

**TEAM BUILDING EVENTS FOR STAFF:**  
**ARE THEY JUST PLAY OR DO THEY PAY?**

**An investigation into the evaluation of team building interventions.**

**By**

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## Executive Summary

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The author, a senior manager in a small, Scottish, business service sector organisation providing participatory events to commercial organisations presents the hypothesis that few organisations apply the concept of evaluation to determine benefits from team building events and activities. It is further suggested that inadequate evaluation and disparate published opinions on the potential benefits and potential outcomes of team building, as an organisational development (OD) intervention, have made the expenditure in this market vulnerable to economic downturn.

An extensive review of extant literature establishes a credible theoretical basis for team building interventions as a tool for OD but reveals problems and barriers to evaluation, which hamper its application. Frameworks for evaluation are critically analysed and suggested applications within the context of purpose are suggested.

Primary research centred on a sample population of central Scotland organisations (both public and private sector), proves the hypothesis, revealing that most organisations evaluate the benefits and outcomes of team building interventions at a superficial level. Analysis of the data reveals that organisations are concentrating on criteria such as participant reaction, the perceived quality of the event and the performance of the provider, rather than evaluating the more fundamental issues of change in participant behaviour and the subsequent impact on organisational performance.

The conclusions consider the competitive advantage and other benefits that may be gained by the author's, employing company through extending their service to assist clients in the evaluation team building events.

## Acknowledgements

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION AND HYPOTHESIS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Highlighting a problem.....	10
1.2 The link between expenditure on corporate events and economic down turn.....	10
1.3 Developments in the evaluation of HRD and OD.....	11
1.4 Scope, limitations and purpose of dissertation.....	12
1.5 Hypothesis.....	13
<b>2. THE MARKET.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Market Size UK.....	14
2.2 Market Size Scotland.....	15
2.3 Potential for growth.....	15
2.4 The activities.....	15
2.5 The clients.....	17
2.6 Summary and conclusions.....	17
<b>3. LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 An overview.....	19
3.2 Current thinking on employee development and OD.....	19
3.3 Team Building – Definitions, concepts and models.....	20
3.4 Establishing the basis for the credibility of team building...	21

3.5 The appropriateness of team building as an OD intervention.....	22
3.6 What can team building achieve?.....	23
3.7 Evaluating team building interventions.....	26
3.8 The purpose of evaluation.....	27
3.9 Implementing evaluation.....	30
3.10 Hamblin and Kirkpatrick’s frameworks of evaluation.....	30
3.11 Evaluating the elements of a development intervention..	33
3.12 Comparison of frameworks of evaluation.....	35
3.13 Barriers to evaluation.....	35
3.14 Team building research.....	36
3.15 Summary and conclusions from literature review.....	38
<b>4. PRIMARY RESEARCH – METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN.....</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1 Problem definition and research objectives.....	40
4.2 Developing the research plan.....	41
4.3 Selecting the sample.....	41
4.4 Survey method.....	42
4.5 Questionnaire design, dissemination and disclosure.....	44
<b>5. PRIMARY RESEARCH ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1 Questionnaire return rate.....	47
5.2 Potential sources of bias.....	47
5.3 Primary research data analysis.....	48
5.4 Questionnaire Part 1.....	48
5.5 Questionnaire Part 2.....	51
5.6 Questionnaire Part 3.....	55

5.7 Questionnaire Part 4.....	61
5.8 Unstructured interviews.....	65
5.9 Summary and conclusions of primary research analysis.....	67
<b>6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF INVESTIGATION.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Appendix A – Dyer’s team building checklist.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Appendix B – Questionnaire covering letter.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Appendix C – Team building event/activity questionnaire.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Appendix D – The Investors in people standard.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>86</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

1.1 UK Corporate Hospitality Expenditure.....	14
2.1 Clients by industrial sector.....	16
5.1 Numbers of respondents with IIP accreditation.....	49
5.2 Frequency and percentage of participation in team building event/activity.....	49
5.3 Frequency and percentage of reasons for organising team building events.....	51
5.4 Frequency and percentage of organisations setting objectives for team building events.....	52
5.5 Frequency and percentage of parties responsible for setting event objectives.....	53
5.6 Frequency and percentage of organisations communicating objectives to participants.....	54
5.7 Frequency and percentage of organisations communicating objectives to activity providers.....	54
5.8 Frequency and percentage of organisations evaluating team building events and activities.....	56
5.9 Frequency and percentage of reasons for organising team building events.....	57
5.10 Organisations' perceptions on the difficulty of evaluation	58
5.11 How organisations perceive the importance of evaluation.....	59
5.12 Organisations' rating of importance of the purposes of evaluation.....	60
5.13 Frequency and percentage of organisations' believing team building events produced benefits.....	61
5.14 Frequency and percentage of belief that team building events are useful OD tools.....	62
5.15 Frequency and percentage belief that activities benefit the organisation.....	62

5.16	Frequency and percentage of respondents on Appropriateness of events to organisational development..	63
5.17	Frequency and percentage of view that team building events are a waste of money.....	63
5.18	Frequency and percentage of respondents views on the possibility of evaluating events.....	64



## LIST OF FIGURES

2.1	Most popular styles for participatory activities.....	16
3.1	A model of employee development.....	20
3.2	Tuckman's stages of group development.....	24
3.3	The team performance curve.....	25
3.4	The systematic training cycle.....	27
3.5	Four overlapping purposes of evaluation.....	28
3.6	Chain of consequences for a training event.....	31
3.7	Different focuses of evaluation.....	33
4.1	Comparison of main data collection methods.....	43
5.1	Schematic representation of the trends identified in respondents' answers to the questionnaire.....	69

# 1. INTRODUCTION AND HYPOTHESIS

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## 1.1 Highlighting a Problem.

During the formulation of the 2002 marketing plan for Scotland's leading corporate event management company, Maximillion Events Limited, the major weakness identified through the SWOT analysis by the author, (a senior manager with this organisation), was the potential effect of a general downturn in the UK economy. An economic downturn would of course concern senior management of any small business services sector organisation, but the effect on organisations providing participatory events designed at employee development, primarily through team building interventions, has been historically severe. (Baxter, 2002).

## 1.2 The Link Between Expenditure on Corporate Events and Economic Downturn.

A section of Baxter's 2002 Market Survey of the Corporate Hospitality Industry, clearly identifies two main categories of event supplied by companies operating in this industry;

- events for organisation's clients
- events for organisation's employees.

(It is the latter category, which is the focus of this dissertation as 90-95% of Maximillion's sales are accounted for in events for client organisations' employees.) The report continues in describing how the economic down turn of the early 1990s affected this market:

*"As organisations had not measured the effectiveness of events, the budget was one of the first to be withdrawn at the early signs of economic downturn. At that time expenditure [on these events] became an acute barometer of economic*

*success for individual companies and business at large”*  
(Baxter, J., Ed., 2002)

Research into the broader concepts of training and development reveals a historically similar and direct relationship between general economic conditions and expenditure and investment in Organisational Development (OD) events and activities. It would appear however that whilst evaluation in the general field of OD has developed, such development in the specific field of team building is less apparent. This difference in the development and application of evaluation in consideration of team building events and activities is considered further below.

### **1.3 Developments in the Evaluation of HRD and OD.**

During the early 1990s when industrialised countries were in the grip of a severe recession, for the first time, retrenchment in the Human Resource Development (HRD) and OD sectors was not apparent. Indeed many leading companies asserted their belief, during this time, in training as the key to future competitiveness. (Easterby - Smith, 1994).

Many authors on the subject of training evaluation attribute this break in the link between expenditure on training and economic conditions, to a change in the significance and contribution that evaluation has made in this field (Bramley, 1996; Easterby-Smith, 1994; Harrison, 1997; Phillips, 1990; Reid and Barrington, 1997; Truelove, 1997 and Stewart 1999). Easterby-Smith, (1994) describes the changes in organisational emphasis on the conduct of evaluation;

*“During the early 1980s, evaluation was linked to demonstrating the value of the training function in order to justify its own continued existence to top managers, funders and other decision makers; in the mid-1980s there was interest in standardising organisational, evaluation procedures in order to maintain and develop what was already there; and in the 1990s, where the growth in provision is leading to greater internal competition, the emphasis is on different*

*providers demonstrating the quality and value of their services. Easterby –Smith, (op cit, p. 4).*

#### **1.4 Scope, Limitations and Purpose of Dissertation.**

This dissertation will focus on OD interventions (team building events and activities) as provided by corporate event management companies in Scotland, as this market segment is known intimately to the author. In doing so it will assess, through the review and consideration of existing academic literature the credibility of corporate events for staff as valid interventions in the process of organisational development. Analysis will also be made of methods, which currently exist in the evaluation of training programmes and other forms of organisational development in order to discover what tools and models may have application in this specific field. The analysis will extend to consider previous research in this field and the problems and barriers associated with the conduct and application of evaluation techniques.

The suggestion earlier in this introduction, based on the findings of leading academics in the field of evaluation, was that enhanced evaluation methods and their application reduced the vulnerability of budgets for training events and activities to economic downturn but that a similar link has not been visible with regard to the team building activities and events that may contribute to OD. As well as a comprehensive literature review, primary research will be presented and analysed to attempt to establish the extent to which expenditure and benefits associated with corporate events is being evaluated by a range of organisations in both the private and public sector. The result of the literature review and primary research will be used to consider the question:

“Are corporate events for staff just play, or do they pay?”

In addressing this question this dissertation will demonstrate a significant contribution to the research base through the presentation of original primary research. The conclusions from this research and review will allow Maximillion, the author’s employer, to review the existing service offered to client

organisations and augment this through an enhanced understanding of the concept, content and process of evaluation and its application within the targeted market sector.

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

It is the hypothesis of this dissertation that few organisations apply the concept of evaluation to determine benefits from team building events and activities.

## 2. THE MARKET

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### 2.1 Market Size – United Kingdom

A 1999 National Opinion Pole (NOP) survey identified the following expenditure on corporate events and this is shown in Table 1 below:

Type of Event	Value £ Million	%
Spectator Sports	471	62
Participatory & Other	91	12
Other Sports	122	16
Arts and Culture	38	5
Other	38	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1.1:** UK Corporate Hospitality Expenditure 2000. *Source: Corporate Hospitality 2002 Market Report, Keynote Publications*

As alluded to in the introduction, the total market for corporate events can be sub-divided into events for the entertainment of clients, and the extensive provision companies also make for their own staff, giving them an informal environment in which to meet, for the purpose of aiding the team-building process and providing staff incentives. (Baxter, J., Ed., 2002).

Whilst Table 1 above shows the size of the UK market for total expenditure on corporate hospitality there is no published source of how this is split between expenditure on events for clients and for staff. However, it is possible to estimate the size of the staff events market based on expenditure on the different types of event, as the vast majority of these tend to be of the participatory type. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the total UK market for corporate events for staff in 2000 was in the region of £91 million.

## **2.2 Market Size – Scotland**

Whilst the corporate event industry is primarily concentrated in the South East of England, reflecting the distribution of business and population, Scotland's unique geography and growing economy has led to a sizeable market north of the border. A search of companies using appropriate Standard Industrial Classification codes and advertisements in Yellow Pages identifies 25-30 companies based within Scotland offering corporate events for the staff of client organisations. To estimate the size of this market in financial terms, summation of turnover of these companies reveals a total market of £7-9million and this excludes an assessment of turnover that could be associated with events purchased exclusively for the entertainment of clients. (In Maximillion, events produced for the entertainment of clients account for 5-10% of turnover and this was used as reasonable assessment across the board.)

## **2.3 Potential for Growth**

Without using specific figures and in order to protect commercial sensitivity, Maximillion has witnessed growth in turnover averaging 20% year on year for the last 4 years without achieving a comparable increase in market share. The market sector has also witnessed many small new entrant suppliers, which together indicate strong market growth.

## **2.4 The Activities**

*“The diversity in team building interventions represents one of the major challenges to previous efforts to make sense of the research literature on team building”. Salas et al, (1999) p. 309.*

The sentiment of the above quotation is manifest in the range of activities requested by client organisations for the purpose of OD through team building. No single activity type stands out as being more popular than the others, for any specific client objective. It is the experience of the author that client organisations tend to select the activity style which they believe will best suit their objectives rather than stating their objectives and asking the question as to which activity might best suit their needs. Often the objectives stated by the

clients are nebulous and the suggestion is that application and potential benefits of team building are widely misunderstood. The most common types of events purchased for are shown below in Figure 2.1:

Most Popular Participatory Events		
Aerobatics	Archery	Business Games
Clay Pigeon Shooting	Family fun days	Driving
Game Shooting	Game Shows	Film Making
Highland Games	High Ropes	Its A Knockout
Indoor Team Building	Laser Clay Shooting	Lawn Games
Multi Activity	Off-road driving	Orienteering
Outdoor Team Building	Survival	Rallies
Sports	Whisky tasting	Treasure hunts

**Figure 2.1:** Most popular styles for participatory activities provided for staff of client organisations. *Source: From data (1990 - 2000) held by Maximillion Events Limited.*

Most of these activities are purchased and sold as having the potential to positively develop the teams and individuals participating, through the provision of a shared experience where team work is central to the completion of the activities involved. Such a description is very unscientific and it is an aim of the literature review that follows, to pursue a more academic approach in order to achieve a more rigorous and specific definition of what is actually being offered to the clients in terms of employee and organisational development. It follows that by doing so the claim that the activities provided have the potential to contribute to OD will also be considered and this is a central tenet to this dissertation.



## 2.5 The Clients

Table 2.1 below shows the percentage breakdown of organisations, by industrial sector, which purchased corporate events for their staff from Maximillion Events during the year 2001.

<b>Financial</b>	41.6%
<b>Business Services</b>	18.5%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	14.0%
<b>Oil and Gas</b>	9.6%
<b>IT&amp; Communication</b>	6.7%
<b>Public</b>	5.6%
<b>Property</b>	2.2%
<b>Pharmaceutical</b>	1.7%
<b><i>Total (rounded)</i></b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2.1** Clients by Industrial Sector. *Source: From data held by Maximillion Events Limited.*

This distribution of clients broadly follows the distribution of businesses in Scotland and demonstrates that no one industry dominates the demand for team building events and OD events offered by Maximillion.

## 2.6 Summary and Conclusions

There is a substantial investment in team building as an instrument for the purposes of OD by organisations in Scotland throughout the entire industry spectrum and current indications are that the market is growing (Patullo, ed. 2001). The range of activities bought is wide and varied and no significant trend can be identified from the data held by Maximillion. This leads to the notion that the concept of team building is widely misunderstood by client and supplier alike. If this assessment is accepted, there is perhaps an opportunity for Maximillion to gain competitive advantage over new entrants and existing

competitors, if the offer and potential benefits can be clearly defined to prospective client organisations. In order to develop this, a review of current literature is conducted in the next chapter.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

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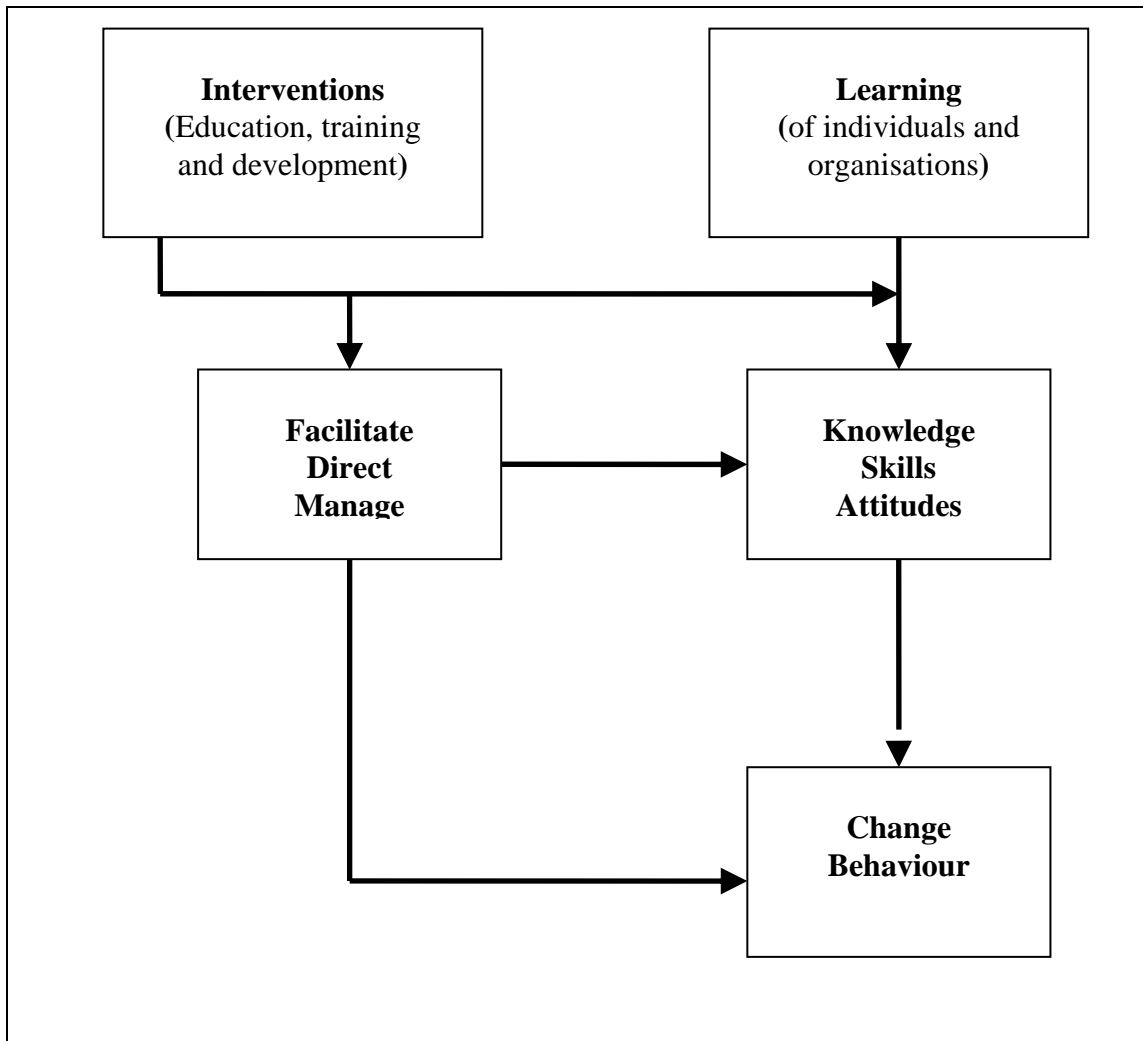
#### 3.1 An Overview

An extensive literature review was conducted to determine the current academic thinking in the areas judged to be critical to this dissertation. The initial search identified that the specific area of team building, through the medium of the activities referred to in the previous chapter, is poorly addressed in textbooks and journals. The few articles that did exist were mainly found in trade journals and perhaps expectedly, were superficial, general, biased and lacking in any degree of academic rigour. It was necessary therefore, to investigate more broadly and identify existing areas of study that could contribute to the purpose of this dissertation:

- Current thinking on employee development and OD.
- Establishing the basis for the credibility of team building.
- Concepts, content and processes of development interventions.

#### 3.2 Current Thinking on Employee Development and OD.

The literature review revealed that analysis and comment on the area of employee development and organisational development is not characterised by a set of terms used consistently to describe the same concept. The terms education, learning, training and development are used interchangeably (Reid and Barrington, 1999; Beardwell and Holden, 1994; Harrison, 1997 and Stewart 1999) and indeed Reid and Barrington (1999) refer to the '*moving dictionary*' and the requirement to resist standard definitions but to rely more on the context. Stewart (1999), however, draws similarities from different definitions of learning, training and development. He concludes that the debate over the meaning of these terms is '*futile and unproductive*' and that it is more important to recognise that they all relate to '*influencing the learning processes of individuals and organisations*' (Stewart, *op cit*, p18). His model of employee development (see figure. 3.1 below) shows the relationship of these different concepts in the overall goal of changing behaviour.



**Figure. 3.1** Towards a model of Employee Development (Source: Stewart, 1999)

The vagueness over definition and use of terms is extended to team building. As referred to in the previous chapter the concept and application are widely misunderstood and this will be the focus in the next section. Despite this, if it is accepted that team building is an intervention of whatever type, the model above indicates that its outcomes can lead to a change in behaviour.

### 3.3 Team building - Definitions, Concepts and Models

In reviewing the extant literature on team building it was felt necessary to try and seek definition of the term in order to accurately understand the concept,

content, and processes. As such three definitions are presented for consideration:

*“Team building is the process of helping a work group become more effective in accomplishing its tasks and in satisfying the needs of group members.”* (Huse, 1980, cited in De Meuse and Liebowitz, 1981, p. 358)

*“Team building is an intervention conducted in a work unit as an action to deal with a condition (or conditions) seen as needing improvement.”* (Dyer, 1977, p.41)

*“Team building is a process by which members of a group diagnose how they work together and plan changes which will improve their effectiveness.”* (Beer, 1980, p. 140)

The ambiguity of these conceptual definitions highlights the fact that team building represents a different concept for different people. However there is agreement that team building is a process aimed at improving the performance of a group. As such it is a widely used intervention based on well-established socio-psychological concepts (e.g. Argyris and Schon, 1978; Kolb, 1984), that have been developed within the business context.

### **3.4 Establishing the Basis for the Credibility of Team Building**

In his seminal work, Dyer (1977) traces roots of team building, as a concept for organisational and employee development, back to the 1920's and studies conducted in the fields of group dynamics and laboratory education (Hawthorne Studies). He cites the work of McGregor (1960) and Likert (1961) in identifying the characteristics of effective teams as providing the foundations for more contemporary development in this area. Dyer, (*op cit*), suggests that through an awareness of the characteristics of effective teams and an examination of group processes, behaviour within teams could be changed to enhance the

performance of a team. Also in this work, Dyer (*op cit*) specifically mentions five applications for team building interventions aimed at enhancing the performance teams and ultimately the organisation:

- Developing new teams.
- Facilitating change in teams in response to a changing environment.
- Developing trust, honesty and supportiveness within teams.
- Reducing inter team conflict.
- Revitalising complacent teams.

He does warn however:

*'Before any organisational unit begins a team development programme a systematic assessment as to the conditions that need improvement and the appropriateness of team building as the change method is essential.'*

*Dyer, 1977, p. 27.*

He offers a checklist that allows for organisations to conduct an analysis to assess the appropriateness of a team building intervention and this is reproduced as Appendix A to this dissertation.

### **3.5 The Appropriateness of Team Building as an OD Intervention.**

The concept of appropriateness or otherwise of teams within specific organisational context has been a popular area of research. (Woodcock, 1989; Hackman, 1990; Katzenbach and Smith, 1993a; Sandberg, 1995; Wickens, 1995.) These texts indicate that where team building has been successful it would appear that the appropriate conditions as espoused by Dyer (*op cit*) were present. The circumstances in which team building has been unsuccessful and as such an inappropriate intervention for OD are characterised by resistance to the change by management or the individuals, or that the task to be completed was not best served by teams (Hackman, *op cit*). Critchley and Casey's (1984)

research into teams, at a senior level in British industry, concluded that teams were not always necessary and may have represented an expensive solution to a simple problem.

### **3.6 What can Team Building Achieve**

Views in this area are subject to tremendous diversity from Shandler and Egan's claim that by applying team building;

*"any group can transform itself into a high performing team"*

Shandler and Egan (1996) p. x.

to the view of Salas *et al*, who in summarising their research into the effects of team building on performance state;

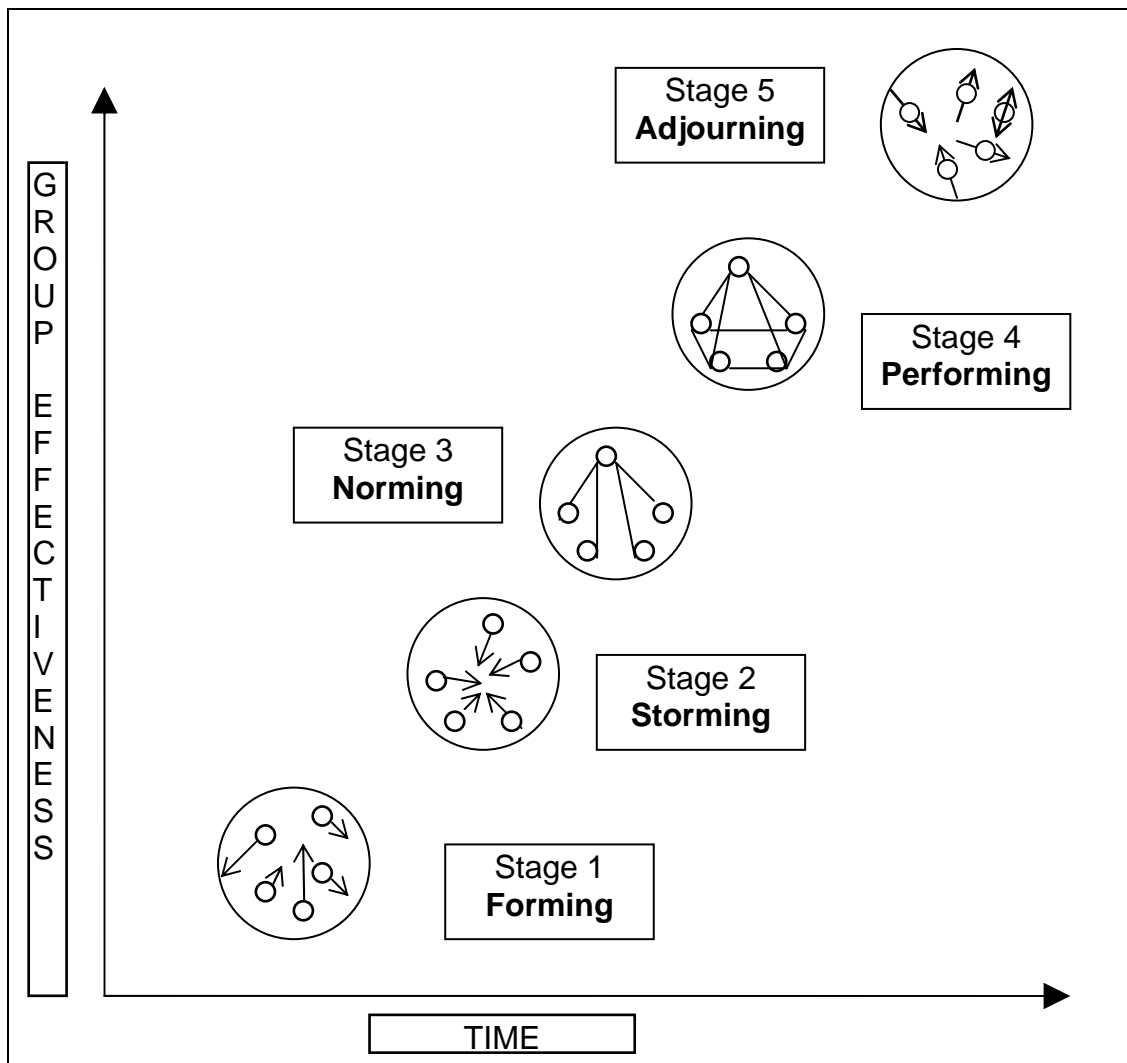
*"Overall there was no significant effect of team building on performance."*

Salas et al (1999) p. 309.

Overall whilst opinion is split, the majority of writers considered in this literature review conclude that there is a positive and demonstrable benefit from participation in team building and development interventions.

The work of Tuckman and Jensen (1977) is widely used as justification for the use of team building (Ibbetson and Newell 1998 and Maznay *et al* 1995). Their work in this area explores the growth of teams in terms of their effectiveness as a development process. (See figure 3.2 below.)

Tuckman and Jensen (1977) describe five distinct stages of development that can be clearly defined by observation of the behaviour of individuals within that group.



**Figure 3.2 Tuckman's Stages of Group Development.** Source: Based on Tuckman and Jensen, 1977.

Katzenbach and Smith (1993b), develop thought in this area through their model of the team performance curve (see fig 3.3 below). They define teams as follows:

**Working group:** Individuals interact to share information but there is no requirement to work together to achieve performance goals.

**Pseudo-Team:** These are teams in name only, who could benefit greatly from closer association and shared development. Attempts at co-

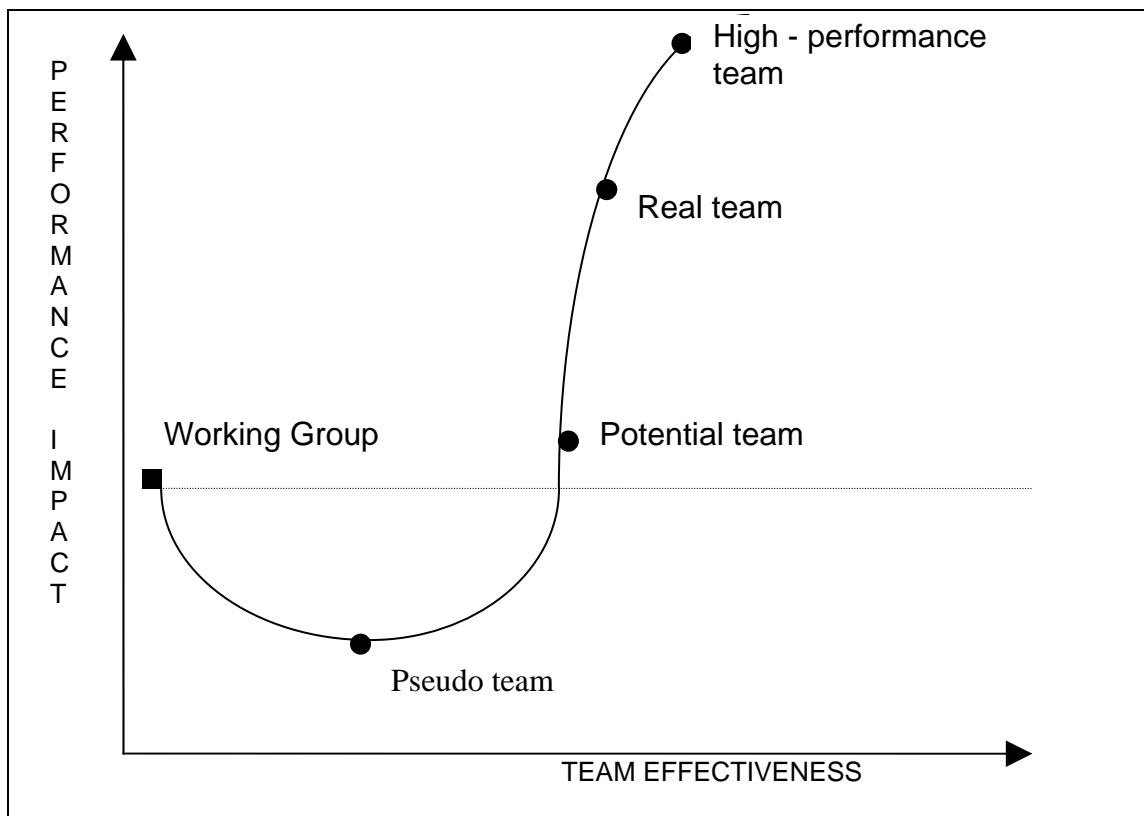


ordination of effort are viewed as distractions to individual goals that as a result, reduce the efficiency of the team.

**Potential Team:** These teams recognise the importance of their joint effort to achieving goals and are genuinely attempting to improve performance. If problems are overcome they will develop but if not, they may regress to pseudo-teams.

**Real teams:** These teams are committed to common purposes and goals.

**High Performance Teams:** These teams meet all the requirements of real teams and in addition show commitment to the personal growth of members.



**Figure 3.3 The team performance curve.** Source: Katzenbach and Smith (1993b)

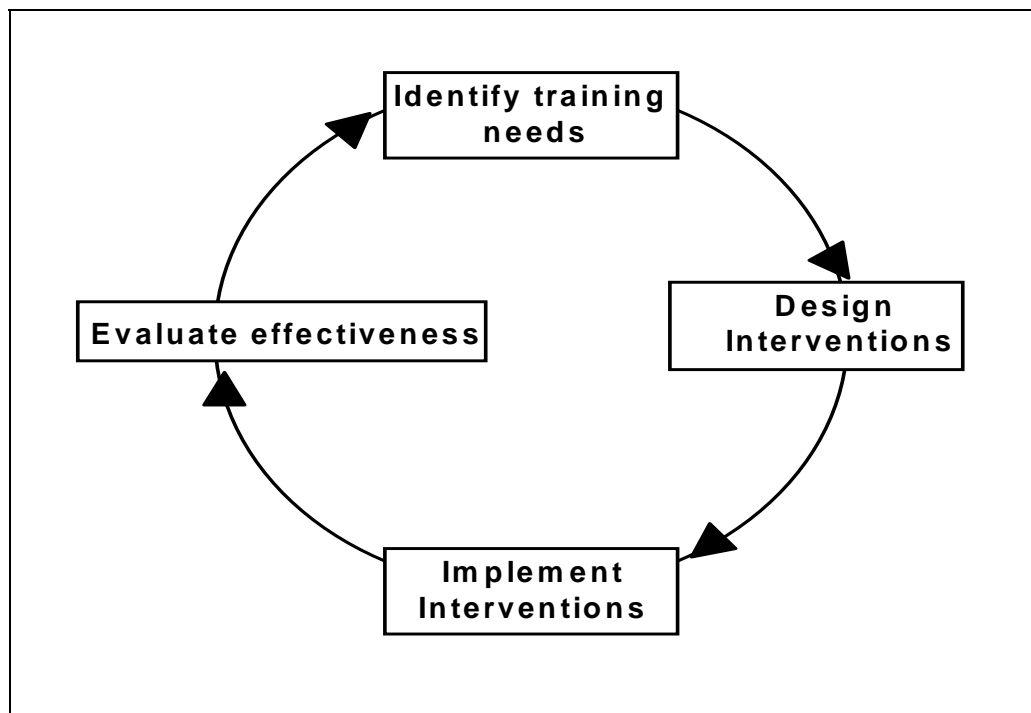
This model is useful in assisting organisations in deciding if the level of team building required is appropriate to the context in which it is being considered. It is particularly useful when questioning whether it is necessary to invest in developing a group to become a high performing team when the task in which they are involved requires minimal interaction in order to achieve satisfactory results.

Much of the research literature indicates that the concept of team building is potentially, a powerful intervention for enhancing organisational performance through employee development if the circumstances of the specific team and organisational context are appropriate. (Dyer, 1977; Beer, 1976; De Meuse and Liebowitz, 1980; Adair, 1986; Woodcock 1989). The extent to which this potential has been converted into measurable improvement in organisational performance has been subject to much review and the findings differ remarkably. Studies in this area will be considered in more detail later in this literature review. Prior to that concepts and frameworks associated with the measurement of the effectiveness of training interventions will be considered.

### **3.7 Evaluating Team Building Interventions**

The literature review in this area identified only seven relatively contemporary textbooks on the subject of evaluating training. (Bramley, 1996; Easterby - Smith, 1994; Phillips, 1990; Jackson, 1989; Kirkpatrick, 1976; Hamblin, 1974, Warr *et al*, 1974.) Two of these, Warr *et al* and Easterby-Smith more specifically; address the subject of evaluating management development training. Despite this specialisation these texts were considered to be a source of valid contribution to the investigation of team building, as the concepts and tools discussed therein are common to and have application in training as a more general concept. There are however, many peer reviewed journal articles that refer to instruments of evaluation as specifically applicable to team building and these are heavily drawn upon in this review. In addition to these sources of specific review, many of the more general texts on training and development pay considerable notice to the role of evaluation as part of the systematic

training cycle as described by Stewart (1999) and reproduced in Figure 3.4 below:



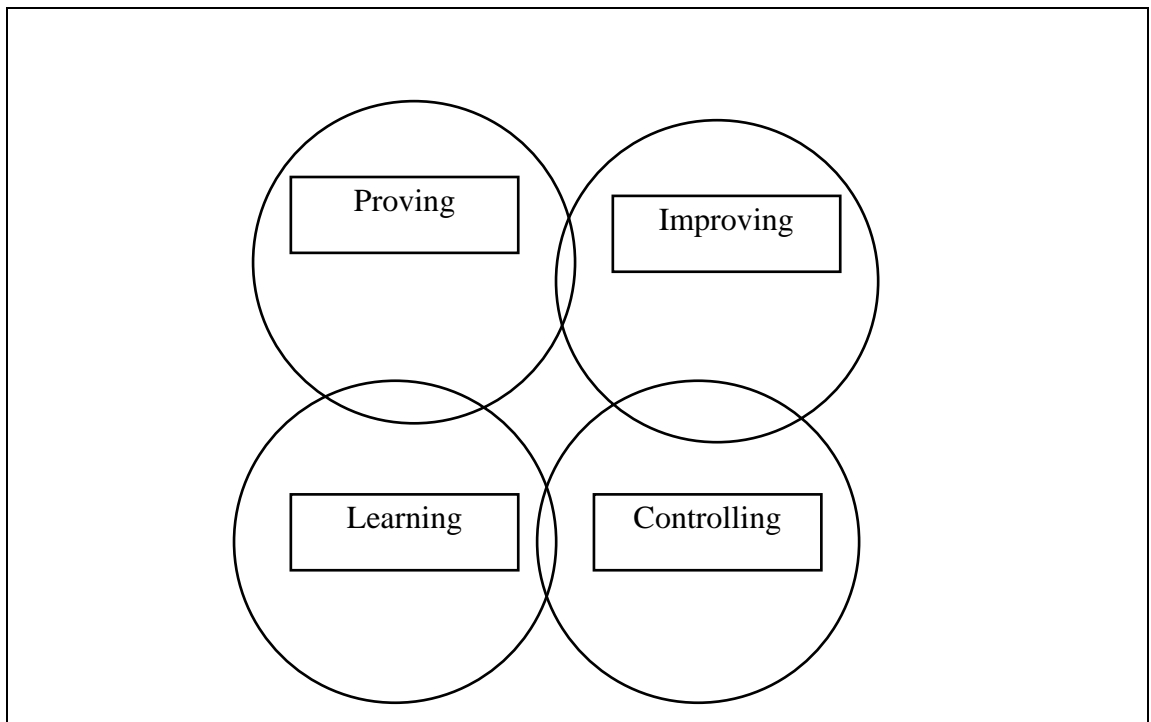
**Figure 3.4 The Systematic Training Cycle.** Source: Stewart (1999), p. 135.

The model presented above can be subject to misinterpretation as has been suggested in much of the literature. (Stewart, 1999; Harrison, 1997 and Sanderson, 1995.) The model shows evaluation as the final part of the cycle and as such can be interpreted to occur after the other the previous stages. By making such an assumption, the view that evaluation should be planned for separately and following the other stages of the cycle may be reached and this completely misses the point. The cycle represents an integrated approach to employee development and as such evaluation should be considered and planned for at all of the other stages in order for development to be effective. It is therefore a very important iterative element of the cycle.

### **3.8 The Purposes of Evaluation**

A review of the literature in this area reveals a degree of consistency as to what is considered to be the primary aims for evaluation. Sanderson (1995)

suggests eight specific purposes, including those to determine whether the training objectives were met and to improve the performance of those delivering the training. Phillip's list (1990) also contains eight specific purposes and places emphasis on determining the cost/benefit ratio of the training and determining the appropriateness of the programme. Easterby-Smith (1994) suggests four, more general purposes and suggests that there is overlap between these purposes and this is represented below in Figure 3.5. Despite the fact that Easterby-Smith's (*op cit*) work was primarily studying the evaluation of management development, his framework is useful in exploring the more general concept of purpose of evaluation further.



**Figure 3.5 Four Overlapping Purposes of Evaluation** (Adapted from Easterby-Smith (1994, p. 15).

The first purpose he suggests is *proving* the value of investing in employee development by demonstrating that the benefits gained have a greater value than the costs associated in providing the development activity. It is widely recognised that whilst the costs of the development intervention are likely to be expressed in monetary terms, benefits do not necessarily have to be expressed

as such since many of the benefits will be intangible. Rowden, (2001) however recognises the pressure which exists on proving value in monetary terms:

*“..increasing global competition has led to extreme pressure to demonstrate that programs are directly contributing to the ‘bottom line’ of the organisation.”* (Rowden, 2001 p. 6)

The next purpose of evaluation in Easterby-Smith’s (*op cit*) framework is *improving*. This differs from *proving* in that it may be described as a summative evaluation whereas *improving is best described* as formative evaluation, in so much as it is concerned with identifying elements of the training intervention where revision is desirable. Hamblin, (1974) and Warr *et al* (1974) suggest that this might be the primary purpose of evaluation.

*“The results [of evaluation] have no intrinsic importance on their own; they become valuable only if they are used as a means of improving the quality of later training”.* (Warr, Bird and Rackham, 1974, p.18)

The third purpose of evaluation espoused by Easterby-Smith (*op cit*), *learning*, is less often considered by other writers. Reid and Barrington (1997), argue, the theory of reflecting on performance represented in the learning cycle is intrinsic to effective learning and this is very much in keeping with Kolb’s (1983) theory of experiential learning. This implies that the subjects of the development must be instrumental in the evaluation, both in determining what is to be done and how it is to be done. The practical implications of this perhaps make this a less reported purpose of evaluation.

Easterby-Smith’s fourth suggested purpose is that of *control*. This is perhaps most likely to be the purpose of those who appoint the event providers and who intend to use evaluation as a mechanism for managing the implementation of an OD strategy.

Stewart (1999), suggests an alternative fourth purpose of evaluation and as it has considerable implication for Maximillion it is considered here. He suggests

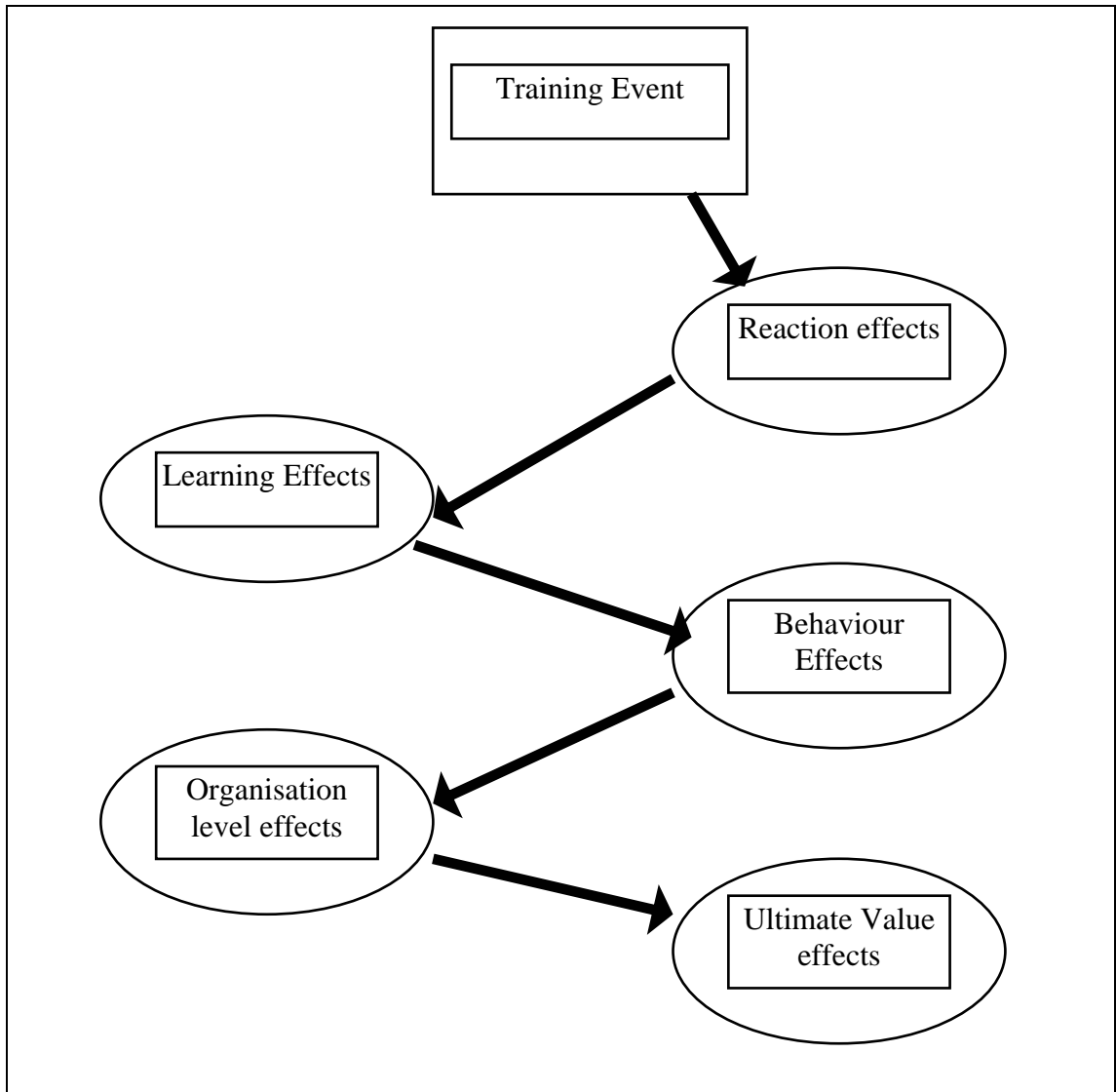
*promoting* as a key purpose of evaluation and a particularly legitimate purpose with regard to providers of employee development interventions. It is perhaps implicit in the three primary purposes discussed above but given less profile in academic studies by those who may display cynicism at the commercial applications of such a purpose.

### **3.9 Implementing Evaluation**

The literature presents several frameworks for conducting evaluation and there is a great degree of similarity between them all. This review centres on the most commonly cited models as much of the research and studies into the evaluation of team building have their basis in these models either implicitly or explicitly.

### **3.10 Hamblin and Kirkpatrick's Frameworks for Evaluation**

Hamblin's (1974) framework has close similarity to that of Kirkpatrick's (1976), in that it suggests that a multi-level framework is useful in the evaluation of employee development. In Hamblin's model it is argued that the five levels of evaluation reflect a causal chain of consequences for a training event and that outcomes at each level can be measured. This causal chain as espoused by Kirkpatrick in keeping with his framework and is represented in Figure 3.6 below.



**Figure 3.6 'Chain of consequences' for a training event.** (Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith, 1994, p. 33)

In Hamblin's model, evaluation is concerned with establishing the 'effects' of the employee development training event and it is suggested that effects at a lower level cause effects in a higher level. (Stewart, 1999).

The reaction level in the model focuses on the experience of those subjected to the development and their reactions to the experience. The learning level again focuses on the individual but this time the evaluation is concerned with assessing the nature and extent of any learning that has occurred as a result of the event. The next level, behaviour effects, again looks at the individual and

attempts to establish the extent to which a change in job behaviour has occurred. Behaviour in this sense is distinct from performance in that a behavioural change may constitute a different approach to a job without directly affecting performance.

The next level of evaluation changes from the perspective of the individual to that of the organisation and from an evaluation of behavioural change to that of performance. At this level change in output is the concern of the evaluation and as such represents the first level at which quantifiable evaluation of the cost of inputs to the resultant benefit can be made due to its focus on the measurement of a tangible output or outputs.

Finally at the ultimate level, the evaluation framework focuses on the extent to which any change impacts on organisational objectives and goals. Measures could include organisational improvements in quality or sales or in positive results, in measures such as absenteeism or staff turnover.

This framework suggests, by implication, methods of evaluating at each of the different levels. It also suggests that the timing of evaluation is affected by the level being considered. Absolute timings are impossible to discern but it is obvious that it is possible to evaluate at the reaction level before it would be possible to conduct meaningful evaluation at the organisational level.

Hamblin's framework is contested on the grounds of the simplistic assumptions that form the basis of cause and effect relationship by writers such as Easterby - Smith, 1994; Bramley, 1996 and Warr *et al*, 1974. Whilst they accept, to an extent, the connection between developmental activities and individual, and organisational behaviour and performance, they argue that the complexity of these relationships and the isolation of causal links is complex and problematic (Stewart, 1999).

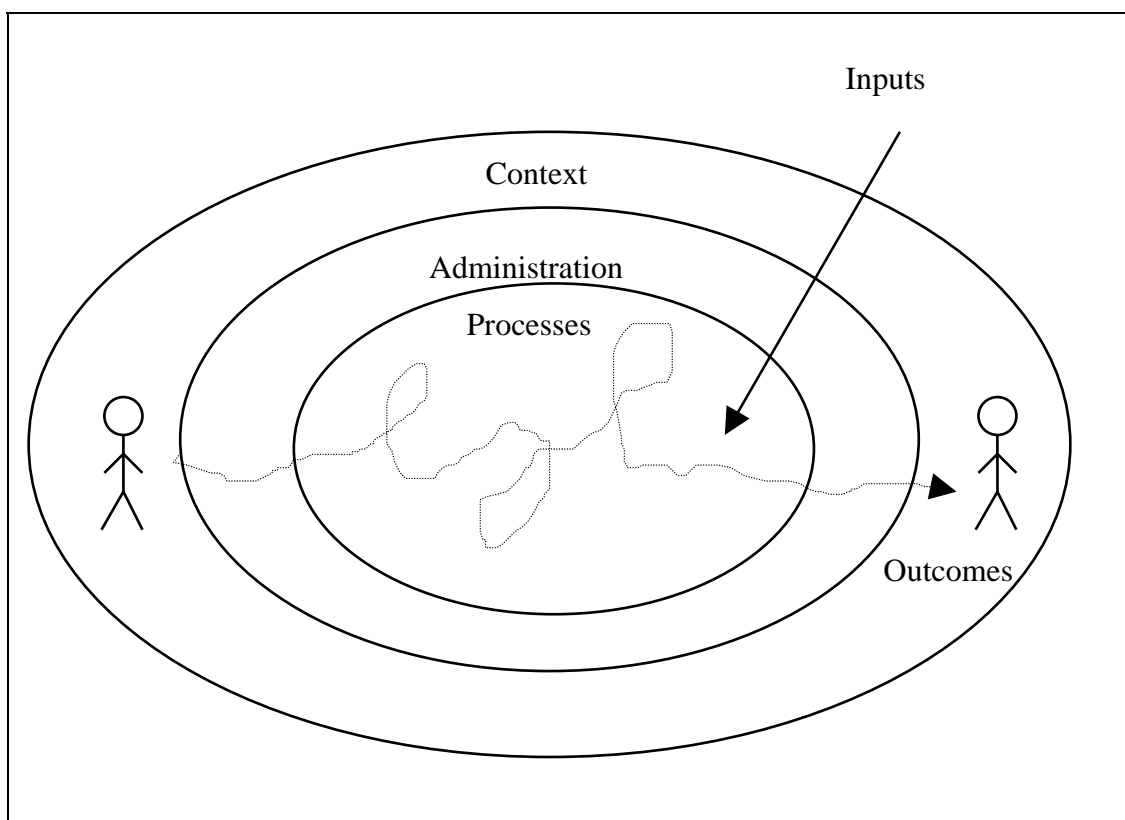
### **3.11 Evaluating the Elements of a Developmental Intervention.**



In recognition of this, the framework suggested by Easterby-Smith (1994) provides for the evaluation of the different elements of a training event in a more independent way.

*“The....framework is intended to distinguish those aspects of an event, each of which may be the main purpose for the evaluation” (Easterby-Smith, 1994, p.46)*

The five elements of his framework are shown below in Figure 3.7.



**Figure 3.7 Different Focuses of Evaluation** Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith, (1990), p. 47.

A description of the elements of Easterby-Smith's framework of evaluation illustrates more fully how this framework can be applied:

- **Context** - This refers to the circumstance out-with the event itself. This could refer to the establishment of the need for the event and the objectives that should therefore be set. It also leads to consideration of the organisation from where those participating in the event originate and how cultures and values therein may affect the event itself.
- **Administration** - This prompts consideration of all the organisation required in support of the event both pre and post. It includes such things as what the participants may be told about the event prior to their attendance and the mechanics of any evaluation that may be made afterwards.
- **Inputs** - This focuses on the content and methods used within the event and the actions of the provider. It forces the questioning of what activities should be used or excluded and whether what was asked for, in terms of the event itself, was delivered.
- **Process** - This is distinct from inputs as it considers not what was done in terms of activities but what was actually experienced. It gives emphasis to how those attending the training event related to what was being experienced in terms of learning and development. It concentrates on the emotional level of engagement with the training activities.
- **Outcomes** - It is perhaps this element which really emphasises the different philosophy behind this framework and those which focus on the causal relationships between and event and outcome. Easterby - Smith suggests that there may be outcomes, which are not visible in behavioural changes but may be present as potential. By following this theory it is possible to determine an outcome for the training event even if the opportunity for whatever circumstances has not been present to demonstrate it.

### 3.12 Comparison of Frameworks for Evaluation

It is clear that the two frameworks analysed in this review serve the different purposes of evaluation in different ways. The 'systems' framework of Hamblin appears to suit the purpose of *proving* to a greater extent than Easterby - Smiths 'constructivist' framework, which appears to give greater emphasis to evaluation for the purposes of 'improving' and 'learning'.

### 3.13 Barriers to Evaluation

A review of the extant literature on training and development whether it be in the specific field of team building, management development or outdoor development, reveals a consensus as to the major barriers that hamper evaluation.

Determining which measures or indicators are to be used in the evaluation poses the first problem. Phillips (1990) suggests that a monetary evaluation is the 'ultimate goal' but that assigning such values to all inputs and benefits of a training intervention is difficult. Rushmer (1997) takes a very different stance and suggests that:

*"Using a "hard" measure for a "soft" intervention is inappropriate"*  
Rushmer (1997), p. 316.

The next important point in consideration of the concept of evaluation of training is discussed in depth by Stewart, (1999). He considers to what extent any evaluation of a training intervention can be deemed to be objective. He challenges, what he terms, the conventional writing on evaluation, (such as that of Jackson 1989; Hamblin 1974; or Kirkpatrick 1976) because of their 'realist' approach to the subject and their adoption of the same research processes and procedures as those used in the physical sciences. It is Stewart's (*op cit*), position that;

*" All assessment decisions are the result of the cognitive processes of individuals.....it follows that all assessment is*

*necessarily and by definition subjective”* (Stewart, 1999, p.180)

The implication for evaluation, if this argument is accepted, is that there can be no ‘correct’ or ‘best’ way to evaluate the effectiveness of training and as such the value of any measured outcome is also subjective.

Another major barrier to evaluating the effects of a team building intervention is concerned with identifying and isolating the variables effected by the event from the myriad of factors that affect performance. (Reid and Barrington, 1997). The time and cost involved in conducting evaluations can also be a barrier (Phillips, 1990) to evaluation. Sometimes the cost involved is not justified by the initial investment in the event and as such precludes evaluation.

Bias is another major problem and this can be heavily influenced by the evaluator and the purpose and context in which the evaluation is being conducted. (Harrison, 1997; Reid and Barrington, 1997 and Easterby–Smith 1994). The fact that much evaluation also relies on reported information is also potentially problematic. This is affected by the time that has elapsed between the intervention being evaluated and the timing of the evaluation.

Despite the many problems and barriers described above there have been many attempts at evaluating the effect of team building evaluations and the methods and findings of these are reviewed in the next section.

### **3.14 Team Building Research**

Research into this area falls into two categories; studies which attempt to evaluate a single intervention and studies which attempt to conduct analysis of the findings of collections of single intervention studies.

The former category is characterised by a disparate range of methods and techniques being employed for the evaluation of the team building intervention. Very few studies are conducted to determine financial benefits associated to the

effects of a team building intervention and most summarise their findings in a narrative, descriptive manner. The single intervention studies tend to follow the format of a case study for example Maznay *et al* 1995 and Rushmer (1997a and b). Although interesting and illuminating in anecdotal way they do not provide definitive, conclusive evaluation of a team building event.

Two recent papers of the second category (Salas *et al*, 1999 and De Meuse and Liebowitz 1981) attempt integrative analysis of many of the single case studies. Their efforts to provide conclusions on the findings of these studies is hampered by the lack of convergence between the methods or the type of team building activities being studied in the single intervention evaluations.

De Meuse and Liebowitz conclude;

*“..a lack of rigour in the research methods used to evaluate the it [the team building event] precludes any firm conclusions about which improvements were functions of team building and which were due to uncontrolled variables.”* De Meuse and Liebowitz, 1981, p. 357.

Salas *et al* focussed their study on a narrowly defined range of team building studies in order to enhance the possibility of like for like integrative analysis. In all only eleven studies spanning thirty years were identified as having requisite statistical information necessary to conduct a ‘meta-analytic integration’. The findings are at odds with the positive effects reported in the narrative studies described earlier;

*“...approximately 99% of the variability in a teams performance is attributable to factors other than whether the team have gone through a team building intervention.”* Salas *et al* (1999, p.322.)

### **3.15 Summary and Conclusions from Literature Review**

The literature review concentrated on three main areas; examination of current thinking on employee development and OD; team building as an instrument of OD and examination of the research into the evaluation of development interventions.

The first area for review revealed that defining the terms associated with OD is fraught with ambiguity. As such describing a team building intervention in precise terms is difficult and very much depends on the context in which they are applied.

The underpinning theories of team building as a valid and beneficial intervention are generally agreed, however, this is subject to certain caveat, namely that in order to be effective other organisational conditions must be present and indeed a checklist has been developed to assist in the practical application of this.

The majority opinion discovered suggests that team building events can result in benefit to the team and to the organisation. The models of team development and the team performance curve offer a framework for the observation, description and assessment of the development of teams.

The review covered the literature that considers the concept, content and process of evaluation and identified two ubiquitous frameworks, the first of which can assist in the understanding and application of assessing to what extent an intervention has effected the individual, team and organisation. The second framework for evaluation looked at the components of a development intervention, rather than the effects, which may result. The application of these frameworks can be influenced by the purposes of the evaluation process.

The purposes of evaluation can range from establishing the extent to which the participants have enjoyed the event to attempting to prove that the activity has generated a financial benefit in excess of the investment.

Many authors recognise that the practical application of evaluation is problematic. The major barriers to applying evaluation techniques are

attributable to the inherent subjectivity of any measurement values and the inability to isolate the effects of intervention from a myriad of uncontrollable variables which exist in the work place. The potential bias of the evaluator is also flagged as a barrier to definitive evaluation.

An examination of research into the evaluation of team building revealed disparate conclusions ranging from the sanguine anecdotes based on single case studies to the more guarded conclusions of integrative empirical analysis.

## **4. PRIMARY RESEARCH - METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

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### **4.1 Problem Definition and Research Objectives.**

The dissertation has so far reviewed existing literature to determine the extent to which team building activities have a basis as valid interventions to facilitate organisational development. This was achieved through the consideration of the underpinning theories of team building and a review of research carried out in this field. It has further considered the methods in which potential benefits of such events may be evaluated, what purpose such evaluation may serve and the conceptual models and frameworks through which evaluation may be practically applied. There remains a gap however in identifying the views of those organisations that may use or potentially use, team building as a tool of organisational development.

In order to test the hypothesis of this dissertation, it was felt necessary and appropriate to capture the views and determine the practices of such organisations in relation to the participation in and evaluation of team building events. In doing so the data generated could be analysed to determine to what extent organisations within a defined sample consider team building to be a valid intervention as part OD, and whether and how they conduct evaluation of such events in order to determine benefits.

The objectives of this primary research are:

- To determine the extent to which team building activities are used as a tool OD.
- To determine the extent to which objectives are set by sponsoring organisations for participation in such events.
- To determine the extent to which participation in such activities is evaluated by sponsoring organisations.



## **4.2 Developing the Research Plan**

Having clearly defined the objectives for the primary research it was necessary to give consideration to a population sample and the method by which the data for analysis were to be collected.

## **4.3 Identifying and Selecting the Sample**

The first task at this stage of the research design was to define the population from which a sample could be selected. It was assumed that the total population for this research was all organisations who may consider using team building as an OD intervention. Given the vast scale of this population, it was of course necessary to select a more manageable and realistically approachable sample given the limited resources available for the conduct of the research.

Initially the author considered selecting a sample of all those organisations that had purchased an event for their staff from Maximillion Events within a defined time period. This was rejected on the grounds that by restricting the sample in this way organisations purchasing from other similar suppliers and those who may have never purchased an event for their staff, for whatever reason, would be excluded and therefore introduce an unacceptable level of bias to the sample.

In order to achieve the objectives of the survey it was assumed that only those organisations with a formalised HRD function would be in a position to provide detailed answers and therefore it was deemed necessary and legitimate to select the sample in accordance with this criteria. As such Barclay's (ed), 'The Personnel Manager's Yearbook 2002/03' which lists over 10,000 United Kingdom companies who have a formalised HRD function (and lists contact details), was chosen as the population for this research. In order to improve accessibility the sample was further refined geographically by selecting those organisations listed who have a presence in the following Scottish Central Region districts:

- East Lothian

- Lanarkshire
- Midlothian
- Renfrewshire
- Stirlingshire
- West Lothian

This reduced the number of organisations to 401. In order to produce a manageable but valid data collection plan, 25% of these organisations were randomly selected to produce a sample of 100 organisations.

#### **4.4 Survey Method**

Having established the sample the next stage was determining the contact method. As the research objectives require descriptive information, a survey approach was adopted as direct questioning can suitably capture the information. The next consideration was the method of contact by which to collect the data. The UK government web site '<http://www.dtlr.gov.uk/>' presents a table highlighting the different methods available for conducting research and these are summarised in the Figure 4.1 below.

Given the author's limited budget and time constraint it was felt that mail was the most appropriate form of contact with the sample organisations. This was chosen above electronic mail, despite the higher costs, as whilst the author possessed specific mail contact details the e mail contact details were not person specific and there was concern that unless specific contact was made the response rate could be adversely affected.

In order to obtain the data a questionnaire was designed to obtain the information that addresses the key issues raised in the research objectives.

<b>Methods</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<p><b>Mail surveys</b> Printed questionnaires are posted to potential respondents</p>	<p><b>Relatively inexpensive</b> Lack of interviewer bias Easier to answer sensitive questions Can be completed at respondent's own pace</p>	<p><b>Low response rates 25-50%</b> Self-selection bias Time-consuming Little control over who fills the questionnaire Fixed question order No clarification or probing possible Restricts the use of visual aids Respondent can alter earlier responses</p>
<p><b>Telephone interviews</b> Interviewers call potential respondents</p>	<p>Complex questionnaire structures are possible <b>Cheaper than face to face interviews</b> Permits probing and clarification Relatively quick to administer Easy to monitor <b>60-75% response rates</b></p>	<p>No use of visual aids Restricts use of lengthy scales Respondent may get tired Respondents may not answer sensitive questions Non-telephone or non-listed respondents not sampled</p>
<p><b>Face-to-face interviews</b> Interviews take place one-to-one between the interviewer and the respondent either at home or another location relevant to the study (intercept survey)</p>	<p>Highly flexible Complex questions and questionnaire structures are possible Permits probing and clarification Larger quantity of data can be collected Potential for extensive use of visual and demonstration aids <b>High response rates 70%+</b> Greatest sample control</p>	<p><b>Relatively expensive</b> Possible interviewer bias Intercept surveys: samples normally not representative and self-selection bias Intercept surveys: questionnaires have to be short</p>
<p><b>Mixed methods: drop off survey</b> The questionnaire is mailed prior to a visit by the interviewer</p>	<p>Initial personal contact gives survey a 'human face' Shares the advantages of mail and face-to-face methods</p>	<p>Survey form may be lost in interval before calling back <b>Expensive</b></p>
<p><b>Mixed methods: mail + telephone surveys</b> The questionnaire is mailed prior to a phone call by the interviewer</p>	<p>Gives personal touch to the survey Can complete mailed questionnaire in own time</p>	<p>Shares some of the limitations of mail surveys <b>Relatively expensive</b></p>
<p><b>Computer assisted interviews</b> Interviewer records responses directly to computer and/or respondent may respond to questions on computer screen</p>	<p>Subsequent analysis is quicker since data inputting stage is not necessary. Permits more complex interviews. Permits use of e-mail and internet</p>	<p>Possible rejection of 'computer technology'. E-mail/internet may preclude random sample unless wide coverage of PCs</p>

**Figure 4.1** Comparison of Main Data Collection Methods. *Source: <http://www.dtlr.gov.uk/about/economics/09.htm>*

#### **4.5 Questionnaire Design, Dissemination and Disclosure.**

A covering letter and questionnaire was sent to named individuals at the 100 companies forming the sample for the research accompanied by a covering letter which can be seen at Appendix B. The author was cautious of many of the pitfalls associated with the preparation of questionnaires (Kotler *et al*, 1996), with regard to wording and question formation. As such it was tested on several fellow MBA students in order to identify areas of ambiguity and to ensure that the correct question was being asked to elicit the required information. The final version of the questionnaire which was sent out it is shown at Appendix C.

It was felt important to offer the respondents anonymity as the questionnaire represented an unsolicited approach to their organisations and a request for information on organisational opinions that could be regarded as sensitive. There are of course disadvantages to this approach in that trends within responses from organisations of similar size or within similar industry sectors cannot be identified. The advantage of this approach is that respondents may feel freer to give honest answers. On balance it was felt that the benefits associated to providing anonymity outweigh the potential benefits of identifying the respondent organisation.

As referred to earlier, the wording and presentation of the questionnaire was subject to careful consideration in order to elicit the information that meets the research objectives. The questionnaire used a mix of questioning styles. It deliberately avoided open-ended questions as whilst they may provide the most revealing information, responding is time consuming and therefore off-putting to respondents. Dichotomous questions were used extensively for ease of response and the author is aware of the limitations of such a questioning technique. Whilst this form of questions are certainly straightforward to answer they are far less revealing than the open ended questions and often the respondents true answer may be a qualified version of the choice selected. It was hoped that these answers could be further explored with those respondents who chose to partake of a further interview.

Where opinions on difficulty and importance of evaluation were sought, variations of semantic differential and importance rating scales were used. The presentation of these questions was constructed in such a way that the time and inconvenience to the respondent was minimised. It was felt that by using a variety of questioning techniques in a clear and uncluttered manner whilst precluding an in depth insight would provide data which could be easily interpreted and tabulated. Gaps, deficiencies or areas requiring more depth of research could be pursued during follow up interviews where the respondent indicated an interest.

The questionnaire was split into 4 parts with questions grouped into common areas. Part 1 was aimed at determining which activity organisations most commonly use for the purpose of team building and the context in which these activities are used.

Part 2 was aimed at determining whether organisations participating in such events and activities have clear objectives as to what they would like to achieve. In addition this section sought to determine who was responsible for setting the team building event objectives and whether these were communicated to the participants.

Part 3 looked more at the extent to which any team building events or activities are evaluated. It sought information on what aspects of the events were evaluated (was there an explicit or implicit leaning towards evaluating outcomes, process or content). The respondents would also be asked which purpose of evaluation they felt to be the most pertinent.

Finally, part 4 was to establish the opinions of those organisations that had not taken part in team building events/activities within the last two years. It was felt that this was necessary, as the views of these organisations were equally valid to those of the organisations that have recently participated in events.

In sending the questionnaire the author's identity as a senior manager in a corporate event company was not disclosed. The ethics of this may be

questioned but it was the author's view that such a disclosure may have introduced bias that could have tainted the data for a number of reasons. It was judged therefore that the perceived neutrality of an academic focus would be of greater benefit in issuing the questionnaires.

## 5. PRIMARY RESEARCH ANALYSIS

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### 5.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

Out of the 100 questionnaires sent out 26 were returned. Of the 26 completed and returned questionnaires 2 respondents indicated that they would be willing to discuss the survey further. The unstructured interviews that were conducted in response to this are addressed in a later section.

The 26% response rate is at the lower end of that which could be reasonably expected (See Figure 4. above). Various authors particularly in the field of market research, commend various techniques for increasing response rate, ranging from using enhanced quality paper, using 1<sup>st</sup> class post or incentivising the return through offering something of benefit to the respondent. Empirical evidence of the effectiveness of such techniques is however non-conclusive. (Kotler *et al*, 1996, Dibb *et al* 1993). It was felt that this was an acceptable return rate that may only have been improved by a prompting telephone call to the targeted respondent. Given time constraints this was not possible.

### 5.2 Potential Sources of Bias

As will be seen below, the majority of respondents had experienced a team building event or activity within the last two years. It is possible that those organisations that had not, did not have the same perceived involvement with the questionnaire. This is of concern, as by not responding and excluding their likely negative comments on the subjects raised, an unintentional positive bias may have been introduced.

Reflecting on the response rate the author concludes that many of the factors considered as contributing to this poor rate of response were not considered prior to dissemination. As such a different or enhanced method of collecting data would be considered for any further research in this area. Despite this the

data gathered is worthy of analysis as long as the previously expressed concerns are considered during any interpretation.

### **5.3 Primary Research Data Analysis**

The data generated from the questionnaire is now reviewed in the next section. Comment is made as appropriate but within the context of the rate of response and the limitations imposed by the questioning techniques discussed earlier. The format for this section will be to provide analysis and interpretation in a question by question manner before summary analysis and interpretation at the conclusion of the section.

### **5.4 Questionnaire Part 1**

This part of the questionnaire sought to satisfy the first objective of the research namely, determining the extent to which team building activities and events are used as a tool for OD within the sample.

#### **5.4.1 Part 1, Question 1.1 – Is Your organisation Investor in People (IIP) Accredited**

It was felt that this question was necessary in order to determine whether a link could be established between the views held by IIP accredited organisations and their approach to the evaluation of team building events/activities. Additionally, as one of the principles of the IIP standard is Evaluation, it was felt necessary to attempt to determine the extent to which this impacted on the organisation's approach to this area. (The IIP standard is available at Appendix D.) This will be analysed in due course.

The data collected from the response to this question is show in Table 5.1 below:



<b>Investor In People Accredited</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>77%</b>

**Table 5.1** Numbers of respondents with IIP accreditation.

All organisations that responded answered this question. The percentages, allowing for rounding, are representative of the UK average for all industry sectors of 24% ([www.iipuk.co.uk](http://www.iipuk.co.uk)). This may be taken as an indication that a representative sample of organisations was selected and that response to this questionnaire was unaffected by IIP accreditation.

#### **5.4.2 Part 1, Question 1.2 - Has Your Company Organised and Participated in any Team Building event or Activity in the Last 2 Years?**

It was felt necessary to determine whether the organisations had participated in a team building event/activity relatively recently, as a positive answer could be interpreted as an indication that the organisation regards such interventions as useful to organisational development. The results of the data collected are show in Table 5.2 below:

<b>Has Your Company Organised and Participated in any Team Building event or Activity in the Last 2 Years?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>27%</b>

**Table 5.2** Frequency and percentage of organisations having participated in a teambuilding event/activity in the last 2 years.

This positive response would suggest that response to the questionnaire was influenced by the fact that the organisation had recently taken part in a team building event/activity. Drawing on the author's knowledge of the industry in Scotland, in the absence of available statistics, it would appear that this response is unrepresentative of a random sample as it is believed that a much lower percentage of Scottish businesses participate in such events and accordingly it is assumed that a response to the questionnaire was more likely to come from an organisation with a recent team building experience.

This assessment must be taken into account when interpreting the rest of the data generated by this survey. If the earlier assumption that organisations who have a positive opinion to team building are more likely to respond then it can also be assumed that the survey has failed to capture the views of many of those organisations who believe such events are of limited benefit. This could be viewed as a major failing of the survey as its very nature excluded negative opinion. This must be balanced against the fact that as long as this bias is considered in the interpretation then the data still has some, if limited value. This weakness could be addressed through the design of two different questionnaires targeted specifically at organisations who have and who have not taken part in activities recently. Such a survey could be integrated to include the views of both subsets in order to gather a more balanced picture.

#### **5.4.3 Part 1, Question 1.3 – What were the Reasons for Organising these Team Building Events?**

This question was asked only to those organisations who had recently participated in such events. The aim of this question was to determine which were the most popular reasons for organising these events. For obvious reasons this question was presented in a multi-selection manner. The data collected is show in Table 5.3 below:

<b>What were the Reasons for Organising these Team Building Events?</b>		
<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Complement other developmental activities</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Assist with forming a new team</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Assist in developing an existing team</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Addressing specific organisational issue</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Reward staff</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16%</b>

**Table 5.3.** Frequencies and percentage of reasons for organising team building events.

A further choice of ‘other reason’ was included in the original questionnaire. Respondents gave only two ‘other’ reasons. Both of these referred to introducing staff from geographically separated areas to each other and as such have been incorporated into the ‘new team’ category by the author.

This data indicates that the most common reason for participation in such events is to develop new and existing teams and compliment other developmental activities. In order to simplify the questionnaire there was no attempt to assign reasons to specific event types. This is potentially an area for future research. It would appear fair to conclude, from the responses to this question, that of those organisations recently participating in such events, they do so for reasons associated with employee and organisational development more than simply to reward their staff. This would indicate that they expect their participation in such activities to result in some effect on the organisation itself.

## **5.5 Questionnaire Part 2**

This part of the questionnaire sought to answer the second objective of the research study, namely determining the extent to which organisations set clear objectives for the events and activities in which they participate. Only the

organisations who had recently participated in an event were instructed to answer.

### 5.5.1 Part 2 – Question 2.1 – Were Specific Objectives Set for the Events

This question was presented in a dichotomous manner in order that the companies who did not set objectives could be identified and directed to the next section. Of the 19 respondents who indicated that they had participated in a team building activity on the last 2 years, only 19 professed to set specific objectives for their events. The data collected in response to this question is shown in Table 5.4 below:

<b>Were specific objectives set for the events?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>42%</b>

**Table 5.4** Frequency and percentage of organisations setting objectives for team building events.

The data reveals that over half of the organisations participating in team building events set objectives as to what they want to achieve from the event. Those that do not are handicapped in any attempts at evaluating outcomes of the event. This would indicate that this latter grouping are not employing a systematic approach (Stewart, 1999) to the design of the team building activity.

### 5.5.2 Question 2.3 – Who was Responsible for Setting the Event Objectives?

The respondents were given several choices in their response, none of which were exclusive. This was in recognition of the fact that no single person or group within the organisation would necessarily be solely responsible for setting

objectives for a team building event. The data collected in response to this question is shown below in Table 5.5:

<b>Who was Responsible for Setting the Event Objectives?</b>		
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The event sponsor</b>		<b>100%</b>
<b>The team leader</b>		<b>54%</b>
<b>Department/Section manager</b>		<b>27%</b>
<b>The participants</b>		<b>27%</b>
<b>The activity provider</b>		<b>10%</b>
<b>Managing director</b>		<b>10%</b>
<b>HR Director/Chief Exec</b>		<b>10%</b>

**Table 5.5** Frequency and percentage of parties setting objectives for team building activities.

The extremely small size of the sample responding to this question raises questions on the validity of any conclusions drawn from this data. However there are several aspects that deserve further consideration. The data revealed that in all organisations the course sponsor was involved in setting the objectives. This suggests that the sponsor feels the ownership of the event and that it is being commissioned for a specific purpose. The value of this interpretation is further questioned however by the lack of a specific definition of sponsor and clarification of whether the sponsor is a participant. This error must be rectified in any further survey in order to clarify this area of vagueness.

Also of particular note is the frequency of which participants are involved in objective setting. This low frequency would be of particular concern if the objective of the event were to develop an existing team. It has been discussed earlier that the effectiveness of teams is enhanced when the team itself is involved in goal setting. (Katzenbach and Smith, 1993b).

**5.5.4 Question 2.4 – Were the Objectives Communicated to the Participants?**

Again the dichotomous question formation was chosen in order to elicit, of those organisations setting objectives, which had communicated these to the participants. The data collected from the response to this question is shown in Table 5.6 below:

<b>Were the Objectives Communicated to the Participants?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 5.6** Frequency and percentage of organisations communicating objectives to participants.

It is apparent from the data that whilst the participants are only involved in setting the objectives in 27% of cases in all but one they were made aware of the objectives of the event.

**5.5.4 Part 2 – Question 2.5 – Were the Objectives Communicated to the Activity Provider.**

The factual nature of this question allowed again for a yes or no response. The data collected from the response to this question is shown in Table 5.7 below:

<b>Were the Objectives Communicated to the Activity Provider?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>46%</b>

**Table 5.7** Frequency and percentage of organisations communicating objectives to activity providers.

The purpose of this question was to determine the extent to which the objectives set for the event planned into the event by the activity provider in order that the event could be delivered to the specific objectives. It is perhaps of concern that on three occasions the objectives were not communicated to the activity provider. This could certainly lead to disparity between what was being bought and what was being delivered. If an activity or event is promoted as fulfilling the objectives that the organisation is seeking to meet then the view may be taken that it is further necessary to discuss the objectives with the provider prior to the event.

### **5.6 Questionnaire Part 3**

This part of the questionnaire was aimed at determining the extent to which organisations participating in team building activities conduct evaluation. It sought to develop this information requirement by eliciting the opinion of the organisations with regard to the significance they attach to this and the difficulties that they face in conducting evaluation.

#### **5.6.1 Part 3 – Question 3.1 – Was the Team Building Activity Subject to any Formal Review**

This question was aimed at identifying how many organisations conduct a formal review of the team building activity. As such a straightforward yes or no question was sufficient to identify those that did. Those that did not were then directed to a later section of the questionnaire to avoid irrelevant questions. The data collected in response to this question is shown in Table 5.8 below:

<b>Was the Team Building Activity Subject to any Formal Review and or Evaluation?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>36%</b>

**Table 5.8** Frequency and percentage of organisations evaluating team building events and activities.

Of those organisations that had recently participated in a team building event, two thirds professed to conducting some type of evaluation. The aspects of the events that were evaluated were determined from the next question. The data resulting from this question must be viewed bearing in mind that no distinction has been made between any of the activity types. This may of course affect the likelihood of evaluation being conducted but for the purpose of this research study it was felt sufficient to generalise in this area. It is also interesting to note that the number of organisations professing to conduct formal evaluation 64%, out number those who set objectives for the event. This would suggest that process of evaluation is considered after the event and does not constitute part of the planning process.

### **5.6.2 Part 3 – Question 3.2 – Which Aspects of the Team Building Event/Activity were evaluated?**

This question was designed to determine which aspects of the event were subject to evaluation by those organisations that professed to conduct evaluation of the events and activities. Loosely using the frameworks of evaluation suggested earlier in the literature review, the four level frame work of Kirkpatrick, (1976) and the ‘CAIPO’ framework of Easterby-Smith (1994), the aspects of the event that may have been evaluated were presented for the organisations to select. The data collected in response to this question is shown in Table 5.9 below:



<b>Which aspects of the team building event were evaluated?</b>		
<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Participant reaction</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Performance of provider</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Quality of the event/activity</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Individual behaviour change</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Other: Venue</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Team behavioural change</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Financial benefits</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Table 5.9** Frequency and percentage of reasons for organising team building events.

The data reveals that most organisations conducting evaluation considered the participant reaction, the performance of the activity provider and the quality of the event. Only one of the seven organisations evaluated change in individual behaviour and none evaluated changes in the behaviour of the team or financial benefits for the organisation.

The next questions sought to develop the trends ascertained through this question by attempting to determine the factors that may have affected this disparity in application of evaluation.

### **5.6.3 Part 3 – Question 3.3 – What is Your View Regarding Evaluating the Following Aspects of a Team Building Activity/Event?**

The most important information to be determined from this and the next question was to attempt to identify what the motivations for evaluation were. It was the author's view prior to this study that the perceived difficulties as espoused by Phillips (1990) and covered in the literature review earlier, (section, 3.13) may be a barrier to organisations conducting evaluation. With this in mind this question sought how easy the organisations judged the process

of evaluation in order to determine if this was a contributing factor in their inclination and desire to conduct the process. The data gathered from this question is shown in table 5.10 below:

Criteria for evaluation	Simple	Straight-forward	Difficult	Very Difficult	Impossible
Participant reaction	4	3			
Change in Individual behaviour		1	4	2	
Change in team behaviour			1	6	
Financial benefits			4	2	1
Quality/value of event	3	4			
Performance of provider	5	2			

**Table 5.10** – Organisations’ perceptions on the difficulty of evaluation.

The data reveals that those areas in which evaluation was conducted were judged to be simple or straightforward by the organisations and the areas where little or no evaluation was conducted were deemed to be difficult to impossible. Despite this analysis not comparing the responses of individual organisations directly, this correlation between not evaluating and the perceived difficulty is believed to be strong enough to warrant the deduction that the perceived level of difficulty impacts directly on the extent of evaluation.

#### **5.6.4 Part 3 – Question 3.4 – What is Your View as to the Importance or other wise of evaluating the Following Aspects of a Team Building Activity/Event?**

The question sought to distinguish how important the organisations viewed evaluation as an aspect of the team building event. The data gathered from the responses to these questions is shown in Table 5.11 below:

Criteria for evaluation	Irrelevant	Un-important	Useful	Important	Vital
Participant reaction		2	5		
Change in Individual behaviour			6	1	
Change in team behaviour		2	5		
Financial benefits			3	2	2
Quality/value of event			3	4	
Performance of provider			3	4	

**Table 5.11** How organisations perceive the importance of evaluation as part of a teambuilding event or activity.

This data clearly demonstrates that there is an alarming gap between the importance organisations place on evaluation and how many actually carry out evaluation. This is perhaps best considered in the context of the data generated by the previous question. It would be reasonable to conclude that the perceived difficulty of evaluation prevents organisations gathering information that they believe to be important. The data also suggests that organisations think it more important to evaluate the reaction of the participants and performance of the provider above evaluating behavioural changes and financial benefits of the event or activity. This would be understandable if the events were designed as a reward for the participants rather than for their development or the benefit of the organisation. As the survey does not identify the specific event types this is certainly an area which would benefit from future research to examine if the event type and objectives effect how the sponsoring organisation regard the importance of evaluation.

**5.6.5 Part 3 – Question 3.5- Rate the Following Purposes of Evaluation, where 1<sup>st</sup> is Most Important and 4<sup>th</sup> is Least Important.**

The final question in this section sought to determine why organisations conduct evaluation of their team building events and activities. The data gathered in response to these questions is shown in table 5.12 below:

Importance Rating →	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
Purpose of evaluation ↓				
Proving	4	3	0	0
Improving	2	3	2	0
Learning	1	1	4	1
Promoting	0	0	3	6

**Table 5.12** Organisation's rating of importance of the purposes of evaluation.

This question was based on the purposes as of evaluation as espoused by Stewart (1999) and Easterby-Smith (1994), and considered earlier in the literature review. (See Section 3.8.) The data generated clearly demonstrates a consistency between the nature of the perceived importance of the criteria to be evaluated and the rating of importance of purpose to the responding organisations. The gap however is stark between what the organisations believe they should be evaluating and what they actually evaluate. Despite them indicating that proving is the most important purpose only one organisation (see Table 5.11) evaluated a change in behaviour or impact on the organisation which would seem to be the most appropriate evaluation to demonstrate the value of the investment of the event. This point will be returned to later in the summary analysis.

### **5.6.6 Part 3 - Question 3.6 – Has Your Participation in the event resulted in benefit to the organisation?**

This question was asked last so that the answer to this question would not influence the respondents who may have sought to justify their response had the question been asked earlier. The data generated from this question is shown in table 5.13 below:

<b>Has Your Participation in the event resulted in benefit to the organisation?</b>			
<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>5%</b>

**Table 5.13** Frequency and percentage of organisations that evaluated their events and who believe that the intervention has benefited the organisation.

Given that only 11 of the respondents set objectives for the event and only 7 of these conducted any sort of formal evaluation this seems to be a high affirmative response. It can be assumed that the respondents feel that the benefits are so evident that evaluation is not necessary or that their response is based on an intuitive assessment of the event outcomes and their impact on the organisation. This interpretation will be developed further in the summary of the survey analysis.

#### **5.7 Questionnaire - Part 4**

This part of the questionnaire was designed to determine the views of those organisations that had not participated in a team building event/activity in the last two years, those who had were excluded. As established earlier, it was felt that these organisations may be less positive about the benefit of team building events as a tool for OD. In spite of and because of this assumption it was felt that it was important to capture their views specifically with regard to their opinion on team building as a beneficial activity and the evaluation of such activities.

##### **5.7.3 Part 4 – Statement 4.1- Team Building Events and Activities are Useful Tools in Organisational Development.**

The data collected from the response to this question are shown in Table 5.14 below:

<b>Team Building Events and Activities are Useful Tools in Organisational Development.</b>			
<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>85%</b>

**Table 5.14** Frequency and percentage of organisations that believe team building events and activities are useful to organisational development.

Unsurprisingly the majority of organisations who had not taken part in a team building event or activity recently, disagreed that these development interventions have any value in organisational development. However, it could be that their disagreement with this statement lies in their belief that a use or value cannot be established. Clarification on this point was sought through the next question.

#### **5.7.4 Part 4 – Statement 4.2 – Team Building Events and Activities Result in Benefit to the Organisation.**

The data collected from the response to this question are shown in Table 5.15 below.

<b>Team Building Events and Activities Result in Benefit to the Organisation.</b>			
<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>85%</b>

**Table 5.15** Frequency and percentage of belief that activities result in benefit.

This table indicates that there is consistency from these respondents in the view that team building events and activities are neither useful to organisational development or result in any benefit to the organisation.

**5.7.5 Part 4 – Statement 4.3 – Team Building Events and Activities are not Appropriate to our Organisational Development**

The data collected from the response to this question are shown in Table 5.16 below.

<b>Team Building Events and Activities are not Appropriate to our Organisational Development</b>			
<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Table 5.16** Percentage and frequency of respondents on appropriateness of events to organisational development.

This data indicates that none of the organisations who have not recently participated in team building events or activities regard them as appropriate to their organisational development. The next question seeks to determine whether this response is a result of the current context of the organisation or a general belief that such events are never an appropriate intervention for organisational development.

**5.7.6 Part 4 – Statement 4.4 – Team Building Activities are a Waste of Time and Money**

The data collected from the response to this question are shown in Table 5.17 below:

<b>Team Building Activities are a Waste of Time and Money</b>			
<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>43%</b>

**Table 5.17** Percentage and frequency of view that team building events are a waste of money.

The data suggest that whilst over half of the respondents believe that these events have no value, some of the respondents who earlier indicated that they believed the events to have no benefit to the organisation do not believe this to be the case. This suggest that the view may be held that whilst the vents may not directly result in benefit to the organisation there is a benefit to the participants but that this may not be transferred back to the work place.

#### 5.7.7 Part 4 – Statement 4.5 – It is Possible to Evaluate the Effect of Team Building Events and Activities

The data collected from the response to this question are shown in Table 5.18 below:

<b>It is Possible to Evaluate the Effect of Team Building Events and Activities?</b>			
<b>Agree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>85%</b>

**Table 5.18** Frequency and percentage of respondent’s views on the possibility of evaluating events.

This data suggests that the majority of these respondents do not believe that it is possible to evaluate the effect of team building events. This most certainly contributes to their negative opinion of the validity of teambuilding events as a valid intervention for organisational development. It is suggested that if a positive evaluation could be demonstrated this view could be significantly reversed.



## 5.8 Unstructured Interviews

As indicated earlier two respondents indicated that they would be willing to discuss the questionnaire and their responses to the questions therein further. Whilst both were keen to retain anonymity they were happy to be referred to by their position in and general description of the organisation in which they worked. The author conducted these interviews with a senior HRD manager for a large national bank and the Personnel manager of a public sector organisation employing over 2500 people.

### 5.8.1 The Banker's Perspective.

The HRD manager agreed to the interview, as he believed that;

*“the area of evaluation was undeveloped with regard to research resulting in practical application in the work place”.*

His view was that team building events and activities are extremely valuable in the development of new and existing teams and that if clear objectives are set with the contribution of the participants the process of team formation can be accelerated. He expanded on this by offering the example of a recent intervention which had assisted in the formation of a new IT project team and that their speedy integration had resulted in quicker implementation of their the project for which they had been formed to deliver. When asked whether a financial measure had been made of these perceived benefits he responded;

*“.... calculating the financial benefit of the early completion of the project would have been an extremely difficult process. Whilst it was evident that the [team building] intervention had contributed to this success it is not possible to isolate it's direct influence. The cost of doing so would be greater than the cost of our event.”*

He elaborated on his belief of the importance of clear objective setting and the importance of considering the purpose of evaluation at the earliest stage of designing the team building activity.

### **5.8.2 The Perspective of the Public Sector Personnel Manager**

The Personnel Manager had agreed to the interview, as she was interested in accessing the data generated from the whole survey. Her organisation has recently introduced a central purchasing function and she suggested that the public sector policy of demonstrating 'best value' had recently prompted her to review the evaluation of training and development within her control. As such she disclosed that her primary purpose for evaluation was 'proving' as defined in the questionnaire.

She offered that the most common form of evaluation used by her organisation was an internal post 'event' questionnaire which all participants in any training or development interventions (provided internally or externally) were obliged to complete. She expressed a general dissatisfaction at the limitations of such evaluation and that whilst it was easy to implement the information provided was a personal perspective which had little relevance or measure of organisational benefit.

Frustration was expressed that the models and frameworks for evaluation offered in current texts had no direct practical application. She elaborated on this point in suggesting that;

*“Our policy of best value purchasing demands justification for expenditure on grounds of return on investment or demonstrable service or quality improvement. The inability to demonstrate tangible benefits of these [team building] events in financial terms makes it difficult to justify expenditure in this area despite my personal view that they can have a huge impact on individual and team behaviour.”*

She went on to say that behavioural changes could be measured through employee appraisal and comparison of pre and post intervention assessment but that the time lapse between the event and the appraisal made a direct link to the event tenuous.

## **5.9 Summary and Conclusions of Primary Research and Analysis**

The purpose of conducting the primary research through a mail questionnaire was to develop the hypothesis of the dissertation by capturing and analysing the views of a representative sample of organisations with regard to team building and the evaluation of such interventions. The objectives focused on three distinct areas:

- Extent to which team building activities are used as a tool for OD.
- Extent to which objectives are set for such interventions.
- Extent to which the event and outcomes are evaluated.

The return rate of 26% is in keeping with the average for such survey methods. However, the small initial sample level may have resulted in a non-representative response, which may have been further biased by a lack of involvement towards the questionnaire by organisations that do not employ team building as a development activity. These concerns were partially allayed by the fact that the distribution of respondents was in keeping with the general distribution of IIP accredited companies.

The questionnaire was split into four parts the first of which was designed to discern to what extent team building was used as tool for OD amongst the selected sample. If the basic assumption, that organisations would not knowingly or willingly waste resources, is accepted then the questionnaire result that reveals that 73% of respondent companies have organised or participated in a team building event or activity in the last 2 years indicates they are a widely used and well regarded intervention. The survey also revealed that organisations use team building interventions in a wide context from forming

new teams to simply rewarding staff. This further indicates that the organisations responding, anticipate a behavioural change at the participant level and determine a link between this and a subsequent impact on the organisation.

The second part of the questionnaire revealed that just over half (58%) of the organisations that had recently participated in a team building event had set specific objectives. Where objectives were set it would appear that the major influence was the event sponsor. There were relatively few (27%) reported incidents of involving the individual team members in objective setting although in 90% of cases these were communicated to the team members. This finding demonstrates a tension between the academic theories discussed earlier that suggest active participation of team members in goal setting can lead to enhanced performance and the actual application of this concept in practice. Finally the survey revealed that when objectives for the event were set, the activity provider was only made aware in 54% of cases.

The third part of the survey examined the extent of the application of evaluation and further sought to elicit the respondents' opinion as to how useful and practical such practice was. A pictorial representation the trends identified from the data generated in response to the questions of this section is shown below in Figure 5.

A clear tension between what is desirable and what is practised is evident here. The respondents clearly identified that the most keenly desired information was that which related to financial benefits of the intervention and that proving was the most important purpose. The data provided in response to the perceived difficulty of evaluation provides explanation. It would appear that the organisations considered the application of evaluation in these areas very difficult and hence it can be assumed that although evaluation is seen as being important its application and therefore use in future decision-making is limited.

Criteria	Value of Information	Frequency of Use	Difficulty of assessment
Participant reaction	Lowest	Relatively Frequent	Relatively Easy
Change in team behaviour		▲	
Change in individual behaviour			
Quality of event Performance of provider Financial benefits	Highest	Relatively Infrequent	Relatively Difficult

**Figure 5.1** A schematic representation of the trends identified in respondents' answers to Part 4 of the questionnaire.

The final section sought to determine the views of those organisations who had not recently organised or participated in team building activities and events. It is possible to conclude from the data generated in this part of the questionnaire that these organisations had a very negative view towards team building. The survey however failed to elicit whether this opinion could be reversed if evidence of the beneficial effects of team building was available. This area provides a rich area for future research into the application of evaluation.

The overarching conclusion to this research is that organisations, in the majority of cases place an intuitive trust in the ability of a team building activity or intervention to deliver benefit to the participants and sponsoring organisation. Objective setting and evaluation of the outcomes of the events is limited. The major focus of the application of evaluation appears to be not in the areas that are regarded as important by these organisations but in the areas where it may be conducted easily.

## 6 – SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF INVESTIGATION

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The investigation identified a historical link between prevailing economic conditions and the expenditure on employee development and OD which led to reduced expenditure on these activities in times of downturn and recession. It was further revealed that developments in the application of evaluation had to an extent broken the link in the general field of OD but that this was not the case in the specific area of team building. A hypothesis was presented that few organisations apply the concept of evaluation to determine the benefits from team building events and activities.

The market for OD was given consideration and it was apparent that there is significant expenditure on participatory team building events and activities £91 million in the UK of which £7-9 million is spent with Scottish event suppliers. Indications are that the market in Scotland has grown and is forecast to do so in the immediate future. Despite this significant expenditure, it was the author's view that neither the client organisations' objectives nor the suppliers offer in terms of team building events is well defined. As such it was proposed that Maximillion could gain competitive advantage in the market by reviewing and better defining the potential benefits of its product and services and augmenting their service to prospective clients through an augmented service through an enhanced understanding of the concepts and application of evaluation.

Extant literature was reviewed in order to better define the concept of team building. It was found that terms in this area are used interchangeably and definition is better achieved through assessing the context of an OD intervention rather than by semantic definition. The literature review further provided evidence of a sound basis for the credibility of the concept of team building as a valid OD intervention. Models were presented as a framework for the application of team building and these suggested particular value of such interventions in the formation of new teams and the development of existing work groups. It was observed however that team building has been

unsuccessful when development has been attempted in inappropriate circumstances that are characterised by a resistance to change in the wider organisation to which the team belongs.

The literature presented several frameworks that are useful in the consideration of the concept, content and process of evaluation. The appropriateness of the frameworks with regard to the application of evaluation, is a consequence of the purpose that the evaluation seeks to achieve.

Many barriers to evaluation were evident from the literature review. These ranged from problems identifying which changes in behaviour and performance were a consequence of the team building intervention and which were influenced by other present variables, to the bias which may be introduced by the evaluator and the purpose and context in which the evaluation is being conducted.

A review of research into the evaluation of team building interventions further highlighted these problems and revealed a broad spectrum of conclusion. In single case study research the conclusions were often that team building was a powerful and beneficial intervention. In those studies, which conducted integrative analysis based on empirical research, the findings were more guarded.

Primary research was conducted to test the hypothesis presented and the analysis revealed that the organisations are not conducting evaluation to the extent that the information produced from such activities provides information for well grounded judgement on the benefits that they gain from their investment. It was apparent that evaluation was not being considered in the sense of an iterative process which begins prior to the delivery of the team building intervention. The research revealed that the most common criteria to be evaluated by the sample organisations were those which they actually valued least and that this was occurring due to the fact that this method of evaluation is the least difficult to conduct.

Maximillion have an opportunity to gain competitive advantage through the enhanced understanding of the concept, content and process of evaluation that this dissertation has provided. It can be achieved by extending their service to from the delivery of the team building events and activities to assisting the client in designing the most appropriate intervention (based on the client organisational objectives) and through assisting in the evaluation process.

Unless organisations are better informed of the potential benefits and outcomes of OD as offered through participatory team building events and activities, they may only draw on their intuitive knowledge to address the question posed in the title to this dissertation. By assisting in the design and evaluation of the team building process through the application of the theories, models and frameworks presented in this work, Maximillion can deliver events appropriate to the context and objectives of the client and gain recognition and reward for the role they have played in a successful intervention. By demonstrating benefit through evaluation, retrenchment in expenditure on such OD interventions as team building in times of economic down turn is less likely to effect those organisations adding value in this way.



## APPENDIX A -DYER'S TEAM BUILDING CHECKLIST

Source: Dyer (1977), pp. 36 – 40.

I. Problem identification: To what extent is there evidence of the following problems in your work unit?

		Low Evidence		Some Evidence		High Evidence
1.	Loss of production or work unit out-put.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Grievances or complaints in the unit.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Conflict or hostility in the unit.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Confusion over assignments or unclear relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Lack of clear goals or low commitment to goals	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Apathy and general lack of interest of members.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Lack of innovation, risk taking and initiative.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Ineffective staff meetings	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Problems working with the boss.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Poor communications: people afraid to speak up, not listening to each other or not talking together.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Lack of trust between the boss and members or between members.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Decisions made that people do not understand or disagree with.	1	2	3	4	5

I. Problem Identification (continued)

		Low Evidence		Some Evidence		High Evidence
13	People feel that good work is not recognised or rewarded.	1	2	3	4	5
14	People are not encouraged to work together in a better team effort.	1	2	3	4	5

**Scoring:** Add up the score for the fourteen items. If your score is between 14-28, there is little evidence your unit needs team building. If your score is between 29-42, there is some evidence, but no immediate pressure unless two or three items are very high. If your score is between 43-56, you should seriously think about planning a team building program. If the score is over 56, then building should be a top priority for the work unit.

II. Are you (or your manager) prepared to start a team building program? Consider the following statements. To what extent do they apply to you or your department?

		Low		Medium		High
1.	You are comfortable in sharing organisational leadership and decision making and prefer to work in a participative manner	1	2	3	4	5
2.	You see a high degree of interdependence as necessary amongst workers to achieve your goals.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The external environment is highly variable and changing rapidly and you need the input of all staff to plan for these conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	You feel you need the input of your staff to plan major changes or develop new operating policies or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	You feel that broad consultation among your people as a group in goals, decisions and problems is necessary and on an ongoing basis.	1	2	3	4	5

		Low Evidence	Some Evidence	High Evidence		
6.	Members of the management team are (or can become) compatible with each other and are able to create a collaborative rather than a competitive environment.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Members of your team are located close enough to meet together as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	You feel the need to rely on the ability and willingness of others to resolve critical operating problems directly and in the best interest of the company.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Formal communication channels are not sufficient for the timely exchange of essential information, views and decisions, amongst team members.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Organisation adaptation requires the use of ad hoc problem solving groups to augment conventional structure.	1	2	3	4	5
11	You feel it is important to surface and deal with critical, albeit sensitive issues that exist in your team.	1	2	3	4	5
12	You are prepared to look at your own role and performance within your team.	1	2	3	4	5
13	You feel there are operating or interpersonal problems that have remained unsolved too long and need the input from all group members.	1	2	3	4	
14	You need an opportunity to meet with your people and set goals and develop commitment to these goals.	1	2	3	4	

*Scoring:* If your total score is between 50-70, you are probably ready to go ahead with the team building program. 35-49 preparation prior to teambuilding is necessary. 14-34 not prepared for team building at the moment.

**III.** Should you use an outside consultant to help in team building? (Circle appropriate response.)

1.	Does the manager feel comfortable about trying out something new and different with the staff?	Yes	No	?
2.	Is the staff used to spending time in an outside location working on different issues of concern to the work unit?	Yes	No	?
3.	Will group members speak up and give honest data?	Yes	No	?
4.	Does your group generally work together without a lot of conflict or apathy?	Yes	No	?
5.	Are you sure that the boss is not a major source of difficulty?	Yes	No	?
6.	Is there a high commitment by the boss and unit members to achieve more effective team functioning?	Yes	No	?
7.	Do you feel you know enough about team building to begin a programme without help?	Yes	No	?
8.	Would your staff feel confident enough to begin a team building program without outside help?	Yes	No	?

*Scoring:* If you have circled six or more “yes” responses, you probably do not need an outside consultant. If you have four or more “no” responses, you probably do need a consultant. If you have a mixture of yes, no and ? responses, you should probably invite in a consultant to talk over the situation and make a joint decision.

## **APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE COVERING LETTER**

August 2002.

Dear ,

### **Research into improving the methods of evaluating team building events.**

As a final year, Part Time Master in Business Administration student, at the University of Glasgow, I write to seek your assistance in the conduct of primary research in the field of evaluating the benefits of team building events. As a leading employer in your industry sector, your answers with regard to the questions in the attached survey would be of immense value to my studies in this field. The overall aim of the study is to present a model with practical application for the measurement of the effects of staff participation in such events.

The survey intends to reveal current practice in the evaluation of team building events as provided by the Corporate Event companies within Scotland in terms of their value to the sponsoring organisation. The information that you kindly provide will be used to give an insight into if and how evaluation of these interventions is being conducted.

By using the attached questionnaire and self addressed envelope provided, your anonymity and confidentiality are assured. However, if you could spare a small amount of time to discuss this area further there is the opportunity to express this on the attached form and I would be delighted to make arrangements to come and visit with you at your convenience.

May I thank you in anticipation of your assistance with this study and wish you and your organisation continued success.

Yours sincerely,

Michael R Tierney

**APPENDIX C -TEAM BUILDING EVENT/ACTIVITY RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Part 1**

**Q1.1** Is your organisation Investor in People Accredited?

**YES**  **NO**

**Q1.2.** Has your company organised and participated in any team building event or activity as shown below in the last 2 years?

**YES**  **NO**

**(If you have answered ‘NO’ to this question please move directly to Part 4).**

Aerobatics	Archery	Business Games
Clay Pigeon Shooting	Country Pursuits	Driving
Falconry	Family fun days	Film Making
Game Shooting	Game Shows	Go-Karting
Highland Games	High Ropes	Its A Knockout
Indoor Team Building	Laser Clay Shooting	Lawn Games
Multi Activity	Off-road driving	Orienteering
Outdoor Team Building	Quizzes	Rallies
Sports	Survival	Treasure hunts

**Q1.3** What were the reasons for organising this/these team building event/s?  
(Please select all reasons which are applicable to you.)

To assist with the forming of a new team.....

To assist the development of an existing team.....

To address a specific organisational issue.....

To complement other developmental activities.....

To reward staff.....

Other (Please specify).....

**Part 2**

**Q2.1** Were specific objectives set for the event?

**YES**  **NO**

**(If you have answered no to this question please move directly to Part 3)**

**Q2.2** Which of the following did the objectives relate to?

Individual behaviour changes.....

Team behaviour change.....

Participants enjoyment.....

Future cost savings.....

Improved quality.....

Other (please specify).....

**Q2.3** Who was involved in setting the event objectives?

(Please select all applicable choices)

The participants.....

The team leader.....

The activity provider.....

The activity/event sponsor/purchaser.....

Other (Please specify).....

**Q2.4** Were the objectives communicated to the participants?

**YES**  **NO**

**Q2.5** Were the objectives communicated to the activity provider?

**YES**  **NO**

---

**Part 3**

**Q3.1** Was the team building event/activity subject to any form of formal review and/or evaluation?

**YES**  **NO**

**(If you have answered no to this question please move directly to Q 3.3)**

**Q3.2** Which aspects of the team building event activity were evaluated?

- Participant reaction.....
- Change in individual behaviour.....
- Change in team behaviour.....
- Financial benefits resulting from the activity/event...
- The quality/value of the activity/event.....
- The performance of the provider.....
- Other (please specify).....

**Q3.3** What is your view regarding evaluating the following aspects of a team building event/activity? (Please place a tick in the most appropriate box in the table below.)

Criteria for evaluation	Simple	Straight-forward	Difficult	Very Difficult	Impossible
Participant reaction					
Change in Individual behaviour					
Change in team behaviour					
Financial benefits					
Quality/value of event					
Performance of provider					

**Q3.4** What is your view as to the importance or otherwise of evaluating the following aspects of a team building/event activity? (Please tick the appropriate box in the table below.)

Criteria for evaluation	Irrelevant	Unimportant	Useful	Important	Vital
Participant reaction					
Change in Individual behaviour					
Change in team behaviour					
Financial benefits					
Quality/value of event					
Performance of provider					



**Q3.5** Rate the importance to you of the following purposes of evaluation, where 1<sup>st</sup> is most important and 4<sup>th</sup> is least important by writing the appropriate purpose next to the ranking.

<p>1<sup>st</sup> _____</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> _____</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> _____</p> <p>4<sup>th</sup> _____</p>	<p><b>Proving</b> – demonstrating the value of the investment in the event</p> <p><b>Improving</b> –in order to make future events better.</p> <p><b>Learning</b> – establishing what individuals have learned from the event.</p> <p><b>Promoting</b> – In order to establish the desirability of attending the event to potential future participants.</p>
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**Q. 3.6** Has Your Participation in the event resulted in benefit to the organisation?

**YES**       **NO**

**Part 4** This part of the questionnaire is only for those organisations who have not organised or participated in a team building event or activity in the last two years.

Please place a tick in the box according to whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

**Q4.1** Team building events and activities are useful tools in Organisational Development

**Agree**                       **Disagree**

**Q4.2** Team building events and activities result in benefit to the organisation.

**Agree**                       **Disagree**

**Q4.3** Team building events and activities are not appropriate to our organisational development.

**Agree**                       **Disagree**

**Q4.4** Team building activities are a waste of time and money.

**Agree**       **Disagree**

**Q4.5** It is possible to demonstrate tangible value to the organisation from teambuilding events and activities.

**Agree**       **Disagree**

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research. If you are willing to discuss this questionnaire further please fill in the contact details below and a researcher will contact you to arrange a short meeting.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D - The Investors in People Standard

Principles	Indicators	Evidence
<p><b>Commitment</b> An Investor in People is fully committed to developing its people in order to achieve its aims and objectives</p>	<p><b>1 The organisation is committed to supporting the development of its people</b></p>	<p>Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to support the development of people in order to improve the organisation's performance Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people People can confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place People believe the organisation is genuinely committed to supporting their development</p>
	<p><b>2 People are encouraged to improve their own and other people's performance</b></p>	<p>People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to improve their own performance People can give examples of how they have been encouraged to improve other people's performance</p>
	<p><b>3 People believe their contribution to the organisation is recognised</b></p>	<p>People can describe how their contribution to the organisation is recognised People believe that their contribution to the organisation is recognised People receive appropriate and constructive feedback on a timely and regular basis</p>
	<p><b>4 The organisation is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of its people</b></p>	<p>Top management can describe strategies that they have put in place to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people Managers can describe specific actions that they have taken and are currently taking to ensure equality of opportunity in the development of people People confirm that the specific strategies and actions described by top management and managers take place and recognise the needs of different groups People believe the organisation is genuinely committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of people</p>

<b>Planning</b> An Investor in People is clear about its aims and its objectives and what its people need to do to achieve them	<b>5 The organisation has a plan with clear aims and objectives which are understood by everyone</b>	The organisation has a plan with clear aims and objectives People can consistently explain the aims and objectives of the organisation at a level appropriate to their role Representative groups are consulted about the organisation's aims and objectives
	<b>6 The development of people is in line with the organisation's aims and objectives</b>	The organisation has clear priorities which link the development of people to its aims and objectives at organisation, team and individual level People clearly understand what their development activities should achieve, both for them and the organisation
	<b>7 People understand how they contribute to achieving the organisation's aims and objectives</b>	People can explain how they contribute to achieving the organisation's aims and objectives
<b>Action</b> An Investor in People develops its people effectively in order to improve its performance	<b>8 Managers are effective in supporting the development of people</b>	The organisation makes sure that managers have the knowledge and skills they need to develop their people Managers at all levels understand what they need to do to support the development of people People understand what their manager should be doing to support their development Managers at all levels can give examples of actions that they have taken and are currently taking to support the development of people People can describe how their managers are effective in supporting their development
	<b>9 People learn and develop effectively</b>	People who are new to the organisation, and those new to a job, can confirm that they have received an effective induction The organisation can show that people learn and develop effectively People understand why they have undertaken development activities and what they are expected to do as a result People can give examples of what they have learnt (knowledge, skills and attitude) from development activities Development is linked to relevant external qualifications or standards (or both), where appropriate

<b>Evaluation</b> An Investor in People understands the impact of its investment in people on its performance	<b>10 The development of people improves the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals</b>	The organisation can show that the development of people has improved the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals
	<b>11 People understand the impact of the development of people on the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals</b>	Top management understands the overall costs and benefits of the development of people and its impact on performance People can explain the impact of their development on their performance, and the performance of their team and the organisation as a whole
	<b>12 The organisation gets better at developing its people</b>	People can give examples of relevant and timely improvements that have been made to development activities

### **The Investors in People Standard**

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