisfaction with salary  ambition, desire and need for formal training  ambition, desire and need for formal training
3	<b>ET</b>  ET requested a clearer job description	Review 2002	signifies confusion over job role

#	Quote	Data Source	Interpretive memo
4	OR		
	Interest in developing and expanding your role is noted	comment by line manager in review	suggests ambition
	Attendance and punctuality have declined somewhat	6 mth probation review	suggests disengagement – absenteeism factor
	OR is taking unpaid leave on the days below	email from line manager	wants more time out of work
5	JD <i>nothing</i>		
6	SP		
	I take great pride in my work	CV	takes personal pride in work

#	Quote	Data Source	Interpretive memo
7	CT		
	Focussed on pursuing a long-term career within the Financial Services industry	CV	ambition
	CT is frustrated with daily fx reconciliation.	commenting on others work in review	frustration with work processes and procedures
	CT had a lot of negative things to say and bottom line is that he has had enough	email from Fin Dir re Colin resignation	complete disengagement
	CT felt his health has deteriorated	file note re Colin resignation	perceives safety breached
	CT felt relationship with other members of team not what should be, feels no support		breakdown of social/peer worker relationships
	CT feels he is doing way more than others		perceives disproportion effort on his part
8	SS		
	SS was full of praise for his co-workers and his working environment	review 2004	good relationship with peers, appreciates good working environment
	SS has been offered an attractive role in a large international firm and it is an opportunity he feels he cannot let pass.	line manager email	ambitious

## **Appendix E – Sample Coding Process (from Interview One)**

INTERVIEW ONE									
Quote	Suggests interviewee thinks/feels	Key Idea	Social Exchange Code	Psychological Contract Code	Transactional /Relational	Herzberg Code	Motivator /Hygiene	Positive/Negative Comment	New Code
I was just pretty happy to have a job	Security important	Job security				Job Security	Hygiene	Positive	
At the start I liked it all	Expectations met in the beginning								
You didn't know where you stood with these people	Confusion re reporting hierarchy	Confusion re management				Supervision	Hygiene	Negative	
I became bored cause it wasn't challenging me	Wants interesting work, losing interest due to lack thereof	Boredom		Training/ Development	Relational	Work/ Responsibility /Growth	Motivator	Negative	Boredom
That annoyed me....sitting around...for a lot of it	Mentally bored	Boredom		Training/ Development	Relational	Work/ Responsibility /Growth	Motivator	Negative	Boredom
I would have thought...there was opportunities....for somebody to take you under their wing	Annoyed with missed opportunity for in-house training	Training/ Development		Training/ Development	Relational	Psychological Contract		Negative	

Quote	Suggests interviewee thinks/feels	Key Idea	Social Exchange Code	Psychological Contract Code	Transactional /Relational	Herzberg Code	Motivator /Hygiene	Positive/Negative Comment	New Code
The reason I made up my mind that I was going was...I wasn't paid sick leave	Values security of pay / disappointed with treatment by company while sick	Sick leave pay				Pay / Company Policies	Hygiene	Negative	
I wouldn't have a great sickness record	Takes responsibility for absenteeism issue								
I couldn't afford to pay my mortgage that month if I'd been out another week	Personal security undermined	Personal Needs/ Security		Money/ Benefits	Transactional	Personal Life/ Pay	Hygiene	Negative	
I would have thought that an emergency appendix would have qualified as....I lost faith in the guys	Break in trust / feels uncared for by management while seriously ill	Trust / Relationships		Loyalty	Relational	Pay / Company Policies/ Personal Life	Hygiene	Negative	Inequity between staff
We got the wage decreases...previous to that and that annoys everyone but it doesn't make you want to run out of the place	Short term annoyance with pay cut but accepts in time	Acceptance of cost cuts				Pay	Hygiene	Positive	

Quote	Suggests interviewee thinks/feels	Key Idea	Social Exchange Code	Psychological Contract Code	Transactional /Relational	Herzberg Code	Motivator/ Hygiene	Positive/ Negative Comment	New Code
I'd made savings and negotiated €2 grand off the bill and the total savings of not paying me....was less than two hundred quid	Effort not being rewarded appropriately / no trade off for finding savings for the company	Not rewarded for effort	Reward for effort/ reciprocation			Recognition	Motivator	Negative	