THE APPLICATION OF POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

THEORY AND PRACTICE

IN A NEW ZEALAND

LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANISATION

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the late Margaret Radford an inspirational, tenacious, and courageous woman who reminds me every day to value the gift of life.

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ABSTRACT

This interpretative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of 10 leaders in their intentional six-month implementation, during the 2010-2011Christchurch earthquakes, of Cameron's (2008) conceptual positive leadership model. The model consisted of four positive strategies of fostering a positive climate, developing positive relationships, engaging in positive communication and reinforcing positive meaning. For the implementation, two positive practices of Everest goal and Personal Management Interview were added as adaptions to Cameron's model.

Four research questions guided the study. The data sources were journals kept by each leader during the implementation, and at the end of the six-month period, individual interviews with the leaders and a random sample of officers who had participated in the Personal Management Interview process. Leaders also decided eight operational measures that for them would indicate achievement of their Everest goal.

The interpretative phenomenological analysis followed the six steps described by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) and elicited four themes of *structure and focus in chaos, working with positive strategies and practices, affecting performance for the better, compassion and connectivity in adversity.* Drawing together these four themes provided the essence of the leaders' experience of implementing the adapted positive leadership model. The analysis revealed that despite the increased emotional and operational complexity, resulting from the continuous earthquake environment, the overall experience of the leaders in their intentional implementation of the positive leadership model was challenging and positive.   The study concluded that the combination of positive strategies and practices provided for the leaders a degree of individual and team psychological and participative safety. The leaders felt safe to learn and to apply new ways of working. This changed how they worked, both within their leadership team, and with their respective teams.

The addition of the positive practice of an Everest goal was crucial and provided meaning, structure, and focus for the implementation. The positive practice of the Personal

Management Interview provided a positive way for leaders to interact and develop positive relationships with a selection of their officers. The psychological capital invested by the leaders in their goal, the meaningfulness for them of their work, and the concept of psychological capital, go some way to explaining why the leaders decided to continue the implementation in the unprecedented chaotic natural disaster environment. This also assists in explaining and understanding in this study the outcomes of increased workplace performance and decreased absenteeism that are contrary to other studies on natural disaster.

This research contributes a validated model that leaders can use to implement positive leadership, new knowledge to the positive leadership literature, new understanding from a leader perspective, of the challenges of implementing positive leadership, and of leading in a workplace environment of continuous natural disaster events.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

This thesis explores the experience of 10 New Zealand Customs Service (Customs) leaders in their six-month intentional application of a positive leadership model. These leaders were responsible for the Customs operational activities based at the Christchurch International Airport in Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand. Their responsibilities involved processing of arriving and departing international passengers, profiling, and risk assessment. Risk assessment included identifying and seizing prohibited imports and exports, collecting Customs and Excise Duty, and protecting the border from importation of illicit substances, prohibited items, and prohibited persons.

The study commenced on 1 September 2010. On 4 September, at 4.35 a.m., Christchurch and the Canterbury region experienced a magnitude 7.1 earthquake. Again, at 12.51 p.m. on 22 February 2011, six days before the study concluded, a devastating magnitude 6.3 earthquake destroyed the Christchurch central city and a number of residential suburbs. In the disaster, 185 people lost their lives and 11,432 people were injured.[1]

This chapter offers some background and explains the local research context, the organisational research context, and the broader research context for this study. It states the research problem as well as the purpose and objectives. The chapter concludes with the significance of the study and an overview of the thesis structure. A glossary of terms is on page 220.

1.2 STUDY BACKGROUND

This research emerged from the researcher's desire to explore the implementation of a positive leadership approach from the perspective of leaders in the workplace. Having been awarded the State Services Leadership Development Centre 2010 Fellowship Award, the researcher attended two positive leadership programmes (*Positive Leadership: Building extraordinary personal leadership capabilities* and *Positive Leadership: Creating spectacular organizational success*) at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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[1] Statistics according to Wikepedia: 2001 Christchurch Earthquake. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved 10 May 2015 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011_Christchurch_earthquake

The study also arose from the researcher's personal reflections of working in a number of organisations over many years, the different leadership behaviours that had been experienced, how these behaviours had influenced and shaped positively or negatively the workplace environment, the behaviours of others in the workplace, and the personal experiences of the researcher. Reflecting back over such experiences reminded the researcher that she first sought a leadership role because of the personal desire to influence workplace behaviours in a positive direction. Realising that organisational behaviours, especially leadership practices of senior leaders have an even stronger influence in shaping workplaces, resulted in moves to senior general management positions, then into specialist group management roles where there was the ability to directly influence and shape organisational and leadership culture across an organisation. Exploring the practical application of Cameron's positive leadership model was a rare opportunity to work with practicing leaders to learn and understand their experiences of implementing the positive leadership approach in their workplace.

Another factor leading to this study was the desire of a number of Customs leaders, responsible for the Customs operations at the Christchurch International Airport, to increase performance in a number of critical operational areas. Previously, these leaders had been introduced to the positive leadership approach through the Customs in-house leadership development programme Leaders@Customs. After the researcher gave a presentation to a Customs leadership forum detailing the knowledge acquired from participating in the University of Michigan programmes, the researcher and several of the leaders at Christchurch International Airport agreed to implement Cameron's positive leadership model in their workplace. This presented the opportunity to take the positive leadership approach further though the intentional application of this conceptual model. Furthermore, it provided the rare opportunity for a researcher to explore leaders' experiences in the practical application of the positive leadership approach.

1.3   LOCAL RESEARCH CONTEXT

The Customs operational environment at Christchurch International Airport operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Two operations leaders and eight frontline leaders (Chief Customs officers) are responsible for the daily operations. The staff group consists of approximately 75 Customs or Senior Customs officers, 21 of whom work variable hours (as and when needed). The leaders and officers work rostered ten-hour shifts and depending on the roster, usually work six days on and four days off. The officers are divided into four teams, each led

by two Chief Customs officers. Over the six-month duration of the implementation, the Customs leaders and officers processed a total of 803,225 passengers: 413,486 on arrival and 389,736 on departure.[2]

1.4   ORGANISATIONAL RESEARCH CONTEXT

As one of the lead agencies responsible for the protection of New Zealand's border, Customs believes that leaders, especially frontline leaders, have a crucial role to play in influencing the workplace environment and the operational outcomes. In Customs, the majority of leaders in the operational areas have transitioned through the rank structure, which has a strong focus on leadership development, operational expertise, operational command, and stringent application of Customs legislation and operational procedures.

Customs operations at Christchurch International Airport are part of the New Zealand Customs Service. Established in 1840, the New Zealand Customs Service is the country's oldest government department. Its Māori name – Te Mana Ārai o Aotearoa – translates as *the authority that screens and protects New Zealand*. This public sector organisation is responsible for the administration of the Customs and Excise Act 1996 and has a lead role in protecting New Zealand's borders. At the time that the research was undertaken, the Customs Vision was: "Leadership and excellence in border management that enhances the security and prosperity of New Zealand."[3]

In the 2010–2011 year, Customs had over 1,200 staff. The majority (82%) worked in operational roles, based at all of New Zealand's 18 international airports and seaports, as well as in offices in Bangkok, Beijing, Brussels, Canberra, and Washington DC. In that year, Customs

- collected $9.540 billion in Crown revenue,
- processed 9.62 million international travellers,
- seized the equivalent of just over 3.6 million tablets of illicit drugs, and
- avoided potential harm to New Zealand through interceptions of methamphetamine equating to over $92 million.[4]

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[2] Official figures provided by the New Zealand Customs Service.
[3] According to the New Zealand Customs Service Annual Report 2010-2011.
[4] According to the New Zealand Customs Service Annual Report 2010-2011.

Avoidance of potential harm to New Zealand is measured through The New Zealand Drug Harm Index, which is an initiative led by the New Zealand Police that quantifies the value of the economic and social costs associated with illicit drugs and calculates the dollar rate of harm prevented through Customs activities and interceptions of methamphetamine. Methamphetamine is an illegal substance used to manufacture a variety of illicit drugs that the criminal fraternity then sell through various illegal avenues.

1.5   GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH

As already noted, the field component of the study commenced on 1 September 2010. Four days later, the research context was violently and irreversibly changed. On 4 September 2010, at 4:35a.m., Christchurch experienced a 7.1 magnitude earthquake.[5] The New Zealand Government declared a state of civil emergency for Canterbury and closed the Christchurch central business district. The earthquake caused damage and disruption, especially to buildings, power, and water facilities in the central city, as well as to suburban and rural locations across Canterbury. While there was no loss of life, there was damage of various degrees, the most predominant being to residential properties where chimneys collapsed through roofs. Severe soil liquefaction occurred in many areas. Soil liquefaction is a phenomenon whereby saturated or partially saturated soil, in response to an applied stress such as shaking from an earthquake, behaves like a liquid. Once dried, it adopts the consistency of fine sand.[6]

The earthquake had a significant emotional impact on the region. The community was shocked that such an unprecedented event had occurred, yet thankful that the earthquake had struck in the early hours of the morning; this was a time of minimal traffic with fewer people in the city areas. Therefore, despite the collapse of a number of buildings, no serious injuries were recorded. However, all schools, early childhood centres, and tertiary education centres, as well as the regions two universities, remained closed for nearly two weeks for health and safety assessments before reopening. Throughout the research period, Christchurch continued to experience aftershocks, a number of which were significant, and caused further damage to buildings and infrastructure. Each significant aftershock resulted in the closure of

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[5] Statistics according to GeoNet: GeoNet. (n.d.). M 7.1, Darfield (Canterbury), 4 September 2010. Retrieved from
   http://info.geonet.org.nz/display/quake/M+7.1%2C+Darfield+%28Canterbury%29%2C+4+September+2010
[6] Soil Liquefaction. (n.d.) In *Wikipedia.* Retreived 10 May 2015 from
   http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/soil_liquefaction

both the Christchurch domestic and international airports for runway inspections. This caused consequential disruptions to airline schedules and passengers as well as to airline and Customs staff that had to deal with the rescheduling of flights and distressed passengers. The most notable aftershocks were (a) a 5.1 magnitude aftershock on 8 September 2010, (b) a 5.0 magnitude earthquake on 19 October 2010, (c) a 4.9 earthquake on 26 December 2010, and (d) a 5.1 magnitude earthquake on 20 January 2011.

The disrupted operational environment that resulted from these frequent seismic events increased the potential for sections of the international criminal fraternity to take advantage of the disruption and attempt to bring in prohibited substances or materials and/or attempt to enter New Zealand illegally under various guises of earthquake recovery activities. Despite increased operational vigilance, continuing aftershocks, and disrupted personal lives (many leaders and officers had damage to their homes), the leaders decided to continue participating in the research and implementing the positive leadership model.

However, yet again, at 12:51 p.m. on 22 February 2011, Christchurch city and suburbs experienced a magnitude 6.3 earthquake.[7] Because the epicentre was only 10 kilometres from the city centre, and had a shallow depth (5 kilometres deep), it devastated the central city and destroyed a number of residential suburbs. In the central city, a number of multi-story buildings collapsed. Infrastructure, roads, homes, and business premises, especially in the eastern suburbs, were swamped by massive amounts of soil liquefaction. This time, 185 people were killed and 11, 432 people were injured. All of the Customs staff in Christchurch had property damage ranging from minor damages to destroyed homes with limited or non-existent access to community facilities. In some cases, family members of staff lost employment as their workplaces were either destroyed, inaccessible because of damage, or located in the "red zone."[8] As in the previous earthquakes, the Christchurch Customs staff continued to facilitate the arrival and departure of stressed and grieving passengers. After the February earthquake, they also managed the influx of international rescue teams and facilitated the departure of victims and their families. The New Zealand Government immediately instigated a national state of emergency and reinstated civil emergency

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[7] Statistics according to GeoNet: GeoNet. (n.d.). M 6.3, Christchurch, 22 February 2011. Retrieved from http://info.geonet.org.nz/display/quake/M+6.3%2C+Christchurch%2C+22+February+2011

[8] Red zone refers to the no access exclusion area designated by Civil Defence and Emergency Management authorities because of considerable damage and ongoing risk from severely damaged buildings. The area contained a high proportion of the Christchurch workforce.

management in Christchurch; this remained in place until late April 2011. The February earthquake is described as the second most deadly natural disaster recorded in New Zealand's history.[9]

1.6 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The positive leadership approach is an emerging field of study. The problem addressed in this study is that despite the increasing research agenda related to positive leadership, there is minimal guidance in the literature for leaders endeavouring to implement positive leadership, and the practicality of implementing this model has not been explored. Cameron's model prescribes four positive leadership strategies that can be used to implement positive leadership in the workplace. These include fostering positive climate, developing positive relationships, engaging in positive communication and reinforcing positive meaning. However, despite significant research on leadership behaviours that promote each of these strategies, most studies are discrete in that they focus on a specific strategy, rather than on the four strategies in combination. To support the implementation of positive leadership, Cameron suggests a number of positive practices, including the Everest goal (Cameron & Levine, 2006) and the personal management interview (PMI) (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002). However, these positive practices are complementary to, rather than inherent to, his model. For leaders seeking to implement positive leadership, there are no explicit and cohesive approaches offered in the literature. Similarly, there is minimal literature on the implementation of positive leadership by leaders in their own workplace. This is especially true for implementation in essential services workplaces affected by natural disaster events.

1.7 RESEARCH PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This research responds to the call of researchers Cameron, Mora, Leutscher, and Calarco (2011) noting the limited amount and scope of research on the relationship between positive practices (explained in section 2.2.2) and organisational effectiveness. They contend that a number of issues are in need of attention. In particular, they propose, "determining explicitly how to assist organizations in implementing positive practices is an area of needed investigation" (Cameron, et al., 2011, p. 27). One issue they contend is the lack of clarity about which specific positive interventions are most effective in increasing positive practice ratings.

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[9] The most deadly was the 1931 Napier earthquake that killed 256 people and devastated the Hawkes Bay Region.

Research focusing on the antecedents or consequences of positive leadership (Zbierowski & Góra, 2014) and interventions at the unit level that use individual traits such as employee talents and strengths (Meyers, van Woerkom & Bakker, 2013) is also needed. While retrospective, as this study was instigated in 2010, it does respond to the need for studies that make positive leadership explicit, accessible, and implementable for leaders. It also responds to Cameron and McNaughtan's (2014) call to research positive change based on the positive organizational scholarship concepts proposed by Cameron, Dutton, and Quinn (2003), so that POS and positive change concepts together, become a useful set of tools for leaders in organisations.

The purpose of this research was to address the problem of a gap in the literature contributing to knowledge on the practical application of positive leadership, especially from the leader's perspective. The objective was to explore the leaders' experiences of implementing Cameron's positive leadership model in the unprecedented disaster context within which the implementation took place. Through the application of a qualitative phenomenological approach, the overarching aim was to elicit the experiences and perceptions of the participating leaders, as well as to understand and share the essence of their real-life experience of implementing positive leadership using Cameron's model. The interpretative phenomenological framework and the methodology chosen for this study are discussed in Chapter 4.

1.8   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The review of the literature clearly identified an empirical knowledge gap on the practical application of CPLM and on the application of the positive strategies in the model from a leader's perspective. No previous studies investigating either were found. Therefore, the research questions for this study focused on the experiences of the leaders in implementing CPLM, explored what positive leadership strategies and positive practices leaders used, and how they used them in a workplace environment affected emotionally and operationally by ongoing earthquakes. Because this study is the first to implement Cameron's model[10] and the first that explores the implementation of the positive strategies and practices from the leader's

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[10] Ascertained through personal communication with Kim Cameron April 2009 and August 2014.

perspective, it was opportune to consider any changes that would optimise the utility and practical implementation of the model. These four questions guided the research:

- What was the lived experience of the leaders in their intentional implementation of CPLM in their workplace?
- What CPLM positive leadership strategies and positive practices did the leaders adopt in the implementation?
- How did the leaders use the leadership strategies and practices in a natural disaster workplace environment?
- What changes are suggested to Cameron's (2008) positive leadership model to optimise its practical implementation by leaders in the workplace?

Question Rationale

The rationale for the research questions stems from the following unexplored areas:

- the experiences of leaders (especially frontline) in the practical implementation of a positive leadership model in the workplace,
- the experiences of leaders (especially frontline) in applying positive strategies in the workplace, and
- the experiences of leaders (especially frontline) in adopting a positive leadership approach in the workplace.

1.9   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is that it contributes insights into the lived experiences of leaders in learning and applying the positive leadership approach. Furthermore, the phenomenological nature of the study elucidates the experiences of the leaders in using a conceptual positive leadership model as a framework to implement positive strategies. It also contributes knowledge on the positive strategies and on how the leaders used them when leading in adverse conditions.

This study contributes to the scarce body of knowledge on the practical implementation of positive leadership in the workplace. While there is increasing academic interest and scholarship in the phenomena related to positive leadership, there are no studies on the practical implementation of the conceptual positive leadership model proposed by

Cameron.[11] Considerable literature and empirical validation exists for each of the positive strategies suggested by Cameron for his model and for the two positive practices implemented in this study with the model (i.e. Everest goal and PMI). However, previous studies do not provide insights into the experiences of leaders in implementing a positive leadership model, nor insights from the perspectives of leaders about their experiences of implementing positive strategies and practices in the workplace.

An unexpected significance of this study is that the implementation took place during the catastrophic 2010 Canterbury and the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. Research on the implementation of positive leadership models and positive leadership behaviours is limited; there is limited knowledge on the potential of these to support leaders and organisations to achieve enhanced performance, whether in normal or adverse situations. Consequently, another significance of this study is that it seeks to address this knowledge gap through interpretation of the lived experiences of leaders who implemented the positive leadership model and applied positive strategies in a workplace impacted by continuous natural disaster events. Finally, in addition to these specific contributions, this study offers an overall contribution to the limited literature on positive leadership.

1.10 THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis consists of a further six chapters. Chapter 2 introduces the positive leadership approach and presents Cameron's positive leadership model. It describes the positive strategies in his model and the positive practices added to the model for the implementation. The concepts of positive strategies and positive practices applied in this study are explained.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the literature associated with this study. Compared to many other leadership approaches, positive leadership is a relatively new area of scholarly focus in academic literature. Therefore, to set positive leadership within a theoretical and contextual framework, and the criticisms of the positive approach, the review covers the foundational theories underpinning positive leadership principles and the studies and theories related to the positive leadership strategies and practices applied in this study.

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[11] Ascertained through personal communication with Kim Cameron April 2009 and August 2014.

Chapter 4 outlines the rationale for the choice of a qualitative interpretative phenomenological approach that is contrary to the majority of previous leadership studies. It explains the ontological and epistemological approach and the methods that guided the research. Descriptions of the participant sample, data collection instruments and methods, as well as the analysis procedures, are covered. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the validity and reliability, underlying assumptions, and ethical and privacy considerations of this study.

Chapter 5 follows the phenomenological approach and presents the findings in four central themes: Structure and Focus in Chaos, Working with Positive Strategies, Affecting Performance for the Better, and Compassion and Connectivity in Adversity. The combined textural and structural threads of the leaders' experiences extract and describe the overall implementation experience. From these, the interpretation of the essence of the overall experience from the leaders' perspective, contributes to answering the four research questions posed for this study.

Chapter 6 compares, contrasts, and discusses the findings and interpretations for the four central themes of the leaders experiences with other relevant studies and literature. This illuminates and provides salient insights into the leaders' implementation experiences and to their experiences of implementing positive strategies and practices in a workplace impacted by continuous natural disaster events.

Chapter 7 presents three conclusions resulting from the study. These relate to the leaders' experiences of implementing CPLM and to the utility of the model in a natural disaster environment. The study contributions, theoretical and practical implications and considerations for leaders and others interested in implementing positive leadership are discussed. The inherent limitations of the study are noted. Finally, are suggestions for future research directions and a postscript.

1.11 SUMMARY

Despite a growing research related to positive leadership, there is minimal guidance on the practicalities of implementing the approach. Cameron (2008) has proposed a conceptual positive leadership model. However, no studies have explored the practical implementation

of the model or of implementing the positive leadership approach from the perspective of leaders in the workplace. The purpose of the current research is to contribute knowledge on implementing Cameron's model and on using the positive strategies from the perspective of leaders. The significance of this study is the contribution to the limited research on implementing positive leadership, on applying a positive leadership model, and on using positive strategies and practices in the workplace. An unexpected significance of this study is the opportunity to contribute to the minimal amount of literature on implementing positive leadership in adverse conditions. This chapter concluded with an overview of the thesis structure. The following chapter introduces the positive leadership approach and Cameron's positive leadership model.

CHAPTER 2: POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

2.1   OVERVIEW

This chapter briefly introduces the positive leadership approach, describes Cameron's positive leadership model, the four positive strategies and the leadership behaviours related to these strategies in his model. It then explains the two positive practices added to the model for the implementation and the difference between positive strategies and positive practices applied in this study.

2.2   POSITIVE LEADERSHIP APPROACH

The positive leadership approach draws on the growing positivity literature that provides strong support for incorporating the principles of positive psychology (Seligman, 1999), positive organizational scholarship (POS) (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003), and positive organizational behavior (POB) (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Church, 2002) into the workplace environment. There is an increasing trend of attention on examining how leadership behaviours influence the dynamics of the workplace environment and on the role of leadership behaviours on follower positivity, wellbeing, positive psychological capital and performance outcomes (Avey, Avolio & Luthans, 2011; Cameron, 2008, 2012, 2013; Fredrickson, 2003; Kelloway, Weigand, McKee, & Das, 2013; Peterson, Luthans, Avolio, Walumbwa & Zhang, 2011). Furthermore, recent research (Zbierowski & Góra, 2014) suggests that positive leadership has a strong positive impact on managerial practices, positively influences outcomes for followers and for leaders, and that there is no age or work experience pre-requisite for applying the positive leadership approach in the workplace.

Positive leadership shares a common intellectual ancestry with authentic leadership in that both have emerged from studies on transformational leadership. However, underpinning and shaping positive leadership are the concepts of POS and the work of Kim Cameron and colleagues from the University of Michigan. Authentic leadership is underpinned by POB and progressed primarily by Fred Luthans from the University of Nebraska. The similarities and differences between positive leadership and authentic leadership are discussed in 3.4.2.

Regardless of ancestry positive leadership and the concept of positivity is not without its critics. Positive leadership is criticised as having a North American cultural approach to leadership that has the potential to manipulate the workforce and the whilst there may be benefits for employees most of the benefits are actually for the enhancement of leaders and organisations (Fineman, 2006b). Other criticisms are that there is little evidence that positivity is beneficial, and could actually be harmful to organisations (Ehrenreich, 2009). Also is that the focus on positive has the potential to not see or learn from negative events (Fineman, 2006a, 2006b), that positivity can lead to reckless optimism, could prevent recognition of escalating challenges, and suppress honest communication in organisations (George, 2004; Hackman, 2008).

In mitigation Cameron (2008) argues that the positive strategies described in his conceptual positive leadership model are universal across cultures and that cultural differences may alter the manner in which the strategies are implemented. Moreover, he claims that his evidence Cameron, 2008, 2012) suggests that the strategies themselves are universal in their effects, exemplify a heliotropic effect or inclination in all living systems towards positive, life-giving forces, and have practical utility in difficult circumstances. As such there is the potential for employees to benefit as well as organisations from positive leadership.

The framework for Cameron's positive leadership model are the principles and concepts that underpin the theories of leaders adopting an integrative approach to leveraging and affirming individual and workplace strengths through demonstrating a positive orientation in their approach to leadership. "Unique to positive leadership is that it is *elevating, exceptional* and *affirmative of strengths, capabilities* and *developmental potential*." (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013, p.201). Positive leadership is defined as "the ways in which leaders enable positively deviant performance, foster an affirmative orientation in organizations, and engender a focus on virtuousness and eudaemonism" (Cameron, 2008, p. 1). In positive leadership, positive deviance is an evaluative term that recognises "outcomes that dramatically exceed common or expected performance" (Cameron, 2008, p.2). A more detailed discussion of positive deviance is in section 3.3.1. Cameron (2008, pp. 97-103) proposes five positive principles, substantially similar to the positive strategies in CPLM, for leaders aspiring to enable positive deviance in their organisation. They are they are: enabling extraordinary performance by fostering a positive work climate, fostering positive

relationships among members, fostering positive communication, associating the work being done with positive meaning and implementing these principles through a PMI program. However, in this current study the research foci are the leaders in their experience of their implementation of CPLM. Sections 3.5 and 3.6 provide further discussion on the positive leadership approach that is the framework for the research in this study.

2.2.1 Cameron's Positive Leadership Model

Cameron's positive leadership model has evolved from his research into organisations that have achieved exceptional levels of success and from validated findings from other empirical research. The foundations of his model relate to the application of principles from positive organizational scholarship (POS) (Cameron, et al., 2003), positive psychology (Seligman, 1999) and the positive change literature (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). These principles have a focus on positive enhancement of performance, strengths, optimism, energy, and behaviours that support positive outcomes for individuals and organisations (Cameron, 2008). His model has four positive strategies of fostering positive climate, developing positive relationships, engaging in positive communication, and reinforcing positive meaning. In Cameron's model, the term "positive strategies" applies to each of the categories of leadership behaviours that comprise the four positive strategies in the model and describes the types of leadership behaviours that have a positive orientation. Drawing on his own experiences and scholarship, he suggests a number of leadership behaviours that can be used to action each of the positive strategies. Based on empirical evidence and observations from a number of investigations, Cameron found that although these strategies are amongst the most important enablers of positive deviance, leaders rarely use them. Figure 1 shows Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM), which formed the foundational framework for this study.

Four Leadership Strategies that Enable Positive Deviance
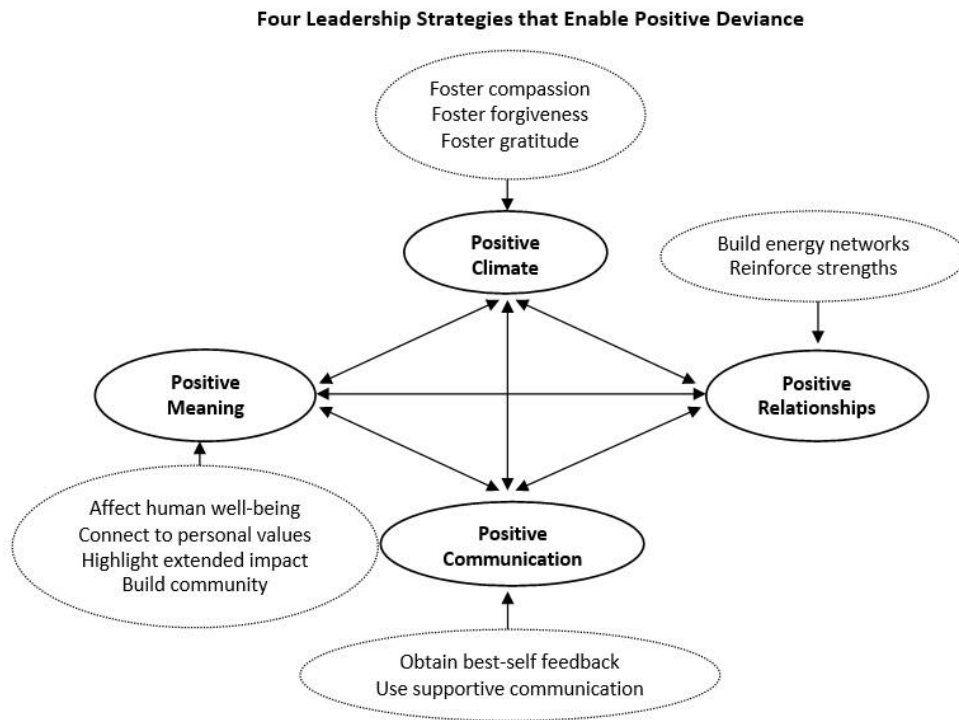
Figure 1: Representation of Cameron's positive leadership model. Adapted from *Positive leadership: strategies for extraordinary performance*, by K. S. Cameron, Figure 1.3, p. 14. Copyright 2008 by K. S. Cameron.

In the model, the suggested positive leadership behaviours associated with each of the strategies have been empirically validated through other studies as enabling and supporting positive outcomes in organisations. Leadership behaviours that contribute to a positive climate include fostering compassion, forgiveness and gratitude. Leader behaviours that facilitate positive energy, or build energy networks, and reinforce strengths in the workplace contribute to fostering positive relationships. Positive communication has a focus on Obtaining positive best-self feedback, especially in relation to occasions when others have observed the individual operating effectively, and using supportive and descriptive communication as a prerequisite and enabler of positive performance are behaviours used to foster positive communication. Reinforcing the meaning, importance, and contribution that the work of the organisation offers to others and focusing on contribution goals rather than individual achievement goals are behaviours associated with fostering positive meaning.

In combination, these four positive strategies make up Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM) implemented by the leaders in this study. For reasons explained in Chapter 4, obtaining best-self feedback (Roberts, Dutton, Spreitzer, Heaphy, & Quinn, 2005) in the communication strategy was not included in the implementation. As previously noted, this

was the first study to implement Cameron's model, so it was not possible to build on previous adaptations or implementations of the model.

2.2.2 Organisational Positive Practices

In his latest book, Cameron (2013) introduces the notion that positive leadership practices lead to positive strategies. Positive practices have an organisational focus as opposed to positive strategies that have a focus on individual leadership behaviours.   Cameron, et al. (2011, p. 5) describe positive practices as "collective behaviors or activities sponsored by and characteristic of an organization." Cameron (2013, p. 151) proposes four positive practices that he contends support the implementation of the four positive strategies in his model. He describes these practices as "developing positive energy networks," "delivering negative feedback positively," "establishing Everest goals," and "creating a culture of abundance." His proposition is that these four positive practices lead to the four positive strategies defined in the model.

In this study, two positive practices, the Everest goal and the Personal Management Interview programme were added to the four positive strategies in Cameron's model. The reason for this addition was the performance improvement that was the focus for the leaders in implementing positive leadership in their workplace.

2.3   SUMMARY

This chapter briefly introduced the positive leadership approach and Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM), which provided the foundational framework for this research. It explained the strategies in Cameron's model and the notion of positive practices that have an organisational focus as opposed to positive strategies that have a focus on individual leadership behaviours.

Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature relevant to positive leadership and to the theories inherent in the positive strategies and practices associated with the positive leadership approach.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature relevant to positive leadership, and theories inherent in the positive strategies associated with positive leadership. To position positive leadership within a theoretical and contextual framework, the chapter begins with an overview of the foundational theories underpinning positive leadership principles. Research and theories related to the positive strategies in Cameron's positive leadership model are then considered. Because of the natural disaster environment that affected this study, literature on the implications of such events on employee and workplace behaviours is also reviewed.

Positive leadership is a relatively new area of research compared to many other leadership approaches. The criteria for selecting literature for review were based on prior research relating to the connotations and constructs of positive organizational scholarship (POS) and the strategies inherent in the positive leadership approach.   The studies that were located predominantly applied a quantitative or a mixed methods approach. A small number of studies involving the implementation of the positive leadership approach were identified. These studies involved the implementation of a set of positive practices, rather than the four positive strategies underpinning Cameron's model. In all of the studies reviewed, implementation of positive practices was from an organisational level, as opposed to this study, where the implementation was from a frontline level. No literature on the practical implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model was located. While there is considerable literature on each of the individual positive strategies in Cameron's model, no studies were located that examined the implementation of these strategies from the perspective of frontline leaders.

3.2   POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

One of the foundations of the positive leadership approach is positive psychology. Positive psychology focuses on positive characteristics and on what is right, rather than wrong, with people. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) described positive psychology as being focused on the study of positive subjective experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions, while encouraging a science that takes as its primary task the understanding of

what makes life worth living. Pursuing a focus on positive psychology does not imply psychology is negative it is taking another perspective on the approach to psychology that seeks to study positive rather than negative phenomenon, states, and interventions. Furthermore, the results of a meta-analysis of 51 positive psychology interventions aimed at cultivating positive feelings, behaviours, or cognitions that involved 4,266 individuals revealed that positive psychology interventions significantly enhance wellbeing (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

However, one of the perils of discussing the concepts of positive psychology and positive leadership within a business environment is the propensity for the interpretation that they are just "positive thinking." Lewis (2011, p.3) states the main difference between positive thinking and positive psychology is that "positive psychology is subjected to the rigours of scientific experimentation and endorsement, suggesting that the phenomena discovered are reliable and repeatable." Lewis contends positive thinking deals more with the realm of anecdote and exhortation. Additionally, as noted by Ehrenreich (2009), when positive thinking is not effective, the tendency is to take a tautological position that it was because the proponent was not positive enough. Positive psychology deals with the sources of psychological wellness, such as positive emotions, positive experiences, positive environments, human strengths and virtues (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2007). There is also a difference in the literature in that positive psychology literature accommodates the reality of negative events, emotions, and behaviours and recognises the importance of these to human wellbeing. These dimensions separate positive psychology and its theoretical underpinning for positive leadership from positive thinking.

Despite an earlier programme of positive-based research and a number of seminal papers produced by Rexford Hersey in the 1920s[12] and 1930s,[13] when Martin Seligman introduced the concept of "positive psychology" in 1999, it was considered significantly different from the traditional approach in psychology, which involved studying the negative effects and behaviour deficit factors of experiences and treatments. Seligman proposed three main areas for positive focus: emotions, traits, and institutions where people flourish. Czapinski (1985) had previously noted the predominantly negative bias in psychology; from an evaluation and

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[12] Hersey, R.B. (1929). Periodic emotional changes in male workers. *Personnel Journal, 7,* 459-464.
[13] Hersey, R.B. (1930). A monotonous job in an emotional crisis. *Personnel Journal, 9,* 290-296.
  Hersey, R.B. (1932). *Workers' emotions in shop and home: A study of industrial workers from the physiological and physiological standpoint.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

coding of Polish psychology research articles, he identified that there was a 2:1 ratio of negative focus to positive or neutral focus in the articles reviewed. In fact, the propensity for a predominant focus on negative domains in psychology, rather than the positive or a balance between positive and negative, was noticed by Maslow (1954), who called for research on positive aspects of self-reliance, courage, humility, kindness and actualisation of potential. More recent scholars have also lamented the imbalance of negative to positive focus in articles published in the social sciences (Luthans & Church, 2002; Meyers, 2000; Sheldon & King, 2001; Wright, 2003; Wright & Quick, 2009).

Positive psychology has been advanced on a number of fronts to include the domains of wellbeing and happiness (Diener, 2000), optimism (Peterson, 2000), and hope (Snyder, 2000). Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) summarised findings from other studies and proposed that positive individual subjective experiences influence the capacities of wellbeing and contentment with the past, flow and happiness in the present, and hope and optimism for the future. They also summarised the domains into analysis levels of subjective, micro/individual, and macro/group or organisational. The subjective level includes positive subjective experience, such as wellbeing and contentment with the past, flow and happiness in the present, and hope and optimism for the future.   The micro/individual level also includes positive traits such as the capacity for love, courage, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom. The macro/group or organisational level includes positive virtues and behaviours by those in organisations that provide encouragement for individuals to move towards higher levels of citizenship, responsibility, and a strong work ethic. Increasingly, these domains are being recognised as important for engendering the positive approach to leadership, which is broader than the leader-follower dyad alone. As such, positive psychology has started to gain support in the fields of psychology and organisational behaviour. For example, when applied to the concept of positive leadership, the positive psychology approach provides an understanding of the benefits of shifting the emphasis and focus from what is wrong to what is right about people and organisations, as well as providing an understanding of ways of achieving this.

3.2.1 Positive Psychology Interventions

The effects of positive psychology interventions applied in organisational contexts were explored by Meyers, et al. (2013, p. 618). They defined psychological interventions as "any intentional activity or methods based on the cultivation of positive subjective experiences,

focused on the building of positive individual traits or the building of civic virtue and positive institutions." They examined 15 studies on the effects of such interventions in organisations. Their main finding was that positive psychological interventions in the work context consistently enhance employee wellbeing. Meyers, et al. (2013) suggested that positive psychology interventions appear to be a promising tool for enhancing employee wellbeing and performance. Furthermore, they proposed that as a flow-on effect, such interventions also tended to diminish stress and burnout, and to a lesser extent, depression and anxiety.

Interventions based on positive psychology are argued to be effective in improving positive affect. Positive affect represents the spectrum of valence feeling states and attitudes (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Fredrickson and Losada (2005) use the term positive affect and positivity interchangeably as representing the pleasant end of a continuum. To test their hypothesis on the potential of positive psychological interventions to increase individual happiness, Seligman, et al., designed a web-based study consisting of a placebo control exercise and five other exercises, each with a different psychological focus of building gratitude, increasing awareness of what is most positive about one's self, and identifying strengths of character. Results showed that two of the exercises in particular increased happiness and decreased depressive symptoms for six-months. The most effective exercises were those where participants identified and used one of their top strengths in new and different ways and those that involved participants' reflecting on and writing about three things that went well and what caused these things to go well. One of the central tenets of positive leadership is to encourage a strengths-based approach, express gratitude, and use positive recognition or noticing to reinforce positive behaviours and good work performance.

A more recent study assessed the effectiveness of two self-administered interventions, aimed at increasing employee wellbeing, based on positive psychology (Kaplan, Bradley-Geist, Ahmad, Anderson, Hargrove & Lindsey, 2014). The findings from this quantitative study showed that the gratitude intervention resulted in significant increases in positive affective wellbeing and self-reported gratitude, but did not significantly affect negative affective wellbeing or self-reported social connectedness. The study showed that gratitude and social connectedness had an impact on wellbeing and identified a relationship between these factors and a reduction in workplace absence due to illness. The findings from these studies add to the growing body of literature that provides support for the benefits claimed for the positive leadership approach.

3.2.2 Positive Psychology Criticisms

The positive psychology movement is not without its critics and challengers, and what constitutes the notion of positive, is not universal (Golden-Biddle & Mao, 2012). As a consequence, positive psychology and the positive approach are not without detractors, of which Lazarus (2003) is a good example. The implicit message of positive psychology and the positive approach, according to Lazarus, is the call to separate positive from negative. He argues that aside from uncertainties and misunderstandings about what defines positive and negative, this polarity represents two sides of the same coin of life. He takes a theoretical stance that it is important to recognise that any emotion can have a negative as well as a positive valence depending on the context in which it occurs. Lazarus argues that affect is a reflection of the process of coping and that, consequentially, the same life challenge may provoke both a positive and negative affect, depending on how the individual views the event as well as on their coping and adaptation response. His unease is that in narrowing the focus of attention too much to one side or the other, there is the danger of losing needed perspective. While he has no issue with giving more attention to the positive, this should not come at the expense of the negative. His central argument is that above all, positive and negative should not be regarded as separate.

However, some researchers such as Gable and Haidt (2005) are concerned about the possibility that Lazarus' (2003) approach may lead to neglecting the potential value of separating the positive from the negative in nomothetic research, particularly in working with positive and negative signals on areas related to neural and cognitive responses. Others (Matthews & Zeidner, 2003; Campos 2003) argue that separation of negative from positive will not progress the field. Rather, what is needed is high quality nomothetic and idiographic research in the domains of coping, emotions, and personality. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2003) supports their concerns. He argues that the agenda for positive psychology, despite the differences in dichotomy, is to build on and contribute to other branches of contemporary science and to recognise the many similarities in the aims rather than exacerbate the differences.

A further criticism, which is similar to that levelled at positive leadership, is that positive psychology fails to recognise the very real negative side of life. It encourages taking a Pollyanna view of the world and life events and this has the potential for the movement to have qualities similar to those of cults where people come together to share their

Pollyannaism (Gable & Haidt, 2005). In mitigation, Gable and Haidt point out that the positive psychology movement assists with studying appropriate topics more effectively, that the field consists of top scholars from eminent universities and that the results of their studies are published in mainstream journals. Furthermore, they contend that the future task of positive psychology is to understand the factors that build strengths, outline the contexts of resilience, ascertain the role of positive experiences, and delineate the function of positive relationships with others. Clearly these are all areas of study that would contribute to building and applying the positive leadership approach.

From the literature reviewed so far, it is evident that the aim of positive psychology is to move the focus of psychology from repairing the damage and deficits of life to building strengths and positive reservoirs for prevention, coping, and even for flourishing in adverse circumstances; in essence, to move the focus from deficit to flourishing. The benefits positive psychology can offer for positive leadership is the validation that this approach builds strengths and positive reservoirs for coping, and even flourishing, especially in adverse circumstances. In the deliberate implementation of positive leadership, being cognisant of the insights provided by positive psychology is useful when seeking ways in which leaders can influence and maintain a workplace environment that supports the opportunity for positively deviant performance.

3.3 POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP (POS)

Positive psychology is one of the foundations for POS (Cameron, et al., 2003), which is the guiding premise of the positive leadership concept and the model implemented in this research. POS has a focus on identifying and developing positive organisational characteristics that lead to exceptional individual and organisational performance (Cameron, et al., 2003). It has a bias towards investigating the ways in which organisations and those within them can flourish, through developing strengths, in order to achieve exceptional performance. POS emerged from researcher concerns that an array of organisational phenomena was being ignored and terms such as "flourishing" or "positive deviance" were not being used to describe outcomes; "Consequently, such phenomena were neither systematically studied nor valued" (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012, p. 4). POS works with the premise that the "heliotropic effect exists" (Cameron, & McNaughtan, 2014. p. 457). This effect is defined by Cameron, (2008, p. xi) as "the tendency in all living systems towards that

which gives life and away from that which depletes life – towards positive energy and away from negative energy."

POS has at least four connotations based on a positive orientation. These are adopting a positive lens, focusing on positively deviant performance, assuming an affirmative bias, and examining virtuousness of the best of the human condition (Cameron, et al., 2003; Cameron & McNaughtan, 2014). Taking this approach is applying a positive lens to dynamics typically described as positive attributes, such as excellence, thriving, and resilience (Spreitzer, 2003). More succinctly, it is looking at the same picture of organisational life with a different paradigmatic lens (Caza & Caza, 2008) or reinterpreting negative events and issues as opportunities and experiences (Gittell, Cameron, Lim & Rivas, 2006). In many ways, the emphasis is on the "how" to see rather than on "exactly what to see" (Caza & Cameron, 2009, p.100). POS acts as an umbrella concept, spanning across a diverse set of theories and topics (Cameron, Bright & Caza, 2004). As an overarching concept, it draws from the full spectrum of organisational theories to understand, explain, and predict the occurrence, causes, and consequences of positivity, and it is described as being "concerned with the study of especially positive outcomes, processes, and attributes of organizations and their members" (Cameron et al., 2003, p. 4). It is not the nature of the phenomena; rather it is the positive perspective that moves an issue into the POS domain (Cameron & McNaughtan, 2014). In his paper on establishing and extending the foundations of highly reliable performance, Vogus (2012) proposes that part of the strength of POS is its focus on richly capturing the subjective experience of organisational life.

3.3.1 Positive Deviance

Central to POS is the concept of positive deviance, or the ways in which organisations and the people in them flourish and produce extraordinary outcomes. Broadly defined by Bono, Davies and Rasch (2012), flourishing at work includes employee thriving (e.g. vitality and learning), happiness (e.g. positive moods and emotions), and engagement (e.g. job satisfaction and self-determined motivation). Positive deviance is an evaluative term that recognises conduct that ought or ought not to occur (Clinard & Meier, 2001). Warren (2003, p. 624) defines deviance at an individual level "as a departure from norms" that can be either constructive or destructive. However, in order for this to be determined, the deviant behaviour needs to be compared to some measure or standard of what should or ought to be. Intentions, not outcomes, is what Spreitzer and Sonenshein (2004) argue to be an important

criterion for positive deviance. Based on a firm theoretical foundation, they offer a definition of "intentional behaviors that significantly depart from the norms of a referent group in honourable ways" (p. 841). They claim that unlike Warren's definition above, their definition can apply at a micro/individual level and at a macro/group or organisational level, and it provides criteria for measurement.

The credibility of POS, and the likelihood of organisations investing in strategies that enable positive deviance, depends to some degree on the ability of POS "to demonstrate desired effects of organizational positivity on organizational performance and improvement" (Cameron, et al., 2011, p.19). Despite some concerns and controversy regarding the terms "positive" and "positive orientation" in the literature (Campos, 2003; Fineman, 2006a, 2006b; George, 2004; Hackman, 2009a, 2009b; Lazarus, 2003), the terms are appearing more frequently in scholarly studies. With its focus on positivity and positive deviance, POS is credited with opening up, rather than restricting, organisational studies (Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012; Caza & Cameron, 2009; Dutton & Glynn, 2008).   Other scholars have examined the potential of positive orientation from a more micro/individual level and macro/group level approach.

3.4   POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR (POB)

Positive organizational behaviour (POB) is also based on positive psychology and promoting a positive leadership approach (Luthans, 2002; Luthans & Avolio, 2009; Luthans & Church, 2002). POB seeks to contribute to improving employee performance and to strengthening organisational performance and competitiveness (Linley, Harrington, & Garcea, 2010). In POB, at the macro/group or organisational level, the focus is on follower strengths, while at the micro/individual level, the focus is on positive state-like psychological capacities that are measurable and open to development and performance management (Luthans & Church, 2002).   Luthans and Church (2002, p. 59) define POB as "the study and application of positively orientated human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace." It has a strong focus on individual factors such as hope, optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy (Luthans, 2002; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007). Luthan's argument for pursuing this stream of thinking grew from his concerns that the organisational development field needed a positive, proactive approach that emphasised strengths, rather than continuing what he considered the downward, negative spiral of endeavouring to "fix what is wrong with

managers and employees and concentrating on weaknesses" (Luthans & Church, 2002, p. 57).

3.4.1 Psychological Capital

One of the strongest contributions of POB, according to Woolley, Caza, and Levy (2011), has been the development and study of the construct of psychological capital (PsyCap). PsyCap is an individual's positive psychological state of development based on self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007; Luthans & Youssef, 2004; Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). It is linked conceptually to work outcomes, such as performance and behaviours, and varies within individuals depending on contextual circumstances such as the individual's characteristics or working with an inspirational leader (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007).   More recently, Youssef and Luthans (2010) proposed the combination of capacities is what contributes to an individual's PsyCap. Furthermore, they contend that this is a more reliable predictor of performance, satisfaction, and absenteeism in the workplace than the separate component capacities. Recent empirical research by Luthans, Youssef, Sweetman, and Harms (2013), have extended PsyCap into the wellbeing domain; a recent study of a cross section of 523 employees took the relationship PsyCap domains of employee attitude, behaviors, and performance and when extending these into the wellbeing domain, found a link between relationship PsyCap and health PsyCap. The researchers proposed that this combination contributed to work and life satisfaction and to overall wellbeing. For leaders, these findings have implications for meeting the challenges of influencing positivity as well as for understanding and developing wellbeing and performance in the workplace.

The PsyCap capacity of self-efficacy or confidence is a persistent theme linked to the positive approach. Bandura (2000) contended that the more confident the individual, the more likely they will be to welcome a new challenge, want to perform in the task, and put more effort and motivation into successfully accomplishing the task. Furthermore, in the situation of obstacles being encountered or initial failure, the individual will demonstrate more persistence to complete the task successfully. These capacities are substantially similar to those Luthans (2002) suggested were necessary for a highly confident leader or employee to achieve effectiveness and high performance in the workplace. His view was supported by a meta-analysis of 114 studies by Stajkovic and Luthans (1998), which found a stronger relationship between self-efficacy and work-related performance than other popular

organisational behaviour domains. Luthans and Church (2002) have suggested that the real value of a POB approach for the future is in its application to the development and performance improvement of both leaders and employees. It is the development and performance orientation that Luthans (2002) has argued separates POB from the broader positive psychology movement.

3.4.2 Two Approaches POS and POS

The POS approach (in contrast to the POB approach) is more concerned with processes considered to have stable or trait-like qualities. It takes a more macro/group or organisational level of analysis and approach (Cameron, et al., 2003; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Additionally, POS has a macro and a micro orientation with the proposition that "by unlocking capacities for elements such as meaning creation, relationship transformation, positive emotion cultivation, and high quality connections, organizations can produce sustained sources of collective capability that help organizations thrive" (Cameron et al. 2003, p.10). Furthermore, compared to Cameron, who takes a definitive positive leadership approach, grounded in POS, Luthans promotes positive leadership through the authentic leadership approach applying the concepts related to POB. Authentic leadership and positive leadership share an intellectual ancestry in that both have a foundation in transformational leadership (Bass, Waldman, Avolio & Bebb, 2006). Both have a focus on leadership behaviours and on how these behaviours affect followers' behaviours. The theories for both are still in the formative stages and the practical approaches to implementing not yet fully developed or substantiated. Furthermore, both authentic leadership and positive leadership share a foundation of positive psychology. Figure 2 on the following page provides an overview of the intellectual ancestry linkages of positive leadership and authentic leadership.
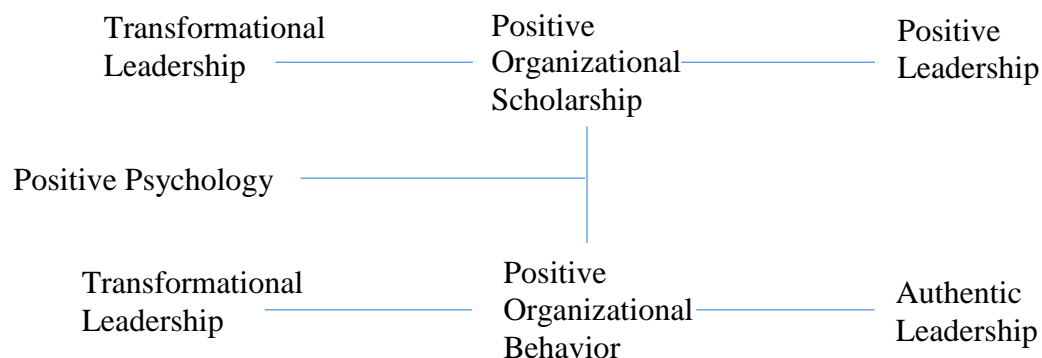
Figure 2: Ancestry and linkages between positive leadership and authentic leadership.

While there are many similarities, there are also a number of significant differences. Authentic leadership has an emphasis on the ethical and moral components of leadership and this according to Woolley, Caza, and Levy (2011) moves authentic leadership beyond transformational leadership. Cameron, (2008) argues that positive leadership moves on from transformational leadership in that it has an emphasis on positivity. Authentic leadership promotes positive psychological capacities and has a focus on whether leadership is genuine. Four defining attributes posited for authentic leaders are: self-awareness; internalised moral perspective; balanced processing; and relational transparency (Avolio & Luthans, 2006). Positive leadership in contrast has the prerequisite to adopt a positive approach to leadership and on dramatically affecting organisational performance for the better (Cameron, 2008). However, while authentic leadership can be considered a form of positive leadership, like transformational leadership it does not have the focus on positivity that is the core of positive leadership (Youssef & Luthans, 2012).

Despite the similarities and differences between POS and positive leadership, and POB and authentic leadership, POS offers little acknowledgement of POB and the micro, state-like insights that it can provide in terms of enhancing performance improvement and implementation of CPLM. For example, POB treats positive efficacy as a state that can be developed and effectively managed. The implication of this for implementing the positive leadership approach is that development can occur in individuals and research evidence suggests that positive self-efficacy (confidence) can enhance performance. Of particular note is the point on which both Cameron and Luthans converge and that is the assertion that

positive leadership is not inherent, and that positive leadership behaviours can be learned (see Cameron, 2008, 2012; Luthans, 2002; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013). A contribution open to this study is to explore this assertion through the experience of the leaders in their intentional application of Cameron's positive leadership model.

3.4.3 Points and Counterpoints

Despite claims by researchers that there are a number of differences between POS and POB, these claims have come under scrutiny. Hackman (2009b, p. 321) has contended that to him "the two streams of work look awfully similar." He acknowledges that there are indeed distinctions between POS and POB and that one of the distinctions claimed by POB researchers is that of performance improvement at the micro/individual level. Cameron, et al. (2003) and Cameron and Spreitzer (2012) also claim performance improvement for POS but on a macro/group or organisational level. Fineman (2006a) argues that the perspective of POS to support the best in human endeavour is rather more problematic than it initially appears. The reason he claims is that in his view the concept of "best" (p. 270) in virtues and values, is a much contested terrain. Additionally, the separation of positive from negative experiences and emotions, he contends, is unstable as there is more to lose than gain by this separation, which in his view, is at odds with the evidence that positive and negative feelings are formed interdependently and are mutually connected. He argues that the capacity to hold these two feelings in constructive tension is a mark of individual maturity and Lazarus (2003) as mentioned earlier has concerns that whilst he has no issue with giving more attention to the positive this should not come at the expense of the negative and above all they should not be regarded as separate.

Other scholars have argued that they find little that is positive in POS, asserting that positivity denies reality, that there is scarce evidence that positivity does indeed foster success, and that positivity has the potential to manipulate the workforce to make organisations and leaders look good (Ehrenreich, 2009; George, 2004). Furthermore, Fineman (2006a) points out that the validation of POS is tied broadly to the North American cultural norms where individualism, optimism and self- confidence are celebrated and that its platform would be strengthened by incorporating both intercultural and intercultural differences in the way positiveness is meant and valued. From the literature reviewed a similar concern could validly be raised about POB.

Recently Cameron, (Spreitzer & Cameron, 2012) recognised and acknowledged the concern that POS research neglected non-managerial employees, especially those from different ethnicities and perspectives, and called for POS research to do more work to benefit the understanding of how to create a more positive work context for those in the lower rungs of society. As mentioned previously criticisms similar to those levelled at POS are made against positive leadership. In mitigation Cameron (2008) argues that the concepts of POS are universal and that the positive strategies described in his conceptual positive leadership model are universal across cultures and acknowledges that cultural differences may alter the manner in which the strategies are implemented.

While positive psychology, POS, and POB each have similarities and differences, and points and counterpoints, it is evident from the literature reviewed in each of these fields that each continues to contribute to the advancement of the developing field of positive leadership. It is also evident from the literature that "leadership is not merely the influential act of an individual or individuals but rather is embedded in a complex interplay of numerous interacting forces" (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007, p. 302).   This leaves an opportunity for this research to explore performance improvement at the micro/individual or frontline level of an organisation.

3.5   POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

POS and POB have contributed to the progressive evolution of taking a more holistic view of leadership. Positive leadership, as noted in Chapter 2, is defined by Cameron (2008, p. 1) as "the ways in which leaders enable positively deviant performance, foster an affirmative orientation in organizations, and engender a focus on virtuousness and eudaemonism." He contends positive leadership does not imply that "leaders should just smile and that everything will be fine" (p. 104). Rather, "positive leadership implies even higher standards of performance, more rigorous expectations than normal, and achievement that exceeds by a wide margin customary or average execution" (p. 104). In organisations, people come to leadership roles through multiple pathways and collectively bring a variety of life, workplace, and emotional experiences. In their summary of a comprehensive meta-analysis of existing research into leadership, Avolio, Griffith, Wernsing, and Walumbwa (2010) concluded that the emergence of people into leadership roles is the result of approximately two-thirds life

experience and one-third heritability. They suggest that this indicates that life experiences are more important that innate abilities. Additionally, age and prior work experience have been found to have no negative impact on the ability to adopt a positive leadership orientation (Zbierowski & Góra, 2014).   This may also suggest that the ability to learn and to adopt the positive leadership approach is more contingent on mind-set, as opposed to skill-set, and that could influence the life experiences of leaders.

Others have developed their own definitions of positive leadership and examined them against a number of relationships and employee affect. Kelloway, et al. (2013) defined positive leadership as "leadership behaviors that result in followers' experiencing positive emotions" and defined positive leadership behaviors as "those behaviours that are enacted by leaders and result in increasing followers' experience of positive emotions" (2013, p. 108). Based on these definitions, Kelloway et al. (2013) undertook two related studies reported in the same academic article. In the first study, a sample of 1,600 employees at a long-term nursing care facility in eastern Canada completed a questionnaire with five positive leadership items. Participants were asked to reflect on the past four months of work and to indicate how often their leader had thanked them, praised them for job performance, cheered them up, gone out of their way to help them, and complimented them. Each item had a five-point rating scale with higher scores indicating higher frequency of behaviour. Results suggested that based on their newly developed measures, positive leadership behaviors are empirically distinct from transformational leadership behaviors and added to the prediction of context-specific and context-free wellbeing over and above the prediction attributable to transformational leadership.

In the second related study, Kelloway et al. (2013) aimed to extend the findings of the first study by examining positive leadership behaviors in a short-term study utilising a sample of 26 full-time employees from a Canadian coffee retail organisation. Over a three-week period, participants completed a confidential daily diary. Six times over the same period, participants completed a survey using the previously developed five-item positive leadership survey with a four-point Likert-type response scale. From the results, Kelloway et al. (2013) suggested that there is considerable positive value for followers in teaching leaders to engage in positive interactions with their followers. Both studies were useful in establishing a relationship between positive emotions and positive leadership behaviours. However, the quantitative nature of the studies, and the fact that the data source for the studies was

followers rather than leaders, does not reduce the knowledge gap of the leader's experience of implementing positive leadership. While responses to the survey questions relied on participant memory of past events and emotions, in both studies the results showed that employees noticed and valued positive leadership behaviours.

Increasingly, there is recognition that one of the most important and influential relationships in the workplace is the one between an employee and that employee's direct leader (Lazear, Shaw, & Stanton, 2012). Leaders have responsibility for productivity and achievement of workplace outcomes. Using the daily productivity transaction records covering 23,878 individual employees and 1,940 direct leaders from a United States customer services based organisation in the technology sector, Lazear et al. (2012) examined the effects of leaders' behaviours on the productivity of their direct report employees from June 2006 to May 2010. They found that leaders are important, and although they vary in productivity, the marginal product of a leader is about twice that of the marginal product of a typical employee. High quality leaders are defined as those who take a positive orientation to teaching, motivating, and communicating with their employees. They have a higher positive affect on high productivity employees than on low productivity employees. Furthermore, Lazear et al. found that from the employee's perspective, in most workplaces "the relationship with one's boss is likely to be as or more important than that to any other worker (2012, p.3). Of particular interest to the positive leadership approach are the findings that replacing a leader who is in the lower 10% of leader quality with one who is in the upper 10% of leader quality can increase a team's total productivity output by about the same amount as would adding another employee to a nine person team. Such findings endorse the importance of the employee-leader relationship within the workplace, and they indicate the importance, impact, and potentiality of leadership behaviours grounded in a positive approach.

3.6 PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF POSITIVE LEADERSHIP

Since the objective in this phenomenological study was leaders' experiences of the practical implementation of the positive leadership model, the aim of this literature review was to identify and examine similar studies. While no studies on the practical application of Cameron's positive leadership model were found, there were three North American studies that explored the implementation of a positive leadership approach and the implementation of positive practices (Cameron, et al., 2011; Cameron & Plews, 2012; Vanette & Cameron, 2009). In these studies, initiation and implementation was through a centralised head office,

rather than by the frontline leaders themselves. A more recent study by Zbierowski and Góra (2014) examined the nature, antecedents and consequences of positive leadership and offered practical recommendations on how to shape positive leadership and endorse the importance of positivity in the workplace.

One North American study (Vanette & Cameron, 2009) explored the journey to change the culture of a financial retirement company (Prudential Financial) by implementing the concepts of POS through a positive leadership approach. The CEO initiated and led the implementation with his leadership team. A positive energy network exercise was used to select a small change team to be responsible for championing POS within the organisation. One of the change team goals was to ensure that every employee experienced at least two sessions on POS. The organisation set a clear Everest goal and encouraged leaders to institute high engagement and employee empowerment activities, as well as to use supportive communication in delivering negative feedback. A number of the business units instituted the personal management interview (PMI) program as a way to provide leaders with the opportunity to demonstrate and reinforce positive behaviours. A number of statistical analyses revealed that positive practices had a positive influence on employee morale, on relationships between leaders and their staff, and intent of employees to remain in the organisation. Higher scores on these factors equated to business units with higher scores on the use of positive practices.

In a later study, Cameron and Plews (2012) explored the implementation of positive leadership in action with the CEO of Prudential Real Estate and Relocation. The organisation applied similar strategies to the previous study and achieved the successful merger of two culturally different organisations. They also achieved significant improvements in financial performance, customer satisfaction ratings, and employee engagement.

In an attempt to empirically examine the link between positive practices and organisational effectiveness, Cameron, et al. (2011) carried out two interrelated studies with the aim of revealing which specific positive practices relate to which specific indicators of effectiveness. The quantitative study covered 40 business units in financial services and 29 nursing units in healthcare over multiple years. Six positive practice dimensions, defined as "collective behaviors or activities sponsored by and characteristic of an organization" (p. 5), that had been based on previous POS-related research were used to develop a positive practice

assessment survey instrument. The survey sought responses about the positive practice dimensions and activities of the organisations (the unit of analysis), rather than about individual attitudes or attributes. As previously noted in Chapter 2, (section 2.2.2), these positive practice dimensions are not the same as positive strategies, but they do have similarities. For example, the positive practice dimension of emphasising the meaning of work compares to the positive meaning strategy. Results from the study showed that the use of positive practices does predict organisational performance and that improvement in positive practices predicts improvements in certain indicators of effectiveness over time. Cameron et al. (2011) suggested that these results can be explained by the amplifying, buffering, and heliotropic effects of positivity in human systems. Although all of these studies were comprehensive and related to the implementation of positive practices using positive strategies, such as having an Everest goal and using PMIs, the researchers applied quantitative methodology and data was taken from a number of perspectives, but no data was taken from the perspective of the leaders' experiences.

More recently, Zbierowski and Góra (2014) used quantitative analysis on questionnaire-generated data from a sample of 59 mid-level managers to test five hypotheses. They measured the influence of some of the antecedents on positive leadership and the impact of positive leadership on some of its consequences. They found that the positive leadership style had a strong positive impact on managerial practices and that optimism and high resilience positively influenced positive leadership, which in turn affected flourishing, satisfaction with life, and subjective happiness. Significantly, they also found that positive leadership had a positive influence on followers and on the leaders themselves. Followers were more motivated and thrived and worked more efficiently, while leaders achieved higher levels of wellbeing, satisfaction with life, and happiness. Although it was quantitative and made the nuances of the leaders inaccessible, this important study contributes significantly to establishing positive leadership as a valid and credible leadership approach that benefits followers, leaders, and organisations. Retrospectively, it endorses the purpose of this research to explore the experiences of leaders in the practical implementation of a positive leadership model.

3.6.1 Military Studies

Two earlier studies involved North American military organisations. Military organisations, like Customs organisations, work within a legislative framework, and for both types of

organisations, there is a law enforcement component that has to be carefully balanced with other aspects of their respective roles (e.g. peacekeeping in the military and facilitating the flow of passengers and goods across a country's border in Customs organisations). Furthermore, leaders in both types of organisations work within an organisational command structure where there is the need to balance leadership and operational command with good employer responsibilities.

In the first military study, Butler (2011) based research on Cameron's (2008) principles of positive leadership and applied qualitative methodology using multiple open-ended questions in semi-structured individual interviews. Working with 23 senior enlisted military personnel at the Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, Rhode Island, he explored the effect that the use of a positive leadership approach by higher military leaders had on personnel. These 23 senior enlisted military personnel were selected because they had identified that at one time, they had worked for a senior military leader who had used a positive leadership approach. Butler applied phenomenological analysis, reducing data to significant statements and combining the statements into themes. Through the process, textural and structural descriptions of the experiences were developed and these yielded the essence of the participants' positive leadership experiences. The findings of the study were grouped into two categories: the impact of short-term exposure to positive leadership behaviours on followers (three years, the typical tour of duty under a more senior officer), and the impact of long-term (ongoing) exposure to positive leadership behaviours on followers. Short-term findings included increased self-esteem, increased morale, reduced absenteeism, increased performance recognition, increased organisational mission accomplishment, a more cohesive work environment, and increased trust between followers and leaders, as well as feelings of empowerment. Long-term findings showed that because of their individual experience of positive leadership, most officers in the sample said that they were using the positive leadership approach and several indicated that they planned to do so in their next assignment. Several of the participants noted how the experience of working for a leader who used positive leadership contributed to their desire to remain in the military. Butler claims that his findings of trust and empowerment add new knowledge to the positive leadership theories. In this regard, his claim is debatable because trust and empowerment are inherent in the affirmative bias, in the focus on strengths and capabilities (Cameron, 2008), and in the fostering of virtuousness (Cameron, et al., 2004; Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003) of Cameron's positive leadership approach. However, this study was useful as it had

participants from a different type of organisation compared to most studies that tend use samples from business, nursing, or purely academic settings. It also reinforced and added to the knowledge on positive leadership. However, it did have limitations for broader application. The study relied on participant interpretation of positive leadership, on perception and memory of an experience unverified through observation or on independent assessment of each of the leaders that had been identified by followers as demonstrating a positive leadership approach.

The second study (Lilley, 2012 , applied interpretative inquiry and quantitative analysis methods through the use of a survey (administered twice) and a focus group to investigate positive leadership within a military environment. Lilley used a framework based on positive leadership practices to investigate organisational stress levels and leaders' emotional intelligence and social awareness. The study covered 400 officers in five military police units from around the United States. It used a military-developed survey to gather information on individuals' stress levels, energy drain levels, and satisfaction levels. An organisation-level report was prepared from the survey data and sent to participants for them to create and implement strategies to address stress and satisfaction levels as they so chose. After six-months, the same participants completed the survey again and results were compared. Although no statistically significant difference was established, the qualitative data did provide useful information that contributed to the design of a resource to incorporate positive leadership principles and emotional intelligence skills into leadership selection criteria, leadership development initiatives, and leader performance assessment in the military. It is interesting to note that the qualitative data was of the most use to the organisation.

Both of these studies offered useful insights to this study in that they link to Cameron's positive leadership principles and are within a similar operational environment to Customs. However, they provided minimal guidance as to the practical application of positive leadership and did not address the strategies proposed for the positive leadership model or the intentional implementation of that model.

3.7   POSITIVE STRATEGIES

To give life to his positive leadership model, Cameron proposes four interrelated and mutually reinforcing strategies: fostering positive climate, developing positive relationships,

engaging in positive communication, and reinforcing positive meaning (Cameron, 2008). He notes that these strategies do not represent a comprehensive or exclusive list, but observation and empirical evidence suggest that they are among the most important enablers of positively deviant performance. Although Cameron stresses the interrelated and mutually reinforcing nature of the strategies, he proposes that in implementing positive strategies they should be tailored to address the specific circumstances in which leaders lead (Cameron, 2008, 2012). His suggestion is for individuals to identify two or three high priority behaviours that could have a significant impact on improving positive leadership effectiveness in their area of responsibility.

3.7.1 Positive Climate

The first of Cameron's four strategies for CPLM is fostering a positive climate. This strategy has a focus on leader activities that foster compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude in the workplace. Within a workplace environment, the term positive climate refers to the predominance of positive emotions over negative emotions (Denison, 1996; Smidts, Pruyin, & Van Riel, 2001). Organisational climate is conceptualised as reflective of employees' perceptions of their work environment (Jones & James, 1979; Verbeke, Volgering, & Hessels, 1998) and represents the visible aspects of a workplace, such as working conditions, supervision approach, and interpersonal relationships (Momeni, 2009). Considerable research has suggested a strong association between a positive workplace climate and positive performance as well as with demonstrations of compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude by leaders and organisations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Schneider, 1991; Seligman, et al., 2005; Tombaugh, 2005).

Casey (2011) tested this premise in a military environment within a personal resiliency and effectiveness programme for personnel. Results showed a link between positive climate and performance. They also showed that there were compounding effects that flowed over to the wider military unit. Cameron, et al. (2004) found that organisations that focused on fostering compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude performed better in a number of significant operational indicators than other organisations. Similarly, Cameron (2003) found statistically significant relationships between organisational virtuousness and objectively measured profitability in a sample of recently downsized organisations across 16 industry groups.

A study that explored an eight-year journey to change and improve the culture and climate of a nursing school revealed that increased communication, shared decision-making, and establishing a shared vision strengthened job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Springer, Clark, Strohfus, & Belcheir, 2012). Within an educational environment, Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) found that employees' perceptions of the quality of their work environment significantly affected work satisfaction and performance. Research has also identified that climate is open to rapid change in response to dynamic events, crisis, and the nature of decisions made within the workplace and the organisation (Dutton, Frost, Worline, Lilius, & Kanov, 2002; Springer et al., 2012).

In accepting workplace climate as an important enabler of performance, as Cooke and Meyer (2007) contend, it follows that the fundamental strategic objective is to create the kind of workplace experiences and conditions employees will respond to in ways sought by leaders. Cameron (2008) supported this view and argued that leadership strategies strongly contribute to engendering a positive or negative climate. He contended that strategies that contribute to a positive climate include modelling and encouraging acts of compassion, encouraging collective forgiveness, maintaining standards, providing support, and encouraging expressions of gratitude. These concepts are aspects of his positive leadership model and the leadership behaviours inherent in the model.

3.7.1.1 Leadership Influence

Hannah, Woolfolk, and Lord (2009) posited that if a leader establishes a frame of thinking that reinforces positive norms, they can influence the self-construct of followers, and through modelling, similar positive attributes are developed in and transferrable to followers. The more a leader holds positive self-aspects and manifests those aspects as positive leadership behaviours, the more they will receive positive reinforcement from their followers, creating a virtuous cycle of leadership development. In turn, this reinforces a strengths-based culture and influences organisational climate.

These claims are supported in other studies that indicated leaders can affect the self-strategies of followers through the modelling of behaviours (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Lord & Brown, 2004). Enabling positive emotions fosters a positive climate that in turn creates positive emotions and promotes upward spirals of enhanced performance (Cameron, 2012; Fredrickson, 2003). Such emotions are transmittable from leaders to followers through an

emotional contagion effect. Emotional contagion refers to the family of phenomena that describes the interpersonal influence of emotions (Elfenbein, 2007) and how an individual or group unwittingly or explicitly influences the emotions and attitudes of another individual or group (Barsade, 2002). In other words, emotions are contagious: if the leader is exhibiting positive or negative behaviours or emotions, then these can be transmitted to followers (Cherulnik, Donley, Weiwei, & Miller, 2001; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005).

3.7.1.2 Positive Emotions

Substantial research suggests that positive emotions, positive opportunities, and positive relationships support the development and maintenance of a positive climate and that a positive climate in the workplace is strongly associated with positive performance (Cameron, 2003, 2008; Schneider, 1991). Performance has a number of influencers. In a meta-analytic study, Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2001) found that there was significant correlation between positive emotions, job satisfaction and productivity. Bono and Ilies (2006) found that expressions of positive emotions by leaders creates perceptions amongst employees of leader effectiveness and increases their desire to work for them. Bagozzi (2003), Fredrickson (2002, 2003), and Fredrickson and Losada (2005) all identified through their research that conditions that enabled and fostered positive emotions led to the positive optimisation of individual and organisational conditions. Behaviours that tend to increase positive emotions and therefore likely to contribute to fostering a positive climate include modelling and encouraging acts of positive noticing and responding, demonstrating forgiveness for mistakes and giving and encouraging expressions of gratitude (Cameron, 2008). It has also been evidenced, that leaders who reinforce such behaviours, are more successful in producing bottom-line results, than typical leaders (Cameron, 2003).

The literature reviewed above suggests that a leader's approach directly affects workplace climate. Additionally, there is increasing evidence of a strong link between leadership behaviours, leader-follower relationships, the workplace environment, and employee health (Stone & Harter, 2009; Kelloway & Barling, 2010; Skakon, Nielsen, Borg, & Guzman, 2010). The nature of the leadership approach is clearly a major influencer in defining the strength, direction, and development of a workplace climate (Baer & Frese, 2003; Jones & James, 1979; Zohar, 1980, 2002; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). A number of studies have linked quality of leadership to positive outcomes such as psychological wellbeing and

enhanced employee wellbeing (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007; Cooke & Meyers, 2007) and to negative outcomes such as workplace stress, injuries and employee health (Arnold et al., 2007; Goodman & Boss, 2002).

3.7.1.3 Wellbeing and Compassion

Positive climate and employee wellbeing is never more important than in situations of traumatic events. Whether internal or external to the workplace, whether triggered through actions of people or nature, disaster and trauma can occur at any time. Based on three years of research, Dutton, et al. (2002) found that in such circumstances, empathy was insufficient, did not engender a wider response, and therefore had limited capacity for organisational healing. Organisational compassion capacity, however, did affect how quickly and effectively people in organisations recovered from disaster events. Their research introduced the notion of organisational compassion with four dimensions: scope, scale, speed, and specialisation. The first three relate to the overall response of the organisation and the last to the degree that the organisation responds to the particular needs of an individual or group within that organisation, for example, how an organisation responds to parents needing to adjust work hours to attend to children when schools are closed because of a disaster.

Another later study also had similar findings on leadership behaviours that were critical in times of trauma. These behaviours included actively noticing what was happening for employees, providing positive reinforcement and support, and encouraging sharing, where appropriate, through forums for individual or collective emotions to be safely expressed (Kanov, Maitlis, Worline, Dutton, Frost, & Lilius, 2004). Facilitating compassion in the workplace is not commonly associated with the general concept of leadership. Nevertheless, a number of leadership behaviours have the potential to contribute to generating a positive workplace climate amidst the chaos of trauma. These leadership behaviours include leaders being present in the workplace, creating a context for meaning and a context for action, and fostering an environment where employees have the opportunity to talk about how they feel in order to make sense of their situation and find ways to cope and resolve the trauma. All of these behaviours find support in the related literature (such as Dutton et al., 2002; Kanov et al., 2004; Nilikant, Walker & Rochford, 2013).

Considerable empirical research has provided evidence that the demonstration of compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude produces a positive climate that consequently influences higher

workplace performance. In such circumstances, positive leadership behaviours have been identified as a significant determinant of organisational climate (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Dickson, Smith, Grojean, & Ehrhart, 2001). Such studies extend the importance of positive leadership behaviours that foster positive climate. The philosophy behind the positive leadership approach has the capacity to influence and strengthen a workplace climate. The underlying principles behind the positive leadership concept also have this capacity. At any time, but particularly in times of trauma, the literature indicates that positive leadership does foster positive climate.

Findings from a New Zealand study following the catastrophic Christchurch/Canterbury 2010-2011 earthquakes were consistent with the aforementioned studies. Nilakant, Walker, and Rochford (2013) investigated how employees think and feel in the aftermath of a disaster. They applied an inductive qualitative design utilising semi-structured interviews with 47 respondents from four Christchurch organisations. Results identified a number of elements involved in effective immediate and post-disaster workplace management. Most pertinent is the finding of the importance of the organisational response and the pivotal role of the leadership behaviours of supervisors, especially their ability to respond to practical and emotional needs in the workplace. These factors were central to post-disaster perceptions employees formed about their leaders and about the organisational performance in caring for employees in the post-disaster environment.

Evidence in the literature suggested that in such circumstances, how an organisation responds, or does not respond, to the plight of employees affects both employee and organisational performance. In a study involving 143 victims of Hurricane Andrew (at the time reputedly one of the United States' most costly natural disasters) Sanchez, Korbin, and Viscarra (1995) found partial support for their prediction that relief services provided to employees by organisations following a natural disaster would reduce levels of employee stress. They contend that assisting employees to get back to normalcy is not only a gesture of good citizenship, but also an effective and tangible intervention that supports organisations to continue to operate in such circumstances. Contrary to expectations, they found that forms of support other than meeting basic needs of employees had little effect on longitudinal (90 days after disaster) employee stress.

3.7.1.4 Absenteeism

A number of other researchers have identified organisational behaviours that are likely to encourage employees to return and to remain at work following a disaster event. Employee access to flexibility about normal working expectations, to practical employer support, and to credible, relevant, situation-specific communications are critical influencing factors on employee attendance at work (Byron & Peterson, 2002; Edwards, 2006; Wilson, 2009). Other researchers have found that the attendance rate is likely to increase sharply when employees feel that the organisation addressed their safety concerns (Shapira, et al., 1991). In the same study, they found that employee indicators of mental stress included the inability to concentrate, difficulty in carrying out work requirements, and absenteeism.   In a later study on normal reactions to disaster and early mental health interventions, Alexander (2005) identified similar elements as indicators of employee mental stress and clustered them into four categories of reactions: emotional, cognitive, physical, and social, and that organisations need to address all of these categories. Considerable empirical research provided evidence that the demonstration of compassion, forgiveness, and gratitude produces a positive climate. Positive workplace climate, in turn, influences a positive workplace environment and higher workplace performance. The importance of a positive workplace climate and the increasing recognition of an intrinsic link between the positive leadership approach, psychological and physical wellbeing, increases the urgency for research to identify ways in which leaders can implement positive leadership simply and effectively in their workplaces.

3.7.2   Positive Relationships

The second of Cameron's positive strategies is fostering positive relationships. This is a key aspect of creating and fostering positive climate. Fostering positive relationships has a focus on leader facilitation and modelling of positive energy and on encouraging high quality relationships in the workplace. Roberts (2007) defined a positive relationship as "one in which there is a true sense of relatedness and mutuality" (p. 31).   A more esoteric definition of positive relationships is proffered by Dutton and Ragins (2007, p. 5) who describe them as "a generative source of enrichment, vitality, and learning." Researchers have pointed out that in order to leverage the value of leaders and followers in the workplace, there needs to be a strong partnership approach (Uhl-Bien, Maslyn, & Ospina, 2012).

Viewing leadership as a relationship is not exclusive to positive leadership. As in any type of relationship, the inference is that both sides of the relationship contribute in some way to the

nature of that relationship and to the resultant outcomes. A basic principle of Cameron's (2008) approach to positive leadership is facilitating the best of the human condition. Such an approach supports the contention that effective leadership is not a "one–way-event" (Northhouse, 2004, p. 113).

3.7.2.1 Relationship Quality

A particular form of positive relationships affiliated with positive leadership is the "high quality connections" (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003, p. 264). High quality connections are short-term, dyadic, positive interactions at work. Dutton & Heaphy explained that these connections are experienced as positive, life enhancing, life giving interactions that have a "felt" and a "sensed" quality (p. 265), promote trust and respect, and have a higher emotional carrying capacity. In other words, such connections can cope with more emotions in a much better way than low quality connections, which, in contrast, tend to have a depleting or even a degrading toxic effect (Frost, 2003) and the potential to leave damage in their wake (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Another description of these connections is "high-quality exchange relationships," in which followers receive high attention and good assignments for high levels of productivity (Graen & Uhi-Bien, 1995, p. 227). However, in contrast to the theory of high quality connections, high-quality exchange relationships do not have the critical positivity focus that is the foundation of high quality connections. The underpinning philosophy for both high quality connections and positive leadership is the critical positivity focus.

Studies such as those by Dutton and Heaphy (2003), Dutton and Ragins (2007; 2009), and Carmeli, Brueller, and Dutton (2009) suggested that promoting high quality connections leads to high quality interpersonal relationships in the workplace and that these are beneficial for people and organisations. These studies also found that high quality connections enhance the quality of communication, collaboration, motivation, and learning behaviours. A number of studies have also identified that positive relationships foster healthier teamwork (Ancona & Isaacs, 2007; McGinn, 2007), and can impact on workplace processes such as error identification and rectification (Weick & Roberts, 1993), willingness to cooperate and work together (Gittell, 2003), and higher levels of commitment to an organisation (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). For both individuals and groups, there is empirical evidence that such relationships foster a greater degree of resiliency that strengthens the ability to cope and to recover from challenging experiences (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Additionally, enhanced relationships contribute to social capital and form reserves that foster organisational

effectiveness (Gittell, et al., 2006). The application of positive strategies and positive practices has the potential to develop positive relationships and a positive workplace climate. This, in turn, enhances organisational and group ability to absorb trauma and recover from adversity, as well as to avoid deteriorating performance (Cameron, et al., 2011; Dutton, et al., 2002)

While high quality connections are subjective, studies have found that when a person is experiencing such connections they are likely to feel vital and alive. Evidence of this claim is from the changed brain patterns detected in positive interactions between two people (Lewis, 2011; Lewis, Amini, & Lannan, 2000). A number of other studies also indicated positive correlations amongst positive relationships, emotional wellbeing, and physical wellbeing as well as between these factors and positive social relationship in the workplace. In a study linking organisational factors and employee physiology, Heaphy and Dutton (2008) found that positive social relationships affect the heart, hormone, and immune systems in ways that enhance wellbeing and the nature of relationships. An earlier study of these factors with 70 New York traffic agents found that positive interactions in the workplace between supervisors and co-workers had a direct effect on lowering both heart and blood pressure rates (Karlin, Brondolo, & Schwartz, 2003). Such studies and their findings add to the increasing trend of acknowledging the importance of positive workplace relationships on both intrinsic and extrinsic outcomes for individuals and organisations, especially during stressful times and in recovery from stressful events.

Other evidence from the emerging field of neuroscience suggests that positive relationships promote positive psychological and physiological benefits and that these in turn affect performance and outcomes (see, for example, Dutton & Ragins, 2007, 2009; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Dockray & Steptoe, 2010). Other studies have explored other aspects of positive relationships and the possible explanations that could account for why positive relationships are likely to produce positive effects for individuals and positive effects for relationships generally. What has been found is that the act of giving time and support to a relationship produces positive effects for the relationship and for the giver (Brown & Brown, 2006; Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003; Grant, Dutton & Russo, 2008).

In a field experiment using quantitative analysis with a sample of 106 engineers, Avey, Avolio, and Luthans (2011) examined the impact of leader positivity on follower positivity

and performance. The results indicated a positive relationship between leaders' positivity and followers' positivity and performance. As well as providing empirical support for the value leaders' positivity has on the positivity and performance of followers, they found that leader positivity is transferrable to followers through electronic means, such as in email communication. This extends the thinking and the literature on positive leadership behaviours, discussed in section 3.7.1.1 in that it indicates that the contagion effect of positive leadership behaviours are conveyable in written communication as well as through verbal communication and physical interactions.

3.7.2.2 Positive Energy

The strategy of fostering positive relationships proposed in Cameron's positive leadership model involves leaders modelling and facilitating positive energy in the workplace. Cameron (2008) and Dutton and Ragins (2007) contended that amongst the especially important activities that have emerged from research on positively deviant performance is the work on understanding positive energy networks (Baker, Cross, & Wooten, 2003; Cross, Baker, & Parker, 2003; Cross, Ehrilich, Dawson, & Helferich, 2008). To explore how energy is generated in day-to-day interactions with others at work, Cross, et al. (2003) assessed energy within seven large groups in three organisations. A number of their findings have particular relevance for positive relationships, for the positive leadership approach generally and in particular for the implementation of CPLM. They found that interactions with others whom individuals considered to be credible were energising, as were interactions that created compelling visions, and interactions where individuals could meaningfully contribute.

A 2012 global workforce study that surveyed 32,000 full-time workers in a range of industries and countries identified two significant areas where organisations need to focus to have high performance. The first is on effectively enabling workers with internal support, resources, and tools, and the second is on creating an environment that is energising to work in. They also found that while many organisations are pursuing a variety of initiatives and wellness efforts, there is a clear need to "embrace the notion of workplace energy on a far broader plane" (Towers Watson, 2012, p. 4).

A quantitative study where employees rated their own feelings in response to leader interactions identified that followers exposed to an energising leader were more likely to have significantly higher personal wellbeing, job satisfaction, engagement, and performance.

Furthermore, there were positive flow-on effects to family wellbeing, workplace cohesion, learning, creativity, and workplace performance (Owens, Baker, & Cameron, 2013, cited in Cameron, 2014). Drawing on four recent studies on relational energy at work Owens, Baker, McDaniel Sumpter and Cameron (2015) examined the role of energy in relational interactions in organisations. Their research showed that the energy resulting from such interactions, specifically in the leader-follower relationship, is associated with positive changes in follower job engagement and performance. Furthermore, they contend that their findings expand the role of leaders to include that of being an "energy broker" (p. 11) in the workplace. Such findings significantly support and endorse the need for research to find ways in which leaders can implement positive leadership strategies in the workplace.

Closely related to creating positive relationships and positive energy in the workplace is the notion of "energizers and de-energizers" (Cross, et al., 2003, p. 51). The concept of "energizers" describes people who create opportunities for others to enter conversations and be positively involved in ways that enable them to feel heard and valued. The other concept, "de-energizers," refers to people who, in contrast, do not create these opportunities, and through predominantly negative behaviours, tend to deplete strength and energy from those with whom they interact. Cross et al. also found that high performing organisations have three times more energisers than average organisations. More recently, Gerbasi, Porath, Parker, Spreitzer, and Cross (2015) found that de-energising relationships were associated with decreased performance. Additionally, they concluded that de-energising relationships should not be ignored as they negatively impact the performance of individuals, and that such behaviours can change when addressed in positive ways. Cross, et al., (2003) also propose that people can learn to become energisers, as does Cameron (2008, 2013). They all contend that it is not an inherent attribute and individuals who exude positive energy positively affect the workplace. Furthermore, individuals who energise others are better performers, and when there is choice those perceived as energisers, in the workplace will be sought by others regardless of whether the de-energisers are the ones with the necessary knowledge and expertise that is being sought (Baker, et al., 2003).

Until recently, despite useful research on energy networks, there was minimal practical guidance accessible to leaders for recognising and working with energisers and de-energisers in the workplace. Cameron (2013) rectified this in his latest positive leadership publication with a description of many of the developable attributes that distinguish energisers from de-

energisers. He also suggested activities designed to encourage positive energy in the workplace. This goes some way to closing the gap between the academic theorising of positive leadership and the need for practical guidance for leaders wanting to implement the theories.

3.7.3   Positive Communication

Positive relationships have a number of components, most of which are generated and enhanced through communication, especially positive communication. Positive communication is the third of Cameron's positive strategies, and it underpins the strategies of fostering positive climate and developing positive relationships. Communication was considered a critical component of enabling and maintaining positive climate in the environment within which this study was undertaken, as it would in any internal and external environment affected by natural disaster events. Furthermore, "leadership and communication are inextricably intertwined" (Van Wart, 2013, p. 554). Cameron (2012) contended that positive communication is a critical enabler of positive leadership and proposed that positive communication in organisations occurs when affirmative and supportive language replaces negative and critical language.

3.7.3.1 Communication, Emotion, and Performance

Increasing the ratio of positive to negative communication and using descriptive, supportive communication is central to the positive communication strategy in Cameron's model. A number of research studies have identified the characteristic propensity of top performing teams to have a high ratio of positive to negative communication (see Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Losada & Heaphy, 2004). Recently, Fredrickson (2013) updated her thinking on positivity ratios and concluded that the mathematical claim for a critical tipping point in the positivity ratio is unfounded. While she questioned Losada's (1999) mathematical modelling, she noted that considerable evidence continues to support conclusions that higher positive ratios are predictive of flourishing mental health and other beneficial outcomes.

Regardless of the updated thinking on positivity ratios, the underlying message for leaders still applies: be aware of the ratio of negative to positive in interactions and communication. In their 2004 study, Losada and Heaphy studied 60 top management teams during business meetings, specifically focusing on the ratio of positive to negative comments and the ratio of questions to advocacy and comments. Using measures of profitability, results from 360-

degree feedback assessments, and customer satisfaction ratings, they categorised the teams into three levels of performance: high, medium, and low. They found that the ratio of positive to negative statements during work interactions was 5:1 for the most profitable, productive, and effective teams, whereas the ratio of positive to negative statements was 1:3 for the lowest performing teams. In predictive studies of successful marriages and divorces by Gottman (1994), the same 5:1 ratio of positives to negatives was also found to be a predictor of sustainability and quality of marital relationships. Clearly, the prevalence of positive comments is an important factor in creating and maintaining positive communication, positive relationships, and a positive workplace environment.

Empirical research has identified a relationship between emotions and performance. Fredrickson and Losada (2005) found evidence that people who experience a ratio of positive emotions to negative emotions of at least 3:1 tend to flourish in both mental health and individual performance. Their research also identified an upper limit for the positive to negative ratio at 13:1. They proposed that when work groups exceed the 13:1 ratio, things are likely to worsen and the positive reinforcement becomes counterproductive, as the effectiveness of it diminishes with overuse. Regardless of the accuracy question related to the modelling element (Brown, Sokal, & Friedman, 2013) and the withdrawal of the paper and the model-based predictions, other elements of the study remain valid (Fredrickson, 2013). The critical underlying message for leaders applying a positive leadership approach is to be aware of a keeping a positivity balance in their workplace interactions and communications.

There is supporting evidence from two studies (Dutton, 2003; Quinn & Dutton, 2005) that a positive workplace environment and supportive communication is a prerequisite for and an enabler of positive organisational performance. Cameron (2008, 2012) contended that the communication patterns of leaders are a powerful factor enabling the emergence of positive organisational performance that results in positively deviant performance. His contention is that it is essential to convey positive messages and to deliver negative messages in supportive, growth-producing ways. He argues that the use of supportive communication is another means by which leaders can enable positive deviance and that they can do this through their feedback, and in particular, how they deliver negative or corrective messages when this is required.

3.7.3.2 Supportive Communication

The theory of supportive, and in particular, descriptive communication emerged from work by Jack Gibb (1961) who was one of the first scholars to attempt to describe and define communication behaviours relating to reducing the degree of defensiveness in interpersonal interactions. He contended that one way to understand communication is to view it as a people process rather than a language process. Furthermore, fundamental improvement in the communication climate first has to have fundamental changes in interpersonal relationships. Gibb (1961) based his findings on a series of experimental and field studies that investigated the arousal and maintenance of defensive behaviour in small task orientated groups within the American naval services over an eight-year period. He designed a measurement instrument and defined defensive behaviour as "that behavior which occurs when an individual perceives threat or anticipates threat in the group" (p. 141). Later, despite criticism of the underlying dimensionality of Gibb's original instrument (Costigan & Schmeidler, 1984) it was refined and used as a conceptual lens in other studies. In one study, statistical analysis uncovered strong predictive relationships between positive behaviours of spontaneity and empathy and perceptions of supervisor effectiveness, relational satisfaction, and job satisfaction (Czech & Forward, 2013). An earlier study concluded, "that the notion of supportive and defensive communication is a powerful and useful one" (Forward, Czech, & Lee, 2011, p.12).

Another study found supportive communication to be a necessary component of interpersonal effectiveness, and identified components of supportive communication to include being non-judgemental, empathic, and accepting, and not making assumptions about the other person's motives (Myers & Rocca, 2001). The concept of supportive and descriptive communication is a component of the positive communication strategy in Cameron's model. One of the most important is the use of descriptive rather than evaluative statements and using descriptive communication, which he explains as having three steps of providing an objective description: identifying factual, validated elements of what has occurred, delivering these with empathy, and delivering these with a focus on the issue, not the person (Cameron, 2008, 2012, 2013). In essence, applying positive communication to situations of tension and disagreement can build positive climate and positive relationships. Additionally, the concept is a practical tool for leaders in the implementation of positive leadership.

The practical importance of positive communication is evident throughout the literature reviewed. In essence, positive communication needs to be a circular, interactive process

rather than a one-way, linear activity. In the literature reviewed, there is a consistent centrality of the importance of positive communication and positive leadership behaviours for fostering a positive climate and encouraging positive relationships in the workplace. In implementing Cameron's (2008), positive leadership model the positive communication strategy is pivotal to successfully enacting the other three strategies. Increasing the positivity ratio in interactions and using supportive and descriptive communication form the core of the positive communication strategy.

3.7.4 Positive Meaning

The fourth strategy in the positive leadership model is creating and fostering positive meaning. This strategy has a focus on engendering and fostering purpose and meaning into the work that employees do. Meaning and meaningfulness in the workplace is achieved when "the work and/or its context are perceived by its practitioners to be, at minimum, purposeful and significant" (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, p. 311). Pratt and Ashforth (2003) proposed that positive meaning takes the premise that such meaning is beneficial to the individual in some way and that fostering meaningfulness at work may actually involve two sets of practices. They are those that focus on changing the nature of the relationships amongst the organisation's members, and those that focus on promoting the goals, values, and beliefs of the organisation. They suggested that implementing both practices concurrently supports fostering meaningfulness in the workplace. However, they also noted that creating meaningfulness at work is not the only means of enhancing performance. They emphasised the importance of integrity in the process and cautioned against manipulation, as where this occurs, it is likely to lead to disillusionment, alienation, and turnover.

Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, and Schwartz (1997) studied a sample of 196 participants from a variety of occupations. Based on their results, they argued that individuals typically associate one of three kinds of meaning with their work: job, career, or calling. They contended that the distinctions are not necessarily dependent on occupation and that within occupations it is conceivably possible to find all three kinds of meaning to the same type of work by different individuals involved in that type of work. They further contended that those with a calling orientation have a stronger and more rewarding relationship with their work as well as more enjoyment and satisfaction from that work. Hall and Chandler (2005) defined a sense of calling in one's work as "a sense of purpose, that this is the work that one was meant to do" (p. 154). Furthermore, Wrzesniewski, et al. (1997) identified that people

with a calling orientation deliberately sought work that would fulfil their individual need for meaning. The more an individual considers their work as a calling and holds the view that the work that they do is good and right, the more meaningful the sense will be (Grant, 2008). Meaningfulness at work has also been found to be associated with a number of positive factors, such as high levels of work satisfaction, less work-related alcoholism, less work/life conflict, more intrinsic motivation, and greater certainty and self-efficacy in regard to career decisions (Steger & Dik, 2010; Judge, et al., 2001; Wrzesniewski, 2003).   Furthermore, Cameron and Lavine (2006) propose that a sense of calling or an orientation towards internalisation is closely associated with positively deviant performance.

The importance of work orientation, workplace relationships, and meaning in one's work is potentially never more important than in the situations involving disaster events. These factors are even more important when an organisation and its workforce has a crucial role to play in the immediate disaster response and in the aftermath management of such an event. In such organisations, one would intuitively expect to find a considerable number of employees with a strong orientation towards attaching the calling meaning to the type of work that they do and the organisation strongly oriented towards focusing on the importance of the employees and the organisation's work. However, a Canadian study (Wilson, 2009) highlighted the subjective, individual, and nebulous nature of the meaning concept and the importance of fostering positive meaning in the workplace. The study explored five hypothetical disaster scenarios with staff from a provincial Crown corporation and a provincial statutory agency in British Columbia. Both organisations that were examined in the study were sole providers and first responders of essential core services for the recovery and resumption of essential services in British Columbia. The researcher presented each of the 218 employees with five potential disaster scenarios and tested their willingness and ability to report to work if confronted with such an event.   In the earthquake scenario, the self-reported likelihood of returning to work was 24%, with 14% not sure, and a significant 62% were very unlikely or unlikely to be willing to return to work after such an event.

Other scholars have identified that high levels of meaningfulness in work are associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisational performance (Cameron, 2007; Cameron & Lavine, 2006; Grant, 2007, 2008). Fostering a sense of meaning through reinforcing the positive benefits that the work provides and emphasising contribution goals over achievement goals are effective strategies of positive leaders (Cameron, 2008, 2007).

3.7.5 Positive Practice - Everest Goal

To harness the energy of the positive leadership strategies, Cameron and Levine (2006) recommend that leaders should set Everest goals.[14] They contend that such goals go beyond the normal SMART[15] goal setting to represent an ultimate achievement, an extraordinary accomplishment, or a positively deviant outcome. Although not depicted as part of Cameron's model, the concept is one method of providing both a foundation and a focus for the outcomes sought and for shaping and driving performance towards those outcomes. Five unique characteristics differentiate the Everest goal concept from other goal theories: positive deviance (seeking outcomes that go beyond the norm for the organisation), goods of first intent (has inherent value), affirmative bias (a focus on strengths and capabilities), contribution focus (creates value) and sustainable positive energy (Cameron, 2008, 2012, 2013). Overall, an Everest goal needs to be engaging so that it creates and fosters sustainable positive energy and requires no external motivator for its pursuit. In organisations that implemented positive leadership at the organisation level, for example in Prudential Real Estate and Relocation (Cameron & Plews, 2012) articulation of an Everest goal was one of the positive practices involved. Positive practices have been credited with assisting and achieving the successful merger of two culturally diverse organisations, dramatically increasing financial performance, and improving customer satisfaction and employee engagement. The Everest goal was used as a positive practice to give purpose and meaning to the activities of the organisation (Cameron & Plews, 2012; Vanette & Cameron, 2009).

The concept of having a goal setting framework within which leaders can operationalise performance enhancement strategies is supported by researchers such as Locke and Latham (1990, 2002) and Kelloway and Barling (2000) who argue that goal setting and goal clarity is an important precursor and ongoing aspect of high performance. Furthermore, Crocker and Park (2004) found that it was possible to categorise goals that individuals pursue into two types: achievement goals (with a focus on self-interest or personal achievement), and contribution goals (with a focus on providing benefits to others or contributing in some way). Niiya and Crocker (2008) noted that when there was a strong contribution goal focus there was also a higher degree of meaningfulness of the activities undertaken compared to when self-interest (achievement) goals predominated. Cameron (2008, 2012) supports the concept

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[14] Characteristic of Everest Goals are defined by Kim Cameron and Marc Lavine (2006) in *Making the impossible possible: Leading extraordinary performance – The Rocky Flats Story*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

[15] SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Aligned with organisational goals, Realistic, Timebound.

of achievement and contribution goals. He argues that while both are important in the implementation of the leadership model, leaders who enable meaningfulness in the workplace, identify the longer-term impact of the work performed, and emphasise contribution goals more than achievement goals have been found to be associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisational performance.

Applying the positive practice of an Everest goal is one way for leaders to engender a clear sense of purpose within the workplace. Having an Everest goal provides a focus for measurement of progress and productivity improvement. Productivity improvement is a convenient way of assessing whether or not a leader has been effective in influencing employees in a positive way (Zenger, Folkman, & Edinger, 2009). The strategy of setting a clear goal also enables meaningful employee involvement in contributing towards achievement of the goal. It provides for opportunities for leaders to demonstrate positive noticing and positive reinforcement of behaviours that contribute towards goal achievement. Research shows that an Everest goal influences performance and outcomes at the organisational level (Lavine & Cameron, 2006). To harness the goal energy at the workplace level, and to support leaders in implementing the four positive strategies in his positive leadership model, Cameron (2008, P. 81) proposes the use of a tailored "Personal Management Interview (PMI) program."

3.7.6 Positive Practice – Personal Management Interview

The positive practice of personal management interviews or PMI, as referred to in this research, commences with an initial role clarification session followed by regular face-to-face meetings, at least monthly, between a leader and a direct report. Although not one of the strategies depicted in Cameron's model, he does suggest PMI as a straightforward way to support the implementation of the four positive strategies in the model. One important and differentiating attribute of positive leaders is that they provide opportunities for others to receive regular feedback and developmental coaching so that employees feel supported and encouraged (Cameron, 2012). Boss (1983) developed the initial characteristics of the PMI process. Using a group behaviour inventory instrument and interview data collected from 208 participants, Boss found that regular PMIs could prevent regression or fade-out that can occur after off-site team building sessions. Even more important, the research indicated that using the PMI process reduced interruptions and unscheduled meetings and increased discretionary time for leaders. A more recent study involving five healthcare organisations

found that employee performance and satisfaction increased significantly and personal stress was reduced when the PMI process was implemented (Goodman & Boss, 2002). Another healthcare organisation used PMIs in a number of their units to reinforce positive practices and organisational improvement (Cameron, et al., 2011).

Other research provides indirect support for implementing PMIs in tandem with positive leadership. Studies have found that employees seek clear role descriptions and expectations (Czech & Forward, 2013), and when these are clear, productivity is higher and employees are more effective, productive, and satisfied with their jobs (Snow, 2002). The PMI two-step process of an initial role-clarifying session followed by ongoing sessions (at least monthly) provides the forum for negotiating and understanding role and performance expectations of both parties, in effect establishing a psychological contract.[16]

Despite empirical support for a positive relationship between using PMIs and significant improvement in a number of areas related to increased individual and organisational performance, limited literature was located on the practical application of PMIs. However, three sources that described the overall philosophy and principles of the PMI all advocate for the incorporation of supportive communication principles into regularly scheduled PMI sessions (Cameron, 2008, 2012, 2013; Latif, 2003; Whetten & Cameron, 2002). While this is useful and confirms the importance of the supportive communication concepts discussed earlier, these sources are limited in that they do not provide detailed guidelines and structured templates that would assist leaders in undertaking personal management interviews. Regardless of this issue, the indication from the literature is that the implementation of a PMI program can have a significant positive impact on team and organisation performance, as well as on the individual employee's workplace experience.

3.8   LITERATURE CONCLUSIONS

This literature review indicates a growing research agenda related to the positive leadership approach and to the continued expansion and refinement of the foundational theories that

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[16] The unwritten understandings and informal obligations between an employer and its employees regarding their mutual expectations of how each will perform their respective roles. Within a typical business, the psychological contract might include such things as the level of employee commitment, job satisfaction, and the quality of working conditions. http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/psychological-contract.html#ixzz3XtxsjEgP

underpin the principles of positive leadership. Strong support was found for incorporating the principles of POS and positive psychology into the workplace environment, as was independent empirical support for each of the four strategies in Cameron's positive leadership model. There is a growing trend of examining how leadership behaviours influence the dynamics of the workplace environment and on the role of leadership behaviours on follower positivity, wellbeing, and performance outcomes. Research suggests that the positive style of leadership has a strong positive impact on managerial practices and that there is no age and work experience pre-requisite for applying positive leadership. Furthermore, positive leadership has influence on followers and on the leaders themselves. Followers are more motivated, and thrive and work more efficiently, while leaders achieve higher levels of wellbeing, happiness, and satisfaction with life (Zbierowski & Góra, 2014).

Literature reviewed on the strategies inherent in the positive leadership approach, and in particular to the four positive strategies proposed by Cameron in his model, indicated that leadership behaviours that foster positive climate, develop positive relationships, engage in positive communication, and reinforce positive meaning in the workplace have the potential to enhance leader, follower, and workplace outcomes. The literature that was found on each of the four strategies in Cameron's model suggests that individually, and in combination, they have the potential to have a positive influence on workplace outcomes in situations of trauma and natural disaster. Increasingly, positive interventions and positive leadership behaviours are being closely linked in empirical studies. For example, Cameron, et al. (2011) found that improvements in positive practices, over time, are likely to lead to improvements in certain indicators of organisational effectiveness. Furthermore, research indicates that positive practices have the potential to cushion organisations and those in them from the effects of trauma or distress. Other research suggests that absenteeism and loss of productivity are potential outcomes for organisations impacted by natural disaster and trauma and that these can be mitigated by positive leader and organisational behaviours (Byron & Peterson, 2002; Edwards, 2006; Kanov, et al., 2004; Nilakant, et al. 2013; Shapira, et al., 1991; Wilson, 2009).

The literature search on the practical implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model found that there are no studies on operationalising positive leadership, on the practical implementation of positive strategies, or on implementing a combination of the four strategies in the model. No studies were located on implementing CPLM or the positive

leadership approach from the perspective of frontline leaders. Three studies identified the implementation of positive practices in organisations (Cameron, et al., 2011; Cameron & Plews, 2012; Vanette & Cameron, 2009). In these studies, implementation was through a centralised head office approach, rather than by frontline leaders themselves in their own workplace. Two other studies were identified that linked to Cameron's positive leadership principles (Butler, 2011; Lilley, 2012). Both quantitative studies were undertaken in North American organisations within operational environments similar to Customs. They were useful in that they endorsed the value of the positive leadership principles in a similar operational environment. However, neither addressed the practical application of positive leadership, nor the strategies proposed for the positive leadership model.

Overall, the literature review identified that there is a scarcity of literature and studies on the practical implementation of the positive leadership approach, no literature on the practical implementation of CPLM, and no studies from the leader's perspective of implementing positive strategies in the workplace. The literature indicates strong and increasing support for the benefits of adopting a positive leadership approach. Furthermore, in the unprecedented workplace environment that resulted from the continuous natural disaster events, there was an opportunity in this study to explore the experiences of leaders applying positive strategies in adverse circumstances.

The identification of these unexplored areas finds support in the literature reviewed for the study. An empirical knowledge gap on the practical application of CPLM and on the application of the positive strategies and positive practices from a leader's perspective is indicated.

In the next chapter, the philosophical and methodological approach, based on the research objectives, ontological nature, and epistemological aims of the study are presented.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the philosophical and methodological choices in this study. It explains the rationale and criteria for choosing a qualitative constructivist paradigm with an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach. It describes the research context, participant sample, research process, data collection procedure and analysis procedure. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the validity and reliability, underlying assumptions, and ethical and privacy considerations of this study.

4.2   RESEARCH APPROACHES

Three research approaches were explored for this study. These research approaches (i.e. quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods) are often depicted as representing different ends of a continuum, with mixed methods residing in the middle (Creswell, 2014; Newman & Benz, 1998). Each of these three approaches has its own distinctive historical evolution. Until the mid-20th century, forms of quantitative research dominated, especially in the social sciences. In the latter part of that period, interest in qualitative approaches increased alongside the emergence of mixed methods approaches to address the gap in theoretical discovery methods and as a means of utilising the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2007). Each research approach has distinctive foundations as well as distinctive philosophical and methodological dimensions. Debate between advocates of quantitative and qualitative research approaches has existed for over a century, with each proponent declaring a fixed position in relation to underlying philosophy and methods (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). However, in exploring whether quantitative and qualitative approaches are conflicting or complementary paradigms, Jones (2004) argued that the division between quantitative and qualitative approaches is problematic and of limited value. Jones suggests the division between the two has become entrenched in an excessively theoretical approach and points out that classifying and categorisation are common features in both approaches. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 17) contend that philosophically, the mixed methods approach to research moves past these debates by offering a logical and practical alternative that "is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research." Nonetheless, a

number of tensions do exist between the three research approaches, especially in terms of assumptions in ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. Ontology relates to the nature of reality, while epistemology relates to the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the researcher and the subject(s) of the research. Axiology relates to the role of existing values and biases in research, highlighting the need for the researcher to acknowledge these, and methodology to the appropriate approach to systematic inquiry (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Table 1 below highlights the different philosophical and methodological tenets that underpin the dimensions of the quantitative (positivist/postpositivist paradigm) and qualitative (constructivist/interpretivist paradigm) research approaches. It also highlights the importance of positional dimensionality for the researcher and for the research project.

Table 1: The Paradigm Contrast Table

Dimensions of Contrast	Positivist/Postpositivist Paradigm	Constructivist/Interpretivist Paradigm
***Ontology:* the nature of reality**	Reality is single, tangible, and fragmentable	Reality is multiple, constructed and holistic
***Epistemology:* the relationship of the knower to the known; nature of the knowledge and its justification**	Knower and known are independent, a dualism	Knower and known are interactive, inseparable
***Axiology:* the role of values in inquiry**	Inquiry is value-free	Inquiry is value-bound
The possibility of causal linkages	There are real cases, temporally precedent to or simultaneous with their effects	All entities are in a state of mutual, simultaneous shaping so that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects
The possibility of generalisation	Time-and-context-free generalisations (nomothetic statements) are possible	Only time-and-context-bound working hypotheses (ideographic statements) are possible

Note. Adapted from *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences,* p. 86, by C. Teddlie and A. Tashakkori. Copyright 2009 by Sage Publications.

4.2.1 Quantitative Approach

Quantitative advocates follow a positivist or postpositivist philosophy (Phillips & Burbules, 2000) and argue for the application of a scientific approach to social observations. The positivist/postpositivist paradigm "reflects a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes" (Creswell, 2003, p.7). A key distinction in the positional views of positivists compared to postpositivists relates to their ontology, (i.e. how

they view reality). Positivists focus on objective reality and theory verification, while one focus for postpositivists is critical realism with the tenet that one can never fully capture true reality, a postpositivist study may include qualitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Quantitative research usually involves researcher-derived hypotheses with rigorous testing of data, usually through statistical analysis techniques and examination of the relationships among variables. Concepts are in the form of distinct variables, procedures are standard, and replication of results assumed (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001).

The quantitative research approach has its strengths. It has a long and distinguished history based on academic critique and rigour. The approach is useful for studying large samples of people, it can test and validate already-existing theories about how, and to some degree why, phenomena occur, it can eliminate any confounding influences of having multiple variables, enabling a more credible assessment of cause-and-effect relationships to be ascertained (Creswell, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Furthermore, there is the possibility for causal linkages and for time and context-free generalisations (nomothetic statements) to be made (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

In quantitative studies, the role of the researcher is relatively independent of the data collection and analysis techniques. The focus is on the use of numbers, often statistics, to explain phenomena and their relationship to the research hypotheses. Advocates of a quantitative research approach claim higher validity, higher reliability, and more generalisability for their studies compared to those that have applied qualitative research methods.

For this study, the issue of participant voice was of particular relevance. A quantitative approach with its accompanying positivist/postpositivist philosophical, epistemological, and ontological dimensions would not have fully enabled the researcher to articulate the participants' voices or the meanings participants attributed to the phenomena. Furthermore, the nature of the research questions indicated the need for an ontology based on social and experientially-constructed realities. Since one objective of this study was to explore and understand the leaders' lived experiences of implementing Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM), the epistemological nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participating leaders (the subjects of the study) was a dimension that the research approach needed to enable.

4.2.2 Qualitative Approach

In contrast, qualitative research follows a constructivist or interpretivist philosophy and has the ontological approach of viewing the world as unknown phenomena. Constructivism or social constructivism are often combined with interpretivism and is an approach to qualitative research that supports the social constructivist belief that individuals seek an understanding of the world in which they live and work (Creswell, 2014). Constructivist/interpretivist approaches to research seek to understand the world of human experience from the participants' views of the situations being studied and the researcher's recognition of the impact their own background and experiences have on the research (Creswell, 2003). The constructivist researcher has an ontological perspective of relativism and constructed realities, an epistemological purpose of creating findings, and a methodological approach that is hermeneutical and dialectical, as the "nature of social construction suggests that individual constructions can be elicited and refined only through interaction *between* and *among* investigator and respondents" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Constructivists do not generally begin with a theory, rather they "generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meanings" (Creswell, 2003, p. 9).

It is important to understand that qualitative research is not just quantitative research without numbers. The approach is concerned with exploring and developing explanations of social phenomena. It posits a very different set of beliefs and emphasises the centrality of the interpretations of the subject(s) being studied (Bryman, 2003). The term qualitative research is a general definition that covers many different methods applied to understanding and explaining social phenomena (Patton, 2015). As opposed to theory testing and data manipulation, it focuses on interpretation of phenomena in their natural settings to make sense of the meanings individuals bring to their situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It seeks to provide understanding of experiences and perceptions, and to understand in-depth the characteristics of the situation and the meanings brought by the participants (Patton, 2002). Qualitative research has a central characteristic of the natural setting or naturalistic inquiry premise that refers to the process of analysis of social action in uncontrived field settings in which the researcher does not impose predetermined theories or manipulate the setting; imposing predetermined theories or manipulating the setting is the domain of quantitative researchers. The researcher's role is as the key instrument; they are integral to the process and seeking a holistic account of the phenomena under study (Creswell, 2007). As such, the qualitative process mandates reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Reflexivity involves

deep reflection, introspection, and ownership of one's perspective of the phenomena of study (Patton, 2015). It entails raising the researcher's awareness of their potential effect on the research process and outcomes. Additionally, in qualitative research, data analysis is inductive and establishes patterns or themes (Creswell, 2013). The researcher aims to achieve an "emic" understanding of the phenomena as described from the participants' point of view as "meanings that emerge from the field" (Tracy, 2013, p. 21). When well-written, the social constructions of leadership from research can be accessible for others. However, as noted by Grint and Jackson (2010, p. 349) leadership research "tends to be written in impenetrable prose that is well-nigh inaccessible to many leadership scholars (let alone those leaders who might choose to learn from it), and generally fails to engage with practitioners in anything other than a token way." Table 2 shows the advantages and disadvantages of the quantitative and qualitative approaches that I considered when evaluating a research approach for my study.

Table 2: Advantages and Disadvantages of Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Quantitative Research	
Advantages	**Disadvantages**
▪ Draws conclusions for large numbers of people ▪ Analyses data efficiently ▪ Investigates relationships within data ▪ Examines probable causes and effects ▪ Controls bias ▪ Appeals to people's preference for numbers	▪ Is impersonal, dry ▪ Does not record the words of participants ▪ Provides limited understanding of the context of participants ▪ Is largely researcher driven
Qualitative Research	
Advantages	**Disadvantages**
▪ Provides detailed perspectives of a few people ▪ Captures the voices of the participants ▪ Allows participants' experiences to be understood in context ▪ Is based on the views of participants, not of the researcher ▪ Appeals to people's enjoyment of stories	▪ Has limited generalisability ▪ Provides only soft data (not hard data, such as numbers) ▪ Studies few people ▪ Is highly subjective ▪ Minimises use of researcher's expertise due to reliance on participants

Note. Adapted from *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*, by J. W. Creswell, p. 5. Copyright 2015 by Sage Publications.

In summary, quantitative and qualitative research approaches each have their own distinctive histories, with their own underlying philosophical paradigms and contrasting methodological dimensions involving ontology, epistemology, axiology, and assumptions on the possibility of causal linkages or the possibility of generalisation from the research. Advocates of both

research approaches argue that their approach is the most ideal, and implicitly, if not explicitly, they posit the incompatibility thesis, which posits that the research approaches, "including their associated methods, cannot and should not be mixed." (Howe, 1988). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) contend that scholars have demonstrated that it is possible to integrate mixed methods into their research projects, discrediting this thesis. Nevertheless, others such as Creswell (2015), Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) urge the research field to move beyond the debates and recognise that both quantitative and qualitative research approaches are important and useful.

4.2.3 Mixed Methods Approach

The goal of mixed methods research is not to replace, but rather to draw on the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in research studies to minimise the disadvantages of each approach (Creswell, 2015; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Often referred to as the third major research approach, and like quantitative and qualitative approaches, the mixed methods research approach also has a distinctive history, especially in the social sciences. Creswell (2015) suggests that over the past 25 years in particular mixed methods has progressed as a valid research approach. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 14) endorsed this and proposed the mixed methods research approach "as the natural complement to traditional qualitative and quantitative research." Mixed methods research includes ideas from quantitative and qualitative approaches and emerged from advocacy by researchers who believed that both quantitative and qualitative approaches were useful for addressing their research questions (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). Mixed methods research is defined as "the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) contend that this methodological pluralism frequently results in superior research compared to single method research. Using different methods that combine elements of quantitative and qualitative approaches has the potential to enhance the validity of research findings and the theoretical value as the different methods can reinforce and complement each other in a mixed methods study. In the mixed methods approach, the researcher's epistemological assumptions about what can be known and what it means to know something, which inform both the research and the researcher's ontological assumptions and beliefs about reality in general and the reality of the research subject, is a tension in the mixed methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Two major types of

mixed methods research have been identified and defined as tending to follow either a "mixed model" or a "mixed method" typology (Johnson & Onweugbuzie, 2004, p. 20). A mixed method typology study uses separate quantitative and qualitative phases in the overall research design, whereas a mixed model study uses quantitative and qualitative approaches within or across the stages of the research process. The use of a questionnaire to collect both quantitative and qualitative data is an example of a within or across-stage mixed model design. Particularly in the social sciences, using both quantitative and qualitative methods in a study can assist in illuminating different aspects of sociological phenomena. An example is applying quantitative methods to describe the actions of a population and qualitative methods to provide information about the possible reasons for those actions. In such studies, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other. Creswell (2003) noted that mixed methods is a pragmatic approach in that there is no reliance on only one method of research. Instead, mixed methods draws liberally from both positivistic and interpretative approaches. However, he does point out that it is important for researchers adopting a mixed methods approach to be explicit about their rationale for the need to mix research methods. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) contend that much work remains in order to establish a distinct language for the mixed methods approach. However, there is increasing recognition and application of mixed methods research as "it recognises the importance of the traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches but also offers a powerful third paradigm choice that often will provide the most informative, complete, balanced, and useful research results" (Johnson, et al., 2007, p. 129).

4.3   APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP RESEARCH

In leadership studies within an organisational context, quantitative and mixed methods research approaches have historically dominated with a tendency towards qualitative methods in studies related to organisational processes of change (Bryman, 2004). Qualitative approaches in leadership research are slowly increasing. Some examples include case study methodology applied to exploring leadership in the construction industry (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988) and grounded theory methodology used to study multi-level leadership in the motor industry (Hunt & Ropo, 1995). Leadership sits within the social science theories that are based on accumulated empirical evidence from fields such as sociology, psychology, education, economics, and communication (Creswell, 2007). Nonetheless, within leadership research, quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches provide valid options for researchers. In order to determine the philosophical and

methodological approach for this study, it was important to consider the ontological and epistemological assumptions inherent in each of the choices alongside the nature of the research objectives.

4.3.1   Quantitative Approaches to Leadership Research

Quantitative research on leadership is generally characterised by an orientation to the impacts of leadership, the factors that influence leader behaviours, and/or the types of people that become leaders (Bryman, 2004). The disadvantage of adopting a quantitative approach for leadership studies is that the ontology of realism and the "knowledge of the "way things are" is conventionally summarized in the form of time-and-context free generalisations" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109). The predominance of quantitative research in leadership studies is related historically to its close relationship to the discipline of psychology, which has relied on quantitative research methods for understanding particular phenomena (Ehrich, 2005; Parry, 1998). Criticism of quantitative approaches to the study of leadership in particular, for those in leadership roles, is the challenge converting the results of such studies into useable practice, because the nuances and the essence of the phenomena are often unavailable or inexplicit in the published results. The experience of the researcher is that leaders often have little time or may have limited ability or patience to interpret complex statistical results, regardless of the relevance for them.

4.3.2   Qualitative Approaches to Leadership Research

The need for more qualitative research in the study of leadership has been an ongoing issue for over 27 years (Bryman, 2004). The underlying premise for the contention that more researchers adopt a qualitative research approach in leadership studies is the argument that this would introduce a wider range of contextual variables into the investigation and that such variables have the advantage of being grounded in experiences; therefore, the variables are more accessible to practitioners (Bryman, 2004; Bryman, et al., 1988). In a critique of empiricist quantitative and qualitative methods in leadership studies, Alvesson (1996, p.455) argued for an interpretative-reflective approach that fully acknowledges the "theory-laden, interpretative nature of empirical studies and the ambiguity of data." Alvesson also contended that results of quantitative research with abstractions of quantified material and statistical correlations are often viewed by practitioners as remote from everyday practice and therefore of little practical use in the workplace. Others endorse this argument with claims that qualitative research reveals broader and richer descriptions, has increased relevance and

interest for practitioners because it is more accessible, and has sensitivity for the meanings participants attach to their experiences (Martin & Turner, 1986).

While there are an increasing number of leadership studies adopting a qualitative research approach, these studies tend to apply grounded theory with a focus on theory generation. For example, in attempting to study the social influences of transformational leadership, Avolio (1999) advocated the need to use qualitative methodologies – in particular, grounded theory – to move away from the theory testing quantitative approaches. Parry (1998) also advocated for an increased use of grounded theory and social process to lead a new direction for leadership research.

In this study, a qualitative approach with grounded theory methodology was considered and rejected. The reason was that such research design requires the formulation of a theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2007) and this was outside the scope of the study's objective to explore and understand the core essence of the implementation experience from the leaders' perspective. Bryman (2004) contends that in leadership research applying a qualitative approach, case study or multiple case study designs tend to dominate. A qualitative case study research design for this research could have elicited a documented account of the implementation. However, in the case study approach, theory building, theory testing, or comparison with other cases is usually the focus (Tharenou, Donohue, and Cooper, 2009). The researcher's literature review and personal communication with another researcher (Kim Cameron, April 2010) had established that there were no other studies on the implementation of CPLM. Therefore, no other studies were available for comparison. While this study could have provided a benchmark for other case studies, using case study methods did not align with this study's ontological position of investigating multiple realities shared amongst many individuals. Furthermore, the epistemological, insider perspective of understanding and reconstructing lived experiences sought in this study would not have been as accessible.

4.3.3 Mixed Methods Approaches to Leadership Research

Mixed methods approaches are increasingly being applied in leadership studies (Bryman, 2004; Klenke, 2008). The underlying premise in this form of inquiry is that the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods provides for a more complete understanding of a problem being studied than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014). In leadership research, quantitative and qualitative approaches tend to be combined for a number of purposes. Most

commonly, a qualitative approach is applied to prepare for the collection of quantitative data or to assist in expanding a quantitative study. In a mixed methods typology approach, the researcher uses quantitative and qualitative approaches as discrete phases within the overall research process.   In this approach, by using both in the same study, the researcher can use the strengths of one method to balance out the weaknesses of the other. Generation and testing of grounded theory can be accomplished and through convergence and corroboration of findings, stronger evidence revealed (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Although methodological purists propose researchers should work within one or the other approach, the combination of approaches has the potential to provide a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014). The results from mixed methods studies are often more useful for practicing leaders in that the participating leader's voice may be available and the findings written a way that practicing leaders can understand.

4.3.4   Approaches to Leadership Research

Bryman (2004) contends that the open-ended and flexible character of qualitative research lends itself well to exploring new forms of leadership. Positive leadership is a relatively new form of leadership, and as noted previously, there is minimal literature on implementing positive leadership from the perspective of leaders. Bryman, Besnen, Beardsworth, and Keil, (1988) advocate for the use of qualitative research approaches that have a focus on leadership practices from the perspective of leaders themselves. Klenke (2008) posits the application of phenomenology in leadership research and cites two studies. The first study explored the features of experiences that facilitate leadership development with a sample of United States army officers (Olivares, Peterson, & Hess, 2007, cited in Klenke, 2008, pp. 232–233). The second study explored the "ripple effect" of a leadership mentoring programme involving nine former mentors who had been participants in the programme (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004, cited in Klenke, 2008, p. 233–236). As in these studies, the intention of this study was to rely on the participants' subjective meanings related to their experiences and allow the participants to express these through engaging with the researcher and the data collection processes. As such, for this study, the ontology of realism, the nature of the research questions, the philosophical position of the researcher (described in 4.4) and the knowledge sought from the research lends itself to the inquiry approach of phenomenology.

4.3.5 Phenomenology

As both a philosophy and a method, phenomenology is applied in organisational research as a way to work with issues to develop understandings that may not be immediately apparent in surface responses (Goulding, 2005). Phenomenology is defined "as the study of phenomena: appearances of things, as they appear in our experience, or the way we experience things, and thus the meanings things have in our experiences" (Klenke, 2008, p. 222). Patton (2015, p. 573) explains phenomenological analysis as seeking "to grasp and elucidate the meaning, structure, and essences of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people." Ehrich (2005) posits that phenomenology's ability to reveal the essence of the lived experience is a contribution to leadership research, suggesting this has significant potential to help researchers understand leadership phenomena, and leadership practices in particular, as these have human elements and dimensions.

The phenomenological approach is common in social science, psychology, and education research. The social sciences consider phenomenology as probably the most significant philosophical movement of the 20th century (Patton, 2015). Yet, the phenomenological approach has an extensive and controversial history. It was first introduced by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Based on earlier work by a number of German philosophers, Husserl's theory posits that being and meaning are always bound up in one another and this leads to a mutual relationship of object and subject (Husserl, 1931). In the classical text *Logical Investigations* (Husserl, 1970) he went on to propose the philosophical perspective in phenomenology as the intentionality of consciousness. Husserl was seeking a single discipline that would bring together objective theories, such as those in the sciences, with the subjective ideas of psychology. He argued for phenomena to be reconceived and recognised as objective intentional contents of subjective acts of consciousness. He contended that because any experience as perceived by human consciousness has value, it should be the object of scientific research. His view was that in seeking to understand human motivation, all subjective information should be important, because human actions are influenced by what people perceive to be real (Beyer, 2003). Husserl contests the purported essentiality of the researcher putting aside prior knowledge in order to grasp the essential lived experiences of those being studied and in order to neutralise biases, so that the researcher does not influence the object of the study (Creswell, 2007). This belief, a factor that distinguishes Husserlian philosophy from Heideggerian philosophy (Hiedegger, 1927/1962; explained in 4.3.6), is based on the *epoché* process (explained later in the chapter) and the extent to which

the researcher sets aside their own knowledge, experiences, and preconceptions in order to hear the participants' descriptions of the phenomena (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The Husserlian philosophy implies that the researcher has been completely freed from all preconceptions (i.e. complete transcendence) regarding the phenomena under study; the interpretations, therefore, are based solely upon the participants' descriptions of their experiences. In contrast, Heideggerian philosophy presupposes that in practice, the state of *epoché,* a state "where all judgments about the existence of the external world, and consequently all action in the world, are suspended,"[17] can never be fully realised or perfectly achieved. The researcher retains some knowledge of experience and preconceptions and in fact, this is required for understanding the experiences and preconceptions of the participants. Inevitably, these are incorporated into the researcher's interpretations of the participants' descriptions of their experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Similarly, Laverty (2003) notes that in phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology, data can include the researcher's personal reflections on the topic as well as information gathered from research participants.

Within phenomenology, there are a number of phenomenological approaches; each seeks to understand the lived human experience, and all have similar end-points (Laverty, 2003). Four characteristics or themes common to phenomenological philosophy and the different types of phenomenology were identified by Merleau-Ponty (1962). These are description, reduction or bracketing, essence, and intentionality. Description is concerned with describing phenomena, which includes anything that appears or presents itself, such as feelings, thoughts, and objects. Reduction or bracketing involves the researcher suspending their presuppositions and assumptions about the phenomena of exploration. Essence is the core meaning of an individual's experience that makes it what it is. Intentionality refers to consciousness and implies that individuals are always conscious of something (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). With a number of differences amongst the approaches, the researcher needs to address the question of which phenomenological method is best suited to the research inquiry based on the phenomenological philosophy, the research approach, and the specific phenomenon of interest. In this study, both hermeneutical and interpretative phenomenological approaches to the research and to the inquiry method were considered.

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[17] Epoché. (n.d.) In Wikipedia. Retrieved 31 May 2015 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epoch%C3%A9

4.3.6   Hermeneutical Phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with *lived experience* (also known as *lived human* and *lived world experience*). The term *hermeneutics* derives from the Greek word *hermeneuein* which means "to understand or to interpret" (Patton, 2015, p. 137).   Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), although never a student of Husserl, was for a time mentored by him. Heidegger based his first philosophy on the Husserlian phenomenological philosophical approach. Later he challenged some of Husserl's assumptions on how phenomenology should guide meaningful inquiry (Heidegger, 1927/1962). He developed hermeneutical phenomenology based on the philosophy of interpretation (Creswell, 2007). The orientation is towards the "lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the texts of life (hermeneutics)" (van Manen, 1990, p. 4). Hermeneutics goes beyond description alone, as it seeks to illuminate details and aspects within an experience that are often taken for granted (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991).

A point of divergence between Husserl and Heidegger is the way in which exploration of lived experience should proceed. The Husserlian style is descriptive, while the Heideggerian style is interpretative. Husserl focused on understanding phenomena, while Heidegger argued that consciousness is not separate from the world, as it is formed from past lived experience; therefore, there is a need to be aware of and to account for these interpretive influences (Laverty, 2003). Hermeneutic approaches view the known (the person with the experience) and the knower (the interpreter of the experience) as fundamentally interrelated. Therefore, any interpretation of a given phenomenon is shaped through the perspectives and understandings of the interpreter. This includes the biases, understandings, and experiences of the interpreter (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006). In attempting to make sense of the meaning of these interactions from the perspective of those involved, the researcher makes a subjective interpretation about the result the subjective meaning of an action or an action's result had for the person (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991). The Heidegger hermeneutic approach to phenomenology is underpinned by the philosophical view that people and the world are indissolubly related in cultural, social, and historical contexts (Larkin et al., 2006; Laverty, 2003). Hermeneutics proposes that expert knowledge is an essential component of inquiry that enables useful and meaningful knowledge to emerge and so prescribed the *epoché* process, a technique of making preconceptions explicit and explaining how they influence the research and findings (Laverty, 2003).

4.3.7 Interpretative Phenomenology

In the mid-1990s, Jonathan Smith (1996) drew on concepts from Heideggerian phenomenology and introduced interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The aim of IPA is to explore in detail the experience of a phenomena or event from the perspective of the participant or participants, for the researcher to get as close as possible to the participants' experiences, and to make sense of that experience through an interpretative process that elucidates the essence of the participants' experiences (Patton, 2015). IPA is focused on trying to understand and "give voice" to the experiential claims and concerns of the "person-in-context" through analysing "first-person accounts as data" with the more speculative development of an interpretative account of the "meaning of such claims and concerns" (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 117). IPA has a set of core ideas. The focus is on elucidating and combining rich descriptions that are the core of the phenomenological approach with the more speculative development of an interpretative account; IPA's distinctiveness is in "the approach that it offers, rather than as a particular set of analytic steps" (Larkin, et al., 2006, p. 117). In IPA, there is recognition that there is not "a direct route to experience," rather it is endeavouring to get as close as possible to the experience (Smith, 2011, p. 10). IPA takes theoretical tenets from idiography, hermeneutics, and phenomenology (Smith, 2011; Smith, et al., 2009). Combining these three elements in a qualitative research inquiry approach involves specific researcher actions. These actions are

- idiographic, consisting of interpreting the lived experiences of each participant,
- hermeneutic, or having a focus on understanding these experiences within the participant's physical world thorough analysis of interview transcriptions and other data sources, such as diaries, and
- interpretative, or having a focus on examining and understanding the real life experience from the perspective of the participant or the participant group in order to interpret and elucidate the overall essence of the experience (Creswell, 2007; Laverty, 2003; Patton, 2002; Smith et al., 2009).

Phenomenology, particularly interpretative phenomenology, seeks the essence of the experience. The term essence refers to the essential meanings of a phenomenon "so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way" (van Manen, 1990, p.39). Put more simply, the phenomenological essence should make explicit the opportunity for

others to say "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46). The interpretative component contextualises these within the context of "what" this means for the participant. The phenomenological component identifies "how" the participant experienced the phenomenon. In IPA, the researcher approaches the study with two specific aims. The first is to understand and describe the participant's world. The second is to develop a more overtly interpretative analysis that positions the initial description in relation to a wider context that may be social, cultural, or theoretical (Larkin, et al., 2006). IPA has a dual focus on the idiographic and on the patterning of meaning across participants. An underpinning tenet in the description and interpretation is the recognition that access to experience is partial and complex (Smith, 1996), therefore the account of the experience is constructed by participants and the researcher (Larkin, et al.).

4.3.8 Phenomenology Summary

Phenomenology has unique philosophies and characteristics as well as a number of approaches that each offer different nuances of focus. In the two approaches considered for this study, there are a number of differences. IPA methodology follows the Heideggerian approach. Essentially, Heidegger's hermeneutical phenomenology suggests that expert knowledge is an essential component of inquiry that enables useful and meaningful knowledge to emerge; the Heideggerian approach prescribes the technique of making preconceptions explicit and explaining how they influence the research and findings (Laverty, 2003). Heuristics has a focus on connectedness and relationships. Participants remain visible in the examination of the data concerned with experience and the essence of the participants experiences (Patton, 2015). Smith's (1996) interpretative phenomenological analysis approach goes a step further in that it combines rich descriptions that are the core of the phenomenological approach with the more speculative development of an interpretative account to extract the overall essence of the experience being studied. Furthermore, in IPA, deepening of the analysis is possible through utilising metaphors and through using the lenses of other theories to view the analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2003). In this study, phenomenology provided the philosophical foundation alongside interpretative phenomenological analysis which guided the data analysis and the researcher interpretations of the data. The distinctiveness of IPA is in its combined approach of focusing on idiography, hermeneutics, and phenomenology (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Smith, 2011; Smith et al., 2009).

4.4   RESEARCH DESIGN

Choosing a qualitative research approach for this study departs from the majority of previous leadership studies. The rationale for the choice of a qualitative research approach was that a qualitative design sits within the constructivist/interpretivist philosophical paradigm and is in keeping with the exploratory nature of seeking to understand the lived experiences of the participants. This aligns with the researcher's interest in exploring and understanding the positive leadership approach from the perspective of the experiences of the leaders. The approach supported the research objective of understanding unique interactions in a specific setting (Patton, 2002) and enabled a focus on interpretation of phenomena in their natural settings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Because positive leadership is a relatively new form of leadership grounded in social connectivity and intentionality and the foci of this research was the lived experiences of the participant leaders in their implementation of CPLM, this study was well-suited to a qualitative research design. Qualitative research based on an interpretive paradigm is exploratory in nature and this facilitated the researcher to gain information about an area of leadership in which little is known (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). The model had not previously been implemented; therefore no knowledge on the practicality and utility of the model for practicing leaders existed. Similarly, the practical experience of applying positive strategies from the perspective of leaders had not previously been researched.

These conditions met Creswell's (2014, p. 20) criteria for choosing a qualitative approach if "a concept or phenomena needs to be explored and understood because little research has been done on it" and the subject has not been explored with a particular sample or group of people before (Morse, 1991). The use of a qualitative approach for leadership research finds support from Bryman et al., (1988, p. 17) in their contention that "the deployment of a qualitative research strategy will lead to a focus on leadership practices from the perspective of leaders themselves." This view aligns with the objective of the study, which was to focus on the overall essence of the implementation experience from the perspective of the participating leaders. Furthermore, a qualitative research approach aligned with the research questions that emerged from the literature that involved seeking answers to the "what" and the "how" of the leaders' experiences of implementing CPLM, the leaders' experiences of applying positive strategies, and how the leaders used these strategies in a natural disaster workplace environment. It also facilitated exploring potential changes to optimise the practical implementation of CPLM by leaders in the workplace.

In this study, the researcher's intent was to rely on the participants' subjective meanings related to their experiences and to allow participants to express these through engaging with the data collection instruments (journals and semi-structured interviews) and with the researcher (as an instrument for data collection and analysis). In this process, the aim was to apply an inductive, interpretative approach to develop patterns of meaning to give life to the combined story and identify the essence of the participants' experiences. Also considered when adopting this research design was the researcher's personal experiences and social constructivist philosophical orientation, as well as how these factors may affect the research. What Creswell (2014, p. 5) calls "the philosophical worldview," or the assumptions that one brings to the study that can influence the research design and the procedures, translated the decided approach into practice. Others have described this as the "basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). The beliefs of the researcher sit within the social constructivist's worldview as an individual who believes that people "seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). This research approach also aligned with the researcher's value system of a adopting a *do-with-not-to* philosophy, which essentially means working *with* people to make changes rather than *imposing* changes on them, and valuing the diversity that people can bring to situations. The qualitative approach therefore aligned with the social constructivist worldview orientation and the inherent value system of the researcher. Thus, based on the researcher's social constructivist philosophical position, the nature of the research that involved multiple realities constructed through lived experiences, and the research goal of relying as much as possible on the participants' views, an interpretive framework that accommodated these factors within a qualitative research approach was indicated.

4.5   INQUIRY APPROACH

The research foci in this study were the experiences of the 10 leaders in their intentional implementation of CPLM, implementation of the four strategies inherent in the model, and implementation of the two additional strategies added to Cameron's model. The unprecedented natural disaster events, which commenced at the same time as the field implementation, added an unplanned layer of complexity to the leaders' implementation. However, the irrevocably changed environment also offered the researcher an opportunity to expand the exploration of what positive leadership strategies the leaders used and how they used them in a workplace environment impacted by continuous earthquakes. The nature of

the research questions and the naturalistic in-the-field context of the implementation, in addition to tending towards a qualitative research design, also lends itself to an inquiry approach that would not only explore but also extract and elucidate the core of the experiences of the participating leaders in this study.

As such, the inquiry approach adopted for this qualitative study was interpretative phenomenological analysis because it enabled the combination of rich descriptions with the more speculative development of an interpretative account. This approach aligned with Creswell's (2007, p. 60) suggestion that the type of problem best suited for a phenomenological approach is "one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon." Using an interpretative phenomenological lens, the focus was on the characteristics of the individual's experience (the idiographic), on describing what all the participants had in common as they experienced the phenomenon, and on reducing individual experiences to a description of a "universal essence" of the experience through an analytic focus (van Manen, 1990, p. 177). In effect, extracting the "what" was experienced and "how" it was experienced, (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; Smith, et al., 2009; Tracy, 2013) is a core purpose of the phenomenological interpretive lens and research approach. As such, phenomenology, with the epistemology anchored in an interactive paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, offered the researcher the potential to capture the meaning and essence of the leaders' implementation experience through their stories.

In hindsight, the choice of a qualitative interpretative phenomenological approach was fortuitous, because of the shift in context resulting from the unpredicted natural disaster events. The flexibility of the design enabled the researcher to extend the second research question to capture the circumstances and the participants' experiences of using positive leadership strategies as the changing environmental and implementation contexts unfolded.

4.6   PARTICIPANT GROUP

In qualitative and especially phenomenological studies, participant groups are usually small. In phenomenological studies, participant groups typically consist of between three and ten participants within a natural setting, with the essentiality that all of the participants have experienced the phenomena that are the focus of the study (Creswell, 2007). This allows for

the generation of rich, in-depth data and the interpretative phenomenological focus that serves to "draw out or disclose the meaning of the experience" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 36).

This study consisted of a purposive participant group of 10 New Zealand Customs Service leaders. These leaders were responsible for the Customs operations at the Christchurch International Airport. In April 2010 to generate a sample, the researcher e-mailed personalised invitations to each leader (see Appendix B). All 10 leaders accepted the invitation to participate in the study. This result was unexpected, as initial indications were that several of the leaders would not want to participate. Because all of the leaders volunteered to participate, there was no opportunity to have a control or comparison group. On the other hand, this presented the opportunity to have the whole leadership team involved in the study.

The leadership team consisted of two operations managers, who were responsible for the overall Customs operations at Christchurch International Airport, and eight leaders (Chief Customs Officers) who were responsible for the daily operations. In the international airport environment, Customs operates 24 hours, 365 days a year. To accommodate operational requirements, Customs leaders and officers operated on rotational shifts and were organised into four teams, each with two leaders. Three teams each consisted of 19 Customs officers and one consisted of 18 Customs officers, in total 75 officers. Within each team, each officer had an allocated leader who was responsible for the officer's overall performance and welfare. Unfortunately, because of the rotational shift patterns, officers only saw their respective leaders occasionally. The situation for the leaders was similar and this restricted leadership team meetings. It also restricted leaders from having full team meetings with their officers. To have full team meetings, some leaders and officers had to come into work on their rostered days off or come in despite having worked the night shift. Because of this, full team meetings were infrequent and other forms of communication were used to convey information within the leadership team, and within and between the officer teams.

In the participating leaders' group, the average participant age was 58 years, with the average time working for Customs being 22 years. The majority of participants had worked together for many years, either in the leadership team, or in various previous roles. All had considerable experience in leadership roles at various levels within Customs with an average of 15.5 years of leadership experience across the group. Eighty percent of the leader sample

was male. Because of this, deliberately throughout this thesis, gender-neutral language is used to prevent identifying individual participants, particularly in the findings chapter. Table 3 shows the demographics for the participating leaders.

Table 3: Demographics of Participant Leaders

Gender	Number	Percent of Sample	Average Age of Sample	Median Age of Sample	Average Length of Customs Service	Average time in Customs leadership role
Male	8	80%	58.4 years	56 years	22 years	15.5 years
Female	2	20%				

Because of the small participant group, gender bias and identification of the workplace in the research, to protect the privacy of the individual participants, only higher-level demographics have been provided on the participant leaders. However, the leader participant group for this research conformed to the contention that in IPA, a relatively small but purposive group of participants with common characteristics and experiences enables the researcher to explore each case with the necessary depth, detail, and rigour required for this type of analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Officer Group

Despite the gender composition of the leadership team, the majority of Customs officers in the Christchurch airport staff group were female (65%), 35 years of age and above (72%), and 85% had given more than two years of service. As part of the implementation design, leaders had chosen 20 officers to be involved in a positive management interview programme (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002).   At the conclusion of the study, a random sample participant group consisting of 10 of these officers was invited to participate in an individual semi-structured interview with the researcher. All accepted the invitation. Selection of the officer interview sample was by blind ballot. One officer for each of the nine leaders who had been involved in the PMI process was selected, along with one more officer from the remaining pool of the original 20 officers, involved in the PMI process. The demographics of the resultant officer interview sample are in Table 4on the following page.

Table 4: Demographics of Officer Interview Sample

Officer	Gender	Age	Length of Customs Service
A	M	30	6
B	M	37	8
C	F	36	7
D	F	33	5
E	F	45	4
F	M	40	6
G	M	36	5
H	F	41	3
I	F	40	4
J	F	38	5
10	**M = 40%** **F = 60%**	**Average 37.6 years**	**Average 5.3 years**

4.7   RESEARCH PROCESS

For the leaders, the study consisted of three interrelated phases: pre-implementation planning, field implementation (six-months duration), and post-implementation individual interviews. The first phase involved the participant leaders in a series of planning workshops. In phase two, the leaders implemented CPLM. Phase three, consisted of the semi-structured individual interviews held with each leader and the random sample of officers.

In phase one, pre-implementation planning, to prepare for the practical implementation of CPLM, six workshops were undertaken with the leaders. The workshops took place over a two-month period prior to commencing phase two, the field implementation. The first workshop in phase one was with the external facilitator who had previously presented the positive leadership approach during the Customs in-house leadership development programme. The reason for using an external academic for the first workshop was to provide a refresher on working with the positive leadership approach and to emphasise the credibility of the approach. Five further workshops followed, each with a different purpose and set of outcomes for achievement (see Table 5). In the second workshop, the outcome of a discussion on the practical aspects of implementing CPLM resulted in an agreement between the leaders and the researcher to add the Everest goal and PMI practices into the model for the implementation. The rationale for this was that having a goal with a set of operational measures to indicate achievement supported the leaders' goal to improve operational performance. In addition, it gave a focus and a purpose for the leaders to implement positive strategies. There was strong support for the PMI practice, as leaders saw this as a constructive way to work with their top performers to support achievement of their goal. In

workshop five, the leadership team met on their own to finalise the goal, measures and process for the implementation. The rationale for encouraging leaders to self-facilitate this workshop was to encourage participation and ownership through working together to decide their Everest goal and decide the specific measures that would indicate achievement of their goal. The leadership team facilitated the final pre-implementation workshop with the researcher available to answer questions or provide points of clarification when needed. Again, the researcher considered this was important for leader ownership of the implementation process in their workplace. Table 5 outlines the focus and outcomes for each workshop.

Table 5: Pre-implementation Workshop Schedule

Workshop one	Facilitator	Purpose and outcomes to be achieved
1. **Review of working with positive leadership**	External[a] & researcher	▪ Refresher of positive leadership principles and strategies ▪ Discussion of CPLM positive strategies
2. **Implementing CPLM**	External & researcher	▪ Finalise decision to implement CPLM ▪ Commence implementation planning
3. **Adjusting CPLM**	Researcher	▪ Finalise positive strategies to implement ▪ Leaders select which positive strategies they will implement
4. **Working with positive strategies**	Researcher	▪ Discussion on implementing positive strategies
5. **Deciding goal and measures**	Leadership team	▪ Discussion and agreement on Everest goal and specific measure to be used
6. **Implementation planning**	Leadership team & researcher	▪ Finalisation of implementation arrangements and date

Note. [a]External facilitator was Dr Peter Cammock, University of Canterbury.

At the conclusion of the workshops, leaders had decided a commencement and conclusion date for their implementation (1 September 2010 - 1 March 2011) as well as an Everest goal and eight measures that they agreed would indicate achievement of their goal. Each leader had also selected two or three positive strategies they would focus on implementing. The Everest goal was the *recognition of Christchurch International Airport as being the model airport in the country by end of February 2011.* The word *model* was defined by the leaders to mean meeting or exceeding operational performance requirements using minimal resources.

It is acknowledged that the Everest goal did not meet the usual criteria for such a goal, nor did it fit within the usual criteria for a phenomenological study. However, what was important was that it was *their* goal; it was an ambitious stretch goal for the leaders and the

research focus was the leaders' experiences. Eight specific measures that would indicate goal achievement were attached to the goal. These measures together with commencement and conclusion results are set out in Table 7 page 128. The goal was time-bound and aligned with the purposes of the organisation. It targeted extraordinary performance in that other performance improvement initiatives had not been successful in improving operational performance. The goal had value and significance for people in the workplace, and an "affirmative orientation" in that it had "an inclination towards positive possibilities" (Cameron, 2013, p. 154-155). As such, the goal did meet much of the criteria to be an Everest goal.

In the pre-implementation workshops, the notion of actively identifying and working with both energisers and de-energisers had an immediate accord with all of the leaders. This was in contrast to the opportunity to participate in an exercise using the reflective best-self tool, (Roberts, et al., 2005) which was soundly rejected by the leaders as a North American approach. The majority of leaders considered soliciting feedback on their best-self was not an approach that they were comfortable with and was not a cultural norm within the environment in which they operated. As such, obtaining best-self feedback as part of implementing the positive communication strategy in Cameron's model was not included in the leaders' implementation of CPLM.

4.7.1 Implementation Resources

In this study, the leaders had a visual of the model in Figure 1 and Cameron's 2008 book, *Positive Leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Performance*. However, there was a need for clear, specific information in an easily accessible, easily understood format that enabled operational leaders to understand the concepts involved with positive leadership and CPLM. To meet this need, and to provide leaders with evidence of the credibility of each positive strategy in the model, the researcher developed a simple visual incorporating additional components adapted from Cameron's book and related literature. The additional components included noting literature related to each strategy, examples of leadership behaviours that enacted each strategy, and adding the personal management interview (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002). For the study, the researcher developed two additional complementary resources. The first was a guide for the leaders that specified the types of positive leadership behaviours that are inherent in each of the four strategies in CPLM. This guide is in Figure 3 below.

POSITIVE CLIMATE	POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	POSITIVE COMMUNICATION	POSITIVE MEANING
• Positive noticing and expressing verbal or written thanks, gratitude/appreciation to others for their actions • Encouraging and reinforcing positive performance • Expressing and responding with empathy providing support for issues • Strengths-based approach – coming from recognising and building on these	• Actions that build positive workplace relationships • Leader facilitation of and modelling of positive energy • Recognising and addressing de-energisers Work with positive energisers • Focus on strengths and give time to strongest performers • Make opportunities for what people do best	• Having descriptive and supportive conversations • Describing what observed and/or what wanted rather than judgement • Describing observation instead of making judgements or assumptions • 5:1 +/- ratio technique – ensuring more positive than negative ratio of communications	• Reinforcing the overall contribution work makes to others and the strategic outcomes and Everest Goal • Reinforcing meaningfulness of the work individuals and the team do • Encouraging ideas generation and support for implementation
PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW			
• PMI initial session • Active participation in ongoing regular PMI meetings with PMI agenda			

Figure 3: Guide to Positive Leadership Behaviours Developed for the Study.

The second guide was a visual representation of the positive strategies, literature links and leadership behaviours related to each of the strategies. Figure 4 on the following page shows this visual and provides a visual representation of the foundational framework for this study. Throughout the implementation, each leader kept an e-journal. For the leader journal, the researcher designed a master journal template that mirrored a standard monthly diary format covering the six-months of the study. This template was adapted to make a personalised journal for each leader. Each journal included information on the positive strategies the leader had selected to use, the positive strategy behaviours (Figure 3), the CPLM visual with strategies and literature links (Figure 4), the measures for the Everest goal, and the PMI guidelines and templates. Because no guidelines or templates were found for implementing the PMI process, these were developed for the initial role-clarifying session and the ongoing PMI sessions, and included in the master journal template (Appendix A).

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL – STRATEGIES AND LITERATURE LINKS 2010

POSITIVE CLIMATE

- Substantial research confirms that a positive climate at work is strongly associated with positive performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Schneider, 1991; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005)

- Strengths-based approach
- Positive noticing
- Appropriate empathy and support
- Time with strongest performers and positive influencers

POSITIVE MEANING

- Research has identified high levels of meaningfulness in work are associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisational performance (Cameron, 2007, 2008; Cameron & Lavine, 2006; Locke & Latham, 1990, 2002; Grant, 2007)

- Reinforce contribution goals more than achievement goals
- Reinforce meaningfulness of work

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEWS
- Initial role negotiation session
- Followed by 1:1 – face-to-face at least monthly meetings 45–60 minutes – with agenda linked to 4 strategies of positive leadership model

- PMI initial session
- PMI agenda meetings

- Empirical investigations support strong positive connections between holding PMIs and significant improvement in organisation and individual performance PMI (Boss, 1983; Cameron, 2008; Goodman & Boss, 2002)

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- Research has identified that people in positive relationships significantly outperformed on decision-making and motor tasks (Jehn & Shah, 1997)
- What people give to a relationship accounts for positive effects (Brown & Brown, 2006; Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003; Dutton, 2003; Dutton & Heaphy, 2003)
- Positive energising is a learned behaviour (Baker, Cross, & Wooten, 2003; Baker & Dutton, 2007; Cross, Baker, & Parker, 2003)

- Leader modelling and facilitation of positive energy
- High quality connections
- Work with positive energisers and address de-energisers

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- Descriptive and supportive communication
- Recognise performance +/– communication
- Losada ratio technique

- Evidence confirms supportive communication is a prerequisite for and enabler of positive organisation performance (Baker & Dutton, 2007; Dutton, 2003)
- Descriptive, constructive, positive conversations (Cameron, 2007; Gibb, 1961; Meyers & Rocca, 2001)
- 5:1 ratio higher performance (Losada & Heaphy, 2004)
- Positive emotions, positive performance (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005)

KEY
- Positive Leadership Strategy
- Literature Links
- Behaviours

Figure 4: Visual Incorporating Additional Components. Adapted from Cameron's book and related literature by R. Martin.

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As shown in Figures 3 and 4, each strategy lists a number of positive leadership behaviours suggested by Cameron (2008) that have been empirically validated as fostering positive outcomes in organisations. Positive climate includes positive noticing, encouraging and reinforcing positive performance, appropriate empathy, and taking a strengths-based approach. Positive relationships include behaviours that facilitate positive energy, use strengths, and build quality relationships. Behaviours listed to foster positive communication focus on using descriptive and supportive communication, describing observations, avoiding judgements or assumptions, and employing a ratio technique to ensure most communication is positive. Positive meaning behaviours focus on reinforcing meaningfulness of overall contributions of the organisation, highlighting contribution goals (Everest goals) rather than individual achievements, reinforcing meaningfulness of individual work and teamwork, and encouraging ideas generation and implementation support. The personal management interview involves an initial role-clarifying session followed regular meetings between a leader and a direct report. As noted above, the PMI guidelines and templates were included in the leader journal (see Appendix A).

The implementation resources shown in Figures 2 and 3 provided a level of consistency and clarity for the leaders in implementing CPLM. Because this is the first study to implement Cameron's model, it was not possible to build on previous implementations of CPLM.

4.7.2 Research Roles

Initially and throughout the implementation, an important role of the researcher was to encourage and support the participant leaders to take ownership of the implementation. This fitted well with the researcher's do-with-not-to philosophy. It also supported the potential benefits of the leaders' participation because it gave them the opportunity to build their knowledge and experience of working with positive leadership strategies. IPA requires in-depth analysis and "a way of understanding *how* the co-researchers as a group experience the *what* they experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 142). In this study, the participant leaders were co-researchers to a degree in that they were implementing CPLM. Because the researcher was based in Wellington for most of the week, it was initially expected that deliberate opportunities would need to be created to facilitate leader-researcher interactions and researcher observations of leader interactions with their officers. However, because the earthquakes began within days of commencing the implementation, this changed; the researcher became based in the Christchurch operations centre full-time. The researcher's

responsibilities associated with leading the emergency support response for staff required frequent visits and interactions within the leaders' operational environment. This supported the IPA inquiry approach of this study.

4.7.3   Role of the *Epoché* Process

During the research, particularly throughout the analysis process, the researcher adopted a conscious awareness of the importance of bracketing, or *epoché* (Tufford & Newman, 2010). *Epoché* is a Greek word meaning *to refrain from judgement*, *to abstain from everyday way of knowing, perceiving, and understanding things*. It is an ongoing analytical process rather than a single fixed event. This process is central to phenomenology and involves the researcher consciously suspending their presuppositions, prejudgements, and interpretations so that they can be open to the aspects of meaning that belong to the phenomena of the lived experience of the participant (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). Despite this process, in IPA, interpretation of the data always has the potentiality of incorporating the cultural and social experiences as well as the assumptions the researcher brings to the topic (Creswell, 2007; van Manen, 1990).

In this study the *epoché*, or bracketing process, consisted of a number of discussion sessions between the research and the researcher's senior supervisor with the objective of surfacing and exploring preconceptions the researcher had about the research topic, the participants, and later, about the emerging data. A number of self-management strategies, such as staying aware of personal bias and preconceptions and suspending judgement, were noted and applied during the research process. Examples of identified preconceptions included whether certain leaders would meaningfully participate as well as considerations about the capability of others to learn and actually apply new ways of working. Having conscious awareness of such preconceptions was an important aspect because of the researcher's prior knowledge of the topic, the researcher's role in the organisation, and the researcher's knowledge of the participants. In a number of instances, the researcher's preconceptions, presuppositions, and prejudgements were unsupported, particularly with two leaders who emerged as champions of the positive leadership approach. During the study, the researcher kept a journal of reflections, observations, and points of interest, referring to them throughout the field research, again during the data analysis process, and finally in writing the findings and discussion chapters.

4.7.4 Role of the Leaders

The leaders took an active role in negotiating and deciding elements of the implementation. In an endeavour to engender a research environment that would enable the leaders to feel comfortable and safe enough to fully participate, a number of safeguards were agreed upon with the leadership team. These safeguards included the following:

- Data and information was used exclusively for the purpose of the research.
- Confidentiality was assured for the individuals involved.
- Confidentiality was assured for the researcher journal entries and for any individual coaching support.
- Coaching support was agreed to focus primarily on the two key leaders to whom the other leaders reported, in order to maintain the integrity of the line management structure to reduce the risk of inadvertent usurping by the researcher.

The leadership team agreed to own the implementation, and rather than making a major announcement informing staff of the Everest goal and the decision to work with positive strategies, it was agreed leaders would introduce their own team(s) to the goal and the eight measures that would indicate achievement of the goal. They would each introduce and pilot the PMI process with a number of officers in their team.   Leaders decided not to discuss implementing CPLM or positive strategies with their respective teams. Instead, each leader would quietly work at implementing their selected positive strategies. This was decided because of the cultural norms and likely negative reaction in the workplace. If the leaders had discussed implementing positive strategies with their officers the potential was that this would have been met by cynicism and considered "just another management fad."

4.8   DATA SOURCES

Three data sources contributed to the interpretative phenomenological analysis in this study: leader interviews, leader journals, and officer interviews. In the analytic procedures, the two sources of leader data (journals and interviews) were processed separately from the officer interview data. The reason for this was the researcher's view that the leader journals and interviews contributed to understanding the experiences and perspectives of the leaders, and the officer interviews contributed to confirming that the leaders did indeed work differently, implement positive strategies, and demonstrate positive leadership behaviours in the

workplace. Figure 5 shows the data sources used for interpretative phenomenological analysis.
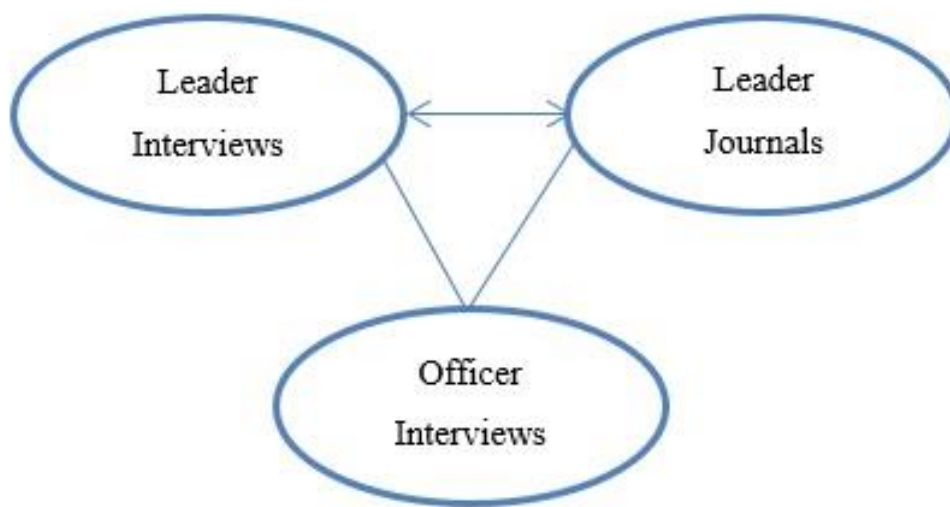
Figure 5: Data Sources for Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Data collected by the leaders on the Everest goal measures contributed to the study, but was not included in the phenomenological analysis. As discussed earlier, leaders had agreed on eight operational measures that would indicate achievement of their Everest goal. Six of these measures related to increasing quality, productivity, and timeliness of processing procedures, and two measures related to reducing sick and annual leave balances. These were selected from already-existing operational measures, as they were important indicators of performance that were already monitored and measured through the official Customs electronic operational management system (CMS). At the conclusion of the study, the electronic system provided verification of the outcomes for each of the measures. (For outcomes of Everest goal measures, see Table 7, Chapter 5.)

4.8.1   Data Collection – Leaders

As already noted throughout the study, each leader kept an e-journal (described in section 4.7.1), and at the conclusion of the study participated in an individual, semi-structured, face-to-face interview with the researcher. The leader interview consisted of 12 questions (Appendix C). Eleven were open questions that focused on in-depth exploration of the leaders' experiences of implementing CPLM through learning and applying positive leadership in their workplace. One closed question asked about the continued use of positive strategies. The interviews were scheduled over a four-week period in March 2011 to fit

around leaders' rosters and operational commitments. Each leader determined the interview location and time that best suited them. In the interviews, leaders were encouraged to reflect and talk freely about their experiences and any other aspects of the implementation not covered by the interview questions. Interviews were digitally recorded with the consent of the participant and transcribed verbatim shortly thereafter by the researcher, using the free version of Express Scribe transcription software (available from www.nch.com.au/scribe). Most interviews lasted for approximately 40 minutes and generated on average 5 pages (size A4) of transcribed type. To check accuracy of transcription and to provide further exposure to the interview content, each transcript was compared, line by line, with the interview recording and any necessary corrections were made. Each individual transcript was then promptly e-mailed to its respective leader for the leader to make changes, corrections, or additions. Eight of the leaders either returned their transcripts without adjustments or e-mailed that they had no changes. Two leaders made minor changes to clarify or expand points in their respective transcripts.

Collecting forms of data such as data from journals for phenomenological analysis has support from Creswell (2013) and Smith, et al. (2009). Therefore, in order to capture experiences and reflections during the implementation, leaders were requested to keep a journal and use it regularly to record experiences, reflections, and learnings during their CPLM implementation and their application of positive strategies. Each leader had a choice of using a paper or electronic journal. All leaders chose the electronic journal. In hindsight, this was fortunate because the journals contained a considerable amount of data. Interpreting handwriting would have been time-consuming and increased the risk of possible misinterpretation.

The prime purpose of developing and implementing the journals was to use them as one way to capture the leaders lived experiences for the duration of the implementation. This purpose was fulfilled, as the journals proved to be a very rich source of data. For a small number of leaders, the discipline of making at least minimal notes on their reflections of their day was an initial challenge. However, once these leaders noticed the benefits others were deriving from reviewing journal entries and using the journal entries to prompt discussions at leadership meetings; they quickly adopted the practice and found it useful. The degree of journal completeness varied from minimal entries to comprehensive journals that included validating sources, such as e-mails from officers and colleagues in response to leader actions.

The journals also had unforeseen benefits in that many of the leaders used them to reflect on their experiences of the implementation and to share these insights with colleagues at leadership meetings. As the majority of leaders e-mailed their journals to the researcher on a monthly basis, journals were a useful indicator of how the implementation was progressing.

4.8.2 Data Collection – Officers

The Customs officer semi-structured interview questionnaire had nine open questions (Appendix D). This was designed to explore their perceptions and experiences of having an Everest goal and being involved in PMI sessions as well as their observations on any differences they may have noticed in the workplace over the past months. The individual interviews with the random sample of officers were conducted, recorded, and transcribed using the same method as used for the leader interviews. Most officer interviews lasted 20–30 minutes and resulted in 3–5 pages of transcript. Each transcript was processed in the same way as the leader transcripts. They were then were promptly e-mailed to their respective officers for any changes, corrections, or additions. Only one officer made minor points of clarification. Another took the time to send an e-mail commenting positively on their PMI sessions.

4.8.3 Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedures followed the six-step process suggested by Smith, et al. (2009, pp. 79-107). Creswell's (2007, p. 159) simplified version of a six-step procedure for analysis of a phenomenological study was also referred to when the researcher required more guidance of the analytical steps. As previously noted, the leader data and officer data was analysed separately using the same analysis procedures. Figure 6 shows an overview of the data analysis process steps.
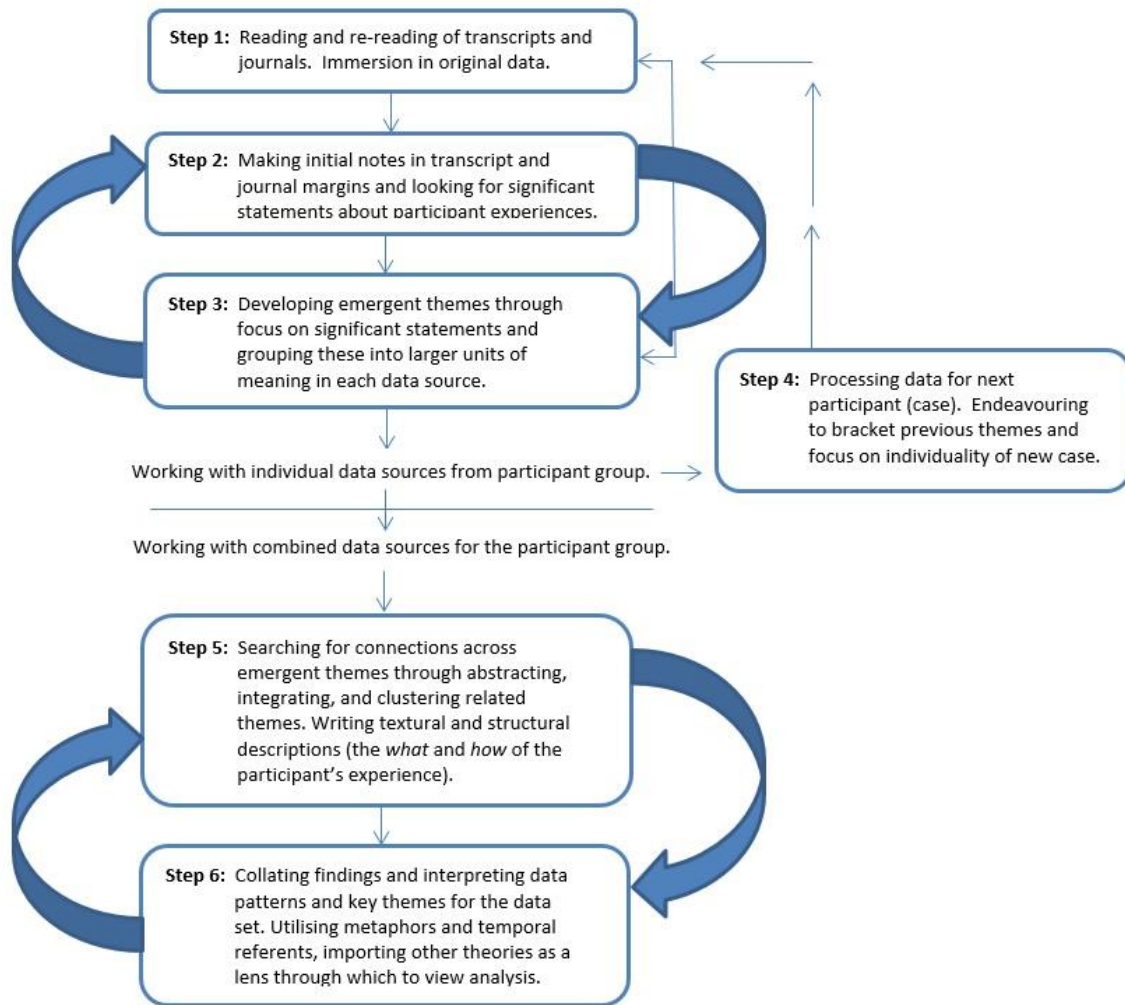
Figure 6: Data Analysis Process Steps. Adapted from *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research* by J. A. Smith, P. Flowers, and M. Larkin, p. 79-107. Copyright 2009 by Sage Publications.

The concept of analytical steps infers a linear process and although depicted as linear steps in figure 6, the process involved first analysing the data for each participant, then moving in the last two steps to analysing the data across the participant group for example all of the leaders or all of the officers. In applying the analytic steps the researcher was conscious of the necessity and importance of *epoché* and setting aside everyday understandings, judgements, and knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). At the beginning and throughout the analysis care was taken to apply the process of *epoché*. Given the personal experience of working within an environment affected by continuous earthquakes, uncertainty, and anxiety, achieving *epoché* was certainly a challenge. However, conversely, it provided the researcher with their own experience of the phenomena, resulting in even greater awareness of the necessity and importance of bracketing that experience in working with the data.

4.8.4 Data Analysis Process Steps

The initial analysis of each leader interview and journal was undertaken manually in 2011 utilising excel spreadsheets. This provided an overview of the key themes of experience for each leader and for the leaders as a group. The same process was applied to the officer interviews. Two factors (a change of senior supervisor and the researcher becoming a full-time student) resulted in the researcher switching software and reprocessing all of the data using NVivo 10 (www.qsrinternational.com). In keeping with the idiographic characteristics of IPA, each participant's account was individually explored and processed. Once each account had been processed in this way the researcher progressed to working with the overall data set for the leaders, seeking emergent patterns and themes across the group. As previously noted, the officer interview transcripts were processed separately from the leader data, using the same analytic steps.

Step 1: Reading and re-reading

This step involved careful reading and re-reading of each interview transcript and journal entry and enabled the researcher greater re-immersion in the data. It also facilitated gaining an overview of the original data content and data direction.

Step 2: Initial noting

In this step, the researcher noted their initial analytic observations about the data on the actual data item (in the margin of the journal or transcript). In IPA, comments can be both descriptive and conceptual (Smith, et al., 2009). This iterative process involved re-reading and exploring each data item, such as a journal or interview transcript, and making margin notes of significant statements, language, and particular words used by the participant when talking about the experience, especially when describing feelings, learnings, and reflections related to the implementation journey. This process of exploratory commenting involved looking for similarities, differences, contradictions, and significant statements in what the participant was saying about their experiences. Working through each of the data items provided the opportunity for reflective engagement with the emergent data and the identification of significant statements in each data item. This process, known as "horizonalization of the data" (Creswell, 2007, p. 159), enabled the researcher to lay out significant points from each participant about their experience. The iterative process was repeated a number of times with each data item (e.g. leader journal or interview transcript) and this assisted in illuminating the emerging experiential story of the individual participant

across their individual data sources. This process enabled the researcher to gain an overview of the data direction and any predominant themes in each of the data items. Once the leader's data sources were processed through steps 1 and 2, the NVivo 10 software programme was then used to assist with the continuing analysis.

Step 3: Developing emergent themes

In this step, initial nodes and related child nodes were constructed in NVivo 10 based on the emergent themes and exploratory comments for allocation of the data into categories or "meaning units" (Creswell, 2007, p.159). The leader data sources (i.e. journals and interview transcripts) were imported into the programme and the functions within the software programme used to assist with reviewing significant statements within each data source and allocating them to relevant nodes or child nodes. The analysis process consisted of working iteratively and reflectively with the data considering each data source again, and moving back and forth between sections and phrases within the overall data source in an attempt to understand and group together significant statements of the lived experience in each. The process also included considering the initial noting, annotations, and emerging patterns within each participant's data source, allocating and re-allocating phrases or significant statements from each leader's experience into a relevant parent or child node to indicate meaning units or categories of emergent themes and sub-themes. Initially, for the leader data 15 nodes and 16 child nodes were constructed. As the analysis progressed through steps 5 and 6, these reduced to 4 nodes and 11 child nodes. The officer data analysis resulted in 10 nodes that reduced to four nodes.

Step 4: Processing next case and bracketing

In IPA, it is important to treat each participant (case) on its own terms. This means bracketing the ideas emerging from analysis of the previous cases as much as possible while working with an individual case, enabling new themes to emerge with each individual participant or case. In this study, the first three analytic steps focused on the individual participant experience. In steps 5 and 6, as the researcher was working with a sample group and the research focus was the overall implementation experience of the leaders, the focus shifted "to assessing what were the key emergent themes for the whole group" (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 106.

Step 5: Searching for connections across emergent themes

Searching for connections across emergent themes involved working across the data to query and explore through mapping, modelling, abstracting, integrating, and considering connections and language use between the emergent themes across the participant group. This search process involved

- reflective writing, especially of theme tables with exploratory comments,
- clustering themes and sub-themes,
- reading and re-reading literature,
- referring back to the notes and transcripts, and their emergent themes, and
- reflecting, interpreting, and reflecting again.

The NVivo 10 query and explore functions assisted with exploring text and phrase frequency and these functions assisted with insights into how participants described their experiences. Examples of how the researcher used the NVivo 10 query functions to assist with data analysis are shown in Figures 7 and 8 on the following page. Figure 7 shows a cluster analysis that identifies the 50 most frequent words used by the leaders in the journals and interviews. Figure 8 shows a word cloud identifying the 50 most frequent words used by the officers in their interviews.
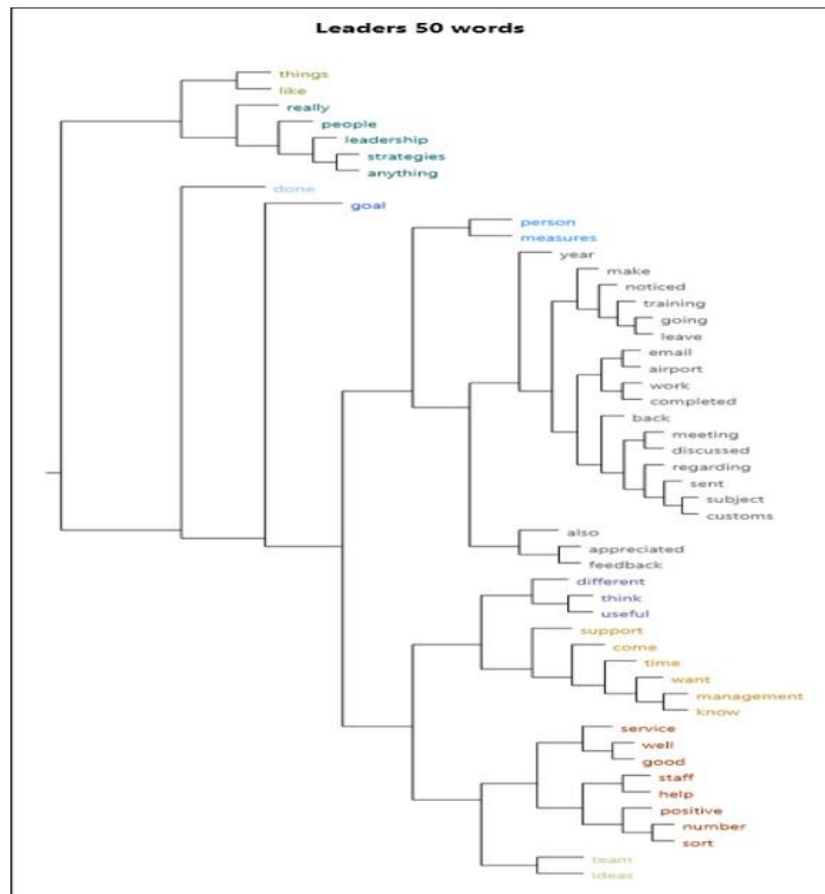
Figure 7: Cluster Analysis – 50 Most Frequent Words in Leader Journals and Interviews

Figure 8: Word Cloud – 50 Most Frequent Words in Officer Interviews

An underpinning characteristic of the IPA analysis process is that it is iterative and the researcher moves back and forth through a range of different ways of thinking about the data rather than working linearly (Smith, et al., 2009). In effect, the researcher is applying a hermeneutic circle, which is the phenomenological approach of working iteratively and reflectively with the data to extract and develop the textural and structural descriptions of the participants' experiences that were emerging from the data. The textural description describes what the participants in the study experienced with the phenomena, while the structural description describes how the experience happened, with the researcher reflecting on the setting, and the context in which the phenomena were experienced (Creswell, 2007). In this study, the unexpected earthquake events added another dimension of phenomena. As such, the textural description (what was experienced) needed to include what was experienced in the CPLM implementation *and* what the leaders experienced with the earthquake phenomena. Similarly, the structural description (the how of the experience), including the setting and context in which the phenomenon was experienced, needed to be recognised and explored from the leaders' perspectives and reflected on by the researcher. The overall hermeneutic process facilitated identification of emergent themes and indicated the superordinate or key themes of the participants' collective experience. Smith et al. (2009, p. 92) notes that "themes are usually expressed as phrases which speak to the psychological essence of the piece and contain enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual." The outcome of this analytic process step was the development of the first theme table collating the initial emergent themes and sub-themes across all of the participant leaders.

Step 6: Collating findings and interpreting data patterns and key themes
This step involved working across the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the previous step, using table formats to list each theme with its sub-themes, indicative verbatim quotes, potential interpretations, and exploratory questions. This process also included in some instances what researchers refer to as "reconfiguring and relabeling of themes" (Smith, et al. 2009, p. 101) to form the final themes. IPA enables researchers to go beyond description and the epistemological flexibility of IPA allows researchers to make cautious inferences about discursive, affective, and cognitive phenomena (Smith, 1996; Larkin et al., 2006). Therefore, in this study, this enabled the researcher to draw upon existing theoretical concepts to assist in the development and elucidation of the emergent key themes and to consider the context's influence on how the leaders experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994, p. 97) refers to

this process as "imaginative variation," seeking possible meanings and essences through applying imagination and varying frames of reference. This, together with writing analytic memos and theme and sub-theme tables, assisted the researcher to achieve two things. First, the researcher began to develop and understand the essence of the experience from the leaders' perspective. Second, the researcher was able to seek the underlying "why" of the experience through referring to existing literature and theories. This process reflects the analytical priority of phenomenology that involves "not just describing and interpreting but also explaining the world" (Patton, 2015, p. 577). Four key themes relating to the essence of the leaders' experience were identified. For a table presenting the key themes for the leader group, examples of indicative significant statements, and the researcher's interpretations, see Appendix E. For a table presenting the key themes, indicative significant statements of differences noticed in the workplace, and the researcher's interpretations for the officer group, see Appendix F. These tables provided guidance for writing the findings and discussion chapters.

4.9   VALIDITY & RELIABILITY

Validity

The purpose of this qualitative interpretative phenomenological study was to identify and interpret the leaders' overall experience of an intentional implementation of Cameron's (2008) positive leadership model in their workplace. There are three key positions (explained in 4.3.7) that inform IPA they are: idiography, hermeneutics, and phenomenology (Smith, et al., 2013). This study addressed all three. Through the data, the individual experience was illuminated. Through the hermeneutic phenomenological reduction, the essence of the experience was extracted. This was presented with a comprehensive analysis and interpretation, referenced to literature, for the four emergent themes. Furthermore, the analysis was interpretative, not just descriptive. The analysis evidenced both convergence and divergence of patterns between the participants, the themes were elaborated, and the research questions addressed. Each of these components aligns with Smith's (2011) criteria for guiding quality evaluation of IPA research.

IPA sits within the qualitative research paradigm. Creswell (2007) and King (1994) contend that validity can be claimed for a study if it successfully examines the topic that it claims to examine. This study set out to explore the experiences of leaders in their intentional implementation of a Cameron's positive leadership model; it has indeed examined this topic.

This study used triangulation of data through corroboration of evidence from different individuals. Triangulation is a method that enhances validity; "when qualitative researchers locate evidence to document a code or theme in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing validity to their findings" Creswell (2013, p. 251). In this study, the power of the researcher needed to be considered in that because of the human resource component of the role, she had knowledge about the strengths and vulnerabilities of individual participants. As a member of the senior management team, with close proximity to other senior leaders, who were influential in allocating interesting operational assignments, the measures taken by the researcher to define roles and confidentiality, were essential to minimising the power bias.

This study used three different instruments (journals and two sets of interview questions). It used two different data sources: leader data and officer data. This provided corroboration and a degree of rigour to the study. Similarly, in studying the same phenomenon, two methods of data collection (semi-structured interviews and journals) were applied and data was collected at different times from different sources (i.e. journals were kept throughout the study and interviews with leaders and officers held at the conclusion). Participants viewed their transcripts and had the opportunity to provide feedback. This was further validated by the triangulation of data from leader and officer sources. Throughout the process, the researcher was cognisant of the contention that one cannot always rely on the participants' accounts, but is able to take their words and actions as reflections of underlying meanings, and this is the nature of qualitative research (Dey, 1993).

External validity of this study is limited, as is the ability to generalise the research findings. This is because the contextual setting of the study was within a rank-structured law enforcement organisation in the context of a natural disaster environment. Contrary to other studies in natural disaster environments, in this study, performance increased and absenteeism was reduced.

Reliability

The reliability of a study is indicated through clear reporting of the data, detailed descriptions of the data analysis procedures, and consistent application of a methodology that is appropriate for the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2007; Smith, 2011; Goulding, 2005). This study provided clear descriptions of the nature of the data and how that data was collected,

the analytical procedures that were used, and the appropriateness of the philosophical and methodological approach. As such, this study has reliability and there is potentiality for repetition of the structure for a similar study. Section 7.7 provides a number of suggestions for future research.

4.10   UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

There were some underlying assumptions present in this study. It was assumed that regardless of the challenges encountered in the implementation, the leaders would continue for the agreed six-month period. Leaders were presumed to be honest in sharing their perspectives and experiences with the researcher. The Group Manager Airports (manager responsible for all of the Customs operations at New Zealand's international airports) was expected to support the implementation and the study by neither changing the leadership team nor the management structure during the period of the study.

Within four days of the field implementation, these underlying assumptions were put at risk. The first of what was to be a series of continuous earthquakes resulted in damage and disruption as well as increased operational risks and complexities that leaders had to manage. The researchers' ethical dilemma in this was the desire to continue with the research and the reality that the leaders would need to focus all of their energies in leading and managing in this unprecedented environment. The dilemma was resolved through advising the leaders that it was their decision on whether or not to continue, delay, or abandon the implementation. Within days of the first earthquake, the leaders advised that they had made a unanimous decision to continue with the implementation and with their participation in the study.

4.11   ETHICAL AND PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS

Privacy and confidentiality for the participants, especially as the research location was identifiable in the thesis, was a prime consideration in the research design. Before commencement, permission for the research was granted from both the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee and the New Zealand Customs Service. The ethical and privacy considerations for this research included the need to ensure clear informed consent of participants so that they understood that participation was voluntary and conveying how the research could provide some advantages for the participants. The invitation sent to each leader set out the study's purpose, potential advantages, time involvement and commitment

that would be required of participants. Confidentiality information and advice on the right to withdraw from the study, or withdraw information at any time during the study, was also included in the invitation. In preparing the invitation, the guidelines provided by Tharenou, et al. (2009) on information that should be provided to potential participants in order to obtain informed consent were followed. For a copy of the leader invitation, see Appendix B.

As a further measure to ensure confidentiality, participant's names were replaced with randomly assigned alphabetical letters on all data and materials, and names mentioned in the interview transcripts were removed. The electronic recordings, transcripts, journals, and all analysis data and notes obtained in the research were stored in password protected computer files that were only accessible by the researcher. These will be destroyed once the study is finalised.

However, as a member of the Customs Senior Leadership Team and the Group Manager of the organisation and human resources my responsibilities included convening interview panels for internal promotions and as a member of the Career Board the ability to influence development opportunities for individuals. As such, there was clearly a potential conflict of interest regarding how the information and insights gained about individuals in the study may be used. I needed to have trust and confidence that the leaders would be open in sharing their genuine perspectives of their experiences. In turn, the leaders needed to have trust and confidence that their honesty would be respected and individual confidentiality assured in the research outcomes. These factors were critical to the foundations and validity of the research and carefully managed by the researcher throughout the research process. There was some mitigation to these factors in that all of the leaders, over the previous three years, had participated in the twelve-month Leaders@Customs in-house leadership development programme. As the designer and sponsor of the programme, and having facilitated a number of workshops on the programme, the researcher had established a level of rapport, trust, and confidence with the majority of the leaders. Furthermore, although working in Wellington, a different geographical region, the researcher lived in Christchurch and was therefore considered to be a "local." Being a "local" meant being considered as a Christchurch rather than a Wellington person, therefore more acceptable to many in the Christchurch workplace environment.

Throughout the study, the researcher kept a conscious focus on meeting ethical and privacy principles. This was enabled through ensuring clarity of and adherence to the researcher role, clear communication, and the explanations of the processes and safeguards for participants. The careful handling of these factors was critical to prevent responses being inhibited and/or shaped in some way as well as for the protection of the participants and the researcher.

4.12 SUMMARY

Adopting an interpretivist framework of inquiry for this study aligned with the ontological perspective of the research, as this framework recognises that multiple realities are constructed by, and can be altered by, the researcher and the nature of the research (Laverty, 2003). This qualitative research applied an interpretative phenomenological analysis approach. This aligns with the proposal that the type of problem best suited for a phenomenological approach is "one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2007, p.60). As a phenomenological study, the aim was to describe the lived experiences, interpret the common meaning, and elucidate the essence of the lived experience for the leaders in implementing the positive leadership model. The use of IPA enabled concentration on the experiences and on extracting and understanding the key themes that tell the story of the leaders' experiences. Together with the researcher's interpretations, these provided the essence of the leaders' experiences.

Furthermore, the approach fitted with the social constructivist philosophical position of the researcher in that it acknowledged the notion of considering reality as socially constructed (Smith, et al., 2009), and formed through interactions with others. The research also sought knowledge, and it had a primary aim of understanding the essence of the experience from the perspective of the participants and of developing a deeper understanding about the implementation of positive leadership. A number of underlying assumptions, ethical considerations, and privacy considerations were consistently managed throughout the research. From the epistemological perspective, the phenomenological approach enabled a relationship between the participants and the researcher and acknowledged that the researcher was essential to the inquiry approach.

The next chapter presents the findings for this study under the four key themes that emerged from the analytic process and addresses the four research questions. Chapter 6 provides a discussion on the findings.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this qualitative interpretative phenomenological study was to explore and understand the experience of 10 New Zealand Customs Service leaders during their intentional implementation of CPLM. The study also sought to understand the practical application of the model, what positive leadership strategies and positive practices, the leaders used, and how they used them within a natural disaster affected workplace environment.

The study findings emerged from the analysis of three raw data sources.   During the six-month implementation, the leaders kept individual journals and at the conclusion of the study participated in an individual semi-structured interview. Semi-structured individual interviews with a random sample of 10 Customs officers, who had been involved in PMI sessions with their respective leaders, also contributed to the raw data sources.

Four research questions guided the study and four central themes emerged from the interpretative phenomenological analysis. This chapter sets out the key findings for each theme, provides supporting data that contributes to each theme, and addresses the four research questions. The following chapter provides a discussion and comparison of the findings in regard to relevant studies and literature. The final chapter presents the conclusions, contributions, and limitations of the study, followed by suggestions for future research directions.

5.2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The first two research questions focused on the experience of the leaders in implementing CPLM. They explored what positive leadership strategies the leaders used, and how they used them in a workplace environment impacted operationally and emotionally by ongoing earthquakes. These questions are:

- ▪ What was the lived experience of the leaders in their intentional implementation of CPLM in their workplace?

- What CPLM positive leadership strategies and positive practices did the leaders adopt in the implementation?
- How did the leaders use the leadership strategies and practices in a natural disaster workplace environment?
- What changes are suggested to Cameron's (2008) positive leadership model to optimise its practical implementation by leaders in the workplace?

Because this study is the first to implement Cameron's model[18] and one of the first that has explored the implementation of positive strategies from the leader perspective, it was opportune to consider any changes that would optimise the utility and practical implementation of the model. The fourth research question therefore is:

- *What changes are suggested to Cameron's positive leadership model to optimise its practical implementation by leaders in the workplace?*

5.3   CENTRAL THEMES

The research findings emerged from significant statements identified through the interpretative phenomenological analysis and the combination of the textural and structural descriptions of the leaders' stories. Four consistent themes were central to the stories that emerged as the essence of the leaders experiences. These are:

- structure and focus in chaos,
- working with positive strategies,
- affecting performance for the better, and
- compassion and connectivity in adversity.

The key findings for each central theme, with detailed findings relevant to that theme, and related officer comments, are set out under headings for the particular theme. Two overview theme tables can be found in Appendices E and F.

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[18] Personal communication from Kim Cameron April 2009 and August 2014.

5.4   THEME 1: STRUCTURE AND FOCUS IN CHAOS

This theme was particularly dominant in the experience of leaders in leading in the natural disaster environment. As outlined in the methodology chapter, in deciding to implement CPLM, the leaders had made a deliberate decision to incorporate the positive practice of an Everest goal into the model. The unprecedented magnitude 7.1 earthquake that occurred four days after implementation commenced, followed by continuous significant aftershocks, presented a very valid reason for leaders to stop their implementation. At that time, for most people, the focus was on coping in the unprecedented chaotic environment of high anxiety and uncertainty. However, within days of the first major earthquake, the leaders made a considered and deliberate decision to continue with the implementation and with their participation in the study.

The reason leaders gave for this decision was the considerable amount of time and effort they had individually, and as a group, invested in preparing for the implementation. Although not explicitly expressed by the leaders themselves, ownership, confidence, and optimism was observed by the researcher. Implementing CPLM for the participant leaders was about increasing operational performance and the consequential hope of increasing their credibility with Customs senior managers who were critical of local operational performance. These factors may well have contributed to their decision to continue.

The findings and interpretation suggest that despite the unprecedented adverse conditions, a number of factors contributed to the leaders' choice to continue their implementation. CPLM provided legitimacy to apply positive strategies. The addition of an Everest goal to the model provided meaning and centrality. Having legitimacy and centrality provided the leaders with a degree of individual and team psychological and participative safety, and this facilitated an environment that encouraged new learning and working in new ways. In combination, CPLM and the Everest goal provided structure and focus in chaos. The detailed findings for this theme are set out under sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2, and 5.4.3.

5.4.1   CPLM Implementation

Implementing CPLM was a major undertaking for the leaders. They had to learn new ways of working, for example, working towards an Everest goal and carrying out PMI sessions. Although the experience of implementing CPLM is unique to each leader, a number of consistent patterns did emerge from the data.

The findings identify that all of the leaders, despite the initial personal challenges, described the overall implementation experience as positive. Most reported that initially "*it was quite hard work*" (Leader G). Many leaders explained that in the beginning they had to be alert to opportunities, and at times, deliberately seek opportunities to apply positive strategies. Many also noted that initially applying positive strategies required a conscious effort, as this was different to their usual way of operating. Implementing positive strategies involved a mind-set and a skill-set change. Several leaders described changes in how they thought about their roles and in how they changed the ways in which they interacted with their respective teams, such as encouraging officers to take more responsibility for workplace processes, and for their own performance and development. All of the leaders noted that with the implementation, they had more focus on people and more focus on performance. Most considered that this focus was different and made a positive difference to how their leadership team operated in that they had a clear goal that gave focus and purpose to their activities. This made a difference to how they interacted within the leadership team. Many considered that the different way of working also flowed on to how they worked with their own teams as they used the Everest goal as a focus for team performance efforts. Descriptions of the personal experience of implementing CPLM included the following:

> *A total change of thinking…I found it to be rewarding. It certainly raised the consciousness of empathy with staff in my days, and actually I quite enjoyed the experience actually, and I found that if you made the time for it you ended up that you could make time for it.* (Leader D)

> *My experience, it was really excellent.* (Leader H)

Most of the leaders said that for them, the implementation was difficult at the start, that it required deliberate thought and deliberate actions to implement the initial positive strategies they had selected. Two leaders described their experience of initially implementing positive strategies:

> *In the beginning I did it positively as a thing I thought about and then it probably came* [sic] *habitual I think.* (Leader G)

> *Difficult at first, had to think about it really conscious of it, got easier* [and it] *went very well.* (Leader D)

It was evident from the researcher's observations and interpretation that initially, there were degrees of hesitancy and buy-in from a small number of leaders. Two other leaders also noticed:

> *... some* [colleagues] *have taken it on board more than others and sometimes it is the ones that you least expected them to do that have done it.* (Leader B)

> *What I suspect is that initially not all CCOs* [leaders] *bought into it to the same degree and so perhaps some of them did not really apply it, didn't really perhaps believe in it, I am not sure.* (Leader I)

However, it is interesting to note that Leader I, in a later journal entry, presented a different perspective:

> *Personal observation that suggests CCOs* [leaders] *are buying into positive leadership techniques. Both* [name of colleagues are] *speaking favourably.* (Leader I)

Many of the leaders also commented on changes in how their leadership team operated. Representative comments included:

> *Probably more of a team atmosphere, people were more prepared to listen a bit more as well,* [there was] *more emphasis on our common purpose.* (Leader J)

> *I think a lot of the strategies have helped to develop the team.* (Leader I)

> *It was helpful, we achieved what we wanted to achieve, especially what I wanted…this was achieved and it's sustaining.* (Leader A)

Overall, despite the multiple challenges, leaders considered that implementing CPLM in their workplace to be a positive experience. Most described that they felt that there was more

purpose and focus in their leadership team, that at their meetings colleagues were listening more, and more communication between colleagues.

5.4.2 Everest Goal

The findings indicate that the addition of the Everest goal to the model provided a central focus for the leaders. In other words, having a clear goal and a set of measures that they had collectively decided on acted as a concrete, central pillar on which they could focus their own and their teams' attention, in the midst of an unprecedented environment. The centrality of the goal and the focus and meaningfulness it provided for the leadership team as well as for the workplace is a consistent theme articulated by the leaders. The representative leader quotes below confirm the findings of the Everest goal's centrality for the leaders and the workplace in the chaotic environment. Three leaders described their view of the usefulness of having an Everest goal:

> *Absolutely necessary, that way everyone had an idea of where we're heading and whether* [we're] *successful or not.* (Leader A)

> *Perhaps timely in some ways that we had that* [the Everest goal] *when the earthquakes were going on. We still managed to fit it in in a very demoralising time and situation that we were living in. We still knew how important it was so everybody was still focusing on achieving what we set out to do. It was very positive from our own management team, and having a whole of purpose goal uplifted each team as a whole. The fact that people have been kept in the loop of how it's going and that has buoyed everybody as well.* (Leader J)

> *I think the Everest goal was good because it gave us a focus.* (Leader C)

All 10 officers interviewed articulated high awareness of the Everest goal and measures. Officers considered that it had made a difference to how their leaders worked and to how they themselves worked in a number of ways. Officers consistently commented on the importance of the goal and measures, because in their view, having these provided opportunities for officers to become involved in the generation of ideas for productivity and workflow improvements. These were all aspects that all of the interviewed officers considered had significantly increased, because there was now a focus on achievement of the Everest goal.

Clearly, for leaders and officers, there was high awareness and ownership of the Everest goal. Representative comments that support this view are below:

> *I think it* [having an Everest goal and measures] *was of use because it gave us something to aim towards. I know my CCO, he was right on top of it all the time. Then I started looking at it too and it became something that I'm aware of to keep an eye on…it gave us something to aim towards. It was an achievable goal, rather than something that was unattainable. I thought it was great because it, um – otherwise you just walk in walk out…I think it's always good to have something to aim towards…then it's a win-win for everybody.* (Officer C)

> *I think it* [the Everest goal], *yeah, gave people more fizz, most people a bit more motivation to improve performance and to work together and that kind of thing. It was cool to use as a guide to how we could change things.* (Officer D)

5.4.3 Legitimacy and Centrality

The findings show that by implementing CPLM, the leaders had a legitimate reason to apply the positive strategies. In CPLM, leaders had a prescribed visual model, and positive strategies, that each leader had selected to apply. This provided a common purpose and framework that, in effect, legitimised or gave reason, permission, and confidence to leaders to apply their selected positive strategies in the workplace. They could see their colleagues applying the strategies and as the implementation progressed, leaders increasingly experienced positive reinforcement and gratitude from their colleagues and from their officers.

The addition of an Everest goal provided centrality to the model and a focus and purpose for the implementation. In combination, CPLM and the Everest goal provided structure and focus for the leaders in a chaotic environment. The resultant combination provided a degree of psychological safety and participative safety for the leaders to work differently. These findings emerged from interpretation of the repetitive references and significant statements by both leaders and officers as to the benefits of implementing CPLM at such a chaotic time, and to the focus that this provided for them in a workplace impacted by the natural disaster. Leader comments that support these findings are as follows:

I think certainly for us when dealing with a lot of negative issues,…using positive leadership stuff made the going a lot easier to stay out of the doom spiral, as [you were] *not concentrating on that because* [you were] *concentrating on what you are contributing to the overall bigger picture to improve the overall environment.* (Leader A)

Absolutely it's been good, [implementing the CPLM and Everest goal] *there was no good time* [to implement] *and perhaps it was more important because of the earthquakes to have such a thing* [the implementation] *during that time.* (Leader B)

5.4.4 Summary: Structure and Focus in Chaos

Having a prescribed model with positive strategies assisted leaders, both with the implementation and with leading in the unexpected adverse environment. Together, CPLM and the Everest goal gave a degree of legitimacy and centrality for the leaders. Having CPLM provided a framework within which leaders could feel confident about applying their selected positive strategies. The Everest goal provided structure, focus, and a sense of meaning and purpose for the leaders to implement the positive strategies. In combination, these provided a level of psychological and participative safety that enabled leaders to work differently and reduced concerns of being seen as working differently from the already established workplace norms.

Analysis of data from the officer interviews evidenced that they had a high awareness of having an Everest goal. All articulated a number of differences and benefits that had resulted from having this focus, especially in the natural disaster workplace environment. Whereas for each leader the implementation experience was individual, unique, and different, the patterns of the findings are consistent, and these findings are further explained in sections 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7. For leaders, CPLM and the Everest goal provided structure and focus, and as a consequence, legitimacy and centrality to implementing in the unprecedented environment in which they found themselves within days of commencing CPLM implementation. In essence, the model and more specifically, the Everest goal provided a central focus for structure and concentration in a chaotic environment over and above everyday leadership practices.

5.5   THEME 2: WORKING WITH POSITIVE STRATEGIES

The theme of leaders working differently and working with positive strategies emerged strongly from all data sources. This strong and consistent theme emerged from the leaders themselves, and from examples articulated by the officers who noticed leaders working differently.

The findings show that in implementing CPLM, the leaders did indeed work with positive strategies. All 10 leaders applied their selected positive strategies and nine of those leaders incorporated additional positive strategies as the implementation progressed. The implementation changed how the leadership team worked. There was more focus on people and more focus on performance. All of the leaders described, in varying degrees, that they had a higher awareness of self and increased the range of leadership behaviours they used in the workplace. The essence of such insights is evident in many of the quotes below. Many reflected that they were more aware of their own behaviours and therefore more conscious of giving positive feedback as well as expressing appreciation and empathy. The majority noticed that implementing CPLM had made a positive difference to how they managed their respective teams. Most leaders thought their teams would have noticed that they were more focused and provided more feedback. Where leaders considered that they had not changed, or were unaware of any changes, colleagues and officers noted that in fact they had changed in a positive direction.

Analysis of interview data and in particular the leaders' journal entries, showed a consistent trend of leaders applying positive strategies that fostered positive interactions with officers and positive interactions within their own leadership teams. The findings show that the leaders learned and consistently applied positive strategies. Indications are that they used the strategies to reinforce positive meaning, foster a positive climate and positive relationships, and engage in positive communication in the workplace. They also used them to encourage increased performance, express gratitude and appreciation, and to demonstrate positivity, energy, and empathy. These findings find support in the officer interview data as officers noticed and reported that leaders did indeed work differently.

The consistent leader and officer statements relating to the PMI practice confirm that this practice was a positive addition to CPLM. The nine leaders and all 10 interviewed officers

who were involved with the PMI sessions considered that the sessions fostered positive workplace interactions, and for a number of officers, contributed to their job satisfaction, motivation, and career development. These findings strongly endorse adding the PMI practice to Cameron's model as an additional positive strategy and as a support for implementing the model.

In terms of the challenges to and inhibitors of the practical aspects of the implementation and application of positive strategies, the findings are that initially, time and roster constraints were a challenge for most leaders. At first, a small number of leaders had reservations about how the staff group would react to the leaders working differently, especially as the implementation coincided with the high volume months for the airport. However, as the implementation progressed, leaders found that the initial reservations as to staff reactions to the Everest goal and positive strategies were unfounded, as most of the staff responded positively to the implementation. Leaders also found that they deliberately made time for interactions. As to the timing of the implementation, the majority view of both leaders and officers was that it was in fact opportune to have been implementing CPLM at such a chaotic time. Furthermore, all leaders indicated that they would continue to use positive strategies in their workplace.

Detailed findings that support the proposition that leaders worked with positive strategies, and did indeed work differently are discussed further in sections 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.5.3, and 5.5.4.

5.5.1 Working Differently

As the implementation progressed and especially after the first earthquake, all leaders except one found they very quickly adapted to using additional positive strategies in the model. Two leaders said that they had already used some of the positive strategies, but with the implementation, they used them more often. The most frequent additional strategies applied related to fostering a positive climate, using positive communication, and emphasising positive meaning. It is interesting to note that only five out of the 10 leaders considered that they were deliberately focusing on fostering positive relationships and only one had added this strategy to their initial choice of strategies to apply. Table 6 indicates the positive strategies, the number of leaders who initially applied each strategy, the number of leaders that added additional positive strategies, which strategies they were, and the total number of leaders who applied a specific positive strategy.

Table 6: Initial and Additional Positive Strategies Applied by Leaders

Positive strategies	Number of leaders initially selecting this strategy	Number of leaders adding this strategy to their initial strategies	Total number of leaders applying this strategy
Everest goal	10	0	10
PMI	9	0	9
Positive climate	4	3	7
Positive relationships	4	1	5
Positive communication	4	3	7
Positive meaning	4	3	7

Data analysis and researcher observations indicate that all 10 leaders applied their selected positive strategies. As the implementation progressed, all leaders but one noted that they had increased the number of positive strategies that they used. The one leader who considered that they had not increased the number of positive strategies that they used, was observed by the researcher as consistently applying additional strategies, in particular leadership behaviours related to the positive meaning and positive communication strategies which were additional to the leaders original selected positive strategies. In the interview, each of these leaders clearly identified the specific positive strategies that they focused on and applied as part of CPLM implementation.

All leaders mentioned that having an awareness of positive leadership theory and actually applying the positive strategies had in varying degrees, made a difference to how they managed their team's performance. Examples are:

> *It has made a difference, I am more aware of myself. I know myself that I'm more aware of what the officers are doing and conscious to pat them on the back when they have done a good job.* (Leader C)

> *Yes, more aware to do the 5:1 and use more specific measures. The group goal was very useful and would do it in future.* (Leader A)

> *I think it is now inbuilt with the staff, some more than others. In my team and even myself, it is a conscious decision all the time that you can do this* [achieve the Everest goal] *it is not something that goes away that you put away, you actually think about it.* (Leader B)

I think it [using positive strategies] *made me more acutely aware of what* [I am]
doing, I was conscious of that. (Leader F)

Researcher interpretations and responses from officers indicated that leaders did indeed work
differently in managing their teams. Officers noticed a difference in a number of areas that
validated the leaders' contentions that they applied positive strategies and worked differently
in the workplace.

A few things, especially people like [name of leader] *or other managers who were
really interested in it. And it would be little things as you go about your workday –
you would notice, oh, this new process's been put in place when we assess
passengers, we have to do that because it all adds up to this Everest goal and we are
all working towards that.* [Leaders were] *more focused, definitely, I think because
they were very encouraging to you to put forward your ideas, whether you thought
they would work or not. I like working in an environment like that.* (Officer D)

Officers described having more contact with their leaders and having increased opportunities
to work differently and to work in different areas of the workplace. Two officers described
their views as:

[Leaders were] *definitely checking on how we all are, letting us do things more, gets
us more involved definitely more.* [Name of leader] *sorted for me to do some time in
the control room, had been wanting to have that for ages. Asked a few weeks ago and
no prob* [sic], *sorted it for me, it was cool.* (Officer G)

[Name of leader] *was quite proactive in getting people to come forward with ideas,
which is a little bit different from the norm. They were good in getting people to put
their hands up and think about what we should be doing, we tried new things. Quite
interesting, cause* [sic] *like we were asked for our opinions. The good thing was that*
[name of leader] *was quite keen that when we said we were going to do something, we
actually did it.* (Officer B)

All leaders described, again to varying degrees, that they had a higher awareness of self and of the benefits of increased officer interaction. They had noticed the benefits of expressing appreciation and giving positive reinforcement to shape desired behaviours in terms of taking a strengths-based approach and keeping a focus on the measures and goal. Representative comments from leaders that show evidence of the difference that working with positive strategies had made to their own awareness included:

> *It* [working with positive strategies] *makes me much more conscious of providing feedback, whether it's positive or negative, and probably shapes the way in which I provide it. That's probably one of the outcomes of it.* (Leader F)

> *It has made a difference, I am more aware of myself.* (Leader C)

> *I'm not terribly empathetic…I learned to be a lot more empathetic with people and so there is that. It's also taught us about…knowing about* [a] *person's circumstances. I have become much more conscious of learning what their personal circumstance are.* (Leader D)

> *I am an aloof person. My main shift is that you do understand other issues, but you could just carry on in the same direction, though you would be still just there. There's other ways of achieving the same inputs at times.* (Leader E)

Seven leaders expected their respective team members would have noticed that they were more focused and that they provided more feedback to team members. Leader descriptions were consistently comprised of examples of giving positive reinforcement and being more positive and more proactive with communications. The leaders also found that they were listening more and reinforcing the value, importance, and meaningfulness of the Customs work that their teams did. Leader reflections about anything their team may have noticed that was different about their leadership, since implementing CPLM included:

> *I think they will have noticed that I have become more focused on what we are trying to achieve. Just, they know my expectations, very clear expectations.* (Leader E)

I think the actual team itself would have felt more positive comments to them because I think what I realised was that while I always did it to the staff as a whole – I would always do that [give positive comment to staff]. *I perhaps, though, was not doing it enough for my own team.   So hopefully they would see that I gave feedback.*
(Leader B)

Having a team breakfast for the following morning, taken up and organised by one of the officers. Leading from behind when normally [I] *would run with this idea and organise* [it] *myself.* (Leader H)

Hopefully they have seen me show lots of gratitude towards what they do. It's something [I] *always try to do anyway, but I guess the material reemphasises that that was the way to go.* (Leader I)

Two leaders said that they did not know if their teams would have noticed any change and one believed that their team would have noticed no change at all. In contrast, several colleagues and officers, unsolicited, provided a number of observations and experiences that indicated that these leaders had indeed changed how they managed their respective teams. Thus, even though the leaders did not know or considered that they had not changed (or were unwilling or unable to see and/or acknowledge any changes), several of the leaders did notice a difference in how these colleagues were managing their respective teams. A number of leaders commented to this effect in their journals and a number of officers commented on changes they had observed in their interviews. Comments from colleagues included the following:

[Name of colleague was] *more supportive and encouraging, and clearer on expectations.* (Leader B)

I know that [name of colleague] *uses a lot of gratitude to his staff in terms of e-mails to them, thanking them, so I think that it will be a noticeable thing.* (Leader I)

[Name of colleague] *held morning tea for staff, thanked staff for their work and support to each other. Interesting to see* [names of several colleagues] *going over to the terminal again, over there a lot now.* (Leader J)

Officer comments indicated that they had noticed that their leaders were managing their teams differently:

> *More communication talks to us more and we see both of them more often than we used to. Certainly makes a difference as you don't have to like, wait to talk to them if you need to especially with, like, there are now earthquakes and all.* (Officer H)

> *More communication and emphasis on achieving.* (Officer E)

> *Yes, it was good. It was different to get our ideas out and be asked for what we think and then getting it done. I know* [name of leader] *was into it more than* [name of leader]. (Officer G)

These findings provide support for the proposition that all of the leaders managed their teams differently. One of the most visible indicators that leaders were working differently was their implementation of the PMI practice, which they had decided to add to the CPLM implementation.

5.5.2   PMI Implementation

The addition of the PMI practice to the model was a core enabler for the leaders to work differently and to implement positive strategies directly with their teams. Nine leaders chose to implement the PMI practice. The predominant theme from these leaders was that it was a very positive and valuable experience. Leaders reported that they found the PMI process challenging and rewarding. In a very busy workplace, tightly controlled by security requirements, airline arrival and departure schedules, and staff rosters, leaders had to allocate specific time to prepare and to meet with their respective officers. Examples of leaders' comments follow:

> *I actually enjoyed it. It's difficult to often fit it in but whilst it has to be done it is a process I rather enjoyed, absolutely.* (Leader G)

> *It was a hard thing finding the time for the interviews.* (Leader B)

It was getting the time to meet ...you just had to make sure that was your time. My experience, it was really excellent, probably sitting down and having the one-on-one with the officers was really good and the sort of feedback I got from them for doing that. (Leader H)

Once the PMI sessions were underway it was clear that the officers involved greatly valued these sessions. Leaders received positive feedback that acted as positive reinforcement for them to continue the sessions, despite the time constraints. Analysis of data from the leader interviews and journals, together with data from the officer interviews, suggests that implementing PMIs contributed to enabling and fostering positive interactions and high quality connections in the workplace. Prior to the implementation, this type of regular meeting did not occur. Leaders making time for a one-on-one meeting and having a clear goal and positive strategies to apply was different for leaders and officers. CPLM with the PMI provided a structure that enabled the interactive interpersonal process to occur. Despite the challenges of making time for the PMI sessions, there was a strong focus on them when describing their experiences of what went well in implementing positive strategies. The following comments from leaders support this finding:

I think the one-on-one interviews and I think sitting down with the staff and setting out the agenda and talking about that and what ways they could contribute to improve the way we did things and just the general morale of the whole airport team worked very well. It was positive. I think it was good. (Leader C)

The templates and guide were great. I think actually they liked someone sitting down and talking to them and maybe getting their ideas out of them and how they could help and the leadership things they could do to make the place run a bit smoothly as well. (Leader H)

An entry in a leader journal noted:

Conversation with [name of colleague] *that PMIs are going very well and that officers look forward to them.* (Leader I)

A similar positive response regarding PMIs was evident from all 10 officers interviewed. Specifically, the majority commented on the difference these sessions had made for them in a number of dimensions, such as their motivation, job satisfaction, and career development. The following responses are examples of officer expressions about leaders working differently and the regular PMI sessions:

It was different because when we had our PMI interviews they would schedule them, e-mail when it was going to happen. We'd go in, we would write the things down, he would e-mail me what [was] *written down* [what the leader and officer had discussed and agreed at the PMI meeting] *and have the next* [meeting dates] *scheduled in and he would stick to it. I thought it was very beneficial to have someone actually sit down with you one-on-one and say, "what do you want to do and how could I help you get there."* (Officer C)

To be able to sit down and have him show an interest in what you're doing kind of motivates you more to think, oh, well I could be doing this, or I could be applying for these jobs, or I should go on this course, rather than just forgetting about those sort of things and just carrying on with your normal [work routine]. (Officer D)

PMI feedback – that was really good. And having the worthwhile goal, that was certainly different. I got a lot of good suggestions through my PMI and being reminded with lots of encouragement, that was great – otherwise I would be just cruising along. Made a difference to my career, more self-motivation, really boosted my job satisfaction. (Officer F)

Just the whole thing of meetings with your boss every month …and feeling more capable and the energy from staff. (Officer A*)*

These findings support the proposition that leaders worked differently, that the implementation of the PMI practice went exceptionally well, and that the guidelines and templates prepared for the initial and ongoing sessions were useful. The format of regular meetings, the focus on development and goal achievement, as well as the opportunity to receive and give timely feedback, was considered by all who participated, especially the officers, as different, valuable, and was making a positive difference for them. A repeated

comment from leaders (all of whom had PMI sessions with their next level leader), and from officers who were involved with PMIs, was the suggestion of extending these to all Customs staff. In an e-mail, returning their interview transcript, officer F made the following comment that echoed the other officers interviewed:

> *I would also like to mention the PMI program that I participated in ... I feel that the support provided by* [name of leader] *was the best regular feedback loop I have participated in during my time at Customs. It provided excellent regular feedback and goal management which I feel helped motivate myself. If I can make the suggestion that a program similar, or the same as this, is adopted on a more regular basis.* (Officer F)

Leaders endorsed this thinking as evidenced in the following comment:

> *PMIs obviously went well, they were only with selected officers, so ideally if you could take them out to all staff, you would capture a lot more ideas and a lot more positive, constructive discussions with staff.* (Leader I)

In summary, leaders found that making time to implement the PMI practice was a challenge. However, the nine leaders and all 10 officers who were involved with the PMI sessions found the process rewarding in a number of ways that positively affected workplace interactions and relationships. For a number of officers, these sessions contributed to their job satisfaction, motivation, and career development. These findings strongly endorse the addition of the PMI practice to Cameron's model and to implementing CPLM.

5.5.3   Challenges and Inhibitors

In exploring the overall leader implementation experience, it is important to understand what aspects of the implementation were challenges and what the inhibitors were. In other words, what went well and not so well? This was especially important because this study is the first to explore the practical implementation of CPLM by frontline leaders and the implementation from their perspective.

It is evident that implementing CPLM did provide for the leaders the opportunity to work differently. CPLM provided a framework of strategies within which each leader could safely

try new ways of working, and for several leaders, new ways of thinking. Having a goal is a familiar concept for most people who work in organisations. All leaders considered, as noted previously in the findings, that having an Everest goal was essential and in effect provided a foundation, a reason, and permission to apply positive strategies. The PMI practice went well and facilitated another level of reason and permission for leaders to interact differently with a selection of officers. The findings, therefore, clearly indicate that the addition of both the Everest goal and PMI positive practices supported the successful implementation of the other positive strategies in Cameron's positive leadership model.

Other aspects of the implementation that the majority considered went well were getting to know people better, increasing interactions with officers, and seeing the visible difference in some of the people in the workplace. One leader described their observation of these aspects as follows:

> *I suppose by using those strategies, constantly using them, I could see the positive reaction from the troops, their behaviours – they were more professional in their approach to their job. They were taking ownership. I think it gave them more confidence when they realised that they could achieve and it also made them realise that they had to do the full job rather than rely on their CCOs to do part of it for them. That was different than before. I won't say it applies to everyone but it certainly has to a number of people that I have deliberately applied it* [positive strategies].
> (Leader F)

To extend the implementation of positive strategies across the full workplace, leaders deliberately incorporated positive strategies into their daily work routines. There are indications of leaders demonstrating positive energy and having a strong focus on fostering a positive climate, evidenced in both the leader journals and interviews. Examples given by the leaders included ensuring that they all finished the pre-shift operational meeting on a positive note. Other examples included positive reinforcement being given where due, descriptive positive communication being used to describe what was required from the shift, and promoting positive meaning through emphasising the important contribution that their work makes to the safety and security of New Zealand. Examples from leader journals and interviews, support their claims of integrating positive strategies into their daily routines include:

Gave verbal appreciation at officer briefing regarding value to the organisation and hard work, especially the Group Ds and PPOs [categories of Customs officers]. (Leader G)

Praised some good work done by team during the preceding day. Debriefed on results, thanked the team for a well-done job from the previous day, which was very busy. (Leader H)

Other journal entries described changes in the workplace routine and how these had been achieved through responding to officer concerns and ideas to improve process, an example from one leader describes how a change was made to the daily briefing routine:

Simple things that we tend to overlook, for example [officer name]*, we have a wee operational briefing of things we need to concentrate on, changes in policies and procedures, so it is an instruction to staff and it can get a bit dull as staff see it once or twice a day every day. Her concern was that officers tend to switch off as it gets a bit boring and her idea was to have a question of the day. So normally the last slide, and we still do it, we have a slide to lighten the whole thing and if people can have a laugh before they finish so they can leave the briefing in a positive frame of mind – so that was her thinking and that is in place now.* (Leader I)

The findings indicate that the leaders made significant visible efforts to model and promote a focus on positivity and achievement. They consciously integrated positive strategies into their daily routines and all considered that this went well. For the leaders, consistently being cognisant of demonstrating energy and promoting and integrating a positive focus into how they worked was different, and for many at times, personally challenging.

Initially, a very small number of leaders had reservations as to how the staff group would respond to the implementation of CPLM and to the leaders demonstrating more focus on people and more focus on performance. Later, reflecting on their initial reservations, two leaders commented on their experience:

You know, there were some reservations that staff would come on board. I was across at the terminal and officers were talking about the Everest goal and about how

we could achieve it, and so every day we had a daily briefing and the Everest goal was from day one part of the daily briefings. It was normally the last slide of the Power Point, just a reminder to staff of what the goal was and yeah, the staff bought into it, which was really pleasing. (Leader I)

To start with I had my doubts about it. I just thought how staff would react to this, but at the end of the day it did work well. (Leader B)

In further exploring the response to the question on what leaders thought were challenges and inhibitors, the predominant themes were the difficulty of fitting in individual meetings with officers because of time constraints and rosters (leaders and officers work on 24/7 rotating shift rosters) and making time to have meaningful contact with colleagues and officers. One leader, in this regard, expressed a common theme that:

It was hard to get the time to talk to them [team members] *with them being on different rosters ... it was getting the time to meet with them. Sometimes you just had to make sure that was your time and yeah overall, I didn't really have any troubles with it [the implementation].* (Leader H)

Interestingly, only one leader commented that they would have liked to have had more initial sessions before implementation. Another leader expressed regret that because of the earthquakes and the busy time at the airport, initially they did not participate as fully as they would have liked. The retrospective reflections of these two leaders were verbalised in their interview as follows:

I felt a little bit blind at times about what I should be doing and maybe possibly we could have had some more sessions with the whole group, the guys who were doing it, to discuss things and what was the best way to go forward. A bit more of that reinforcing I guess would have helped. I thought it [implementing CPLM] *was really good.* (Leader C)

The timing – perhaps earthquakes and over the busy summer season I regret that I didn't take it on –fully on board – the opportunity, with everything else going on, so I feel disappointed in myself that I didn't take it fully on board. I feel disappointed ...

could have done a wee bit more for it. As to anything specific that didn't work, it was a hard thing finding the time for the interviews. (Leader B)

Overall, the inhibitors and challenges of the implementation were time and roster constraints. For a small number of leaders, there were reservations about how the staff group would react and concerns about the timing because of the traditionally busy period and the adverse disaster environment. However, leaders some more than others, deliberately made time and the initial reservations as to staff reactions were resolved as most staff responded positively to the implementation. As to the timing, the majority view of both leaders and officers was that it was in fact opportune to have been implementing CPLM at such a chaotic time.

5.5.4 Continuing the Positive

The response to the question on whether the leaders would continue to use positive leadership (CPLM, Everest goal, PMI and positive strategies) offered an insight into how they viewed their experience of applying positive leadership. Despite the multiple challenges encountered over the six-month implementation period, leaders were unanimous in their responses. All said "yes." The majority responded, "yes, definitely" or "definitely yes." One leader commented that they had used the Everest goal as a focus for successfully completing an important project for which their team had responsibility:

> *Oh definitely yes. I used the Everest goal and said righty-oh in* [name of project], *we want to be the best in the country and everything … and just by pointing out to them, look, here is our Everest goal and this is one way we can achieve that, and they said okay, let's do it and we achieved it.* (Leader C)

> *Yes, I would promote it no problem. I'm still – I'm actually continuing,* [I] *think it benefits me and the team.* (Leader E)

One leader said that they shared the CPLM with a colleague who was interested in implementing the model in their workplace:

> *Yes, I had a session with* [name of colleague in different area of Customs] *the other day on PMI he is keen to introduce CPLM in his area.* (Leader A)

One leader succinctly summarised their view of the experience and of continuing to use positive leadership in the following quotes:

The tools and materials that have come with it [the implementation] *you can apply it to your everyday life as well. It's a valuable source of info that sometimes keeps you reminded of what you should be doing and I can see there's heaps of things that we could do down the line. We have those tools and we know that we can go and apply them so we should be picking something else out now.* (Leader J)

All 10 leaders indicated that they would continue to use the positive leadership approach and the positive strategies they had implemented. Likewise, all 10 officers indicated that they would like to see their leaders continue to apply their new ways of working. Examples of officer responses included:

Made a difference, so yes, different definitely. Was good to have the goal, and good to continue with having a goal, it makes a difference, definitely. (Officer F)

I think that it is necessary for the service to continue in this vein and promote such processes. It can only be good in the long run. (Officer E)

Overall, good. Yeah, it has been good. Would be nice if it would continue and see what happens for the future. (Officer A)

It was something that everyone obviously at the airport could have a hand in and helping to do. (Officer C)

5.5.5 Summary: Working with Positive Strategies and Practices

In summary, in the theme working with positive strategies and practices triangulation of data from leader journals and from leader and officer interviews, supports the findings and interpretations that the leaders worked with positive strategies. As the implementation progressed, all but one leader increased the number of positive strategies that were used. Nine leaders implemented the PMI practice; this went exceptionally well, both with leaders and with the officers, and facilitated meaningful interactions in the workplace. Initially, a small number of leaders had reservations about how the staff group would react. These

concerns quickly dissipated because they observed the positive reactions from the majority of officers. Similarly, leaders could see benefits in the different ways they were working and in the positive reactions they noticed from their officers. Furthermore, as the implementation progressed most leaders found that the process was not as difficult as some had expected it would be. Only one leader would have liked more pre-implementation sessions. The leaders were unanimous in their contention that they would continue to use CPLM, Everest goals, PMIs and positive strategies. Overall, working with positive strategies changed how the leaders worked and how they learned and applied new ways of working. The interpretation is that the implementation was a positive experience for the leaders.

In the next theme, *Affecting Performance for the Better,* the findings demonstrate how leaders used positive strategies to affect an outcome of positive operational performance, in an environment impacted by an ongoing natural disaster.

5.6   THEME 3: AFFECTING PERFORMANCE FOR THE BETTER

The theme of affecting performance for the better is an unexpected theme to emerge from a field study undertaken with a participant sample that, for the duration of the study, operated in an unexpected natural disaster environment. This environment directly affected the workplace operations as well as the personal circumstances of participating leaders and their team members.

What differentiates the findings in this theme from those in previous themes is that these findings build on the evidence of leaders deliberately emphasising the meaning and importance of the work their teams do. They also identify in more depth how a number of the leaders applied a strengths-based approach through descriptive and supportive communication strategies. They actively worked on encouraging their top performers and constructively addressed a number of de-energisers and habitual non-performers in their teams. These findings show that the leaders affected performance in a positive direction and that in doing so, many of the leaders fundamentally changed how they recognised and endorsed positive performance and how they addressed non-performance and inappropriate behaviours in the workplace.

One of the driving factors for the leaders in implementing CPLM was to improve operational performance. Irrespective of the changed operational environment, they had made a decision

to continue with the implementation; that is, continuing with the pursuit of their Everest goal. To indicate achievement of their goal, leaders had agreed on eight operational measures. The measures and outcomes are set out in Table 7.

The findings show that operational performance improved and six of the eight Everest goal measures achieved. The detailed findings that support the proposition that leaders affected operational performance for the better are under sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2.

5.6.1 Using Positive Communication

The data, particularly from the leader journals and officer interviews, indicates that leaders used positive communication strategies in a number of different ways. Leaders and officers also experienced positive communication and appreciation from senior Customs managers for the work they were doing in such unprecedented circumstances. Although the continuous natural disaster events created a degree of commonality of experience amongst leaders and officers, it also created an operational environment of significantly increased processing complexity and risk. The disrupted operational and community environment increased the potential for certain sections of the international criminal fraternity to take advantage of the disruption and attempt to bring in prohibited substances or materials and/or attempt to enter New Zealand, illegally under various guises of earthquake recovery activities. Therefore, the environment and the opportunity were open for the leaders to affect performance for the better. There was heightened importance in Customs work and there were opportunities for positive communication to reflect that. As one leader commented:

> *Our work is important and everyone has a role to play, we have different roles but they are all important in doing what we do. I really emphasised that for the guys.* (Leader J).

> *I like to compliment people when they do a good job that's important.* (Leader G)

Findings from the interpretative analysis of the leaders' experience indicate that for many leaders, there was a fundamental change in how they recognised and endorsed positive performance and in how they addressed non-performance, particularly with a number of individuals in their teams. The leader focus was on using descriptive rather than evaluative statements describing the performance or behaviours desired, rather than stating what they

did not want. Surprisingly, all of the leaders, either at the interview and/or in their journals, described instances of applying supportive and descriptive communication to address performance issues and inappropriate behaviours. Excerpts from leaders show that they did use supportive and descriptive communication:

One of the things I recognised was that persons such as [name of officer] *whose normally getting a lot of negative – it's easy to concentrate on the negative so there was a total change of thinking. While he doesn't directly report to me, I did on occasions, when he'd done something really well or* [was] *doing something on a regular basis, I actually gave him positive feedback and whether that's doing the daily diary for us or preparing it so we could just go and put the jobs in because they change a lot with flights and stuff, who's present and stuff, and I would say to him* [name of officer] *I really appreciate this or I've missed you when you've been away on holiday and having to do this. So I appreciate that sort of thing and you could actually see him similar, like* [name of officer]*, who wasn't one of my PMI ones either, but I noticed and gave her some good feedback. Then I noticed that she was taking the initiative for example when SmartGate was opening. She thought the control room needs tided up so at 4 o'clock in the morning she went up and tidied the control room up because the Comptroller* [chief executive] *might walk up there and he might see it – that sort of thing.   So it was definitely positive in peoples' motivation and stuff like that. You could actually see improvements.* (Leader D)

[name of officer] *is quite a de-energiser in the team, so over the last couple of months I have focused on the positive with this officer and given her positive feedback about work undertaken and also discussed future opportunities with her in a positive manner. There have been noticeable changes in the officer's attitude since that time, however, it will be important to maintain the positive leadership principles otherwise I suspect that the attitudes may revert back.* (Leader B)

Non-performance, um, I addressed the problem exactly as it was and then I encouraged the person that they have skills and the abilities to do better. They knew they had a problem and I had recognised it. I encouraged them they had the strengths and abilities to do better. (Leader F)

From the researcher's observations, it was also apparent that leaders were actively addressing performance, and in particular addressing habitual non-performance and inappropriate behaviours within their teams. For many of the leaders, this was both challenging and rewarding. One leader explained their experience as follows:

> *Whilst* [I have] *always done the positive side of things whilst it has always been there for leadership, you have also got to think of dealing with issues when they arise … dealing with performance issues and the main one that I did, whilst it was not an ideal situation that I had with* [name of officer]*, I still I did it and I felt better for doing it …I think I have been dealing with those* [performance issues] *better.* (Leader B*)*

It was interesting to note that leaders were also giving positive reinforcement to each other. Two examples of this come from a leader e-mail and from a leader journal:

> *Hi* [name of colleague] *I note that I have received a number of informative and professional e-mails from* [name of officer] *over the last few months. It would appear that* [name of officer] *has really stepped up and* [is] *showing definite signs of leadership and responsibility. Full credit to him (and you). Regards,* [name of leader]. (Leader I)

> *Both* [name of colleague] *and* [name of colleague] *volunteered that they had both observed positive signs from* [name of officer] *following my meeting of the 10th November 2010.* (Leader D)

In addition to addressing performance related issues using descriptive and supportive communication, evidence confirms that leaders also used it consistently to recognise and reinforce positive performance. They used it to describe the performance wanted and to convey gratitude and appreciation for good work and positive behaviours. This claim has support from leaders' journal comments and e-mails sent to officers:

> *Minister's visit next day and also the Comptroller* [chief executive] *attending. Explained the importance of this visit and the overall positive place we want to show them. Team worked well together to tidy up work area. Bit of push back by a couple of*

team members, I utilised the rest of the team to carry these people forward and to help. (Leader H)

Verbal thank you to the staff for staying for the late flight; finished at 04:15 a long night. (Leader C)

E-mail sent to [name of officer] *letting her know that I was extremely impressed with the effort she put into profiling when rostered as rover last Friday. Her effort was rewarded with one of the many passengers she risk-assessed fitting the* [name of operation] *profile. During the afternoon, I also observed her with the vacuum cleaner (Briefing room and Cloakroom) and attending to the dishwasher and general tidiness of the lunchroom. I commended her on her attitude and told her to keep up the good work. With only having cleaners on and off at the moment because of everything happening appreciated her initiative in doing this, really helpful and not like* [name of officer] *at all.* (Leader G)

[Name of officer] *an e-mail to acknowledge your excellent work in searching passenger* [name of passenger]. *Your feedback, conclusions and decision making last night were impeccable. You demonstrated concern for the passenger's well being* [sic] *while not losing sight of the opportunity to achieve a positive outcome. This was all achieved despite the late hour, i.e. 03:50 hours.* (Leader D)

Many of the officers who received such feedback from leaders responded positively. This in turn had the potential to provide positive reinforcement for the leaders for their behaviour in recognising officer contributions. Examples of feedback received from officers and noted in leader journals and e-mails are documented below:

Hi [name of leader], *Thank you very much. It was nice to get in to my e-mails and find a nice welcome!! I have loved being over here and enjoyed the new learning curve very much. It certainly is a very different environment over here and I've enjoyed going out and about on jobs …. Kind Regards,* [name of officer].

Hello [name of leader], *I just wanted to say THANK YOU for letting me search* [name of passenger] *the other day. You might have thought I wasn't capable of searching*

the pax [passenger] *alert first but you believed in me. You told me that I was doing good during the search and at the end not only once but a few times. Thank you once again* [name of leader]*,* [name of officer].

Thanks [name of leader]*, that's so nice to read such nice comments and I am very appreciated* [sic] *for your e-mail. Kind regards,* [name of officer].

A journal note from one leader recorded their acknowledgement of positive feedback from an officer as:

Positive response from [name of officer] *saying both* [name of another leader] *and my e-mail* [sic] *gave her a "lift" to start the day.* (Leader C)

Officer interviews validated positive communications from leaders, both verbal and in e-mails, either to individuals or to groups to recognise specific positive contributions. Examples of this include the following:

Definitely talking to us more and just little things like giving us a comment when we were working, a lot more praising us for our work, especially when we had had a hard shift, you know, lots of upset paxs [passengers]*, grieving parents of the students killed in February, that sort of thing. Much more of that, did notice lots more, "thank you" and "appreciate you doing that," sort of thing, definitely.* [Officer J]

I was asked to come up with a few ideas about the sort of things to motivate people in a more enforcement manner and to work a bit harder. It was quite good and we took the opportunity to run a few minor operations on night shift and I think everyone sort of basically resolved to doing their ARs [alert reports] *on the work queue and that seems to have carried on. We don't have ARs sitting on the work queue now. That is different, it is still going on. It's become a bit of a habit, people just do it now.* (Officer B)

In addition to positive changes in leaders and officers, several of the leaders considered that the overall workplace environment had changed in a positive way. The following leader comments validate this positive change:

I think positive reinforcement definitely helps in creating a positive, happy environment. In the beginning, I did it positively as a thing I thought about and then it probably came [became] *habitual I think.* (Leader G)

Being overall able to see people blossom and learning and become more positive, that's what I enjoyed seeing. (Leader F)

When asked if this had continued, the leader response was clear:

My word, yes. (Leader F)

In essence, both leaders and officers noticed a positive difference in the workplace and were able to describe these differences. This provides confirmation that the leaders intentionally used positive communication – in particular, descriptive and supportive communication strategies. As the study progressed, leaders received increasing amounts of positive communication from each other, from their officers, and from senior Customs managers. These actions, in turn, positively reinforced the way in which the leaders were working and the operational results they were achieving.

These findings clearly indicate that the leaders applied positive communication strategies to reinforce the importance of the work, to encourage high performance, and to address non-performance. The driving purpose for the leaders in implementing CPLM was to improve operational performance. Despite the unexpected workplace environment, the achievement of the eight operational measures remained a key focus. The outcomes for the eight measures leaders set for their Everest goal are presented next.

5.6.2   Achieving the Measures

Although the Customs workplace operates in four teams, the electronic workflow systems only measure operational performance across the overall workplace. The indicators are that throughout the implementation, the leaders focused on achievement of the eight measures that they had agreed on before commencement. Achieving the measures was a key component of the purpose to continue the implementation, especially when it could have been sensible not to do so, under the circumstances.   The measures were a tangible and visible aspect of the implementation that all of the workplace could participate in. The indications are that the leaders used these to encourage progress towards the Everest goal.

Everest Goal Measures

In implementing CPLM, the leaders had set an overall Everest goal and agreed on eight operational measures that they would use as an indication of whether or not that they had achieved their goal. The commencement date was 1 September 2010 and the conclusion date was 1 March 2011. Their Everest goal was *recognition of Christchurch International Airport as being the model airport in the country by end of February 2011*. The leaders defined the word *model* as meeting or exceeding operational performance requirements using minimal resources. The eight measures selected link to the New Zealand Customs Service performance criteria for leaders and officers and are important to Customs work. Accuracy and timeliness of data collection and data input is critical as other areas of Customs use the data for a number of risk and intelligence activities. The leaders selected these eight measures from the overall performance criteria because they directly related to the work of their respective teams, and they were able to be monitored through the Customs electronic monitoring system (CMS). At the airport, Customs officers enter data this is then centrally collated at Customs operations centre in Auckland with progress reports for each measure available to leaders. The outcomes of the eight measures that the leaders agreed on for their Everest goal are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Outcomes of Everest Goal Measures

Measures to be met for Everest goal	Status of measure at 1 September 2010	Result and outcome 1 March 2011
Reduce average sick days per officer by 1.2 from 9.2 to 8 average sick days per officer	9.2 average days per officer	14% reduction to 7.9 average days per officer = measure exceeded
Reduce annual leave balances by 1 average day per officer from 24.2 to 23.2 average days per officer	24.2 average days per officer	10% increase to 26.6 average days per officer = measure not achieved
Quality assurance check 50% of officer notebooks	30% quality assurance checked	80% quality assurance checked = measure exceeded
80% of officer notebooks checked are at accuracy standard	66% of notebooks checked are at accuracy standard	81% of officer notebooks checked were at accuracy standard = measure exceeded
50% of activity and alert reports are quality assurance checked	30% currently quality assurance checked	67% of activity and alert reports quality assurance checked = measure exceeded
Reduce outstanding activity and alert report on work queue by 20%	78 reports on work queue	60 reports on work queue = 23% reduction, measure exceeded
Decrease data mismatch to intervention by 2%	7% data mismatch	5% data mismatch = 2% decrease, measure achieved
Decrease non-accuracy of officer primary processing by 2%	18% non-accuracy primary processing	21% non-accuracy = 3% net increase measure, not achieved

The findings are that at the conclusion of the six-month CPLM implementation period, the leaders had achieved six of the eight operational measures agreed on for their Everest goal. Five of the measures were exceeded, one achieved, and two not achieved. An interesting finding was the 14% reduction in absenteeism to 7.9 average days per officer. This was a reduction of 1.3 average days per officer from the 9.2 baseline. The 7.9 average days absent per officer was lower than the 8.8 organisation average at that time. This finding is contrary to a number of other studies that found that employees who experience traumatic events may be more likely to be absent from work in the following weeks (e.g. Byron & Peterson, 2002[19]; Sanchez, et al., 1995[20]; Wilson, 2009[21]). Under the circumstances, this particularly meaningful finding could have a number of possible explanations and these are discussed in section 6.4.

As the study progressed, the trend of decreased absenteeism became noticeable as leaders frequently had more officers report for duty than needed to cover the requisite responsibilities on each shift. This was in contrast to the usual trend of officers calling in sick at short notice and leaders having to ring around to find sufficient officers for a shift. One explanation for the decreased absenteeism is simply that in the circumstances, leaders did not accurately record sick or domestic leave taken by officers. However, because the indications in the quotes below suggest that leaders paid particular attention to recording and monitoring leave, this explanation does not have high validity. To assist with effective monitoring, one leader designed a spreadsheet recording system that all the leaders used in addition to the usual leave recording process. To ensure recording accuracy, this leader also consistently followed up with colleagues, as exemplified by the following e-mails to colleagues:

> *People, I have created an excel spreadsheet on the Airport G Drive to record Sick Leave as and when calls are received from staff. This is to allow more effective monitoring of Sick Leave usage, patterns of leave and reasons for it…this sheet will not replace the Daily Sign on Sheets, but will compliment* [sic] *them, kind regards.* (Leader D)

Some weeks later, in a follow up e-mail, the leader reminded colleagues of the requirements:

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[19] A study conducted in the context of the September 2001 terrorist attacks
[20] A study conducted in the context of Hurricane Andrew August 1992
[21] A study conducted in the context of five hypothetical disaster scenarios

...tonight I checked the spreadsheet and it would have me believe that no staff have called in sick or taken domestic leave in the last week! In checking the trays I found one sheet where [name of officer] *had taken sick leave and provided a Medical Certificate – which I since charted. ...please ensure* [that the] *OIC* [officer in charge] *in your absence are* [sic] *e-mailing details for later inclusion in the spreadsheet regards.* (Leader D)

Although some non-recording may well have occurred, the likelihood of significant non-recording is minimal. This leaves other possible explanations for the finding of reduced absenteeism. The interpretations include leader and officer commitment to the nature and importance of Customs work, and/or that in implementing CPLM, the leaders created a workplace environment that encouraged officers to continue to attend work, regardless of the ongoing seismic events (especially the catastrophic September, December, and February events). The positive emotional and practical support the New Zealand Customs Service provided for the leaders and officers, and the support and consideration the leaders in this study provided for their officers may have influenced this outcome. A combination of these factors may also have contributed to the outcome. Furthermore, the environment that was created either by implementing CPLM or by the ongoing earthquakes, or by a combination of all of these factors, may well have contributed to the positive outcome of a 14% decrease in absenteeism. As such, it is not possible to argue for any one of these explanations. The evidence however does support the claim of positively affected performance. A discussion of this claim against relevant literature and other studies can be found in chapter 6.

In contrast to the achievement of increased operational performance in five measures and decreased absenteeism due to less sick leave, two measures were not achieved. Outstanding annual leave balances increased by 2.4 average days per officer. This indicates that officers did not take all of the annual leave that had been anticipated and planned for when the measure was agreed. Under the circumstances, this is explainable given the ongoing earthquakes and the general reluctance of most people to take annual leave in the unpredictable environment. The fact that Customs had provided a special leave allocation for Christchurch staff to take when needed for earthquake-related reasons may also have accounted for this outcome. However, minimal use was actually made of this leave

provision, as most staff preferred to adjust shift times or rostered days off to fit with those sorts of commitments.

The other measure that was not achieved was accuracy of officer primary processing, which initially improved, then declined. In December 2010, the Customs system showed a 2% decrease in errors, which was an improvement. However, at the conclusion of the study in March 2011, this had declined, resulting in an increase of processing errors from the baseline of 18% to 21%. A realistic possible explanation for the 3% net increase is the increased volume and enhanced complexity of processing due to passengers without or with incomplete travel documentation. Another is the significant amount of personal and professional stress that officers may have had to deal with in both their personal and professional environment. There was the effect such stress could have on concentration, especially with the ongoing seismic events and the consequential building evacuations that resulted when frequent quakes of magnitude 5.0 or above occurred. Again, there is the possibility that one or the other, or indeed a combination of these factors, contributed to the increase in processing errors.

5.6.3   Summary: Affecting Performance for the Better

In summary, the findings and interpretations in this theme indicate that the leaders intentionally utilised strategies of positive communication to influence and increase many aspects of operational performance. They also used it to encourage the type of performance that contributed to achievement of their Everest goal. Analysis of the leaders' experiences suggests that many of them fundamentally changed how they recognised and endorsed positive performance, and how they deliberately addressed non-performance, especially habitual non-performance, using positive strategies. The analysis shows that leaders also used these strategies with their colleagues. They used them to provide feedback on positive changes they had observed in their colleagues and/or their officers. Indications are that the leaders experienced positive communication and positive reinforcement from senior Customs managers, from their colleagues, and from their own officers, verbally and in e-mails. Many of the officers who received positive feedback from leaders responded positively and this, in turn, had the potential to provide positive reinforcement for leaders to continue such behaviours. Leaders and officers noticed a positive difference in the workplace environment in terms of more recognition and acknowledgement for good work, more purpose and focus in working towards achievement of the goal measures, and more encouragement to be

actively involved in improving workplace practices. Both leaders and officers articulated the differences they had experienced and/or observed.

These findings support the contention that the leaders affected performance for the better. In doing this, they achieved or exceeded six of the eight measures they had set at commencement of the CPLM implementation. Under the circumstances, the outcome of a 3% net increase in officer primary processing errors is understandable and explainable, and the 14% reduction in absenteeism is a very credible outcome, which may have a number of possible explanations. These are explored in Chapter 6.

5.7   THEME 4: COMPASSION AND CONNECTIVITY IN ADVERSITY

At commencement of the CPLM implementation, the leaders' purpose was to increase operational performance to achieve their Everest goal. However, the intervention of the unpredicted ongoing natural disaster events, in the leaders' view, resulted in them having to focus more of their attention on responding to the emotional needs of their officers. This focus emphasised actively seeking the potential positive and opportunity in any situation, rather than focussing on issues and loss. In so doing, leaders had to balance workplace compassion and empathy with their prime legislative and compliance responsibilities of ensuring continuity and rigour of operational delivery (especially in a disaster situation), regardless of their own and/or their officers' personal issues.

The interpretative analysis suggests that over the period of the study, in addition to the CPLM implementation, both leaders and officers had an overall common emotional experience of living with damaged homes, lack of community facilities, and coping with affected family and friends resulting from the continuous natural disaster events. They also experienced increased compassionate behaviours as well as verbal and practical expressions of gratitude and appreciation amongst themselves and from the New Zealand Customs Service. These factors increased the social interactions and connectivity in the workplace. The combination of the commonality and connectivity of experience, together with the leaders implementing positive strategies, intensified and enhanced relationships and encouraged social interactions in the workplace. This also created the opportunity for a mutually positive reinforcing environment to emerge.

In essence, the contention of the experience is that the continuous natural disaster events and the application of positive strategies had an intensifying effect that enhanced relationships and social interactions in the workplace. These factors acted as a cushioning effect that enhanced the performance ability of the leaders and the officers. The detailed findings and interpretations that support these contentions are explained further in sections 5.7.1 and 5.7.2.

5.7.1 Compassion and Connectivity in the Workplace

Even though many of the leaders and officers were anxious and tired because of the continuous earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks, and like many people in Canterbury, especially in the Christchurch city suburbs at that time, coping with what is termed 'anticipatory anxiety'[22] leaders deliberately focused on demonstrating compassion, consideration, and optimism in the workplace. These findings emerged from the analysis and interpretation of all data sources for this study. They corroborate the contention that leaders demonstrated compassion, appreciation, and support that increased social interactions and connectivity in adversity. Leaders did this through workplace demonstrations of compassion, appreciation, and practical support. Examples of this from leaders include the following:

> *I have become much more conscious of learning what their* [the officers] *personal circumstances are. So when they ring in and say, for this reason they can't do it* [come to work or perform a specific duty or responsibility] *I can put a name to it and understand what their reasoning is behind it, and also anticipate when they are becoming stressed because of their family circumstances. It can dictate what jobs I put them on. So if I think they are stressed, I'm not going to put them into a public role, so* [I might put them in] *the control* [room] *role where they are away from the public and their patience is not being tested and that sort of thing. It* [implementing CPLM] *has raised the consciousness of people's circumstances…I made an effort to know what their individual circumstances were.* (Leader D)

> *I tried to lead by example, demonstrating energy and positivity and also trying to keep a balance between if somebody really needed to go home – I found a replacement for*

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[22] Described by Associate Professor Lois Surgenor, University of Otago, Christchurch School of Medicine, to Customs staff as a state of conscious or unconscious alert for sounds and signs that another traumatic event is about to or actually occurring. (See for example, Wong, 1999; Starcke, Wolf, Markowitsch & Brand, 2008).

them – some may have child issues. It was encouraging them to tell us in advance, what they needed, and not feel guilty. (Leader J)

Officers noticed the practical expressions of compassion, appreciation, and support extended to them by their leaders and by the Customs Service. Examples evidenced in officer interviews included comments such as:

Just being able to say, I'm not feeling okay, or I need to go home to see the assessor [Earthquake Commission appointed assessor] *and not feel guilty about it.* [Name of two leaders] *were really, really good about that.* [It] *did not happen often, but when people did* [need to go home], *they* [leaders] *sorted it out and we all pulled together I feel.* (Officer I)

Lots of comms [communications] *about what's going on and how people are, etc. Was good having food etc. for us in those first weeks after the big one* [22 February 2011 earthquake]. *Really made a difference, you could come to work without worrying about sorting food, etc.* (Officer G)

One officer took the time to express their experience and appreciation in an e-mail to their leader. This, in many ways, summed up the comments of others:

[Name of leader],
After this earthquake I "went to pieces" and did not cope at all well. However, the Service was prepared for this, and were unbelievably kind and caring in their management of staff in this terrible time, going to outstanding lengths to provide counselling, kindness, and direction to everyone.

With the phone number one could ring at any time, [and] *the EOC office* [earthquake operations centre] *set up, we felt that the Service cared and went to extraordinary lengths to get staff back to coping where needed, and being there for us at all times. The counselling I found invaluable, and the understanding of being "stood down" in that personal crisis time, was absolutely outstanding and so very much appreciated.*

Thank you so much for helping staff and showing the care and feeling that we are important.

Regards,
[Name of officer]

Regardless of whether one was a Customs leader or Customs officer, all shared the experience of a disrupted workplace and community. These factors linked everyone in the workplace in a commonality of experience that provided opportunities for reciprocal positive reinforcement. The findings are that the leaders consciously paid attention to responding to officer needs and to positively reinforcing the reciprocal nature of the situation for everyone in the workplace. One leader explained their leadership approach that acknowledged the reciprocal nature of the workplace relationships that had emerged as follows:

> *I think it was from the leadership point of view, it was having contingencies and that people knew that.* [The] *recent snow, having ideas in place, and people knew that they are* [sic] *in place so it was keeping people informed was one of the best things, as we did not know if a plane was going to come and we had people sitting around for hours and they probably had things at home* [they] *wanted to do. So it was making them feel appreciated for the fact that they were at work before what they had at home. So to that extent, that they were valued and that we did need them to support us as well.* (Leader J)

Officers noticed and appreciated the consideration as evidenced by such comments as the following:

> *Checking in with us to be sure we were okay and thanking us for coming on shift when we had quakes and aftershocks happening and would rather be at home. But it was good to be here* [to] *take your mind off other things at home. Giving us all torches, meals, and being able to use the showers and get water for everyone was great and things that like that. Customs really looked after us.* (Officer J)

> *I thought that the Chiefs* [leaders] *took care to know how we are, checking that you were okay, like, um, things like that. The way we have been treated during and after the quakes has to be second to none and has made me feel appreciated and valued.*
> (Officer H)

Although the leaders intentionally implemented positive strategies to influence positive outcomes, this research also found that leaders received the benefits of others using positive strategies. They experienced increased positive reinforcement from their officers and from senior Customs leaders. Additionally, the findings showed that senior Customs managers provided operational support and practical demonstrations of compassion, as well as access to support services for leaders, officers, and their families.

Although the focus for the local leaders was to ensure that they continued to operate effectively on their home ground, and not give that over to the wider Customs Service, they did indeed notice and appreciate the support extended to them from Customs senior managers. A number of senior managers were regularly in the workplace providing positive acknowledgement to leaders and officers for their resilience and their work in the adverse environment. For a number of leaders, this may have influenced how they perceived some of those senior managers. One leader summarised this as follows:

> *I think the support that they offered and gave was exceptional. Well, I experienced it first-hand with September the 4th when the earthquake hit, and the support that I got from ITOC* [Customs operational centre in Auckland] *was unbelievable cause* [sic] *I had people to handle here and situations to handle here and I was also trying to deal with the airlines and tell them to bugger off and don't come near Christchurch and what they did for me was great.* (Leader F)

Another leader expressed their view on the wider Customs Service support as follows:

> *The support that the* [Customs] *Service gave us was immensely helpful. Being phoned at home to make sure everything was okay, and was there anything they could help with, and also throwing the* [Customs] *Service facilities open for us was really*

helpful. I came over here to shower and cart fresh water home, and that sort of thing,
was just fantastic really. Really appreciated it, yes. (Leader G)

The closer interaction between leaders at different levels positively influenced many of the
leaders. Two leaders described their views as follows:

I also appreciated higher management coming down because…I learnt new skills
from watching the guys like [name of senior manager] *and* [name of senior manager]*,*
watching them interact with stakeholders and staff and so I have taken some cues to
take it up another level when we deal with those situations. The niceties like going
out and thanking all the teams that come in, shaking their hands and that sort of
thing. Personal things, showing appreciation, no you can't fault the Service actually.
(Leader D)

Group Managers seen as people more than at any other time. Overall, it had a
positive effect on staff. (Leader A)

These findings clearly evidence that compassion, support, and appreciation were consistently
present at all levels in the workplace. Leaders focused on positive interactions, officers
noticed and responded, and leaders experienced positive interactions from senior managers.
The interpretative phenomenological analysis is that these factors increased positive emotions
and social connectivity and that this intensified the positivity in the workplace. These factors,
together with the commonality of experience, suggest there was the opportunity for a
mutually positive reinforcing environment to emerge.

5.7.2 Buffering the Trauma

The findings and interpretative phenomenological analysis are that in implementing CPLM,
which included the intentional implementation of positive strategies, the local leaders created
an environment with the propensity for a positive workplace climate. This, together with the
commonality of experience of the continuous natural disaster events and the positive practical
response from Customs senior managers, further increased the propensity for positivity in the
environment. As a result, these factors contributed to resiliency, social connections, and a
sense of belonging in the workplace. The findings showed deliberate actions by the leaders,
which may well have contributed to and intensified positivity in the workplace. In particular,

this was evidenced by the analysis of leader journals that showed leaders encouraged activities with the potential to increase wellbeing and social connections. These journal entries included the following:

>*Set up Gym orientation sessions for staff so they can utilise the gym correctly. Improves team's fitness and resilience.* (Leader A)

>*Organised a golf day afternoon out before late shift on Wed 27 Nov. Good response from team.* A later journal entry from the same leader was: *Encouraged the use of the Customs House gym. Attended with two staff, very positive feedback about this.* (Leader H)

>[Name of senior leader] *appeared and shouted coffee for all those working. Good spirit of goodwill, camaraderie, and cooperation exists.* (Leader D)

These examples support the contentions that the leaders' behaviours encouraged social connectivity and positivity in the workplace. One of the benefits of this is that the workplace environment, especially in such adverse circumstances, became a "safe haven" for many people, and this had a cushioning or buffering affect from the realities of the outside world. From the analysis, support for this proposition comes from both leaders and officers with comments such as the following:

>*…just reassuring and encouraging staff, offering them any assistance that we could. But still getting our day-to-day BA* [business as usual] *stuff done and just being a positive person yourself about everything, and so you know everyone was going through hard times and they could see you being positive about what's happening at work, and work was probably their opt out and a reasonably pleasant place to be.* (Leader H)

>*With all the things happening for us, I think our Chief created a much more enabling environment for us.* (Officer F)

>*With everything going on the earthquakes etc it was really good to come to work and just focus on where we were heading, especially with everything going on the roads,*

no water etc, everyone had had damages, especially after the last big one but we have just got on with our work especially at this time, really important. (Officer A)

I think it, the events, brought people closer together and they wanted to support each other more. You learned a lot more about people's backgrounds, about their family life, because you'd say have you seen such and such – no they're at home with their kids because their partner lost his job – and you'd find out these details that help you relate to people a lot better, which I think would have helped people with teamwork as people kind of pulled together and were aware of events that had happened and affected people. (Officer D)

These significant statements suggest that in the challenging environment, the commonality of adverse experiences, together with the increased social connectivity and the impact of positive experiences and positive leadership behaviours, created a workplace environment that strengthened and intensified caring, compassion, and positivity amongst the people in the workplace. This created a cushioning or buffering effect between the people in the workplace and the constantly occurring natural disaster events. The indications are that for many these factors contributed to resiliency, and a sense of belonging in the workplace.

5.7.3   Summary: Compassion and Connectivity in Adversity

The overall interpretative analysis for the central theme of *Compassion and Connectivity in Adversity* shows that leaders and officers experienced and/or observed increased compassionate behaviours, verbal and practical expressions of gratitude, and appreciation amongst themselves and from the Customs senior managers. Leaders also made particular efforts to provide opportunities for officers to come together, and these factors increased social interactions and connectivity in the workplace. This suggests that these factors, together with the commonality and the connectivity of the earthquake experience, and the purposeful implementation of the positive strategies in CPLM, provided the opportunity for a mutually positive reinforcing workplace environment to emerge. In essence, in the chaotic external environment, the workplace became a "safe haven" for leaders and officers. This intensified the likelihood of reciprocal positivity, which in turn had the propensity to absorb, and to a degree, protect or distract people, from the trauma of the constant natural disaster events while in the workplace.

5.8   OVERALL RESEARCH FINDINGS SUMMARY

The aim of this qualitative interpretative phenomenological study was to explore and understand the overall essence of the experience of 10 New Zealand Customs Service leaders during their intentional implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM). The study also sought to understand the practical application of the model, what positive leadership strategies and practices the leaders used, and how they used them within a natural disaster workplace environment.

In pursuing this aim and drawing together the four central themes that emerged from the interpretative phenomenological analysis, a number of key findings provide the essence of the leaders' experience of implementing CPLM. Despite the multiple challenges, the overall experience of the leaders in their intentional implementation of CPLM was positive.   For the leaders having the model, with the four prescribed strategies, gave legitimacy for them to apply the strategies in their workplace. The addition of an Everest goal was crucial, and provided meaning and centrality in the implementation. Having legitimacy and centrality provided the leaders with a degree of individual and team psychological safety and participative safety, and this facilitated new learning and new ways of working. The theories of goal ownership, having a contribution goal, meaningfulness in work, and the concept of psychological capital, go some way to explaining why the leaders decided to continue the implementation. They also assist in explaining and understanding the increased performance outcomes observed in the unprecedented natural disaster environment. These concepts are discussed further in Chapter 6. In combination, CPLM and the Everest goal provided structure and focus in chaos.

A strong and consistent theme emerged of leaders working with positive strategies and practices and working differently. All 10 leaders applied their selected positive strategies and practices. Nine of those leaders evolved to using additional positive strategies. The implementation changed how the leadership team worked. There was more focus on people and more focus on performance.   In variable degrees, all of the leaders considered that they had a higher awareness of self and increased the range of leadership behaviours they used, and this made a difference to how they managed their respective teams. Most leaders thought their teams would have noticed that they were more focused and provided more feedback.

Where leaders did not consider they had changed, or were unaware of any changes, colleagues and officers noted that in fact they had changed in a positive direction.

Triangulation of data from leader journals and interviews and from officer interviews supports the interpretation and contention that the leaders did indeed work differently. The findings show that leaders learned and consistently applied positive strategies that fostered positive meaning, positive climate, positive relationships and positive communication. They used these to affect performance at both ends of the performance continuum, foster relationships, express gratitude and appreciation, and to demonstrate positivity, energy, and empathy in the workplace. The indications from all of the leaders were that they would continue to use positive strategies.

The findings established the PMI practice as a positive addition to Cameron's positive leadership model and as an enabler for leaders in fostering positive interactions in the workplace. Nine leaders and all 10 officers involved with the PMI sessions found them rewarding. A number of officers considered that the sessions contributed to their job satisfaction, motivation, and career development. These findings strongly endorse the addition of the PMI practice to Cameron's model.

The theme of affecting performance for the better is a somewhat surprising theme to emerge from a field study, where for the duration, the participants operated in an unprecedented natural disaster environment. This environment directly affected the workplace operations and the personal circumstances of participating leaders and their team members. The findings show a fundamental change by the leaders in how they used supportive and descriptive communication to affect performance in a positive direction. Leaders achieved or exceeded six of the eight measures for their Everest goal. The failure to achieve the target measure of annual leave balance reduction is explainable under the circumstances. The resulting 3% increase in officer primary processing errors and 14% decrease in absenteeism is more complex and may have a number of possible explanations.

The overall interpretative phenomenological analysis suggests that in the challenging environment, the commonality and connectivity of experiences, in combination with the purposeful implementation of CPLM, created the opportunity for a positive, mutually reinforcing workplace environment to emerge. In other words, the workplace became a "safe

haven" for leaders and officers. This intensified the likelihood of reciprocal positivity, which in turn had the propensity to absorb, and to a degree protect or distract people, from the trauma of the constant natural disaster events. Collectively, these factors, together with the impact of positive leadership behaviours, created a workplace environment that strengthened and intensified caring, compassion, and positivity. This acted as a cushion or buffer between the people in the workplace and the constantly occurring natural disaster events. The indications are that this contributed to resiliency, social connections, and a sense of belonging in the workplace. Performance increased and absenteeism decreased.

5.9   RESPONSE TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Turning now to consider how these findings answer the four research questions that guided this study. The first question explored the experiences of the frontline leaders in implementing the positive leadership model. The next two explored what positive strategies and practices the leaders adopted in the implementation and how they used them in a workplace environment impacted by continuous natural disaster events. The fourth question explored strategies that would optimise the practical implementation of the model. The research foci involved identifying the essence of the leaders' collective experience. Essentially the essence, or the "what and the how" of their collective experience, was distilled from the combination of textural and structural descriptions and significant statements resulting from the interpretative phenomenological analysis.

5.9.1   Research Question 1: Leaders' Experience

What was the lived experience of the leaders in their intentional implementation of CPLM in their workplace?

Cameron's positive leadership model (CPLM) is based on the principles and philosophies that underpin positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, et al., 2003). This approach advocates adopting a positive, fresh lens to look at the same picture of organisational life (Spreitzer, 2003). In this study, the experience of the leaders was that they did indeed adopt a positive and fresh lens with which to look at the same picture of their workplace life and to see it differently.

Pre-implementation Experience

Participating in pre-implementation workshops enabled the leaders to plan and to take ownership of the implementation. The workshops also provided the opportunity to agree on

their Everest goal and to decide the measures that would indicate achievement of their goal. The experience of participation in this process meant that when the leaders had a legitimate reason to discontinue with the implementation because of the first earthquake, they made a deliberate decision to continue. In doing so, there is an indication of ownership, confidence, and optimism that they would achieve their goal; *"we achieved what we wanted to achieve"* (Leader A). The leaders' experience is that they not only persevered with the implementation, but they were also hopeful and optimistic that they would achieve their goal. In the pre-implementation workshops, the leaders soundly rejected the notion of expressing gratitude and compassion in the workplace. Similarly rejected was the use of the reflective best-self tool (Roberts, et al., 2005). The majority leader view was that both these concepts were *"very American"* (Leader E). Obtaining best-self feedback was not an aspect that all of the leaders were comfortable with therefore in the interest of the overall implementation this component of Cameron's model was not included. Additionally, the notion of keeping a gratitude journal, and/or expressing gratitude and appreciation in the workplace, was considered by the majority of leaders as unnecessary as they did appreciate officers' work, so there was no need to *"do the gratitude and compassion bit"* (Leader F). On the other hand, the notion of using descriptive and supportive communication to address de-energisers, inappropriate attitudes, and habitual non-performance found favour with the leaders (what strategies they used and how they used them is explored in sections 5.6.1 and 6.7.2). The experience of participating in the pre-implementation workshops was positive with only one leader who *"felt a little bit blind at times"* and *"would have liked more sessions with the whole group"* (Leader C). However, overall, when reflecting on the implementation and the adverse circumstances, the experience of knowing about the benefits of taking a positive orientation, and the experience of using positive leadership strategies, leaders considered their experience had been advantageous. Significant representative statements from leaders included *"we have those tools and we know that we can go and apply them"* (Leader J), and *"it's not something that goes away that you put away, you actually think about it and can convert back to it"* (Leader B). This knowledge may well have increased the practical tools and personal resources that the leaders, individually and collectively, had at their disposal during the implementation.

Experience of Implementing CPLM

While the leaders each had their own individual experience of implementing CPLM, the significant statements indicate that despite initial personal challenges of needing to

consciously adopt a different mind-set, learn, and apply new ways of working, the leaders unanimously experienced the intentional implementation of CPLM as challenging and positive. The implementation was challenging in that initially applying positive strategies was *"difficult at first, had to think about it"* and was *"a total change of thinking"* (Leader D). Applying positive strategies for most leaders meant changing their usual pattern of how they worked and interacted with others in the workplace, especially their colleagues and the officers in their respective teams. However, the essence of the implementation experience for the leaders was that overall there were *"really no troubles"* (Leader H), and some even *"quite enjoyed the experience"* (Leaders D and F).

Experience of the Leadership Team

Early on in the implementation, most leaders had the experience of noticing that their leadership team was working more positively. Most also noticed that they were working differently with their own teams, and that there was greater focus on both people and performance. Leader J commented on the experience of the leadership team working differently, expressing that there was *"probably more of a team atmosphere, people were more prepared to listen a bit more, as well* [as] *more emphasis on our common purpose."* The common thread for leaders in working differently within their leadership team, and with their own officer teams, was the experience of having a clear goal and a set of measures. This was different; the leaders' experience was that the clarity provided by having a specified goal and set of measures assisted them to target areas for increasing performance efforts, in effect, *"the Everest goal was good because it gave us a focus"* (Leader C).

Experience of Working Differently

In the resultant adverse environment, the essence of the leader experience was that having a goal was "absolutely necessary, that way everyone had an idea of where we're heading and whether [we're] successful or not" (Leader A). Similarly, the goal provided meaning and centrality in the uncertain environment and provided a reason and legitimacy to implement the positive strategies in the model. In addition to influencing how the leadership team operated, the Everest goal and Cameron's model, in tandem, influenced the leaders' own awareness and leadership behaviours when interacting with their respective teams. Most leaders considered that their teams would have noticed that they were more focused. Leader E noted that officers in their team *"will have noticed that I have become more focused."* Leaders also considered they were *"much more conscious of providing feedback"* (Leader F).

The experience for most was that they were *"more aware"* (Leaders A and C) of their own behaviours. Where leaders did not consider they had changed, or were unaware of changes, colleagues and officers noted that positive changes actually had been noticed in these leaders. When describing these positive changes, one officer said that their leader *"... talks to us more"* (Officer H) and another noticed *"just little things like giving us a comment when we were working"* (Officer J). There was unanimous agreement by the leaders and the interviewed officers that this way of working was different and advantageous. The leaders found that having the prescribed CPLM with the addition of the Everest goal, gave a central focus to the implementation and a purpose to the use of positive strategies. In essence, the leaders' experience was that Cameron's model with the Everest goal, provided structure and focus for them amidst the chaos of an uncertain environment impacted by ongoing earthquakes.

Experience of Working with Positive Strategies and Practices

This structure and focus provided a common purpose and a framework that, in effect, legitimised or gave leaders the permission and confidence needed to apply their selected positive strategies. They could see others applying the strategies, and as the implementation progressed, they increasingly experienced positive reinforcement, positive communication, and expressions of appreciation and gratitude from others. These factors provided the leaders with a degree of individual and team psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999) to risk working differently from workplace norms. All of the leaders applied their selected positive strategies, and as the implementation progressed, nine of the leaders evolved to using additional positive strategies. There was a common thread. Leaders *"tried them* [positive strategies] *all the time"* (Leader F) and *"sort of evolved to applying more than at first"* (Leader D). In addition to psychological safety, the leaders' experience indicates that they felt safe to participate as they *"could see others using their strategies"* (Leader I). The fact that they actively participated in the implementation and worked differently suggests that a degree of participative safety (Härtel, et al., 2011) was indeed present, because leaders not only learned new ways of working, they also applied the new learning. The environment that was created because of the presence of psychological and participative safety may have been influential in the leaders choosing to continue, and in fact increasing their use of positive strategies. An environment of psychological safety, it is proposed, contributed to the leaders' abilities to learn new behaviours, to take action in response to the changing environment, and to continue their implementation journey. Reflections of the essence of this experience is

demonstrated through the number of leaders who increased the range of positive strategies they used, considered that using positive strategies became quickly embedded in their leadership behaviours, and noted that they *"applied them constantly"* (Leader F). Leaders noticed that they were working differently. Many officers also noticed that leaders were working differently. As one officer commented, *"it was good, it was different"* (Officer G).

Affecting Performance for the Better

The implementation presented a number of challenges and inhibitors for leaders that contributed to the essence of their collective experience. Initially, a small number of leaders had reservations as to how the staff group would respond. However, these quickly dissipated. One leader offered a comment particularly reflective of the overall leader experience, stating, *"to start with I had my doubts…but at the end of the day it did work well"* (Leader B). The more that leaders integrated positive strategies into their daily work routines, the more they experienced positive reactions from officers. Leader F stated that they were *"constantly using them* [positive strategies]," and they *"could see the positive reaction from the troops,"* while Leader I reported *"yeah the staff bought into it which was really pleasing."* Making time to work differently and to hold PMI sessions (discussed in sections 5.5.2 and 6.7.2) was a challenging experience. One leader addressed this by noting that *"you just had to make sure that was your time"* (Leader H). Despite the challenges and adverse conditions, the leaders exhibited the behaviour and had the experience that they *"… tried to lead by example, demonstrating energy and positivity"* (Leader J). The experience of affecting performance for the better for the leaders also included addressing de-energisers, inappropriate behaviour, and non-performance in a very different way. As noted previously, in the pre-implementation workshops, the notion of recognising and addressing the de-energisers and habitual non-performers in their teams resonated with the leaders (the strategies and practices they used and how they used them is discussed in section 6.7.2). However, all of the leaders did address such issues and *"felt better for doing it"* (Leader B). The essence of the leader experience of working with positive strategies to affect performance in a positive direction was that in doing so, there was a fundamental change: they focused on the goal and applied positive strategies to convey, recognise, and endorse positive performance, as well as to address non-performance in the workplace. Having implemented the positive leadership approach and experienced the difference this made for them personally and for workplace performance, the comment of *"my word, yes"* (Leader F) encapsulates the leader intention to continue to work within the positive leadership approach.

Emotional Experience

At commencement of the CPLM implementation, the leaders' purpose was to increase operational performance to achieve their Everest goal. However, the leaders' experience was that in the ongoing earthquake environment, they found themselves focusing more of their attention on responding to the emotional needs of their officers through strategies like "*encouraging them to tell us in advance, what they needed, and not feel guilty*"(Leader J). This focus also involved actively seeking the potential positive and opportunity in any situation, rather than focusing on anxiety, loss, and disruption. The essence of the leader experience was that "*using positive leadership stuff made the going a lot easier to stay out of the doom spiral*" (Leader A). In so doing, regardless of their initial rejection of expressing gratitude and compassion, the reality was that the workplace environment had irreversibly changed. As leaders, they responded to that change. Regardless of their own and/or their officers' personal issues resulting from the disaster situation, leaders had to balance workplace compassion and empathy with their prime legislative and compliance responsibilities of ensuring continuity and rigour of operational delivery. The ongoing earthquakes and consequential disruptions resulted in an overall common experience for both leaders and officers. These factors increased the social interactions and connectivity in the workplace. The leaders' experience was that they received compassionate behaviours and practical support from the New Zealand Customs Service. Leader D summarised this aspect of the experience saying, "*it was the personal things showing appreciation*" that influenced the essence of the leader experience. Leaders experienced empathy and compassion. In turn, they demonstrated empathy and compassionate behaviours to officers and colleagues.

The combination of the commonality and the connectivity of experience and the effects of leaders using positive strategies added an intensity that enhanced positivity, relationships, and social interactions in the workplace. This also created the opportunity for a mutually positive reinforcing environment between leaders and officers to emerge. Leader J commented, "*we did need them to support us as well.*" Leaders were relying on officers to attend work and made efforts to acknowledge attendance by "*making them feel appreciated for the fact that they were at work*" (Leader J). Officers also relied on leaders to provide flexibility and consideration when needed. Many officers acknowledged and appreciated the efforts that leaders made in this regard. Officer J noticed leaders were "*checking in…to be sure we were okay and thanking us for coming on shift when we had quakes and aftershocks happening and would rather be at home.*" Leaders also increased their awareness of the positive

benefits of encouraging social interactions in the workplace, for example, one *"organised a golf day afternoon out"* (Leader H). Leaders also consciously attended to responding to officer needs by doing things such as "*just reassuring and encouraging staff, offering them any assistance that we could"* (Leader H) and positively reinforcing the reciprocal nature of the workplace relationship that had emerged. In essence, in adversity the experience was one of reciprocal compassion and connectivity.

The Overall Essence of Leader Experience

The phenomenological analysis and interpretation of the overall essence of the leaders' experience of the intentional implementation of CPLM is that it was challenging and positive. Whereas the implementation experience was unique for each leader, the patterns in the findings are consistent with the leaders' assertions that their experience was challenging and positive. Leaders learned and applied new ways of thinking and new ways of working. In implementing CPLM, they set an Everest goal and this gave confidence, purpose, and legitimacy to applying the four positive strategies in the leadership model. In the unexpected natural disaster environment, having Cameron's model and strong ownership of the Everest goal provided centrality, structure, and focus in a chaotic environment. In the changed environment, applying positive strategies positively enhanced the performance ability of the leaders; they used the Everest goal to focus work efforts both for themselves and for their respective teams, and used positive strategies in caring for their officers. The common experience created through the adverse environment, the compassionate leadership behaviours, and the expressions of gratitude and appreciation increased and intensified the potentiality for positive emotions, emotional contagion, positive reciprocity and resilience to occur. The combination of these factors intensified the positivity generated through applying the positive strategies and this, in turn, cushioned or buffered those in the disrupted workplace. The workplace became a "safe haven" for leaders and officers. This is the essence of the leaders' experience of the intentional implementation of CPLM in their workplace.

5.9.2   Research Questions 2 and 3: Positive Strategies

What CPLM positive leadership strategies and positive practices did the leaders adopt in the implementation?

How did the leaders use the leadership strategies and practices in a natural disaster workplace environment?

Leaders used the four positive strategies in CPLM. They also used the two additional strategies that had been added to CPLM for the implementation: an Everest goal and the PMI. Leaders used these six positive strategies to shape their own leadership behaviours, to focus their attention and interactions, and to inform and enhance how they worked as a leadership team and how they worked with their respective teams. Adopting the positive leadership approach influenced all of these factors. It also influenced how they responded and cared for their people in a workplace impacted by an unprecedented natural disaster.

Throughout the study, as indicated in the findings, leaders used all of the agreed positive strategies. Different leaders used different combinations of the strategies. The majority focused on strategies that fostered positive climate, positive communication, and positive meaning. Half focused on fostering positive relationships, nine focused on the PMI practice, and all leaders focused on the Everest goal. Although each positive strategy has specific positive leadership behaviours (see Figures 3 and 4), in the practical application they tend to meld into an overall positive leadership approach. For leaders, being cognisant of the four positive strategies in the model and the related leadership behaviours, acted as a guide in implementing the positive leadership approach. In implementing positive leadership, many of the leaders fundamentally changed how they interacted within their leadership team and how they worked with their respective teams. They had more focus on performance and more focus on people. They used positive strategies and these fundamentally changed how they set goals, recognised and endorsed positive performance, and how they addressed non-performance and inappropriate behaviours in the workplace. The leaders used all of the positive strategies selected for the implementation in a number of different ways to care for their officers and to achieve increased performance in a natural disaster workplace environment.

Everest Goal and Positive Meaning Strategy

Prior to the implementation, the Everest goal and the positive meaning strategy received minimal attention from the leaders. However, in the implementation, leaders consistently

used both of these. The Everest goal provided a clear focus for performance efforts and the positive meaning strategy complement the positive practice of an Everest goal. The goal also provided a central focus for the leaders to emphasise the importance of Customs work and to reinforce the meaningfulness of the work undertaken by each person individually as well as by each collective team. The Everest goal was different and useful. Officer F stated *"having the worthwhile goal, that was certainly different."* It provided a contribution goal in that everyone in the workplace could contribute to the achievement of the goal. In doing so, they were directly contributing to the protection of everyone in New Zealand. Having the goal *"uplifted each team as a whole"* (Leader J) and *"it gave us something to aim towards"* (Officer C). *"The Everest goal was from day one part of the daily briefings"* (Leader I) and leaders used this together with the importance of Customs work to encourage ideas for workplace productivity improvements. One officer noticed it was different in that they were being *"asked for our* [their] *opinions"* (Officer B). Officers also noticed that leaders were *"quite proactive in getting people to come forward with ideas which is a little bit different from the norm"* (Officer B), and that they were, *" very encouraging to you to put forward your ideas whether you thought they would work or not"* (Officer D).

Positive Communication and Positive Climate Strategies

Two positive strategies that were particularly useful in the adverse environment but had very little attention from leaders, prior to the implementation, were the positive communication and positive climate strategies. The indications are that these two strategies were critical, individually and in tandem, and leaders were *"more acutely aware"* (Leader F) of using them in their everyday interactions with their teams. The indications are that leaders used these two strategies to keep officers, *"in the loop of how it's going" (*Leader J), to encourage social interactions and connectivity through activities such as *"a golf day afternoon out before late shift* (Leader H), and to convey empathy by making the effort *"to know what their* [officers'] *individual circumstances were"* (Leader D). They used positive actions and written and verbal communication to express gratitude and to acknowledge officers' contributions to the workplace. For example they, *"thanked the team for a well done job from the previous day which was very busy"* (Leader H) and *"held morning tea for staff, thanked staff for their work and support to each other"* (Leader J). Leaders also conveyed positive strategies through electronic means. They used e-mail to convey appreciation and recognition for good work to officers. Leader G used *"e-mail sent to* [name of officer] *letting her know that I was extremely impressed with the effort she put into profiling when rostered as rover last*

Friday." Leader D sent "[Name of officer] *an e-mail to acknowledge your excellent work in searching passenger* [name of passenger].*"* Colleagues and officers reciprocated the positive communication. The use of positive communication supported the development of a positive climate. The use of positive communication was noticed in a number of ways by officers who acknowledged that leaders provided, *"lots of comms* [communications] *about what's going on and how people are etc."* (Officer G). They also noticed that leaders were *"checking in with us to be sure we were okay and thanking us for coming on shift when we had quakes and aftershocks happening and would rather be at home"* (Officer J).

Leaders also used positive communication to acknowledge and encourage good performance. Additionally, all used the strategy to address non-performance and inappropriate attitudes in the workplace. For leaders, this was a new way of working, which they described as challenging and rewarding. At first, utilising descriptive and supportive communication strategies to address de-energisers, inappropriate attitudes, and non-performance was challenging. This was different to the previous workplace norms where to some degree these behaviours were ignored, tolerated, or *"previously just worked around"* (Leader B). Using positive communication provided leaders with new ways of reinforcing performance at both ends of the continuum. They worked individually with relevant officers, using descriptive communication to explain the behaviours and outcomes required and using supportive communication to shape and reinforce behaviours in a positive direction. In effect, they used positive communication to shape the way in which they addressed performance and provided feedback. In using descriptive and supportive communication, leaders observed changes in officers. For example, leader F stated, *"I think it gave them more confidence when they realised that they could achieve…"* and noted *"that was different than before."* The more leaders used the strategies, the easier it became. All leaders noted that because of the implementation, they had new strategies that provided them with new ways to work proactively with their top performers and constructively address a number of de-energisers and habitual non-performers in their teams.

Positive Relationship Strategy

In the natural disaster environment, the indications are that leaders went out of their way to foster positive relationships and positivity in the workplace. Leaders focused on demonstrating positivity and energy in their own behaviours and on using strategies that fostered positive relationships and a positive workplace climate. They did this through

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encouraging activities that supported positive interactions and wellbeing in the workplace, for example, gym attendance, pre-shift golf outings, thank you morning teas, and making time for officers to come together to share experiences. Leaders also encouraged positive relationships through making opportunities for officers to have new and different experiences. An example of this is one leader who *"encouraged a staff member to be a workplace assessor"* (Leader H). Having such opportunities was different and noticed by officers. For example, one officer commented that their leader had organised for them *"to do some time in the control room, had been wanting to have that for ages"* (Officer G). There are clear indications that leaders also made conscious efforts to express gratitude and empathy such as, *"I just keep saying the value that they add through turning up"* (Leader J), and *"it is just having that closer contact with the staff and knowing what the particular circumstances are"* (Leader C). These sorts of leadership actions have the potential to support the development of positive workplace relationships. Officers noticed such leader behaviours, for example, Officer H said, *"the way we have been treated during and after the quakes has to be second to none and has made me feel appreciated and valued."*

PMI Practice

As an additional way to foster positive relationships, leaders used the positive practice of the PMI process to work with individual officers. Leaders used this practice as a core enabler for working differently. When *"sitting down and having the one-on-one with the officers"* (Leader H), leaders used the PMI process that employed the strategy of discussing ideas and the *"ways they* [officers] *could contribute to the way we did things"* (Leader C). A number of challenges were inherent in using this strategy. Leaders found that *"it was a hard thing finding the time for the interviews"* (Leader B). However, the approach was that *"you just had to make sure it was your time"* and many *"actually enjoyed"* (Leader G) the process. Leaders received positive feedback for undertaking the PMI sessions. Officers responded positively to the implementation of the PMI practice. Reactions from many officers clearly indicate that the sessions were *"very beneficial"* (Officer C). Officer D reported the effect was that when their leader is *"showing an interest in what you're doing* [it] *kind of motivates you more"* and another officer stated that their leader taking time to talk individually with them had made, *"a difference to my career, more self-motivation, really boosted my job satisfaction* (Officer F). This practice was particularly useful and had a positive impact on those involved, despite the initial challenges and inhibitors of rosters and finding time to hold the individual PMI sessions. Not all of the officers were involved in PMI sessions during the

implementation and only nine of the leaders applied the positive practice. Leaders in this study used the positive practice of the PMI process differently to leaders in other studies in that they implemented it with a small number of officers in each team rather than with whole teams. The indications are that it was effective as well as being a positive experience for the leaders and officers involved. There was strong endorsement from both leaders and officers of the benefits of implementing the PMI practice. One leader proposed that, "*ideally if you could take them* [PMI sessions] *out to all staff, you could capture a lot more ideas and a lot more positive, constructive discussions with staff"* (Leader I). Officers who were involved reflected on the benefits as well. One officer said, *"[I] got a lot of good suggestions through my PMI"* and went on to add, *"being reminded with lots of encouragement that was great – otherwise I would be just cruising along.* The sessions facilitated interactions and exchanges of views and information that may not have otherwise occurred because of the adverse distractions.

5.9.3   Research Question 4: Model Adaptations

What changes are suggested to Cameron's (2008) positive leadership model to optimise its practical implementation by leaders in the workplace?

Because this study is the first to implement Cameron's model and the first to have explored the experience of leaders, especially frontline leaders, in applying positive strategies and practices, it was opportune to consider any changes that would enhance the utility and practical implementation of the model for adopting the positive leadership approach in the workplace.

The changes suggested to Cameron's positive leadership model are that the Everest goal and PMI practices should be at the heart of the model. This suggestion would change the model and present a holistic concept for the implementation of the positive leadership approach, using the model as an enabler and guide. Outcomes from this study support the contention that the addition of these two positive practices strengthen the model. The Everest goal provides purpose, centrality, and a measurement dimension to the implementation of positive strategies. The PMI practice facilitates positive interactions between leaders and their direct reports. In this study, both leaders and officers valued the PMI practice because of the opportunities it provided for positive interaction and communication. In participating in the PMI sessions, the experience for many officers was that they were more motivated and the

sessions contributed to opportunities for their career development. In combination, the Everest goal and PMI practices provided centrality, synergy, energy, and legitimacy to the practical implementation of the model. Furthermore, in having all of the components of the positive leadership strategies and practices in one model, leaders have a comprehensive visual on which to focus for the practical implementation of the holistic model. These changes would optimise the practical implementation of the model and assist with the overall conceptualisation of the model and the positive leadership approach. Figure 9 provides a visual representation of the adapted version of CPLM. The adaptations to Cameron's (2008) positive leadership model are indicated in blue.

Figure 9: Adaptations to Cameron's Positive Leadership Model

Embedding the two additional strategies into the model and further enhancing it through adding more detail of the positive strategies would provide a guide for leaders as to what behaviours leaders can practically engage in to enact positive leadership. Including detail of the positive strategy behaviours used by the leaders in this current study would further enhance the model, making it easily accessible and immediately usable for leaders. The detailed version of Cameron's model grounds the concepts of "positive" and "positive leadership" and provides leaders with a practical model for implementing the positive leadership approach. Figure 10 on the next page shows the adapted version of Cameron's model with the positive leadership behaviours included.

ADAPTED POSITIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL – POSITIVE STRATEGIES AND POSITIVE PRACTICES

POSITIVE CLIMATE

- Positive noticing, expressing verbal or written thanks, gratitude/appreciation to others for their actions
- Encouraging and reinforcing positive performance
- Expressing and responding with empathy
- Recognising and building on strengths

POSITIVE MEANING

- Reinforcing the overall contribution work makes to others, to the strategic outcomes, and the Everest goal
- Reinforcing meaningfulness of individuals' and the team's work
- Encouraging ideas generation, providing support for evaluation and implementation

EVEREST GOAL

- Establish Everest goal
- Aim for positive deviance
- Affirmative orientation
- Contribution goal that creates value
- Define measures for goal achievement

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- Building positive workplace relationships
- Leader facilitation and modelling of positive energy
- Recognising and addressing de-energisers, working with positive energisers
- Focus on strengths and give time to strongest performers
- Make opportunities for what people do best

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW

- Initial role negotiation session followed by 1:1 sessions at least monthly 45-60 minutes with agenda linked to positive strategies and employee development

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- Having descriptive and supportive conversations
- Describing what observed and/or what wanted rather than making judgements
- Describing observation instead of making judgement or assumption
- 5:1 +/- ratio technique, ensuring more positive than negative ratio of communications

KEY

- Positive practice
- Positive Strategy
- Positive Leadership Behaviours

Figure 10: Adapted Version of Cameron's Positive Leadership Model. Adapted by R. Martin to include positive behaviours.

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In proposing these additions to the model it is acknowledged that in his latest book, *Practicing positive leadership: tools and techniques that create extraordinary results,* Cameron does integrate the Everest goal as one of four additional positive practices beyond the first four positive strategies implemented in this study that were introduced in his original 2008 book. At the time that this study was initiated and the Everest goal and the PMI strategies were added to the model for the study, Cameron's later books had not been published. As such, the findings from this current study add validation to Cameron's 2008 model and to his 2013 model, which includes establishing Everest goals as one enabler of implementing positive strategies. Cameron's latest model adds a level of validation to the suggestion to integrate these strategies into the model.

Since the 2010 commencement of this study, the positive leadership research agenda has progressed. The studies by Cameron, et al. (2011) and Cameron and Plews' (2012) both identified positive outcomes from the application of a number of positive practices. An earlier study (Cameron & Vannette, 2009) similarly used a variety of positive practices and tools to implement the positive leadership approach in an organisation. Contributing to the positive practices was a number of positive strategies similar to those applied in this study. However, the focus of this research was positive strategies and the leaders' experiences of implementing them based on the positive leadership behaviours prescribed for Cameron's 2008 model.

The next chapter provides a discussion of these findings compared to literature and other research. The final chapter presents the conclusions, contributions, implications, and considerations for practitioners considering implementing positive leadership using the adapted version of CPLM. Finally, it discusses the limitations of this study, suggested directions for future research and provides a postscript on the leaders post implementation experience.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings and interpretations of this research according to four central themes of *Structure and Focus in Chaos*, *Working with Positive Strategies and Practices*, *Affecting Performance for the Better*, and *Compassion and Connectivity in Adversity* that emerged from the interpretative phenomenological analysis of the leaders' stories relating to their implementation experiences. It compares and contrasts the themes with other relevant studies and literature. In a number of instances, the findings from this study suggest an extension to the outcomes from other research. The four central themes provided salient insights into the leaders' implementation experiences and the essence of their collective experience. The findings reflected many of the positive leadership concepts referred to by Cameron (2008, 2012) and a number of other studies across several scholarly disciplines. In this study three research questions related to the leaders' overall implementation experience, the positive strategies and practices that they adopted, and how they used them in a natural disaster natural disaster workplace environment, and one question explored any suggested changes to CPLM.

6.2 STRUCTURE AND FOCUS IN CHAOS

The findings show that the adapted version of CPLM provided the leaders with a framework and a legitimate reason to apply positive strategies. The addition of the Everest goal provided a central purpose and clear focus to the implementation. In the environment of a natural disaster, the combination of CPLM and the Everest goal provided the leaders with structure and focus in the context of chaos.

6.2.1 CPLM Implementation

In the implementation of CPLM, the leaders had a visual model and prescribed positive strategies. This provided a framework for leaders to follow and in effect, legitimised or gave permission and confidence to leaders to apply their selected positive strategies. Leaders could see their colleagues applying the strategies, and as the implementation progressed, they increasingly experienced the benefits of others using these positive strategies, as leaders received positive reinforcement and gratitude from their colleagues and officers. These factors provided

the leaders with a degree of psychological safety and participative safety to learn and work differently. Leaders reported experiencing changes in their workplace environment. These changes included a more team-orientated atmosphere, with people being more prepared to listen, and a greater emphasis on a common purpose. This suggests that positive leadership strategies were influencing the leadership team environment and that there was a level of team psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999) for individuals to learn and to risk working differently from workplace norms. This is consistent with previous research that found experiences of high quality relationships contribute both directly and indirectly to psychological safety, which is associated with facilitating learning behaviours (Carmeli, et al., 2009).

Additionally, other research has found that the quality of relationships, especially positive relationships, influences feelings of psychological safety and promotes performance (Edmondson, 1999). As most of the leaders had worked together for many years, either in the leadership team or in various roles, there may have been familiarity and a degree of comfort in their shared histories and relationships. This may also have facilitated learning, a stronger collective ability to cope with stress (Länsisalmi, Peiró, & Kivimäki, 2000), and a shared belief that the team was safe for interpersonal risk-taking (Edmondson, 1999). In times of change, such as in this study, the creation of psychological safety for the leaders to overcome any learning anxiety was critical. An environment of psychological safety, it is proposed, contributed to the leaders' abilities to learn new behaviours and to take action in response to changing situations (Edmondson, 1999).

In addition to psychological safety, environments in which individuals feel safe to participate are likely to be characterised by participative safety (Härtel, Kimberley, & McKeown, 2011). It is this participative safety that is asserted as being conducive to providing a sense of safety for individuals, not only to learn, but also to apply that new learning (Härtel, 2008). It is evident that the leaders in this study did indeed feel safe to learn and to participate in the changing situation, as they not only succeeded in learning and working in new ways, but they noticed they were working differently, as did others. This suggests a considerable level of participative safety was present.

There is no doubt that an environment of anxiety and change was present in applying CPLM due to the need to learn and use new behaviours. However, as described by many of the leaders

having a prescribed visual model gave a common purpose and a framework for their implementation. The interpretation is that this gave legitimacy to the leaders to apply the positive strategies and practices in the model. Leaders could see colleagues using positive strategies; most increased the number of strategies they used and they increasingly received positive reinforcement from colleagues and officers. Despite the challenges of implementing CPLM, all considered their overall implementation experience to be positive. These factors support the contention that an environment of psychological safety and participative safety enabled the leaders to learn new ways of working and to use these new ways in their workplace, despite adverse conditions.

6.2.2 Everest Goal

The prime reason for the leaders having an Everest goal was to indicate the outcome they sought and to use it as a focus for improving operational performance. In so doing, leaders hoped that the credibility of their teams would increase in the eyes of the Customs senior management. One of the reasons given by the leaders for continuing the implementation, despite the unprecedented operating environment, was the considerable amount of time and effort they had invested in deciding the Everest goal and measures. The collective decision to continue, despite what had become for most a chaotic operational and personal environment of high anxiety and uncertainty, is an indication that a degree of goal ownership, resiliency, confidence, hope, and optimism was present in the leadership team. The findings indicate that the Everest goal became a pillar that provided centrality and clarity of purpose, which the leaders used as the centre of their own attention and their teams' attention. The goal and the implementing the strategies contributed to providing structure and focus in the chaos of post-earthquake Christchurch.

These findings compare to those of other researchers such as Locke and Latham, (1990, 2002), Kelloway and Barling (2000), and Kelloway et al. (2013), who all contended that goal setting and goal clarity is an important precursor and key feature of ongoing high performance. Where there is a strong contribution goal (as in this study) a higher degree of meaningfulness has been found to be present, compared to when self-interest (achievement) goals predominate (Niiya & Crocker, 2008). In addition, Cameron (2008, 2012) contended that in the implementing his model, leaders who enable meaningfulness and emphasise contribution goals are more likely to be associated with positive outcomes as well as extraordinary individual and organisational performance.

The findings confirm that the leaders in this study focused on increasing the meaningfulness of officers' work. They did this through regularly incorporating reports on progress towards the Everest goal and consistently emphasising the importance and contribution of their work in the officer pre-op briefings. Other research has found that leader behaviours influence the meaningfulness that employees find in their work (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Emmons, 1997; Steger & Dik, 2010). Additionally, studies have shown that the more people hold a view that the work they do is good and right, the more meaningful the work will seem to be for them (Grant, 2008). Meaningfulness at work is also associated with a number of positive factors, such as high levels of work satisfaction, more intrinsic motivation, and self-confidence regarding career decisions (Judge, et al., 2001; Steger & Dik, 2010; Wrzesniewski, 2003). Furthermore, other researchers have found high levels of meaningfulness in work are associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisation performance (Cameron, 2007, 2008; Cameron & Lavine, 2006; Grant, 2007, 2008).

Fostering positive meaning was one of the CPLM strategies that the leaders focused on in this study. They focused on emphasising the meaningfulness and importance of Customs work and on achievement of the Everest goal. As noted above, officers responded positively. However, the strategy of fostering meaning is not the only means of increasing performance. In implementing the positive meaning strategy, even from the pre-implementation planning sessions, leaders were cognisant of the caution to take care that fostering positive meaning was not used or construed as manipulation, otherwise the strategy would have the potential to "backfire and lead to disillusionment" (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003, p. 326). A small number of leaders had reservations about the officers' potential responses to the implementation, and in particular to the implementation of the Everest goal. However, the positive responses from the officers, especially to the Everest goal and PMI practices, quickly dissipated the leaders' concerns.

The investment the leaders made in taking responsibility to improve performance by setting a significant goal and specifying a set of eight measures for that goal may go some way to explaining the commitment to the goal, the continuing of the implementation in adverse conditions, and the increased performance outcomes. Additionally, studies on goal performance have found that specific and challenging goals are more effective in stimulating improved

performance than vague or easily attainable goals (Locke & Latham, 1990) and that commitment, perseverance, and goal achievement is more likely when there is a constant focus on the goal (Latham, Locke, & Fassina, 2002; Locke & Latham, 2002; Seijts & Latham, 2000). In this study, a constant focus on the goal was evident. Critically, leaders have an important role to play in influencing followers' beliefs about the worth of a goal and about their ability to achieve that goal (Jackson & Parry, 2011). In this study, the goal and measures set by the leaders were specific and challenging and the findings clearly reflect a high level of leader focus, ownership, and commitment. Likewise, the officers had high levels of goal awareness and commitment, as evidenced by their interview responses.

Although the theories and concepts of goal ownership, commitment, perseverance, and focus go some way to explaining the findings of the centrality of the Everest goal, they do not provide insight into why the leaders were persistent and confident in persevering with the implementation regardless of the natural disaster circumstances. The concept of psychological capital (PsyCap), with its four dimensions of confidence (self-efficacy), hope, resiliency, and optimism (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007; Luthans &Youssef, 2004; Luthans, Youssef, et al., 2007) may go some way to explaining the findings that the leaders not only persevered with the implementation, but they strongly asserted it as being a positive experience. Conceptually and empirically, PsyCap capacities have been found to be positively related to individual and group performance (Peterson, et al., 2011; Peterson & Zhang, 2011; Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey, & Oke, 2011; Walumbwa, Peterson, Avolio, & Hartnell, 2010). Other research has found that work outcomes such as performance and behaviours vary with individual characteristics and contextual circumstances (Luthans, Avolio, et al., 2007), and that similarities in PsyCap between employees and their leaders enhance person-organisation fit, engagement, and job satisfaction (Larson, Norman, Hughes, & Avey, 2013). A supportive organisational climate has also been linked to PsyCap and positive performance (Luthans, Norman, Avolio & Avey, 2008). However, it is the combination of psychological capacities that contribute to an individual's PsyCap and this combination has been found to be a more reliable predictor of performance, satisfaction, and absenteeism in the workplace (Youssef & Luthans, 2010). The concept of PsyCap suggests another explanation as to why leaders persevered with the implementation despite the natural disaster, as leader and officer examples indicated the presence of all four PsyCap dimensions: confidence, hope, resiliency, and optimism.

By having a positive experience, persevering with the implementation, having a meaningful and challenging goal, fostering positive meaning, increasing performance, and reducing absenteeism, the leaders exhibited positive psychological capacities consistent with the concept of PsyCap. This study proposes that the leaders chose to persevere with their implementation, despite the unprecedented adverse conditions, because of their goal ownership, resiliency, confidence, hope, and optimism that they would achieve their goal. This finding has support in the literature on goal setting and PsyCap. A recent study on the antecedents and consequences of positive leadership by Zbierowski and Góra (2014) also supports these findings. Zbierowski and Góra identified a relationship between optimism and high resilience as a positive influencer of positive leadership, which in turn strongly influenced managerial practices in a positive direction. Furthermore, they found that all of these relationships have positive influences on both leader and follower behaviours.

In the implementation, Cameron's model provided legitimacy of purpose to apply the positive strategies, the Everest goal provided centrality, clarity and focus to the application of the positive strategies. The argument that the combination of these provided individual and team psychological safety and participative safety for the leaders, and that these factors enabled learning and working differently, finds support in the literature. In effect, the combination of the model with the Everest goal provided structure and focus in the chaos of ongoing seismic events.

6.3 WORKING WITH POSITIVE STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

6.3.1 Working Differently

In exploring the leaders' implementation experience, it is evident that they did indeed use positive strategies. The findings and interpretations confirm that by working with these strategies, the leaders learned and applied new ways of working. The leaders were all able to describe how they used positive strategies. Verification that they used these strategies also came from the data analysis, particularly from the leader journals and the officer interviews. These findings corroborate a point of convergence between Cameron (2008, 2012) and Luthans (2002; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013) that contends positive leadership behaviours are not inherent and can be learned. The findings of this study provide confirmation, a new insight, and an extension to this assertion. Leaders learned positive leadership behaviours and implemented positive strategies, confirming that positive leadership behaviours are learnable. The leaders themselves led the implementation in their own workplace, thereby providing an extension to the

aforementioned contention because the leaders not only learned positive leadership behaviours; they also led the implementation of these behaviours in their own workplace.

As the study progressed, nine of the leaders increased the number of positive strategies they used. This also suggests an extension to Cameron's proposal that leaders focus on applying two or three high priority behaviours that could have significant impact on improving effectiveness in their area of responsibility (Cameron, 2008, 2012). The extension suggested from the findings in this study is that in the self-implementation of CPLM, leaders focus on all four positive strategies, rather than a limited number. Support for the suggested extension comes from the assertion of Cameron, et al. (2011). Their argument is that it is the positive practices in combination, rather than any single practice, that appear to have the most powerful impact. As such, there is credible support in the literature for the extension suggested by this study that leaders apply the positive strategies in combination. However, in adopting this suggestion, it is important to note that Cameron (2008) does stress the interrelated and mutually reinforcing nature of the positive strategies in his model.

In this study, the majority of leaders chose to focus on strategies that fostered positive climate, positive communication, and positive meaning, and only half focused on applying strategies that fostered positive relationships. However, all of the officers interviewed noticed positive differences in how their leaders interacted with them. This raises the question of the possibility of a hierarchy amongst the strategies. By leaders focusing on strategies that foster positive climate, positive communication, and positive meaning, is there the possibility of a consequential amplifying and flow-on effect that promotes and enhances positive relationships? Another possibility is that the natural disaster environment, singularly, or in combination with the effects of positive strategies, had an amplifying and/or flow-on effect (Cameron, et al., 2011) that made a positive difference to relationships. This possibility is discussed further in section 6.5.1. Put more simply, it is also possible that because nine leaders chose to implement the PMI practice, fewer chose to focus on implementing the positive relationship strategy. Because guidelines and templates were available for implementing the PMI sessions, leaders may have considered PMI sessions as a more tangible option, as opposed to the more ambiguous aspects of applying the positive relationship strategy, which involved modelling and facilitation of positive energy, working with energisers, and addressing de-energisers.

Officers noticed increased positive interaction and communication, greater focus on people and more focus on achievement. The majority noted more positivity, both in the workplace and in their own approaches to work. These expressions of positive emotions in the workplace have been shown to be one indicator that positive leadership behaviours are being implemented (Kelloway, et al., 2013). This also suggests that the leaders were demonstrating energy and positive behaviours (Baker, et al., 2003; Cross, et al., 2003), taking an affirmative bias (Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman, & Combs, 2006), and demonstrating a strengths-based approach (Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Hodges & Clifton, 2004). All of these factors are conducive to the development of a positive workplace climate, with leadership argued as a major influencer in defining the strength, direction, and development of a workplace climate (Zohar, 1980, 2002; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). The outcomes from these studies endorse the contention that in this study, leaders applied positive strategies and positively affected the workplace.

The experiences of the leaders showed that having an awareness of positive leadership theory and applying the positive strategies made a difference in how they managed their team's performance. It also increased their self-awareness and their cognisance of the benefits of increased officer interactions. Although only four leaders initially chose to focus on positive relationships analysis of the leaders experiences indicate that in varying degrees they all applied positive relationship behaviours. Leaders focused on modelling positive energy, on applying positive reinforcement, especially for good work, and for attendance in the aftermath of seismic events. As previously noted leaders modelling positive energy has been shown to positively affect the workplace (Cross, et al., 2003), to impact positively on interactions with others at work (Baker, et al., 2003; Gerbasi, et al., 2015) and associated with positive changes in follower job engagement and job performance (Owens, et al., 2015).

The findings from this study support the contention that in working with positive strategies, the leaders demonstrated positive energy and positive leadership behaviours. These behaviours have the potential to promote and support positive emotions. Empirical studies have found that leader emotions are transmittable to followers through a contagion effect (Elfenbein, 2007). In other words, they are contagious; if a leader is exhibiting positive or negative behaviours or emotions, then these can be transmitted to followers (Avolio, et al., 2004; Cherulnik, et al., 2001; Ilies, et al., 2005; Owens, et al., 2015). Other research has found that enabling positive emotions fosters

a positive climate, which in turn, creates positive emotions and promotes upward spirals of enhanced performance (Cameron, 2012; Fredrickson, 2003, 2009). In this study, leaders did focus on taking a positive approach. The indications of this are that they experienced positive emotions and demonstrated positive energy and positivity in their interactions. Furthermore, because of the ongoing earthquakes and the need to ensure continuity of operations, they also focused on fostering positivity and creating a sense of security, safety, and purpose in the workplace environment.

Other researchers have found that where there are conditions that enable and foster positive emotions, it leads to the positive optimisation of individual and organisational conditions (Bagozzi, 2003; Fredrickson, 2002; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Climate can change quickly (Springer, et al., 2012), and is reflective of employees' perceptions of their environment (Jones & James, 1979; Verbeke, et al., 1998). To be a positive climate, there needs to be a predominance of positive emotions over negative emotions (Denison, 1996; Smidts, et al., 2001). Positive emotions, opportunities, and relationships support the development and maintenance of a positive climate (Cameron, 2008). In essence, positive workplace climate is strongly associated with positive performance (Schneider, 1991). The findings of increased performance and decreased absenteeism in this study suggest that in implementing CPLM, the leaders did positively influence the workplace climate. Corroboration of this was through the positive responses of the officers and the achievement of the Everest goal measures.

The majority of leaders considered that since implementing CPLM, their teams had noticed the focus on performance, that leaders were listening more, and that leaders were providing more feedback. In contrast, only a small number of leaders were unsure if their teams had noticed any difference. Only one leader believed that their team had not noticed any change. However, a number of colleagues did notice positive changes in the leaders who were unsure they had made changes, and officers noticed positive changes in all of the leaders. These changes were evidenced in leader and officer interviews and in a number of entries in the leaders' journals. The indications are that positive communication was present and this positively influenced the workplace climate.

Both positive communication and positive workplace climate are strongly associated with positive performance outcomes (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Schneider, 1991; Seligman, et

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al., 2005; Tombaugh, 2005). Positive communication influencing workplace climate has been found to be an essential component (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003; Baker & Dutton, 2007; Dutton & Ragins, 2007) and an enabler of positive organisational performance (Cameron, 2008; Cooke & Meyer, 2007; Quinn & Dutton, 2005; Dutton, 2003). These studies support the findings and contentions of this study, that leaders increased their leadership self-awareness, worked differently with their teams, and that these behaviours contributed to increased performance and reduced absenteeism.

6.3.2 PMI Implementation

One of the visible indicators of leaders working differently was their implementation of the personal management interview (PMI) strategy (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002). In implementing CPLM, the leaders made a deliberate decision to add the PMI practice to the model. Their purpose was to use the PMI process to work with a random selection of officers to increase and strengthen performance. Implementing this strategy was a major undertaking as prior studies provided only minimal guidance on the practical application of the PMI process. The addition of the PMI positive practice to the model was found to be a core enabler for the leaders to work differently and to implement positive strategies directly with a selection of officers.

Notwithstanding the initial challenge of making time to hold monthly PMI meetings, the interviews revealed that the nine leaders and 10 officers involved with the PMI sessions found the process rewarding in a number of ways. These sessions had a positive impact on workplace interactions and enhanced workplace relationships. For a number of officers, the sessions contributed to their job satisfaction, motivation, and career development. These findings support Cameron's claim that a straightforward way to institutionalise the four positive strategies in his model is to implement the PMI process on an ongoing basis. They also support his claim that the PMI practice appears to have significant positive impact on the personal work experiences of individual employees and on team and organisational performance (Cameron, 2008; 2012). The findings provide strong endorsement and justification for the contention to add the PMI practice to his model, and use it as an enabler for leaders in their CPLM implementation.

A point of difference in this study is that it implemented the PMI practice with leaders and only a selection of officers in each team, rather than implementing it at the full team level, as in other

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PMI studies, such as those carried out by Boss (1983) and Goodman and Boss (2002). There is a point of convergence between these two studies and this study in that all studies found evidence that implementing the PMI process positively affects individuals.

A contribution of this study is the finding that leaders did successfully implement the PMI process at an individual rather than at the whole team level. This had not been previously explored. Furthermore, as noted earlier, despite prior studies, there is minimal guidance on the practical application of the PMI practice. The process guide, role clarifying, and ongoing PMI meeting templates that were prepared for this study could also be useful for other leaders in implementing the PMI practice. These findings strongly endorse the addition of the PMI practice to Cameron's positive leadership model.

6.3.3   Challenges and Inhibitors

As this study is the first to explore the practical implementation of CPLM, gaining an understanding of the challenges and inhibitors in the implementation from the perspective of frontline leaders, is important for others planning to implement CPLM. Leaders considered implementing CPLM to be a positive experience. Most leaders said that for them, the implementation was difficult at the start and that it required deliberate thought and actions to implement. All considered that the Everest goal was essential and that, although initially a challenge, the PMI practice went very well. Leaders considered that the addition of both of these strategies added value to the model. As the implementation progressed, all of the leaders found that using positive strategies provided them with a framework for trying out new ways of working, and for several leaders, new ways of thinking.

An inhibitor for the leaders was finding time to have individual PMI meetings. This required leaders to deliberately prioritise and "make time" for these meetings. The majority of leaders noted that once a regular routine for the meetings was established, the response from the officers was positive and the inhibitor became manageable. Because of the 24/7 roster routine, the inhibitor that was less resolvable was the challenge of having time for meaningful contact with colleagues and officers. To have a full team meeting, at either leadership or officer level, a proportion of individuals needed to attend during their rostered time off. Officers attending workplace meetings when not on roster incurred overtime rates. Even more important was the issue of disrupted sleep patterns for those on the night shift if they were required to attend

meetings during the day. While the leaders endeavoured to work around these challenges, they were inhibitors to frequent whole team and whole workplace meetings. As to the timing of the implementation, the majority view of both leaders and officers was that it was opportune to have been implementing CPLM at such a chaotic time. In addition to the implementation providing a challenge, it also acted as a distraction from the constant earthquakes and resultant disruptions.

6.3.4   Continuing the Positive

Despite the earthquakes that continued throughout the six-month implementation, the leaders were unanimous in their intention to continue using positive strategies, including PMIs. As part of the intentional implementation of CPLM, the leaders applied positive noticing, gave positive reinforcement for good work and attendance, and used a strengths-based approach. They also actively looked for ways to use their own strengths and those of others in new ways to achieve higher levels of performance. The positive organizational scholarship approach (Cameron, et al. 2003), on which CPLM is based, advocates using a positive lens, or fresh lens (Spreitzer, 2003) and looking at the same picture of organisational life through a different paradigmatic lens (Caza & Caza, 2008). In essence, it is about looking at the same picture, but seeing differently (Weick, 2003), and in many ways it is about how and what to see (Caza & Cameron, 2009). The themes that emerged from the data in this study verify that the leaders did see differently, and in so doing, acted differently. Taking such a perspective assists with understanding how to unlock potential, reveal possibilities, and move along a more positive course of human and organisational functioning (Spreitzer, Lam & Quinn, 2012). The findings of this study show that leaders looked at the same picture with a different and positive lens, that they used their own strengths in new and different ways and encouraged others to do the same.   Furthermore, they did achieve higher levels of performance. The ways in which leaders used a different paradigmatic lens and applied that lens to unlocking potential and revealing possibilities are discussed in the next theme, *Affecting Performance for the Better.*

6.4   AFFECTING PERFORMANCE FOR THE BETTER

For the leaders, implementing CPLM was about increasing operational performance and the consequential hope of increased credibility with Customs senior management. The indications are that in implementing CPLM, there was a fundamental change for many in how they recognised and endorsed positive performance and in how they addressed non-performance. The findings show that despite the adverse circumstances, the leaders achieved six of the eight

operational measures set for their Everest goal. Under the circumstances, the increase in performance, particularly the 14% decrease in absenteeism, was unexpected. These findings are both contrary and complementary to those of other studies on performance in post-disaster situations. A number of possible explanations for these outcomes is discussed in section 6.4.1.

6.4.1 Natural Disaster Implications

A possible explanation for increased performance and decreased absenteeism in a natural disaster environment is that the workforce valued and appreciated the nature of the organisation and leadership response. The commitment Christchurch leaders and officers hold for the importance and meaningfulness of their work are also factors that likely influenced these outcomes. Support for these claims comes from other studies concluding that high levels of meaningfulness in work are associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisation performance (Cameron, 2007; Cameron & Lavine, 2006; Grant, 2007, 2008). Given the circumstances encountered in this study, it is justifiable to claim that an outcome of increased performance and decreased absenteeism is an extraordinary outcome, particularly when performance usually suffers following a traumatic event.

Literature on workplace implications in the aftermath of natural disasters indicates that how an organisation responds can have ongoing consequences for employee relationships (Goodman & Mann, 2008). In particular, in disaster events, absenteeism is likely to increase (Byron & Peterson, 2002; Wilson, 2009). Reactions to trauma can complicate personal and workplace performance. Other studies have found such events affect morale, the ability to concentrate and to fully carry out work requirements. Evidence shows that many people, when stressed, have difficulty in concentrating, learning, and assimilating new behaviours, routines, and skills. Yet these are attributes so often needed to cope with the new way of being because of the trauma experienced (Alexander, 2005). All of these factors can result in decreased productivity and increased absenteeism (Alexander, 2005; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Sanchez, et al., 1995; Shapira, et al., 1991).

In contrast, increased communication and provision of organisational support are activities likely to reduce the negative impacts of disaster events (Drabek, 2001). Similarly, the rate of employees returning to and remaining at work is likely to increase sharply when employees feel that their safety concerns are addressed (Nilakant, et al., 2013; Shapira, et al., 1991).

Furthermore, reduced absenteeism has been found in the aftermath of disaster events where leaders have ensured that there is access to practical employer support and flexibility around normal working expectations (Byron & Peterson, 2002; Wilson, 2009).

There are indications in the study findings that for most Customs employees at the Christchurch International Airport, such concerns were recognised and addressed. Endorsement of the usefulness of the practical support provided and expressions of appreciation for the consideration and flexibility extended to employees are evident in the data analysis. However, given the ongoing nature of the earthquake events and the resulting environment, attending to the immediate and practical aspects of employee support alone is unlikely to explain the full picture of decreased absenteeism throughout the study period.

In this study, the implementation focused on positive leadership strategies and on improving the quality of leadership in the workplace. A number of studies have linked leadership quality to positive outcomes such as psychological wellbeing and enhanced employee wellbeing and to negative outcomes such as workplace stress and employee health (Arnold et al., 2007; Goodman & Boss, 2002). Increasingly, strong links are being identified between leadership behaviours and employee health (Kelloway & Barling, 2010; Skakon, et al., 2010; Stone & Harter, 2009). Another study on the effects of positive leadership behaviours on military personnel reported increased performance and reduced absenteeism as an outcome of employees experiencing positive leadership behaviours (Butler, 2011). This is of interest in evaluating this study, particularly in regard to the findings of reduced absenteeism. This result suggests that similar to other studies there was less absenteeism because leaders were focusing on positive leadership behaviours.

The implementation in this study also focused on positive strategies. Positive strategies have been found to promote positive psychological and physiological benefits that in turn can affect performance and outcomes (Dockray & Steptoe, 2010; Dutton & Ragins, 2007; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Similarly, a test of positive psychology interventions to increase employee wellbeing found the gratitude intervention, where participants focused on aspects of their life that they were grateful for, resulted in a significant increase in positive affective wellbeing and a reduction in workplace absence due to illness (Kaplan, et al., 2014). Leaders in this implementation focused on applying positive strategies. The indications are that as the leaders in

this study focused on applying positive strategies together with organisational support, this mitigated some of the trauma of the adverse events. Consequently, attendance increased, while absenteeism decreased.

The findings of significantly reduced absenteeism are both contrary and complementary to the findings in other studies. They are contrary in that despite the continuous natural disaster environment, there was a decrease, rather than an increase, in absenteeism. They are complementary in that the literature suggests that where employees feel supported by their leaders and organisation, and their concerns are addressed, negative impacts are likely to be mitigated.

6.4.2   Using Positive Communication

In implementing CPLM and using positive communication, it is apparent that for many of the leaders, there was a fundamental change in how they recognised and endorsed positive performance and in how they addressed non-performance. The findings support the leaders' contentions that they focused on using descriptive rather than evaluative or judgemental statements as well as on describing desired performance or behaviours, rather than stating what they did not want. Each leader, either at interview and/or in their journal, described instances of applying supportive and descriptive communication. A number of leaders actively used positive communication strategies to encourage energisers and to constructively address those they had identified as de-energisers.

In the pre-implementation workshops, the majority of leaders had an immediate accord with the notion of "energizers and de-energizers" (Cross, et al., 2003, p. 51). The knowledge that these behaviours are not inherent attributes, but that they are learnable and can positively or negatively affect the workplace (Cross, et. al., 2003; Cameron, 2008; Gerbasi, et al., 2015), was an incentive for leaders to take a different approach with a number of officers in their respective teams. The data confirms the achievement of a number of resultant positive outcomes.

Using supportive communication is part of the positive communication strategy in CPLM. The notion of addressing non-performance in a positive way has support in the literature. Recommendations for doing this have included viewing communication as a people process rather than a language process (Gibb, 1961), viewing communication as a necessary component

of interpersonal effectiveness (Myers & Rocca, 2001), and providing objective descriptions of non-performance issues and delivering these with empathy, focusing on the issue, not the person (Cameron, 2011, 2012, 2013). Leaders in this study considered the experience of addressing non-performance and de-energisers using descriptive and supportive communication to be both challenging and rewarding. In addition to using positive communication to raise officer performance, the leader journals pointed to a number of instances where leaders used positive reinforcement and encouragement with each other and shared their experiences of noticing positive changes in colleagues and in officers.

The leadership and positive communication actions of the leaders included actively noticing what was happening in the workplace and deliberately providing opportunities for collective sharing of experiences. Providing opportunities for individual or collective emotions to be safely expressed has been found to be conducive to encouraging individual and collective responding (Kanov, et al., 2004). This has been shown to positively strengthen the workplace environment. Literature on positive leadership behaviours indicates that the flow-on (contagion) effect of positive leadership behaviours are conveyable in written as well as through verbal communication and physical interactions (Avey, et al., 2011). In this study, many of the leaders and officers who received positive communication reciprocated. Evidence of this came from comments in many of the interviews and in the journals. The potential for reciprocal positivity in the workplace clearly existed and the leaders' actions supported and encouraged positivity and reciprocal positivity. This finding is useful because it shows the learning and confirms that in implementing CPLM it is possible to use positive strategies, especially positive communication, to influence performance at both ends of the performance continuum. It also shows that by implementing CPLM, it is possible to influence a workplace impacted by adverse conditions in a positive direction.

6.4.3 Achieving the Measures

Throughout the implementation, leaders focused on achievement of the eight measures they had agreed on before commencement for their Everest goal. The measures were a tangible and visible aspect of the implementation in which the entire workplace could participate. Leaders consistently used the measures as an indicator of progress towards the Everest goal. At the conclusion of the implementation, five of the measures had been exceeded, one achieved and two not achieved. In the findings, the non-achievement of the annual leave measure is detailed in

section 5.6.2. This leaves the 3% increase, rather than the 2% decrease sought in officer processing errors, as an unexplained finding. The operational reality for leaders and officers throughout the study was one of increased risk and processing complexity, continuous aftershocks, and building evacuations each time an earthquake of magnitude 5.0 or above occurred. These circumstances created the potential for compromising the coping abilities of individuals.

Disasters are complex events likely to challenge the coping, concentration, accuracy, and memory abilities of most people. In such circumstances, there are a range of normal reactions, including impaired memory and concentration (Alexander, 2005), that may explain the increase in officer processing errors. Given the continuous nature of the disaster, there is also the probability of personal and professional stress affecting concentration and memory (Byron & Peterson, 2002; Shapira, et al., 1991). Relevant literature provides a number of potential explanations that could explain increased processing errors, especially in the adverse continuous earthquake environment. Nevertheless, under the circumstances, the increase was minimal and may be an indication that in using positive strategies, leaders affected performance for the better. Without a control group, the causality of the disaster events on performance and on the implementation of CPLM cannot unequivocally be validated or asserted.

Overall, the leaders' implementation approach was to establish a positive frame of thinking and to model positivity in their interactions with others. In doing so, the leaders' approach may have influenced positivity in others and the workplace, which contributed to the positive outcomes. Support for this suggestion comes from other research that found that where leaders establish a frame of thinking, it can influence the self-construct in followers (Hannah, et al., 2009), and that leaders can affect the self-strategies of followers through the modelling of behaviours (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Lord & Brown, 2004). In the ongoing earthquake environment, the leaders and Customs senior management made particular efforts to provide practical and emotional support in the workplace. The leaders addressed concerns, provided timely communication and workplace flexibility, and applied positive strategies. These behaviours are similar to those found to be likely to influence employee perceptions in a positive direction in a study of four Christchurch organisations, following the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. The behaviours in this study included communication and addressing employee needs. Most important was the emotional awareness and leadership behaviours of supervisors (Nilakant, et al., 2013). The

proposition in this study that absenteeism reduced and operational performance improved, despite the adverse conditions, because leaders were applying positive strategies, is clearly supported by the findings and relevant literature. In essence, positive leadership behaviours affected performance for the better.

6.5   COMPASSION AND CONNECTIVITY IN ADVERSITY

There was no anticipation of a central theme of compassion and connectivity during planning for the implementation of CPLM in this study. The emergence of the theme was unexpected because in the preparation workshops, the leaders soundly rejected the notions of positive emotions, expressing gratitude, and compassion. However, in the preparation planning and in the first days of the implementation, the natural disaster events that continued throughout the study were also unexpected. As such, the anticipated implementation environment was fundamentally changed. In this changed environment, there was commonality and connectivity in adverse experiences.

The implementation of positive strategies together with the positive behaviours of the leaders increased and strengthened the opportunities and potentiality for positive emotions to occur. Substantial evidence supports the potential for positive emotions to build and strengthen personal and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), build psychological resiliency towards negative events (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004), and have an intensifying effect on positive practices which are similar to positive strategies (Cameron, et al., 2011). Furthermore, because of the connection between positive practices, positive emotions, and social capital (Baker, 2000; Cameron, et al., 2004), there was the potential for the implementation of positive strategies to have an intensifying or amplifying effect on the workplace climate.

The indications are that the positive strategies applied by the leaders in this study increased positive emotions and social interactions in the workplace. The response to the natural disaster events by the organisation and by the leaders in the workplace demonstrated caring and compassion. The combination of these factors intensified or amplified the effect of the positive strategies and consequentially cushioned or buffered those in the workplace from the trauma. The workplace therefore remained effective, performance increased, and absenteeism decreased. The following section expands these contentions.

6.5.1 Compassion and Connectivity in the Workplace

In times of trauma, experiences of compassion at work are likely to influence deeper affective commitment to the organisation and engender positive emotions (Lilius, Worline, Maitlis, Kanov, Dutton, & Frost, 2008). If compassion is accepted as being the empathetic reaction to observed suffering (Lazarus, 1991) and the actions taken to alleviate the pain (Frost, Dutton, Worline, & Wilson, 2000) then the conditions for compassionate responding to emerge (Madden, Duchon, Madden, & Plowman, 2012) in this study were opportune.

Compassionate leadership, however, requires some form of public action, however small, that endeavours to ease the pain of the trauma (Dutton, et al., 2002). In the findings, there is corroboration that the New Zealand Customs Service and the workplace leaders demonstrated care and compassion. The findings indicate that the leaders made deliberate opportunities for the sharing of both positive and negative workplace and outside of work experiences. Other research has found that such opportunities are effective in facilitating workplaces to re-establish workplace routines more quickly and effectively (Dutton, et al., 2002, 2009). These studies support the contention that care, compassion, and connectivity in the workplace contributed to the workplace continuing to operate effectively despite the adverse conditions.

The notion of compassion being present during the study because of the leader and organisation response has credibility. From the first earthquake in September 2010, Customs, as an organisation, immediately provided 24/7 access to facilities for showering, laundry, and fresh water (the airport precinct had a separate, safe water source). Practical assistance to move house, remove chimneys, and remove liquefaction was available and employee assistance services were increased. These practical demonstrations of care and compassion were open to present and retired staff and families. In the aftermath of the more serious quakes, Customs provided meals for the officers on duty. This was so that they did not have to worry about finding shops that were open, and/or having water and/or power at home to prepare food. These actions were particularly relevant after the September, December, and the devastating February earthquakes. Leader and officer appreciation for the organisation's response are shown in many of the quotes in the findings (see Chapter 5, section 5.7).

Disaster is a great leveller. Regardless of whether an employee was a Customs leader or Customs officer, there was the shared experience of a continuously disrupted workplace, home, and community environment. For most, this had considerable consequences and required physical and psychological adjusting to what was to become the "new normal" way of life for most people in Christchurch. However, the situation also gave commonality of experience. Most people had their own story of earthquake and post-quake experiences to tell.

The suggestion that there was increased social interaction, compassion, and connectivity in the workplace, and that this contributed to positive outcomes, is supported by other studies. There were indications of positive reinforcement amongst the leaders and between leaders and officers as the implementation progressed. This had the potential to increase positive emotions. Positive emotions shape attitudes and social contexts (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977) and are dispositional determinants of affect (Straw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986). In turn, positive affect favourably influences outcomes in the workplace (Straw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1994). Similarly, other studies have found that positive social interactions (as encouraged by the leaders in this study), have the potential to increase feelings of connectedness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The proposition is that these factors, in combination with the implementation of CPLM, intensified and enhanced relationships, social interaction, and connectivity in the workplace.

It follows, then, that because there were positive emotions and social interactions, and these positively affected the workplace, outcomes were favourable. This proposition finds support in the literature, in particular in an empirical study by Straw, et al. (1994). They established that employees who feel and display positive emotions on the job are likely to experience positive outcomes in their work roles. In addition, the leaders were modelling positive behaviours and such behaviours have been found to affect followers' self-strategies (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Lord & Brown, 2004). Furthermore, because leaders were reinforcing positivity, they were more likely to receive reciprocal positivity (Hannah, et al., 2009). Favourable workplace outcomes, positive emotions and reciprocal positivity are evident in the study data. There is confirmation in the literature such as Cameron and Levine, (2006), Dutton and Ragins (2007), Fredrickson & Losada (2005) and Owens, et al., (2015) that this combination is likely to lead to positive workplace outcomes.

In the trauma of the continuous earthquakes, the organisation and the leaders responded with demonstrations of compassion and practical support. Because of the disaster events, there was commonality and connectivity of experience. These factors together with the practical application of positive strategies by the leaders increased the potentiality for connectivity in the workplace. The consequence was an enhancement of the performance ability of leaders and officers. In addition, the workplace became a "safe haven" as it may have had a cushioning or buffering effect for many, sheltering them from the realities of the outside world. This, in turn, may have contributed to increased attendance.

6.5.2   Buffering the Trauma

The contention from the findings of this study is that in the adverse circumstances, implementing CPLM had an intensifying effect that enhanced compassion and connectivity, which cushioned and reduced the impact of the adverse circumstances. The combination of implementing CPLM, applying positive strategies, especially of leaders demonstrating compassion and encouraging connectivity in the workplace, contributed to increased performance and decreased absenteeism. This finding is similar to and supported by two co-joint studies by Cameron, et al., (2011). Although their studies were at the organisational level and the outcome data was "suggestive and not conclusive" (p. 26), they proposed that the implementation of positive practices (similar to positive strategies), positively affects organisational performance. While acknowledging that their studies were at organisational rather than local level, and that results were suggestive rather than conclusive, their findings do provide support for the proposition that the implementation of CPLM in this study influenced positive outcomes across a number of dimensions. Their suggestion that implementing positive practices acts as a buffering agent from the negative effects of trauma, distress, and dysfunction goes some way to explaining the outcomes of the current study. Furthermore, because positive strategies are associated with positive emotions and social capital (Cameron, et al, 2004) they have the potential to provide an amplifying effect that protects, enables recovery, and avoids deteriorating performance (Cameron, et al., 2011). These factors further explain and support the contention that the leaders' application of positive strategies contributed to the favourable outcomes in this study.

These findings suggest that in the challenging environment, the commonality and connectivity of experiences, in combination with the purposeful implementation of CPLM, created the opportunity for a positive, mutually reinforcing workplace environment to emerge. In other

words, the workplace became a "safe haven" for leaders and officers. This intensified the likelihood of reciprocal positivity, which in turn had the propensity to cushion or buffer, and to a degree protect or distract people, from the trauma of constant natural disaster events. These factors, together with the impact of positive leadership behaviours, created a workplace environment that strengthened and intensified caring, compassion, and positivity. This acted as a cushion or buffer between the people in the workplace and the constantly occurring natural disaster events. The indications are that this contributed to resiliency, social connections, and a sense of belonging in the workplace. As a result, performance increased and absenteeism decreased.

6.6   DISCUSSION SUMMARY

This chapter discussed the findings and contentions of this interpretative phenomenological study of the leaders' experiences of their intentional implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model and examined them in relation to existing literature and studies. Literature on goal setting, psychological capital, psychological safety, and participative safety support the contention that there is value in adding the Everest goal and PMI practices to the model. The suggestion to apply the four positive strategies in tandem found validation in a study by Cameron, et al. (2011), which evidenced positive change when positive practices (similar to positive strategies) were given added emphasis and used in combination.

This study provides empirical support for assertions by Cameron (2008, 2012) and Luthans (2002; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013), that positive leadership behaviours are learnable. The contention that leaders positively affected performance and absenteeism for the better because they were using positive strategies has similarities to findings of other studies. There is support from other studies for the proposal that in the changed environment, implementing positive strategies increased and strengthened the opportunities and potentiality for positive emotions to occur. Other studies have confirmed the potential for positive emotions to build and strengthen personal and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001) and build psychological resiliency towards negative events (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). In the adverse environment in this study, operational services continued and enhanced operational performance was achieved. This finding confirms that the leaders implemented positive strategies in their workplace.

The suggestion that the natural disaster response instigated by Customs and the leaders contributed to increased performance and attendance, despite the conditions, found support in studies suggesting the use of mitigation strategies under such conditions. These studies found or predicted reduced performance and attendance in traumatic circumstances. The proposition that there was a positive impact on performance and attendance because leaders were applying positive strategies, and that in the adverse circumstances these positive strategies had an intensifying effect that enhanced connectivity, cushioned and reduced the impact of the adverse circumstances, has direct support in the literature.

Furthermore, the proposition that the adverse circumstances, the leader and organisation response, and the implementation of CPLM with the two additional strategies had the potential to increase the intensity of the positive strategies compares with the research findings of Cameron, et al. (2011). Similarly, there are indicators of support for the proposition that the combination of these factors cushioned or buffered those in the disrupted workplace environment. As a result, the workplace became a "safe haven" for many employees, offering relief from the continuous earthquake trauma. The outcome was that the workplace remained effective and performance and attendance moved in a positive direction.

This chapter discussed the findings and interpretations from the research according to the four central themes that emerged from the leaders' experiences of their intentional implementation of CPLM. Chapter 7 offers the conclusions and contributions from this study, discusses a number of theoretical and practical implications. A number of limitations inherent in the study are noted and suggestions for future research are offered. The chapter and thesis concludes with a brief postscript.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 SUMMARY

In every workplace, employees, regardless of role, are impacted one way or another by leadership behaviours. Therefore, the merits of exploring leadership approaches, grounded in the principles of positive organizational scholarship and positive psychology, have value that extends beyond the workplace as experiences in the workplace have the potential to impact employee wellbeing and the employee home environment. This study explored the experience of 10 New Zealand Customs Service leaders, based at the Christchurch International Airport, in their intentional six-month implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model.

Cameron (2008) developed the model from his analysis of organisations that had achieved exceptional levels of success. The model has four key strategies: fostering positive climate, developing positive relationships, engaging in positive communication, and reinforcing positive meaning in the workplace. Each strategy has a number of positive leadership behaviours founded on the positive leadership approach. The positive leadership approach incorporates many of the attributes of authentic leadership, but differs in that positive leadership has a clear focus on positivity, on achievement of results, and on enabling positively deviant outcomes.

The literature review identified no studies on the practical application of the positive leadership approach, no studies on the application of positive strategies from the leader perspective, and no studies on the application of Cameron's model. However, the literature review did provide significant support for the positive potential of each of the four strategies proposed by Cameron for his positive leadership model. In the pre-implementation workshops two positive practices of an Everest goal (Cameron & Levine, 2006) and PMI (Boss, 1983, Goodman & Boss, 2002) were added to the four positive strategies inherent in the model. On the fourth day of implementation, Christchurch and the Canterbury region experienced a 7.1 magnitude earthquake. This was the first of the earthquakes and aftershocks that continued throughout the period of the study. Despite the severely disrupted environment, the leaders made a unanimous decision to continue with their implementation and with their participation in the research study. This decision facilitated the opportunity to explore and understand, from the perspective of leaders, their

experiences in the practical application of CPLM. As such, the research questions focused on the experiences of the leaders in implementing CPLM, explored what positive leadership strategies and practices leaders used, and how they used them in a workplace environment affected emotionally and operationally by ongoing earthquakes. Furthermore, as this study was the first to implement CPLM, there was the opportunity to consider any changes that would optimise the utility and practical implementation of CPLM.

7.2   CONCLUSIONS

This study draws three conclusions. They relate to the leaders' experiences of implementing Cameron's model, the positive strategies and practices, and the utility of the model, in a natural disaster environment.

Conclusion 1- essence of the leaders experience

The essence of the leaders' experience in their intentional implementation of CPLM in their workplace was that it was challenging and positive. They learned and applied new ways of working. Many learned new ways of thinking. Working with an Everest goal gave the leaders confidence, purpose, and legitimacy to apply the four positive strategies in Cameron's model. The combination of the model and their Everest goal provided a degree of individual and team psychological and participative safety. This allowed leaders to learn and to apply new ways of working.

When the first of the major earthquakes occurred, the decision to continue with the implementation, despite a drastic change in environment, was influenced by the leaders'psychological capital engendered through their investment in the implementation and in their Everest goal. In the continuous earthquake environment, the combination of CPLM and the Everest goal provided structure, focus and centrality for the leaders. Implementing the PMI practice added another positive dimension in that it provided the leaders with a way to work differently with a number of their officers.

Although there were challenges in implementing the PMI practice, those involved considered the process rewarding. It contributed to enhancing workplace interactions and relationships. In a workplace environment affected emotionally and operationally by ongoing earthquakes, the commonality of the overall experience, together with the leaders' purposeful application of

positive strategies, intensified the potentiality for positive emotions, emotional contagion, reciprocal positivity, compassion, and connectivity to occur. In the adverse circumstances, these dimensions contributed to increased social connections, resiliency, and a sense of belonging in the workplace. Collectively, these factors, together with the impact of positive leadership behaviours, created a workplace environment that strengthened and intensified caring, compassion, and positivity. This created the propensity for the workplace environment to absorb, and to a degree cushion, protect or distract people in the workplace from the trauma of the constant natural disaster events. As such, the workplace became a "safe haven" for leaders and officers. Workplace performance increased and absenteeism decreased.

Conclusion 2- CPLM implementation

The adapted version of Cameron's positive leadership model, which includes the addition of the Everest goal (Cameron & Levine, 2006), and the personal management interview (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002) is implementable in that the leaders were able to learn and apply the positive strategies and practices. Adapting the model by adding these two positive practices strengthens the model and provides structure, centrality, and purpose to the implementation. Furthermore, the combination of Cameron's positive leadership model, the Everest goal, and the PMI practices had the potential to facilitate an environment where leaders feel safe to learn and safe to apply their learning through participating in new ways of working.

In implementing positive strategies, the conclusion is that leaders should focus on applying all of the positive strategies, rather than focusing on only two or three of the strategies. In doing so this has the potential to support the conceptualisation of the wholeness of the model and supports the concept of better leadership being "purpose-driven not targets-driven" (Jackson & Smolović Jones, 2012, p.37). This reduces the risk of the Everest goal becoming the *only* focus for the implementation and consequently reducing or losing the application and benefits of the positive strategies in the overall process. Furthermore, this study found that the positive practice of personal management interviews is implementable, and effective, with a selection of staff, rather than with whole teams, as in other studies. In the overall implementation, the positive practices of Everest goal and personal management interview each have a role to play. Together they are concluded as core enablers for the leaders in implementing the adapted CPLM.

Conclusion 3- positive results

The third and final conclusion that can be taken from this study is that in adverse conditions, implementing the adapted positive leadership model has the potential to lead to positive results. Other studies indicate that performance and attendance declines in traumatic events. This study concludes with confidence that the implementation during traumatic events had a positive influence on performance and attendance, when one would have expected both to decline.

It can justifiably be claimed that an outcome of increased performance and decreased absenteeism, is an extraordinary outcome, given the circumstances of this study. In any change initiative, such as implementing the positive leadership approach, the risk of discontinuing if difficulties or adverse conditions occur is high. The fact that in this study, the leaders persevered with the achievement of their goal and experienced the implementation as positive supports the conclusion that an Everest goal is central to Cameron's model, the PMI practice is enabling as a way for leaders to work differently with their direct reports and both are imperative to Cameron's (2008) model. The adapted version of Cameron's model provides structure, centrality, and purpose to the implementation. The practical implication of implementing CPLM without the Everest goal in particular, is the potential for the application of positive strategies to fade, and for leaders to become distracted with other things because there is no central focus, purpose, or measurement to the implementation.

7.3   STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS

This study contributes new knowledge to the positive organizational scholarship and positive leadership literature, as well as to the literature on goal setting and leading in natural disaster conditions in a number of significant ways. It has demonstrated that with the adaptions proposed by this study, Cameron's conceptual positive leadership model is implementable, and was able to be applied in a complex frontline organisational environment.

The study contributes to the positive leadership literature in that it provides empirical support for the assertions made by Cameron (2008, 2012) and Luthans (2002; Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013) that positive leadership behaviours are learnable. It confirms that the addition of the Everest goal and PMI practices provide purpose and focus for the implementation of the four positive strategies, and as such, this strengthens Cameron's positive leadership model.

Furthermore, with minimal support, leaders are able to implement the adapted version of this model.

In asserting the Everest goal and personal management practices as central to the practical implementation of the model, this study contributes to the theories on goal setting and goal achievement in that it suggests a positive leadership model that has a central focus on having a clear goal and a focus on achievement of that goal. This aligns with the contentions that goal setting and goal clarity are important precursors of high performance. Similarly, the adapted model supports Cameron's contention that an effective strategy for positive leaders is emphasising contribution goals over achievement goals. Establishing the personal management interview practice as implementable with a selection of staff rather than with entire work teams, as in other studies, extends the current literature and the usefulness of this strategy. In the overall implementation, the Everest goal and personal management interview practices each have a role to play. In combination, they are core enablers for the leaders in successfully implementing positive strategies. As such, the outcomes from this research contribute to the literature on goal theories and the positive leadership approach.

These outcomes contribute knowledge to an area of investigation suggested by Cameron, et al., (2011, p. 27) of "determining explicitly how to assist organizations in implementing positive practices." Cameron and McNaugthan (2014) called for POS and positive change concepts to expand areas of research and together become a useful set of tools for leaders and organisations. This study expands these fields of study and provides useful tools for leaders. Positive leadership is an enabler of positive change. Therefore, the adapted version of Cameron's model and the PMI templates provide leaders and organisations with useful tools to implement positive leadership and bring about positive change. The study contributes to scarce literature in that it explored the real-life experiences of leaders learning and applying positive strategies. It contributes knowledge of the lived experience of frontline leaders responsible for the operational efficiency and critical facilitation, compliance, and border protection services in the situation of an extended civil emergency. Furthermore, there is the contribution to the knowledge-base of the leadership experience of continuing to lead in an environment of continuous earthquakes and uncertainty.

Notably, the study established that the leaders' implementation experience was positive. Phenomenological insights provide guidance for leaders to learn and implement positive leadership through the adapted version of Cameron's model. The study has established that positive leadership is learnable, and that with pre-implementation planning and minimal ongoing support, the adapted model is implementable by leaders themselves. Furthermore, in an ongoing natural disaster environment, positive results were achieved. As such, with the proviso of the limitations noted later, the study has shown that implementing positive leadership through the adapted version of Cameron's model can lead to positive results. Finally, because this study demonstrated the learnability of positive leadership and that the leaders implemented the adapted positive leadership model it gives confidence to those who have the tenacity and courage to apply positive leadership theory and practice in their workplace.

7.4   IMPLICATIONS

7.4.1 Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications for the Everest goal being concluded as imperative to the practical implementation of the model is that it positions the theories on goal setting and goal achievement as central to the positive leadership model at the pre-implementation and the implementation phases. The study contributes to the contention that goal setting and goal clarity is an important precursor and ongoing aspect of high performance. It contributes to the Everest goal theory in that it endorses Cameron's (2008, 2012, 2013) contention that emphasising contribution goals is an effective strategy of positive leaders.

Similarly, before and during the implementation, the goal decision actions and the goal clarity resulting from the process of deciding the Everest goal has the potential to contribute to the meaningfulness and to the psychological capital leaders invest in the concept. This theoretical implication and the positive implications of building goal ownership and psychological capital through the goal decision and the pre-implementation process are findings that are critical to the implementation of the adapted version of Cameron's model.

Other studies on the implementation of the positive leadership approach have been at the organisational level (for example see Cameron, et al., 2011; Cameron & Plews, 2012; Cameron & Vannette, 2009). In these studies, it does not appear that the implementation was solely by frontline leaders in their own workplace (as it was in this study). Furthermore, no research has

explored the implementation experience exclusively from the perspective of frontline leaders as implementers. The theoretical implications are that this study extends the knowledge and utility of the model in that it is implementable by a group of frontline leaders in their own workplace, rather than by relying on a centralised, organisational implementation approach. Similarly, the theoretical implication resulting from this study for the PMI practice is the conclusion that the strategy is applicable with a selection of staff, rather than with whole work teams, as in other studies. This extends the usefulness of the strategy in organisations and in the literature.

7.4.2   Practical Implications

In implementing positive strategies and practices in addition to the theoretical implications, there are a number of practical implications and risks to consider. Implementing an Everest goal may be a different way of working for some leaders and employees. Because an Everest goal should be an ambitious stretch goal, a high level of ownership and commitment, particularly by leaders, is important. Leader ownership and commitment are fundamental for promoting the benefits of the goal and for encouraging employee efforts towards achievement of the measures and ultimate goal. Using measures to promptly identify and share any positive (or negative) changes in operational performance indictors is a useful tool for guiding the implementation of positive leadership strategies and practices in the workplace.

The practical implications for organisations and leaders in applying the PMI positive practice with a selection of staff is that it is likely to be less disruptive to the whole workplace. Leaders can start with a small number of staff and extend as they become proficient in implementation. This also reduces the potential for leaders to be overwhelmed in the initial stages of implementation. The practical implication of leaders working, at least initially, with a small number of staff, could make a difference to the continuation and the success of the strategy. To be successful and to maintain momentum, the implementation obviously needs a significant level of buy-in and resiliency, especially in times of change and challenging circumstances. Ensuring that leaders implementing the adapted version of Cameron's model also participate in regular PMI sessions with their direct leaders were found to be one way to mitigate this risk and to influence reciprocal positivity in the leadership team.

This study showed that positive leadership behaviours are learnable and this has considerable implications for leaders, organisations, and leadership development programmes. It clearly

demonstrated that in having a practical model, an agreed goal, supportive pre-implementation planning, sufficient motivation, clear progress measurements, and peer support, leaders are likely to feel validated and safe to learn and to apply that learning through their leadership behaviours.

In implementing the adapted model, the conclusion that leaders should use all of the positive strategies and practices in the model has implications for its practical application. This conclusion does have corroboration from the assertion that the "positive practices in combination" rather than any single positive practice, "appear to have the most powerful impact" (Cameron, et al., 2011, p. 19). Although positive practices have some differences to positive strategies, they both have a positive orientation. The consequences of applying all of the positive strategies in the adapted version of Cameron's model are that leaders would have to learn and extend the number of strategies that they use. This increases the risk of diluting the effectiveness of individual strategies. Nevertheless, it also has the potential to more clearly conceptualise and integrate the entirety of the model in the implementation. The literature review clearly established the credibility of each individual strategy in the model. Only a few studies, such as those by Cameron, et al. (2011), and Zbierowski and Góra (2014), have explored positive leadership behaviours in combination, and both argue for the theory that positive leadership does indeed influence organisational effectiveness in a positive direction.

The application of positive strategies and practices is the core of implementing any positive leadership approach, but attempting to implement these for the first time can carry risks. In this study, a number of leaders had reservations as to how officers would react to the changes. Although in the study the concerns quickly dissipated, indicators were that there was the potential for leaders to experience negative reactions from staff. The potential consequences of such negative reactions are that leaders could discontinue using positive strategies, either overtly or covertly. The risks leaders face in changing how they usually interact with their teams, how they usually acknowledge and encourage desired performance, and how they would usually react when challenging situations occur, can be considerable. In implementing the adapted version of Cameron's model and applying positive strategies and practices, leaders may well change their usual ways of working. These changes are likely to be noticed by others, especially by people in their work team. The risk of having reduced credibility and even being open to ridicule is high, especially where there is cynicism or negativity in the workplace and the leader is endeavouring

to model positive behaviours. These are all potential risks leaders can face when implementing the adapted version of Cameron's model.

A number of practical and phenomenological insights from this study offer mitigation strategies for others in implementing positive leadership. These are that the adapted version of the model with the Everest goal and PMI practices provided the leaders with a framework and a legitimate reason to apply positive strategies. The addition of an Everest goal provided centrality, focus, and meaning to work efforts. Having meaning, legitimacy, and centrality provided the leaders with a degree of individual and team psychological and participative safety. These factors, together with a high degree of ownership for the implementation generated through the pre-implementation workshops, supported leaders through the challenges encountered in learning to work with the positive approach to leadership. As such, they offer mitigation strategies for others implementing the adapted version of Cameron's model in their workplaces. Furthermore, the conclusion from this study that the combination of legitimacy and centrality provided in the adapted version of the model has the potential to engender individual and team psychological and participative safety, allowing leaders to learn and to apply new ways of working, is an important outcome and risk mitigation strategy for the implementation of positive leadership.

7.4.3 Fragmentation Implications

Fragmenting the model through implementing one or two components, for example, implementing just the Everest goal, or just the positive strategies, has the potential to dilute the opportunity for successful implementation and the positive leverage likely to be gained from implementing the comprehensive adapted model. Therefore, the implications for leaders implementing the adapted version are that there is a need to have legitimacy in an established model, centrality through a measurable stretch goal, confidence to work with positive strategies, and awareness of the importance of modelling and fostering positivity and energy in their interactions. Unexpected disaster does happen, and as evidenced in this study, it can affect people and the workplace in many different ways. Furthermore, in any workplace, people are likely to be the product of past and present leadership. Therefore, the importance of leaders having an integrated model that has as its foundation the principles of positive organizational scholarship (Cameron, et al., 2003) and positive leadership (Cameron, 2008, 2012, 2013) should not be underestimated. Based on these principles, the leadership behaviours inherent in the

model have the potential to buffer or cushion the disaster and trauma impacts for those in the workplace.

7.4.4 Natural Disaster Implications

One of the most significant contributions noted in this study was that, in adverse conditions, implementing the adapted positive leadership model has the potential to lead to positive results. What cannot be confidently asserted however, is the degree to which the continuous sequence of natural disaster events influenced emotions which in turn had the potential to influence behaviours and outcomes. From this research, what can be confidently asserted is that positive results on a number of indicators were in fact achieved.

The implication of this for leaders implementing the adapted version of Cameron's model is the unknown positive leverage, or indeed negative disadvantage, that this environment may have had on the outcomes. The indications are that leaders made considerable efforts to ensure that care and compassion were present at both the individual and workplace level. There are noticeable references to instances of positive communication, flexibility, and consideration in the workplace. These actions may well have intensified the positivity indicated in the workplace.

Implications identified in the literature review for workplaces exposed to natural disasters and traumatic events indicate the potential for reduced productivity and attendance. The actions proposed in the literature to help organisations mitigate this suggest that the type of actions taken by the leaders and the organisation in this study were likely to encourage employees to remain at work, particularly when their work contributes to disaster recovery activities, as it did in this study.

7.5   CONSIDERATIONS FOR LEADERS AND OTHERS

In any organisation, leaders can only be as effective as their organisation enables and supports them to be. The responsibility of any organisation is to create a "fire-break" (Jackson & Smolović Jones, 2012, p. 37) that provides the opportunity for local leaders to learn, contribute, and take ownership and responsibility for shaping their workplace environment to achieve enhanced outcomes. As such, supporting and encouraging the implementation of the adapted version of Cameron's positive leadership model is one way that organisations can create a "fire-

break" and support leaders to shape their workplace environment to achieve positively deviant outcomes that benefit everyone in the organisation.

Organisations that have the courage to implement positive leadership through their frontline leaders need to be cognisant of the learning from this study. Particularly important is the need to provide leaders with a visual model that conceptualises all of the components involved with the implementation, such as the model in Figure 10, which indicates some of the behaviours that operationalise the positive leadership approach. Equally important is providing empirical evidence that supports the positive strategies and presenting this in a format that is quick and easy to understand, such as the format of the model in Figure 4 showing the literature links for the positive strategies based on Cameron's positive leadership model. In this study, providing the leaders with information that explained the practical actions and mind-set changes involved in implementing the positive leadership approach as well as giving credibility to the strategies was crucial.

7.5.1 Leadership Development

Viewed in its entirety, leadership is a complex multidisciplinary activity that requires awareness of self and others. Leadership behaviours can influence the workplace environment and those within it positively or negatively. For a number of social, economic, political, and technological and security-related reasons, the workplace environment for many is increasingly complex. Therefore, "the art of leadership development in a complex environment is to enable a system to learn together. In other words, the learning and the work are so closely related as to be inseparable" (Jackson & Smolović Jones, 2012, p.38). Without doubt, the Customs operational environment is complex. In leadership development programmes, there is often a separation to some degree between the learning and the workplace application of that learning. As a result, opportunities for leaders to learn and consistently apply new ways of working while "on the job" are often minimal. Other areas of research outside the domain of this study endorse the effectiveness of "on the job" experiential learning, endorse the benefits of having behaviour models, endorse opportunities to practice and transfer those behaviours to the job (see for example Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Robinson, 1982; Taylor, Russ-Eft, & Chan, 2005). Directly supporting leaders to implement positive leadership within their own workplace is one way to integrate leadership learning and development and to operationalise that learning in the everyday workplace.

The considerations for leaders and others seeking to enhance organisational effectiveness, such as organisation development practitioners, are the potential benefits that can be gained through supporting frontline leaders to take responsibility for the practical implementation of the adapted positive leadership model within their own workplaces. As already noted, the few studies that have looked at the implementation of positive practices have all done so through implementing from a centralised head office rather through frontline leaders. With a centralised approach, where the majority of the pre-planning and monitoring of the implementation sits with others, there is the potential for frontline leaders to take less ownership of the implementation. Regardless of the "good intentions" of those leading a centralised approach, there is the possibility for the perception and actuality of a "do to" as opposed to a "do with" attitude emerging. Supporting and enabling leaders to plan and lead the implementation of the adapted positive leadership model in their own workplace has a higher potential to engender ownership and a "do with" approach between the organisation and the leaders.

Providing brief workshops to introduce leaders to the theory and examples of applications of positive leadership (as described in sections 4.7 and 4.7.1) is critical. The provision of resources and templates is also important (for example see Appendix A) and the visual in figure 10 of the adapted CPLM. The leaders in my study had information on each of the positive strategies, guidelines and templates for the initial and ongoing PMI sessions, as well as a personal copy of Cameron's 2008 positive leadership book. Since that time, there has been an update to the 2008 positive leadership book (see Cameron, 2012). Cameron also published a new book outlining positive leadership tools and techniques (see Cameron, 2013). These books, together with the PMI templates from this study, are likely to be beneficial for leaders planning to implement the adapted positive leadership model.

Tangible Resources
The leaders' experience in this study confirms the importance of leaders having time to have pre-implementation planning workshops and tangible resources such as a visual of the adapted model the PMI templates. Having prior agreement on the nature and degree of ongoing support for the leaders is also important. It is critical that leaders have time and support to decide on their Everest goal and to agree on the measures that would indicate achievement of that goal. Effective facilitation, especially for the first few pre-implementation workshops is also critical.

An essential for the facilitator(s) is the need to be knowledgeable about, and have practical experience of, the concepts of positive leadership, POS, and positive psychology. Even more essential is that they demonstrate positive leadership concepts in how they facilitate the workshops. It is also vital to success of the workshops and ongoing leader support that the facilitator(s) already have or quickly establish credibility, trust, and confidence with the leaders.

In this study, each leader had an e-journal in which they noted their application of positive strategies, as well as any reactions, learnings, issues, thoughts, or reflections on their experiences. Although the purpose of these e-journals was for data collection, for organisations not using the implementation for scholarly purposes, encouraging leaders to record their learning and reflections is recommended. Initially for a small number of leaders in this study, the discipline of making even minimal reflective notes about their day was challenging. However, once they noticed the benefits other leaders derived from reviewing their journal entries and using them to prompt discussions at leadership meetings, the remaining leaders quickly adopted the practice and found it useful.

Overall, for leaders and organisations considering implementing positive leadership, there must be commitment, trust, and confidence from the chief executive and the senior management team. This needs to be complemented by support and coaching for the leaders during the implementation. In this study, the coaching support focused primarily on the two key leaders to whom other leaders reported. This maintained the integrity of the line management structure. It also reduced the risk of the facilitator usurping the line management structure.

Finally, no positive leadership implementation is likely to be successful unless the prime enablers are in place. These prime enablers include the following:

- Having a model for leaders to implement and having psychological capital invested in the implementation
- Having individual and team psychological and participative safety to learn and apply positive strategies
- Having reciprocal positivity from others to encourage continuation particularly if challenges are encountered during the implementation
- Taking ownership of an Everest goal and measures.

Finally, leaders can only be as effective as their organisation enables and supports them to be. As noted previously, the responsibility of any organisation is to create a "fire-break" (Jackson & Smolović Jones, 2012, p. 37) that provides the opportunity for local leaders to learn, contribute, and take ownership and responsibility for shaping their workplace environment. Directly supporting leaders to implement the adapted positive leadership model and operationalise positive leadership is one way that organisations can create that "fire-break."

7.6 LIMITATIONS

A number of limitations are inherent in this study. A potential limitation was the gender composition of the leader participant group that consisted of 80% male and as such provides a gender bias to the overall experiences of the leader participant group. However, the nature of the sample (purposive participant group) established the gender mix for the study. Because of the unequal gender distribution, and identification of research locality the analysis did not differentiate on the basis of gender.

A potential limitation is the reliance on self-report data and the potentiality that responses may not always reflect reality. This limitation is somewhat addressed through triangulation of data from leader journals and interviews, officer interviews, and researcher's observations to corroborate leaders' assertions. The sample for the officer interviews consisted of officers who had participated in personal management interviews and were therefore likely to have had more contact with their respective leaders over the six-months of the study. Consequently, there was potential for a positive bias in the responses of these officers. Widening the officer sample to a cross section of officers involved and not involved in that positive practice would reduce the potential for such bias in officer responses. Future research could be strengthened by examining the viewpoints of others not directly involved in personal management interview sessions.

At commencement of the research and confirmed again recently,[23] this is the first time that Cameron's positive leadership model has been implemented. As such, there are no previous studies with which to compare or contrast the leaders' implementation experiences and resultant outcomes. Not having a control group against which to compare the research findings is another

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[23] Ascertained through personal communication with Kim Cameron [email] April 2010 and August 2014.

limitation. Because there was no control group, it cannot unequivocally be concluded that positive leadership behaviours contributed to any positive related outcomes or counteracted any potential negative outcomes in the workplace. Essentially, this considerably limits the ability to make a confident declaration about the relationships amongst positive leadership strategies, leadership in an ongoing natural disaster environment, and the findings of this study. In addition, the study was in one location and in unpredicted adverse circumstances. The study sample was small and qualitative research does have a subjective bias, however the methodology did allow the researcher to examine a lived experience and the social context of the leaders' experiences. In hindsight, perhaps the leader interview questions could have been more probing to elicit a deeper level of emotion related to the experiences. However, the interpretative phenomenological approach applied in this study does provide insights from the perspective of leaders as to how positive leadership influenced their experiences and their perspectives of coping with the traumatic events. Together with the researcher's interpretations, an account of the lived experiences of leaders in implementing positive leadership has been examined and is now available to others.

The extent of generalisation from this study has some limitation in that the application of the model and concepts were within a law enforcement organisation structured by rank, where the majority of leaders and officers joined the organisation to have a career, not just a job (Martin, Martin & Tootell, 2009). Operational leaders usually have many years of experience and considerable training in operational command (as did the ones in this study). Although this is likely to be different from many business organisations, there is similarity to others such as police, immigration, and bio-security agencies who work within a legislative law enforcement framework. Increasingly, leaders in such organisations have to balance the responsibilities of operational command with good employer responsibilities. As a result, the limitation on the generalisability for this study is somewhat mitigated. However, further mitigation is possible through the demonstration in this study that positive leadership is learnable and implementable by leaders themselves in the workplace.

7.7   FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

As evidenced in this study, research on the implementation of the positive leadership approach is limited. A future research suggestion is to explore the implementation of the adapted positive leadership model by leaders in a workplace not affected by natural disaster events. In such an

implementation, a pre-post workplace culture survey could accompany the implementation. The implementation in this current study is not only the first outside of North America, it is the first in a New Zealand organisational environment. Therefore, implementing the adapted model in another New Zealand organisation could contribute to knowledge on the utility of the model outside of its North American cultural origins. Similarly, implementing in a non-rank structured organisation, whether in New Zealand or elsewhere, may provide insights into how other leaders and followers experience the respective positive leadership behaviours. In this study, the leader participant group was predominantly male, therefore another avenue open to future research is to implement the adapted model with either a predominant female, or an all male or female, or an equal gender mix, participant group. Moreover, it is now some time since the leaders in this study implemented positive leadership in their workplace. A number of organisational and structural changes have occurred, and a number of the leaders have moved on to new challenges inside or outside of the organisation. Another direction for future research would be to explore if there were any long-lasting individual personal and/or professional effects of the experiences of implementing the positive leadership approach.

In this study, the concept of PsyCap is suggested as an explanation as to why the leaders persevered with their implementation, despite the natural disaster situation. A direction for future research would be to explore further a possible link between PsyCap, positive leadership and positive performance. Additionally, exploring any relationship between leaders PsyCap and outcomes achieved in situations resulting from natural disaster would add to the minimal knowledge on how to support frontline leaders in continuing to lead in adverse circumstances.

In the current study, half of leaders chose to focus on strategies other than those that fostered positive relationships. Nonetheless, all of the officers interviewed noticed positive differences in how their leaders interacted with them. This raises the question of the possibility of a hierarchy amongst the strategies. A future research direction to explore the question of if leaders focus on strategies that foster positive climate, positive communication, and positive meaning, is there the possibility of a consequential amplifying and flow-on effect that promotes and enhances positive relationships? These suggested research directions respond to the call by Cameron and McNaughtan (2014, p. 456) for the need to "expand markedly the types of outcomes to be included in future research" that are related to POS and positive change. Additionally, these

research suggestions respond to the criticism often levelled at qualitative research that it rarely builds on previous studies (Bryman, 2004).

7.8   POSTSCRIPT

At the conclusion of the research, leaders at the Christchurch International Airport continued to apply the positive leadership approach using the adapted version of Cameron's model. In late 2012, an organisational restructure reorganised the airport and the seaport operations into a whole-of-port way of working. A whole-of-port way of working requires leaders and officers to work across both airport and seaport duties rather than as previously, where they would work either at the airport or the seaport. This way of working was a significant change. It directly affected the type of Customs duties leaders and officers undertook on a daily basis. For both leaders and officers there were changes to their rosters, their team and the leadership structure. The anecdotal evidence from the leaders who had participated in the study is that using positive leadership greatly assisted them and their officers to transition into the new way of working. Working within the positive leadership approach, they contended, assisted them to cope effectively with the professional and personal challenge this new way of working and leading required of them. Leaders at Auckland International Airport have also successfully implemented the adapted version of the model with their teams with positive results. A 2011 e-mail from one of these leaders said *"I have no doubt that without the influence of positive leadership we would not have achieved our result to the level that we did or possibly even at all. Its effects have been far-reaching."*

My positive leadership and postgraduate journey has been one of challenges and new learning. The positive organizational scholarship philosophy and the underpinning principles of positive leadership are in accord with my personal philosophy and leadership approach. In initiating this research, one of the key challenges was selecting a methodology that would fit with the objectives of the research. The methodology needed to capture, value, and reveal the "universal essence" (van Manen, 1997, p. 177) of the leaders' experiences in a way that would enable other leaders to use the learnings from this study to implement the positive leadership approach in their workplaces. In positive organizational scholarship and in the positive leadership approach the emphasis is on "how to see", rather than "exactly what to see" (Caza & Cameron, 2009, p. 100). In this study, as in any IPA study, the outcome is a joint product of the participants' reflections and attempts to make sense of the experiences, through the telling of their stories, and the

researcher's interpretations of those stories. In effect, in this study, IPA enhanced "how to see" the leaders' experiences of the application of positive leadership theory and practice in a New Zealand law enforcement organisation.

During the postgraduate journey, I have had the opportunity to use positive leadership in two challenging assignment in two different organisations. The first assignment was to refocus the Southern Region of the Department of Labour after the Pike River Mine disaster [24] that killed 29 people in a West Coast coal mine in the South Island of New Zealand. Leaders across the Region were introduced to positive leadership, encouraged to set an Everest goal and apply positive strategies in their workplace. In one particular workplace, a recent staff survey had identified low staff engagement and high dissatisfaction in a number of areas. Using these ratings as their baseline, the leaders in this workplace focused on implementing the adapted positive leadership model. The leaders established an Everest goal, instituted PMI sessions, and focused on learning and applying the four positive strategies in Cameron's model. Six-months later a further staff survey found significant increases in staff engagement scores and satisfaction with communications and opportunities for workplace involvement. The second opportunity to apply positive leadership was in the Christchurch schools reorganisation project[25] with a brief to recover the initiative from the error-plagued launch and achieve the ministerial outcomes for the largest such initiative ever undertaken in the history of education in New Zealand. The principles of positive leadership were shared with the leaders and staff and I ensured that we consistently demonstrated these across all aspects of our relationships and our work. Positive leadership made a visible and measurable difference to the outcomes for these organisations. My challenge now is to find a Volunteer Service Abroad project that offers the opportunity to introduce other leaders and organisations to the theory, practice, and benefits of positive leadership.

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[24] Pike River Mine disaster. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia.* Retrieved 11 May 2105 from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pike_River_Mine_disaster
[25] Initiated by the Ministry of Education to close or merge 38 schools in the greater Christchurch area.
Shapingeducation.govt.nz (n.d.). Renewal decisions. Retrieved from
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GLOSSARY

Cameron's positive leadership definition: "the ways in which leaders enable positively deviant performance, foster an affirmative orientation in organizations, and engender a focus on virtuousness and eudaemonism" (Cameron, 2008, p. 1).

Cameron's positive leadership model: A model proposed by K. S. Cameron in his 2008 book, *Positive leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Performance*, consisting of four leadership strategies that can be used to enable positive deviance. These four strategies are fostering positive climate, developing positive relationships, engaging in positive communication, and reinforcing positive meaning (see figure 1).

CPLM: Shortened form of *Cameron's positive leadership model*. Used primarily in this thesis when referring to the implementation of Cameron's positive leadership model.

Do-with-not-to philosophy: A philosophy of working with people to make changes, rather than imposing changes on them.

Essence and phenomenological essence: Essence is the core meaning of an individual's experience that makes it what it is (van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological essence refers to the essential meanings of a phenomenon "so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way" (van Manen, 1990, p.39). Put more simply, the phenomenological essence should make explicit the opportunity for others to say, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

Implement/Implementable: Apply, put into practice, carry out, put into effect.*

Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA): A qualitative research methodology "concerned with the detailed examination of personal lived experience, the meaning of experience to participants and how participants make sense of that experience" (Smith, 2011, p. 9). **Lived experience**: A term used in phenomenology to emphasise the personal experience of

the participant and the significance and meaning that the participant attributes to that experience (Smith, 2011)

Natural disaster: An environmental event "that periodically, and with varying degrees of intensity, subject[s] human systems to a wide range of disruptions and stress" (Bolin, 1989, p. 61). Also "acute events that disrupt normal operations and impinge on employees' well-being" (Sanchez, Korbin, & Viscarra, 1995, p. 405). Both definitions succinctly describe the elements involved in the Christchurch earthquakes. These natural disasters had the potential to impact the staff and the workplace environment, to various degrees, over the period of the study. As such, for the purposes of this research, these definitions are adopted as descriptors of the natural disaster and its ongoing effects.

Personal management interview (PMI): A one-on-one interview between a leader and a direct report (Boss, 1983; Goodman & Boss, 2002). The PMI program or PMI practice, as referred to in this research, commences with an initial role clarification session followed by regular face-to-face meetings, at least monthly, between a leader and a direct report.

Positive deviance: "Intentional behaviors that depart from the norm of a reference group in honourable ways" (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2003, p. 209); "outcomes that dramatically exceed common or expected performance" (Cameron, 2008, p.2).

Positive leadership approach: Leadership behaviours that have a positive orientation. "Unique to positive leadership is that it is *elevating*, *exceptional* and *affirmative of strengths*, *capabilities* and *development potential*" (Youssef-Morgan & Luthans, 2013, p.201).

Positive practices: Positive practices have an organisational focus on "collective behaviors or activities sponsored by and characteristic of an organization" (Cameron, Mora, Leutscher & Calarco, 2011, p. 5). Cameron (2013, p. 151) defines four positive practices that support the implementation of the four positive strategies in his model as "developing positive energy networks," **"delivering negative feedback positively,"** **"establishing Everest goals,"** and "creating a culture of abundance."

Positive organizational behaviour (POB): "The study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace" (Luthans & Church, 2002, p. 59).

Natural disaster: An environmental event "that periodically, and with varying degrees of intensity, subject[s] human systems to a wide range of disruptions and stress" (Bolin, 1989, p. 61). Also "acute events that disrupt normal operations and impinge on employees' well-being" (Sanchez, Korbin, & Viscarra, 1995, p. 405). Both definitions succinctly describe the elements involved in the Christchurch earthquakes. These natural disasters had the potential to impact the staff and the workplace environment, to various degrees, over the period of the study. As such, for the purposes of this research, these definitions are adopted as descriptors of the natural disaster and its ongoing effects.

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Practical application: Purposeful act of applying for a particular purpose or use.*

Practical utility: Able to be applied, workable, usable for purpose sought.*[26]

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[26]* http://dictionary.reference.com

APPENDIX A: Master Journal Template

JOURNAL OF PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY:

APPLICATION OF POSITIVE LEADERSHIP THEORY AND PRACTICE IN A NEW ZEALAND LAW ENFORCEMNENT ORGANISATION

CHIEF CUSTOMS OFFICER – <Name>
CHRISTCHURCH AIRPORT LEADERSHIP TEAM

<Name> Add name of leader

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study on the application of positive leadership theory and practice in a New Zealand law enforcement organisation.

EVEREST GOAL

The Christchurch International Airport Leadership Team, of which you are a member, has chosen an Everest Goal of:

- *Recognition of Christchurch Airport as being the model airport in the country by end of February 2011*

The word *"model"* is defined as meeting or exceeding operational performance requirements using minimal resources.

THE MEASURES

Your leadership team agreed eight measures that would indicate achievement of your Everest Goal. These are set out for you after the diary pages in your journal.

YOUR POSITIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES

To assist you in implementing the model and the positive strategies and practices you have chosen I have included a table with suggestions of leadership behaviours related to each of the four positive strategies in the model and a visual relating these to the literature on positive leadership. The particular positive leadership strategies that you have chosen to consistently apply are:

- Personal management interviews – (PMIs) you have selected XX members of your team to work with on this strategy.

and

- <XXXX> (add details of chosen positive strategies) e.g. Cultivating a positive climate.

The guidelines and templates for the PMI process are at the back of your journal.

Your focus in the application of these strategies is to:

- Foster improvement in performance

- Foster and strengthen positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication and positive meaning within the workplace.

- The purpose of the first PMI session is to clarify for each of your selected direct reports the specific set of performance expectations and responsibilities required in their role as well as the attitudes and behaviours required in your team – the template for the role expectation meeting is at the back of this journal.

- Following the initial role expectation PMI session you will then meet fortnightly or no less than once a month in a one-on-one session with each of your selected direct reports. A template is also enclosed and you may vary this to suit the contents of your sessions.

- Remember to encourage your direct report to be an equal partner in each PMI session, bring agenda items to the session for discussion, and to take responsibility for the actions towards agreed outcomes.

YOUR ELECTRONIC RESEARCH JOURNAL

You are requested to use this journal to record when you have applied any of your chosen positive strategies and any comments/observations/reflections on your experiences of implementing the positive strategies. You can also use it to record your thoughts and/or any items you may want to follow up or discuss with me or with your colleagues. As the Christchurch Airport Team are the first to implement the positive leadership model even your smallest observation is valuable to building a picture of your experiences as a frontline leader in implementing the model.

At regular periods, and again at the beginning of March I will ask you to share your journal with me as rich data for my overall research study. If at any time you want to withdraw or delete any entries or details in entries you may do so.

QUESTIONS – CONCERNS – INFORMATION

I am interested in your journey of applying the positive leadership model, with the positive strategies and practices with your team, and in your experience of the implementation journey over the coming six-months.

At any time if you have any questions or concerns please, do not hesitate to speak with me of contact me on 029 200 9231 or email me on Jean.martin@customs.govt.nz

I look forward to working with you on what I trust will be a very interesting research study and an interesting and worthwhile learning experience for all of us.

Jean Martin

NB: For the purposes of this appendix, only the first and last month templates are
shown.

Please briefly record your application of your chosen positive strategies and any comments, reflections, staff reaction regarding the experience.		
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2010		
TUESDAY	31	
WEDNESDAY	1	
THURSDAY	2	
FRIDAY	3	
SATURDAY	4	
SUNDAY	5	
MONDAY	6	
TUESDAY	7	
WEDNESDAY	8	
THURSDAY	9	
FRIDAY	10	
SATURDAY	11	
SUNDAY	12	
MONDAY	13	
TUESDAY	14	
WEDNESDAY	15	
THURSDAY	16	
FRIDAY	17	
SATURDAY	18	
SUNDAY	19	
MONDAY	20	
TUESDAY	21	
WEDNESDAY	22	
THURSDAY	23	
FRIDAY	24	
SATURDAY	25	
SUNDAY	26	
MONDAY	27	
TUESDAY	28	
WEDNESDAY	29	
THURSDAY	30	

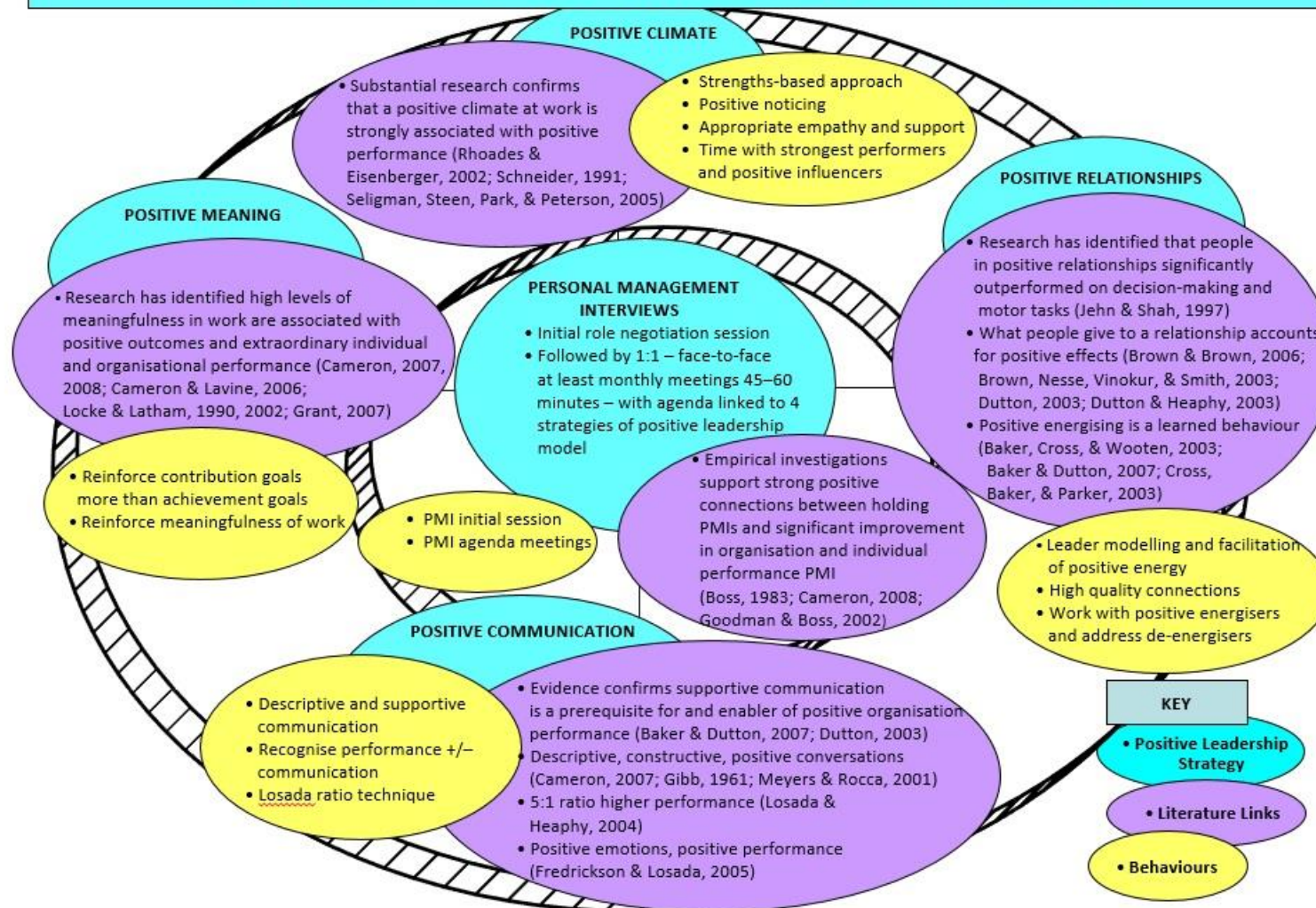|		
FEBRUARY/MARCH 2011		
TUESDAY	1	
WEDNESDAY	2	
THURSDAY	3	
FRIDAY	4	
SATURDAY	5	
SUNDAY	6	
MONDAY	7	
TUESDAY	8	
WEDNESDAY	9	
THURSDAY	10	
FRIDAY	11	
SATURDAY	12	
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MONDAY	14	
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WEDNESDAY	16	
THURSDAY	17	
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SATURDAY	19	
SUNDAY	20	
MONDAY	21	
TUESDAY	22	
WEDNESDAY	23	
THURSDAY	24	
FRIDAY	25	
SATURDAY	26	
SUNDAY	27	
MONDAY	28	
TUESDAY	1	

EVEREST GOAL - OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Measures to be met for Everest Goal	Measure current status
1. Reduce average sick days per officer by 1.2 from 9.2 to 8 average sick days per officer	9.2 average days per officer
2. Reduce annual leave balances by 1 average day per officer from 24.2 to 23.2 average days per officer	24.2 average days per officer
3. Quality assurance check 50% of officer notebooks	30% quality assurance checked
4. 80% of officer notebooks checked are at accuracy standard	66% of notebooks checked are at accuracy standard
5. 50% of activity and alert reports are quality assurance checked	30% currently quality assurance checked
6. Reduce outstanding activity and alert report on work queue by 20%	78 reports on work queue
7. Decrease data mismatch to intervention by 2%	7% data mismatch
8. Decrease non-accuracy of officer primary processing by 2%	18% non-accuracy primary processing

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POSITIVE STRATEGY BEHAVIOURS

POSITIVE CLIMATE	POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	POSITIVE COMMUNICATION	POSITIVE MEANING
• Positive noticing and expressing verbal or written thanks, gratitude/appreciation to others for their actions • Encouraging and reinforcing positive performance • Expressing and responding with empathy providing support for issues • Strengths-based approach – coming from recognising and building on these	• Actions that build positive workplace relationships • Leader facilitation of and modelling of positive energy • Recognising and addressing de-energisers Work with positive energisers • Focus on strengths and give time to strongest performers • Make opportunities for what people do best	• Having descriptive and supportive conversations • Describing what observed and/or what wanted rather than judgement • Describing observation instead of making judgements or assumptions • 5:1 +/- ratio technique – ensuring more positive than negative ratio of communications	• Reinforcing the overall contribution work makes to others and the strategic outcomes and Everest Goal • Reinforcing meaningfulness of the work individuals and the team do • Encouraging ideas generation and support for implementation
PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW			
• PMI initial session • Active participation in ongoing regular PMI meetings with PMI agenda			

POSITIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL – STRATEGIES AND LITERATURE LINKS 2010

POSITIVE CLIMATE

- Substantial research confirms that a positive climate at work is strongly associated with positive performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Schneider, 1991; Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005)

- Strengths-based approach
- Positive noticing
- Appropriate empathy and support
- Time with strongest performers and positive influencers

POSITIVE MEANING

- Research has identified high levels of meaningfulness in work are associated with positive outcomes and extraordinary individual and organisational performance (Cameron, 2007, 2008; Cameron & Lavine, 2006; Locke & Latham, 1990, 2002; Grant, 2007)

- Reinforce contribution goals more than achievement goals
- Reinforce meaningfulness of work

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEWS

- Initial role negotiation session
- Followed by 1:1 – face-to-face at least monthly meetings 45–60 minutes – with agenda linked to 4 strategies of positive leadership model

- PMI initial session
- PMI agenda meetings

- Empirical investigations support strong positive connections between holding PMIs and significant improvement in organisation and individual performance PMI (Boss, 1983; Cameron, 2008; Goodman & Boss, 2002)

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- Research has identified that people in positive relationships significantly outperformed on decision-making and motor tasks (Jehn & Shah, 1997)
- What people give to a relationship accounts for positive effects (Brown & Brown, 2006; Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003; Dutton, 2003; Dutton & Heaphy, 2003)
- Positive energising is a learned behaviour (Baker, Cross, & Wooten, 2003; Baker & Dutton, 2007; Cross, Baker, & Parker, 2003)

- Leader modelling and facilitation of positive energy
- High quality connections
- Work with positive energisers and address de-energisers

POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

- Descriptive and supportive communication
- Recognise performance +/– communication
- Losada ratio technique

- Evidence confirms supportive communication is a prerequisite for and enabler of positive organisation performance (Baker & Dutton, 2007; Dutton, 2003)
- Descriptive, constructive, positive conversations (Cameron, 2007; Gibb, 1961; Meyers & Rocca, 2001)
- 5:1 ratio higher performance (Losada & Heaphy, 2004)
- Positive emotions, positive performance (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005)

KEY

- Positive Leadership Strategy
- Literature Links
- Behaviours

Adapted from Cameron's (2008) book and related literature by R. Martin.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW (PMI)

TOOL DESCRIPTION

The PMI process is an on-going programme of regular one-on-one interviews between a leader and individual direct reports. It is a two way process the leader and the staff person need to prepare for the sessions which need to be face preferably weekly or fortnightly but no less than once a month. The two objectives of the process are to:

- Foster improvement in performance
- Strengthen positive climate, positive relationships, positive communication and positive meaning within the workplace.

The process consists of two steps:

1. An initial role negotiation session – the purpose is to ensure that there is clear understanding from both parties as to the purpose and expectations of a role

2. Ongoing regular sessions – for the purposes of this research study the PMI interviews will need to be **carried out consistently until 1 March 2011.**

POTENTIAL OUTCOME

Research has shown that a PMI programme can have positive effects on productivity, leader, staff relationships, empowerment, participation and teamwork, trust and increase the effectiveness of team meetings.

STEP ONE

Initial Role Negotiation Session – Meet with each selected direct report and discuss:

- Expectations of their role – what are the role performance, behaviours, responsibilities, accountabilities and interpersonal relationships required of the role. What are the rewards of the role? Whilst the role description is the basis for these factors, the purpose of the discussion is "fleshing these out" so that a common understanding is established between you and your direct report of the expectations of their role. This contributes to having a clear psychological contract.

- Ensure a clear understanding of how these expectations are measured and evaluated

- Discuss how these factors contribute to the culture, Mission, Vision, and Values of Customs

- Clarify and agree any areas of disagreement or uncertainty

- Provide the staff person with brief written key points from the session.

Ongoing regular interviews – for the purposes of this research study the PMI sessions will need to be **carried out consistently until 1 March 2011**. At the conclusion of each session provide the staff person with a copy of the key points from the session. A template is provided, however, you may vary this to suit the contents of your sessions.

The sessions must be regular, one-on-one and face-to-face preferably weekly or fortnightly but no less than once a month.

Session content for the Christchurch Chief Customs Officers where relevant may include some of the following components:

- Climate discussion – team and wider work environment
- Relationships – colleagues, team and wider work environment
- Communication – team and wider work environment
- Meaning – contributions made from the results achieved (or if not achieved – what has prevented results being achieved)
- Feedback on job performance
- Progress towards the Everest goal and operational performance targets
- Accountability for commitments made in past sessions
- Any necessary training required and/or obstacles to development
- Two-way information sharing.

PMIs are not formal appraisal sessions they are a development and improvement sessions in which both people have an opportunity to support achievement of operational targets, support a positive workplace climate, a continue their own learning and development.

Both the leader and the staff person should prepare an agenda of items for discussion at each session and ensure that there is follow up at the beginning of each session on items in progress or outcomes agreed for achievement.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW – ROLE EXPECTATION/CLARIFICATION

Team members name …

Team <Name>

Chief Customs Officer <Name>

Meeting date …   September 2010

In addition to the role expectations in your position description my role expectations for you as a Customs Officer at Christchurch International Airport are:

-

-

The measurement and evaluation criteria we have agreed is:

To support you in your role you have

Your expectations of me as your Chief are:

……

……

……

………………………………………………………………………………

The arrangements for our ongoing PMI sessions are:

Weekly/Fortnightly/Monthly commencing XXXXXX September 2010 at XXXhrs.

Thank you for participating in this role expectation session.

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT INTERVIEW ONGOING

Team members name …

Team <Name>

Chief Customs Officer …<Name>

Meeting date …   October 2010

1.   Follow up agenda items from last session

2.   New agenda items for this session

3.   Agreed actions and timelines to be achieved before next session

ACTIONS	TIMELINE	RESP OF	OUTCOME
1.			
2.			
3.			

4.   Next session

Date: ……………………….   Time: ……………hrs

Thank you for participating in this session.

APPENDIX B: Invitation to Participate

**The application of positive leadership theory and practice in a
New Zealand law enforcement organisation**

Dear <first name>

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

You are invited to participate in a research project that will study the application of positive leadership with the New Zealand Customs Service leadership team based at the Christchurch International Airport.

The aim of this study is to explore, from the perspective of the leaders who choose to participate, their experience of implementing a conceptual leadership model. The model has not previously been implemented. The strategies in the model are outlined in Cameron's (2008) Positive Leadership text that you would have received when you participated in the Leaders@Customs programme.

If you choose to be involved in the study, you would need to participate in a number of pre-implementation planning workshops in July and August, choose one or two positive leadership strategies and implement them when working with your team, over six-months commencing on 1 September. Should you choose to be involved you would need to regularly record your experiences, reflections and learnings in a journal that I would provide for you. At the end of the study, there will be an invitation to participate in an individual interview about your experiences. At any time during the study, you have the right to withdraw also to withdraw any information you have provided and or delete sections of entries in your journal, correspondence or interview transcript.

The time commitment for you will be attendance at a refresher positive leadership workshop and a number of pre-implementation planning workshops. With others from your leadership team, you will be responsible for implementing the positive leadership model in the airport workplace. The benefits for you are that you will have the opportunity to learn and apply strategies from the positive leadership model, and to be involved in the overall implementation in your workplace.

The results of the study may be published and a copy of the completed report will be deposited in the university library database. The identity of any individual participant will not be made public without their consent. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality all data gathered will be held securely by myself and destroyed on completion of the study. A summary of the overall research findings will be available to you and may be published on the Longroom.

As you know, I am the Group Manager Organisation Development/Human Resources for the New Zealand Customs Service and have been granted permission to carrying out this study towards a PhD degree in Management. My supervisor is Dr Peter Cammock. If you wish to discuss any aspects of the study, or any concerns you may have about participation please contact me or you can contact Peter on 03 364 2674 or Peter.cammock@canterbury.ac.nz. The study proposal has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

Your contribution to this research would be appreciated. To accept this invitation please respond to jean.martin@customs.govt.nz or contact me directly on 04 462 0305 or 029 200 9231 before 26 April 2010. I look forward to the opportunity to work with you on this very interesting research study.

Jean Martin

APPENDIX C: Leader Interview Questions

Thank you for giving me your time to talk about your experience of implementing the positive leadership model in your workplace.

This is an opportunity for you to talk about your experiences, and about how the process has been for you. I am keen to hear anything you want to say about your experience and how you feel about it after six-months of implementation.

I have a number of questions that will guide our discussion but this is your time to reflect and share your experience. Once I have completed the interviews I will collate and analyze the interview and journal information and write up the outcomes for the study. Just a reminder of confidentiality that no individual will be identified in the study outcomes.

Depending on the amount of comment you want to make our interview should take about 30 to 40 minutes. When we set up our meeting time we discussed recording our interview – are you still agreeable to that? I will transcribe our interview and send you the transcript. You are welcome to provide any changes, corrections or additions that you want.

_____

1.   What was your experience of implementing positive leadership in your Workplace?

2.   What positive leadership Strategies and practices did you apply?

3.   What was your experience of having an Everest goal and a number of measures – was it useful or not?

4.   What was your experience of using positive leadership strategies and practices – what went well?

5.   Was there anything that went not so well?

6.   Has applying positive leadership strategies and practices made any difference to how you manage your team's performance?

7.   What, if anything, do you think your team may have noticed about your leadership since you have used positive leadership?

8.   Will you continue to use positive leadership strategies and practices?

9.   Add any question(s) for individual from journal analysis.

_____

Now reflecting on the September and February events:

10. Since September last year, we have had a number of major earthquakes. Were there any positive leadership strategies and practices that you found useful during those circumstances? If so, can you please tell me about the strategies you used and how you used them?

11. Thinking back about those events is there anything that the Customs Service could have done better, more of or less of, that you would have appreciated?

12. Reflecting back on the past six-months of implementing positive leadership is there anything else you want to say about your experience?

_____

Thank you for participating in the study and in this interview. In a few days, I will email you the transcript of our interview. Any concerns, changes or additions you are welcome to make them or call me and I will do that for you. Any questions just call or email me. Again thank you for sharing your experience of implementing positive leadership in your workplace.

_____
_____

APPENDIX D: Officer Interview Questions

Thank you for giving me your time today to talk to me about your experience over the past six-months of being involved with the personal management interview process with your Chief. I have a number of questions that will guide our discussion but this is your time to share your experience and observations of any differences you may have noticed in the workplace over this time.

Depending on the amount of comment you want to make our interview should take about 30 minutes. When we set up our meeting time we discussed recording our interview – are you still agreeable to that? I will transcribe our interview and send you the transcript. You are welcome to provide any changes, corrections or additions that you want. Just a reminder about the confidentiality I will apply to your interview information and that no individual will be identified in the study outcomes.

_____

1. Were you aware of the Everest goal and measures for the Christchurch Airport?

2. What, if anything, was different for you because of the goal?

3. In your view, did having the goal and measures make any difference to how people operated? (If so, what was different)

4. Can you tell me about anything you may have noticed the chiefs doing differently in the past months?

5. Can you tell me about anything different you may have noticed in the overall workplace environment?

6. You were one of the officers involved with the personal management interview sessions with your chief. Tell me about that experience, how was it for you?

7. Overall, having the goal and measures, and being involved in the individual sessions with your chief, is there anything in the future you think we should do differently?

8. Would you recommend the process to others?

9. Looking back on your workplace experiences over the past six-months is there anything else you would like to say about your experiences before we close our interview?

_____

Thank you for participating in this interview. In a few days, I will email you the transcript of our interview. Any concerns, changes or additions you are welcome to make them or call me and I will do that for you. Any questions just call or email me. Thank you for sharing with me your experiences of being involved with the personal management interview sessions.

_____

APPENDIX E: Leader Group Themes

Themes for leader group	Examples of indicative significant statements of leader lived experiences	Interpretation
Structure and focus in chaos **Sub-theme:** Experience of implementing CPLM Experience of having an Everest goal	▪ Difficult at first, had to think about it … found it rewarding … quite enjoyed the experience (LD). At the time, quite hard work … enjoyed the experience (LF). In beginning thought about it then it probably 'came a habit (LG). ▪ Very positive from our own management team … more of team atmosphere … more emphasis on our common purpose … up to us to actually put that in place (LJ). ▪ Goal was good because it gave us a focus (LC). Group goal was very useful … that way everyone had an idea of where we were heading (LA). More important we had it because of the earthquakes (LB). Everest goal was from day one part of the daily briefings (LI). ▪ Got us all more involved … I'm a lot more focussed (LE).	▪ Leaders' investment into development of Everest goal gave common focus and legitimacy to CPLM implementation ▪ CPLM and Everest goal in combination gave structure and focus for leaders and workplace in unprecedented earthquake environment ▪ In combination, CPLM and Everest goal provided a degree of individual and team psychological and participative safety for leaders to learn and apply new ways of working ▪ Implementation experience for leaders was challenging and positive
Working with positive strategies **Sub-theme:** Working differently Implementing PMI Challenges and Inhibitors Continuing the positive	▪ Learned new strategies which I used … more supportive and encouraging (LB). ▪ Made me more acutely aware of what doing … could see positive reaction from the troops … much more conscious of providing feedback (LF). ▪ Learned to be a lot more empathetic … it was the personal things showing appreciation (LD). ▪ PMIs are going very well … have to make time to meet … my experience really excellent … officers look forward to them (LH). ▪ I'm actually continuing … think it benefits me and the team (LE). ▪ We have those tools and we know that we can go and apply them (LJ)	▪ Leaders learned and applied new ways of working ▪ Leaders increased awareness of own leadership behaviours ▪ PMI experience was challenging, positive, and provided leaders with a new way to work with some officers ▪ Leaders considered positive leadership tools useful and likely to continue using them
Affecting performance for the better **Sub-theme:** Using positive communication Achieving the measures	▪ It's easy to concentrate on the negative so there was a total change of thinking … I noticed and gave some good feedback (LD). ▪ Being able to see people blossom and learning and become more positive that's what I enjoyed seeing (LF). ▪ Had a courageous conversation … I did it and felt better for doing it. I have focused on the positive (LB). ▪ Positive leadership helped set the standards (LI). ▪ Got people into the habit of seeing how progressing (LA).	▪ Leaders had a strong focus on emphasising meaning of work with their teams ▪ Fundamental change for many leaders in how recognised and endorsed positive performance and addressed non-performance – found this challenging and rewarding ▪ Intentionally used descriptive and supportive communication
Compassion and connectivity in the workplace **Sub-theme:** Compassion and connectivity in adversity Buffering the trauma	▪ Certainly raised the consciousness of empathy with staff in my days … it's easy to concentrate on the negative so there was a total change of thinking (LD). ▪ I tried to lead by example, demonstrating energy and positivity … I just keep saying the value they (officers) add through turning up … making them feel appreciated for the fact that they were at work before what they had at home (LJ). ▪ Just reassuring and encouraging staff, offering any assistance that we could (LH). ▪ Using the positive leadership stuff made the going a lot easier to stay out of the doom spiral … I find I automatically turn to positive very quickly (LA).	▪ In environment impacted emotionally and operationally by ongoing earthquakes, the commonality of experience between leaders and officers and the leaders purposeful application of positive strategies intensified the potentiality of positive emotions, emotional contagion, and increased resiliency in the workplace ▪ In the adverse circumstances these dimensions created propensity for the workplace environment to absorb and to a degree cushion, protect, or distract people in the workplace from the trauma of constant natural disaster events

Note. L = leader. Letter denotes specific leader.

APPENDIX F: Officer Group Themes

Themes for officer group	Examples of indicative significant statements of differences noticed in workplace	Interpretation
▪ **Everest goal a focus for performance**	▪ It all adds up to this Everest goal and we are all working towards that … it was cool to use as a guide to how could change things … a bit more motivation to improve performance and to work together (OD). ▪ It gave us something to aim towards … it was something that everyone obviously at the airport could have a hand in and helping to do (OC). ▪ Made a difference … was good to have the goal … it makes a difference definitely … noticed a difference in others - a sense of purpose (OF). ▪ It has become the way people just do it, in that respect it's a tangible delivery … a definite improvement (OB).	▪ Increased clarity and focus from leaders made a positive difference for officers ▪ Everest goal provided common purpose and performance ▪ Leaders influencing officer psychological capital capacities ▪ Sense of purpose increased in the workplace
▪ **Leaders worked differently, noticed difference in self and others**	▪ Letting us do things more, gets us more involved, definitely (OG). ▪ People's confidence to speak up about what they wanted changed (OD). ▪ Quite proactive getting people to come forward with ideas which is a little bit different from the norm (OB). ▪ Nice to have PMI at the end of the month whilst it was still fresh in your head (OA). ▪ PMI made a difference to my career, more self-motivation, really boosted my job satisfaction (OF). ▪ Just the whole thing of meetings with your boss every month … and feeling more capable and the energy from staff (OA).	▪ Noticed leaders working differently – received increased encouragement and recognition for good work ▪ Officers experienced leader interactions as positive and encouraging ▪ PMI sessions positive experience with personal benefits for some officers ▪ Officers experienced increased communication and opportunities to be involved with working differently
▪ **Our work is important we have things to achieve**	▪ Our Chiefs were very encouraging and more focused so it made a more enabling environment, felt you could do things (OF). Good to have the extra focus (OA). ▪ It was really good to come to work and just focus on where we were heading … we have just got on with our work especially at this time really important (OG). ▪ More communication and emphasis on achieving (OE). We had things to achieve (OI). Definitely talking to us more … a lot more praising us for our work (OJ). ▪ We don't have ARs sitting on the work queue now that is different and still going on, it's become a bit of a habit, people just do it now (OB).	▪ Positive communication and encouragement from leaders contributed to officers feeling positive and enabled in the workplace ▪ Officers responded positively to increased focus on importance and achievement of work
▪ **Care, consideration, and compassion in the workplace**	▪ Just being able to say I'm not feeling okay … [leaders] sorted it out and we all pulled together (OI). Brought people closer together (OA). ▪ Checking in with us to be sure we were okay and thanking us for coming on shift when we had quakes and aftershocks happening and would rather be at home (OJ). ▪ I thought that the Chiefs took care to know how we are (OH). ▪ It would be little things as you go about your workday you would notice (OD). ▪ With all the things happening for us, I think our Chiefs created a much more enabling environment for us (OF).	▪ Everyone affected in some way by external events, we are all having a similar adverse experience, feel more connected in the workplace ▪ Consideration in the workplace engendered feelings of being cared for and valued for coming to work ▪ In the adverse external environment, the positive workplace environment was a comforting place to be

Note. O =officer. Letter denotes specific officer.