

**Communication and Trust: The Effect of Organisational Commitment and
Change Process Perceptions on Change Attitudes**

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Abstract

This study investigated organisational commitment and perceptions of previous change management as precursors to employee perceptions of communication and trust in management during change. Participants at a large New Zealand organisation undergoing a systems change completed online surveys at Time 1 (pre-change) and Time 2 (change implementation). The results showed that perceptions of previous change management positively related to appraisals of change communication and trust perceptions during change. However, affective organisational commitment was not significantly related to perceptions of change communications or trust in management. These findings highlight that employees' previous experiences of change influence appraisals of managerial actions during change.

Introduction

Overview

According to an old French proverb, “The more things change, the more things remain the same” (Alphonse Karr, 1849, *Les Guêpes*). This encompasses the idea that change has become a constant feature of contemporary working life, as organisations are continuously undergoing change in order to adapt to the dynamic nature of the work environment. Globalisation, technological developments, increasingly complex jobs and organisational structures, expanding workforce specialisation, and changing laws and policies all put pressure on companies to change to ensure competitive advantage (Reeves & Deimler, 2011). There is therefore a need now more than ever for researchers and practitioners to really understand the mechanisms affecting employee perceptions and attitudes during change.

Despite the prevalence of organisational change, it is estimated that at least half of all change programmes are not implemented successfully (Isern & Pung, 2007). This may be in part due to a previous focus on organisational readiness for change from the standpoint of physical and technological systems and infrastructure (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011). However, as individuals are at the heart of all organisational processes, the consideration of change recipients’ readiness and their attitudes toward the organisation is important when studying factors that contribute to change implementation success (Bartunek, Rousseau, Rudolph & DePalma, 2006). While there is evidence to suggest that employee attitudes towards the organisation before change can affect how employees perceive the organisation’s actions during change (Bennett & Durkin, 2000; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Oreg et al., 2011), more research is required to uncover specific linkages between workplace attitudes pre-change and change-related perceptions.

Research supports a link between employee perceptions of organisational change management and perceptions of change communication and trust in management (Elving, 2005; Sørensen, Hasle & Pejtersen, 2011). In turn, the provision of effective and timely information regarding the change is a significant predictor of implementation success (Simoes & Esposito, 2014). Furthermore, trust in management – regardless of whether it is in relation to an individual’s immediate supervisor or the senior management team – increases employee buy-in to the change (Sørensen et al., 2011). In addition, organisational commitment has been linked to change implementation success as both an antecedent and consequence of change-related variables (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). However, research has not yet been conducted investigating whether employees’ commitment to the organisation before change is a precursor to perceptions of change communications and trust in management during change implementation. Similarly, although evidence exists linking employees’ past experiences of change management to their perceptions of management’s actions during future change efforts, change communications and trust in management have not specifically been investigated as consequences of pre-change attitudes (Van Dam, Oreg & Schyns, 2008).

The objective of this research is two-fold. First, the study empirically tests whether employees’ organisational commitment affects their attitudes towards change-related communication and change leaders at the outset of change implementation. Second, the study empirically tests whether employee perceptions of previous change processes impact on attitudes towards change-related communication and change leaders at the outset of change implementation.

Change Communication

Communication is a critical component of organisational change. Research indicates that communication and change implementation are inseparable processes (Lewis, 1999). It is

impossible to change employees' behaviour and organisational processes without providing information regarding how and why to do it (Robertson, Roberts & Porras, 1993).

Communication plays a key role in diminishing uncertainty and ambiguity surrounding the change, and as such impacts on buy-in and successful implementation (Klein, 1996; Simoes & Esposito, 2014).

Souza (2006) describes communication as a social process whereby people exchange and create meaning. This means that communication is not just the provision of information, but the construction of meaning and the interpretation of this information (Simoes & Esposito, 2014). Communication is therefore not just a top-down process, but also occurs from the bottom-up in the form of employee discussion with management and involvement in decision-making. It is important to remember this bidirectional nature of communication when investigating the construct in a change context, as the manner in which messages are delivered can lead to misunderstandings that impact on overall perceptions of change communication (Klein, 1996).

Organisations need to focus on how communication can be used to assist in reducing uncertainty during change (McKay, Kuntz & Näswall, 2013). Communication reduces uncertainty by providing details about the implementation process, clarifying how employees can and will be involved, and setting milestones. Information must be relevant, be presented in a timely manner, and be clear and understandable (Elving, 2005). Change communication that meets these criteria also helps decrease uncertainty and encourage employees' acceptance of the change by enhancing community spirit and sense of belonging to the organisation (De Ridder, 2003). This is because effective change communication aids sensemaking, which is to do with how employees understand, interpret, and make sense of a situation (such as organisational change) based on relevant information (Rouleau, 2005).

Communication that contributes to the sensemaking process helps individuals to ascertain their fit in the changing organisation and their team (van Vuuren & Elving, 2008).

In the literature, employee satisfaction with communication is generally referred to in terms of quality and quantity of information (Thomas, Zolin & Hartman, 2009). Information quality is operationalised in terms of accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness (Wanberg & Banas, 2000). The role of communication throughout the change process is also very important. In studies conducted by Allen, Jimmieson, Bordia and Irmer (2007), it was found that when information failed to meet even one of the quality components, employees were dissatisfied with the quality of change-related communication, resulting in feelings of uncertainty regarding the change. Following research carried out by McKay et al. (2013), it was proposed that more attention should be given to the perceived quality of information during change, rather than focusing solely on reducing uncertainty pre-implementation by delivering large amounts of information. This illustrates that change communication in organisations must be accurate, timely, and useful in order to be perceived as satisfactory by employees.

In contrast, quantity of information (or information adequacy) refers to the amount of information employees receive. There is general agreement that the more information is given to employees, the higher the perceptions of information adequacy due to reduced uncertainty and higher trust in the message sender (Klein, 1996; Thomas et al, 2009). However, Zimmerman, Sypher and Haas (1996) argue that regardless of how much information people receive, they will always want more. They also found that although management might feel that they are providing adequate change-related information, employees generally disagree, meaning that managers often have to provide more information than they judge is sufficient (Zimmerman et al., 1996). It is also important that more change-related communication focuses on uncertainty reduction, as this is reported to be associated with higher employee satisfaction with communication adequacy (Hargie,

Tourish & Wilson, 2002). Although few studies have researched both quality and quantity of information, there is research to suggest that their relative influence on change-related attitudes vary based on context and the stage in the change process (Kramer, 1996; Thomas et al., 2009).

Another important component of change-related communication is the perceived openness of information flow within the organisation. The openness of change communication refers to employees' perception that management provides opportunities for employee participation in discussion surrounding changes, and that information is not being withheld (Kelloway, 2004; Miller, Johnson & Grau, 1994). Research by Allen et al. (2007) found that communication with supervisors was perceived as more effective when employees were allowed to ask questions and make suggestions. Involving employees in discussion sessions gives them a sense of ownership of the change, and also helps to create social cohesion among employees to support the change (Frahm & Brown, 2007; Jimmieson, Peach & White, 2008). Furthermore, a consultative communication strategy (such as those described above) decreases ambiguity about the change process, and as such reduces employee stress and insecurity (Jimmieson, Terry & Callan, 2004). In line with this, transparency regarding the change is important. Transparent change communication is when management explains the reasons for the change so that everyone who is involved knows exactly what is happening (Kavanagh & Ashkanasy, 2006). Research by Frahm and Brown (2007) found that when managers withheld change-related information, employee cynicism, uncertainty and frustration caused rumours to develop, which is counterproductive to change implementation. Thus, change communication must be open in the sense that it is consultative and transparent in order to be perceived positively by employees and contribute to effective change implementation.

Trust in Management

Trust is a central component of the change process, as employees' trust in management encourages acceptance of the change vision and cooperation in change activities (Li, 2005). Trust can be defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another" (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt & Camerer, 1998, p. 395). Dirks and Ferrin (2002) argue that there are two perspectives to consider when studying organisational trust. The relationship-based approach focuses on the employees' view of their relationship with their leader. Management can successfully foster trust by exhibiting care and consideration, which in turn elicits positive employee attitudes and behaviours (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). The character-based approach centres on how leader characteristics affect an employee's sense of vulnerability in the relationship (Mayer et al., 1995). Both of these approaches describe trust as a perception held by the employee. In addition, trust is often described as either cognition-based or affect-based (Lee, 2004). Cognition-based trust reflects perceptions of an individual's reliability, dependability and competency to carry out obligations, and as such is especially relevant for judging the capability of change leaders (Cook & Wall, 1980). In contrast, affect-based trust is an emotional connection that stems from the care and concern that exists between the trustor and the trustee (McAllister, 1995). Therefore it is important that leaders are aware of how they interact with their employees and how employees perceive managers' trustworthiness, as trusting relationships have a significant impact on attitudinal and organisational outcomes.

Trust is a central mechanism for managing expectations, interactions, and behaviours, and it is particularly critical during change (Costa & Bijlsma-Frankema, 2007). Without trust, organisations struggle to ensure cohesiveness among individuals and teams and to foster cooperation and information sharing (Mayer et al., 1995). When managers propose a change,

this introduces a degree of uncertainty to everyday work and to one's status with the organisation, which can undermine employee trust in management. Sørensen et al. (2011) posit that as organisational change triggers uncertainty, employees pay more attention to managerial actions. This increased vigilance means that employees are more aware of actions and behaviours from management that might breach the trust relationship, and as such illustrates the vulnerability of trust in a changing environment. As such, organisational change can damage trust relations or even cause distrust if employees judge that management's change agenda is at odds with their best interests (Hopkins & Weathington, 2006). Ensuring that managers effectively understand and manage employee perceptions of trust during change can eventuate in stronger, more functional relationships between management and employees (Neves & Caetano, 2009).

A final aspect of trust to consider is the referent in whom the employee invests trust. There is literature suggesting that employees experience different trust perceptions towards different levels of management. Research by Allen et al. (2007) found that employees are less willing to trust communications from senior management. This reluctance to trust senior management may be attributed to senior managers being seen as organisational representatives, the embodiment of organisational successes and also its failures (Bachmann, 2003). The human tendency to weigh failures heavier than successes means that employees more easily associate senior management with failures rather than successes (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Senior managers are also more likely to be judged as working towards the organisation's financial bottom-line, whereas immediate supervisors are seen as caring about individual employees' roles in the change (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). This could mean that employees trust immediate supervisors more than they do the senior management.

Dirks and Ferrin (2002) found that trust in immediate supervisor related to numerous positive organisational outcomes including performance and job satisfaction, whilst trust in

senior management related to organisational commitment. This not only highlights a link between trust and organisational commitment, but also further suggests that our understanding of how trust develops and what factors it relates to, may differ by levels of management. Sørensen et al. (2011) propose that employees invest greater trust in immediate supervisors due to the interpersonal relations that develop from daily contact and communication in the workplace. These daily social exchanges between employee and immediate supervisor can result in close, personal relationships, as it is part and parcel of immediate supervisors' role to maintain positive social relationships with employees (Frazier, Johnson, Gavin, Gooty & Snow, 2010). In contrast, employees may have fewer opportunities to form personal relationships with senior management, and appraisals of these managers are contingent on evaluations of the organisation as whole (Ullman-Margalit, 2004).

The Role of Previous Change Process Perceptions on Change Communication

Appraisals and Managerial Trust

Employees' past experiences of organisational change influence employees' attitudes towards future changes (Van Dam et al., 2008). This is because past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviour. This means that if management have handled change well in the past and the change has been perceived as beneficial by employees, then employees' attitudes towards management during future changes are also likely be positive (Doyle, Claydon & Buchanan, 2000). Particular elements of a change process, such as the provision of timely feedback from management, the capability of change drivers, and the appropriateness of the change, all affect whether individuals perceive change as being beneficial and necessary (Ford & Greer, 2006).

Ford and Greer (2006) conceptualised specific organisational activities as being important during change: goal setting, skill development, feedback, and management control.

Employees' perceptions of how these activities have been carried out in previous change efforts is thought to be a major predictor of how employees will respond to future organisational changes (Van Dam et al., 2008). In particular, adequate management of these activities is conducive to greater employee ease with regards to upcoming changes, encouraging buy-in to the change (Ford & Greer, 2006). The developmental nature of these activities encourages learning and change acceptance for individuals (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005). Development-oriented environments are positively related to employee attitudes towards change, making it important to consider developmental aspects of the change process (that is, goal setting, skill development and feedback) as a precursor to employee attitudes during change (Van Dam & Seijts, 2007).

Although all organisational change processes are unique, past experience of change management is a good indicator of how a new change will be handled (Ford & Greer, 2006). Therefore, enquiring into employees' perceptions of how the organisation typically handles change prior to a new change being implemented may provide a good indication of employee attitudes toward that upcoming change.

Communication is a key component of the change process, and is involved in goal setting and feedback, but also in clarifying the relevance and impact the change will have on people and the organisation. Initial provision of information about the change is essential in order to ensure employees have the necessary knowledge of upcoming events (such as the implementation timeline and major milestones), the nature and consequences of the change, and how their jobs will be affected (Van Dam et al., 2008). In contrast, poor change communication detrimentally affects the change process, as rumours, cynicism, and resistance to change can result (DiFonzo, Bordia & Rosnow, 1994; Stanley, Meyer & Topolnytsky, 2005). This illustrates that past behaviour from management in regards to the information they have provided about changes impacts on future appraisals of change

communications (Allen et al., 2007). Based on this evidence, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Change process perceptions before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceptions of the openness of change communications (Time 2).

Hypothesis 2: Change process perceptions before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceptions of the quality of change communications (Time 2).

Trust in the reliability and integrity of change leaders is a key component of the change process as it means that employees are less likely to resist the change, which is conducive to implementation success (Kotter, 1995). Brockner, Siegel, Daly, Tyler and Martin (1997) argue that if previous instances of change have resulted in favourable change outcomes, then employees will express less concern about the trustworthiness of managers. In contrast, if employees perceive managerial decisions as unfavourable, they may question management's ability to support their employees, which could hinder trust during change processes. This indicates how employee perceptions of previous change management efforts may predict trust perceptions for subsequent changes. Therefore, the following research hypotheses will also be investigated:

Hypothesis 3: Change process perceptions before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceived trust in immediate manager during change (Time 2).

Hypothesis 4: Change process perceptions before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceived trust in the Executive Team during change (Time 2).

The Role of Organisational Commitment on Change Communication Appraisals and Managerial Trust

The long history of interest in organisational commitment has resulted in various conceptualisations of, and measurement approaches to, the construct. It is best understood as an employee's bond with, and attachment to, an organisation (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Individuals have unique reasons for experiencing commitment to their organisation, which renders the construct multidimensional (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The three components of organisational commitment identified in the literature reflect psychological states experienced by the employee (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Affective commitment describes an employee's emotional connection with the organisation. This component of commitment has the strongest relation with important organisational outcomes such as turnover, absenteeism, performance, discretionary behaviours, and resistance to change (Iverson, 1996; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). Normative commitment, defined as an employee's perceived obligation to remain with the organisation due to a sense of duty and loyalty to their employer, is also related to important organisational outcome variables, but to a lesser degree than affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002). Continuance commitment describes an employee's need to remain with the organisation because of the perceived costs of leaving (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Contrary to the other two components of commitment, continuance commitment typically shows non-significant or negative relationships to organisational outcome variables (Meyer et al., 2002; Solinger, Van Olffen & Roe, 2008).

It is also argued that affective commitment is an attitude regarding the organisation, whereas normative and continuance commitment are attitudes about turnover (Solinger et al., 2008). Elias (2009) notes that affective commitment is a “psychological and individual-level variable that primarily hinges on the fulfilment of personal needs” (p. 40). This adds further justification to its appropriateness as the dimension of commitment to be used in the current research.

Organisational commitment has received a lot of attention as both a consequence and an antecedent of employees’ change-related attitudes (Judge, Thoresen, Pucik & Welbourne, 1999; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Oreg, 2006). Although previous research tends to focus on commitment as an attitudinal *consequence* of change, there has been a recent shift in the literature investigating level of organisational commitment as a potential *antecedent* to attitudes toward an upcoming change (Iverson, 1996; McKay et al., 2013).

Although research into organisational commitment as an antecedent to organisational change perceptions is somewhat limited, there exists literature that makes connections between affective commitment and positive employee attitudes towards change (Meyer et al., 2002; Yousef, 2000). Research by Meyer and Allen (1997) empirically supports the fact that highly committed individuals are more likely to perceive their organisational events in a positive light than those who have lower organisational commitment. This stems from cognitive dissonance theory, whereby in the case of organisational change, highly committed employees experience a cognitive tension between the organisation that they are committed to and the proposed changed state of the organisation. In order to reduce dissonance, individuals tend to view their environment in a way that is consistent with their pre-existing experiences (Festinger, 1957). This suggests that employees who view their organisation positively and are affectively committed to its pre-change state, will maintain this positive perception even as change occurs. However, some literature has argued that strong

organisational commitment leads to resistant, negative behaviours, as employees do not want the environment to change from the status quo (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). As affective commitment involves strong identification with the organisation's vision and values, affectively committed individuals may perceive the change positively providing the change does not threaten the organisation's values and vision (Bennett & Durkin, 2000).

Although previous research has found associations between affective commitment and perceptions of trust in management, no studies to date have specifically addressed whether affective commitment to an organisation affects employee trust in their immediate supervisor or senior management during change (Neves & Caetano, 2009). McKay et al. (2013) suggest that individuals with greater affective commitment towards their organisation may be more likely to believe that the change will benefit all stakeholders. Similarly, the connection between organisational commitment and perceptions of change communications is yet to be studied. Elving (2005) claims that effective communication creates the conditions for commitment, however organisational commitment may in turn impact on perceptions of communication effectiveness. Effective communication during previous change efforts could indeed lead to higher organisational commitment in individuals, but this commitment may in turn encourage positive appraisals of change communication in the future (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Based on this literature evidence, the following research hypotheses are also proposed:

Hypothesis 5: Affective organisational commitment before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceptions of the openness of change communications (Time 2).

Hypothesis 6: Affective organisational commitment before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceptions of the quality of change communications (Time 2).

Hypothesis 7: Affective organisational commitment before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceived trust in immediate supervisor during change (Time 2).

Hypothesis 8: Affective organisational commitment before a change announcement (Time 1) will be positively related to subsequent perceived trust in the Executive Team during change (Time 2).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study work at a large New Zealand organisation within the financial sector, undergoing a systems change that consisted of shifting from specialist roles to generalist roles. A time-lagged design was employed, whereby data was collected at two time points from employees affected by the change. Participants were provided with information about the research and gave consent prior to completing the surveys (Appendix A). They received the first questionnaire as part of the organisation's bi-annual staff survey, prior to knowing about the upcoming change (about 5 months before the change was announced). This survey contained scales pertaining to previous experiences of change and affective organisational commitment (Appendix B). The survey was administered online via Qualtrics' Survey Software, and remained active for a period of three weeks. The survey was confidential but not anonymous, and respondents had a unique code, which enabled their information to be tracked over time. Results from this survey were used as the Time 1 (pre-change) data set. The second survey was distributed by the same method five months after the first survey, when the organisation was in the early stages of change implementation. Participants were told that the information from this second survey was supplementary to the bi-annual survey process, and that the data from both surveys would be linked for research purposes. Questions pertained to employee perceptions of change communications and perceived trust in management (Appendix C). Results from this survey were used as the Time 2 (change implementation) data set.

The surveys were sent to 204 employees at Time 1 and Time 2. The final sample comprised of 41 respondents who provided complete information for both surveys, which corresponds to a response rate of 20%. Issues associated with this low response rate will be

addressed later in the paper. Of these 41 participants, 71% were female and 29% were male. The mean age was 42.51 years ($SD = 10.55$), and the average tenure was 3.83 years ($SD = 3.64$). Eight of these individuals were in managerial positions at the organisation, whilst 33 were non-managers.

Measures

All responses to all measures were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Appendices B and C contain the survey questions for Time 1 and Time 2 respectively.

Change process perceptions. Employee perceptions of how change processes are managed by the organisation were measured at Time 1 using an adapted version of the Change Process scale developed by Ford and Greer (2006). This adapted version included one item from the goal setting subscale, three items from the skill development subscale, and three items from the feedback subscale, which were compiled to create a unidimensional Change Process Perceptions scale for this study (Ford & Greer, 2006). The coefficient alphas in previous research ranged from .82 to .84 (Ford & Greer, 2006). A sample question used in the adapted version of the Change Process Perceptions scale is, *“The gap between ‘where we are’ and ‘where we want to be’ is clearly determined prior to change implementation”*.

Organisational commitment. To assess employees’ affective organisational commitment to the organisation, Meyer, Allen and Smith’s (1993) Affective Organisational Commitment scale was administered at Time 1. The coefficient alphas in previous research ranged from .82 to .87. An example of a question incorporated in this scale is, *“I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with [organisation’s name]”*.

Change communications. Both the openness of communication regarding changes and the perceived quality of change communications were measured at Time 2 using the relevant dimensions of the Organisational Change Questionnaire – Climate of Change, Processes, and Readiness (OCQ-C, P, R) (Bouckenooghe, Devos & Van den Broeck, 2009). Coefficient alphas for each specific dimension were not provided in Bouckenooghe et al.'s (2009) scale development study, but alphas ranged from .68 to .89 on all dimensions relating to change. An example question measuring openness of communication regarding change is, *“Team members can raise change-related topics for discussion”*. An example question measuring quality of change communications is, *“Two-way communication between the Executive Team and the branches regarding this change is very good”*.

Trust perceptions. Individual perceptions of trust in immediate supervisor and in the Executive Team were measured at Time 2 using Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman and Fetter's (1990) 6-item Trust in/Loyalty to the Leader scale. The coefficient alpha in previous research was .89. An example item is, *“I feel quite confident that my manager will always try to treat me fairly”*. The same questions were used when referring to trust in the Executive team, but rather than “my manager” the questions referred to the Executive team, for example, *“I have complete faith in the integrity of the Executive Team”*.

Analyses

Version 22 of IBM SPSS Statistics package was used for all data analysis. Before commencing data analysis, exploratory factor analyses were conducted for each of the scales to examine their dimensionality (Appendix D). Reliability analyses were then conducted for each of the five scales in order to obtain descriptive statistics and Cronbach alphas as a measure of internal consistency. The hypotheses were tested by conducting four multiple

regressions, one for each outcome variable. Results of these analyses are reported in the next section.

Given the small sample size, a post-hoc power analysis was conducted using Version 3.1 of the G*Power software. A post-hoc power analysis is appropriate for computing the achieved power, given the alpha value, sample size, and effect size. Following Cohen's (1988) recommendations, an effect size of $r = .15$ was considered. Given the effect size of $r = .15$, the small sample size obtained ($n = 41$), and the number of predictors, the decision was made to consider statistically significant results at $p < .10$. While this resulted in a final power level of 0.68, where .80 or above is generally deemed acceptable (Cohen, 1988), increasing the p-value is appropriate when very small samples are obtained. (Noordzij et al., 2010). Using a larger p-value with a small sample increases the chance of finding significant effects that may not be exposed if a more conservative p-value (i.e. $p < .05$) is used (Noordzij et al., 2010).

Results

Exploratory Factor Analyses and Descriptive Statistics

Prior to testing the hypotheses, exploratory factor analyses (principal axis factoring, direct oblimin rotation) were conducted to assess the dimensionality of each of the five scales. Eigenvalues greater than 1 denoted a distinct factor measured by the scale, and items were considered to 'load' onto a factor if they had a value of at least .40 (Hinkin, 1995). Items for all scales loaded on single factors, each corresponding to the scale they belonged to with an eigenvalue above 1. This information is presented in Appendix D.

Reliability analyses were then conducted to examine the internal consistency of each of the scales. Table 1 shows the coefficient alphas for each scale. As can be seen, all five scales are above Cronbach's (1951) minimum recommended level of .70.

Means, standard deviations, and correlations are also presented in Table 1. Participants reported positive attitudes towards all constructs, denoted by means at or above 4.9 on a 7-point scale. Standard deviations ranged from 0.86 to 1.11, indicating that all employees shared these positive attitudes. In particular, employees exhibited high levels of trust in their immediate supervisor during change (T2) ($M = 6.32$, $SD = 0.87$). High levels of affective organisational commitment at Time 1 were also reported ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.09$) as well as positive perceptions of previous change efforts ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 0.86$). Although not as high as their trust in their immediate supervisor, employees reported high levels of trust in the Executive Team during change (T2) ($M = 5.55$, $SD = 0.91$). Employees' attitudes regarding change communications (T2) were also positive but obtained the lowest mean of all the scales, with perceptions of the openness of change communications having the lowest mean of all the variables measured ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 0.93$). However, these trends indicate

that employees have a generally positive attitude towards both the organisation and its management of the change.

Correlations

The correlation matrix in Table 1 presents the associations between the variables of interest. Significant positive correlations were found between trust in the Executive Team and openness of change communications ($r = .73, p < .01$) and quality of change communications ($r = .76, p < .01$). This suggests a relationship between trust in the Executive Team and change communication. There was also a significant positive correlation between the openness of change communications and trust in immediate supervisor ($r = .39, p < .05$), which indicates a link between trust in immediate supervisor and the consultative and transparent nature of change-related information.

Furthermore, there was a significant positive correlation between change process perceptions and the openness of change communications ($r = .48, p < .01$). Change process perceptions were also significantly positively correlated with trust in the Executive Team ($r = .35, p < .05$), alluding to an association between previous management of change and current levels of trust in senior managers.

T-tests

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to explore differences in perceptions of trust, the change process, change communications, and organisational commitment between managers and non-managers. This was because managers as change drivers have a different perspective on change compared to non-managers (Meyer et al., 1995). Interestingly, the only variable that displayed a significant difference between managers and non-managers was organisational commitment. It was found that non-managers ($M = 5.75, SD = .83$) were

significantly more committed to the organisation than managers ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 1.76$); $t(38) = 1.12$, $p < .01$.

Table 1. Correlations for All Variables.

	Mean	S.D.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Change Process Perceptions	5.48	0.86	(.89)									
2. Organisational Commitment	5.63	1.09	.48**	(.90)								
3. Openness of Change Communications	4.94	0.93	.40*	.10	(.91)							
4. Quality of Change Communications	5.17	1.11	.24	.03	.75**	(.89)						
5. Trust in Immediate Supervisor	6.32	0.87	.14	.13	.39*	.33	(.95)					
6. Trust in Executive Team	5.55	0.91	.35*	-.02	.73**	.76**	.42*	(.95)				
7. Age (years)	42.51	10.55	-.03	-.12	-.02	.18	-.15	.08				
8. Gender	-	-	.37*	.11	.30	.12	.01	.08	.05			
9. Tenure (years)	3.83	3.64	-.13	-.05	-.10	.11	-.07	-.15	.56**	.01		
10. Manager Status	-	-	.25	-.08	.28	.29	.06	.29	-.01	.45**	-.13	

Note: N = 41, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ (two-tailed)

Regressions

In order to test the research hypotheses, multiple regressions were carried out. A control variable (manager status) was included so as to remove its effect from the equation (Field, 2013). Results from these analyses are presented in Table 2.

Hypotheses 1 and 5 proposed that change process perceptions and organisational commitment, respectively, would be positively related to perceptions of the openness of change communications. The results supported Hypothesis 1 as they showed that change process perceptions were positively and significantly related to perceptions of the openness of change communications ($\beta = .45, p < .05$). The R^2 of .17 ($F(3, 37) = 2.44, p < .10$) in Model 3 indicated that manager status, change process perceptions and organisational commitment accounted for 17% of variance in perceptions of openness of change communications. However, organisational commitment did not significantly predict employee perceptions of the openness of change communications. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Hypotheses 2 and 6 predicted that change process perceptions and organisational commitment would be positively related to employee perceptions of the quality of change communications. The results did not indicate any significant relationships between these variables, meaning the neither change process perceptions nor organisational commitment significantly predicted perceptions of the quality of change communications. This means that both Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 6 were not supported.

Hypotheses 3 and 7 expected that change process perceptions and organisational commitment would be positively related to individuals' trust in their immediate supervisor during change. No significant findings were obtained, meaning that neither change process perceptions nor organisational commitment significantly predicted employee trust in their

immediate supervisor during change. Thus, both Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 7 were not supported.

The final regression investigated Hypotheses 4 and 8, which proposed that change process perceptions and organisational commitment would be positively related to employees' trust in the Executive Team during change. The findings supported Hypothesis 4 as they showed that change process perceptions were positively and significantly related to trust in the Executive Team ($\beta = .32, p < .10$). Furthermore, manager status, change process perceptions and organisational commitment accounted for 12% of variance in perceptions of trust in the Executive Team ($R^2 = .12, F(3, 37) = 1.74, p < .10$). However, organisational commitment did not significantly relate to employee trust in the Executive Team during change, meaning that Hypothesis 8 was not supported.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analyses for All Variables.

	Openness of Change Communications				Quality of Change Communications				Trust in Immediate Supervisor				Trust in Executive Team			
	b	SEb	β	R ²	b	SEb	β	R ²	b	SEb	β	R ²	b	SEb	β	R ²
<u>Model 1</u>				.00				.01				.00				.04
Manager Status	.14	.34	.07		.18	.40	.07		.08	.22	.06		.43	.32	.21	
<u>Model 2</u>				.15				.07				.03				.09
Manager Status	.07	.32	.03		.13	.40	.05		.06	.22	.04		.39	.32	.19	
Change Process Perceptions	.38	.15	.39**		.29	.18	.25		.11	.10	.18		.21	.15	.22	
<u>Model 3</u>				.17				.07				.05				.12
Manager Status	-.02	.34	-.01		.05	.43	.02		-.00	.24	-.00		.26	.34	.12	
Change Process Perceptions	.44	.17	.45**		.34	.21	.30		.15	.12	.24		.31	.17	.32*	
Organisational Commitment	-.10	.14	-.13		-.10	.17	-.10		-.07	.10	-.14		-.16	.14	-.21	

Note: ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Discussion

Summary of Results

This research aimed to assess whether certain employee perceptions and attitudes before a change, namely change process perceptions and affective organisational commitment, predicted employee perceptions of change communications and trust in management during early stages of change implementation. Employee perceptions of the openness of change communication, the quality of change-related information, and their trust in their immediate supervisor and the Executive Team are important, as they are associated with employees' buy-in to the change process and overall successful implementation of the change (Mayer et al., 1995; Simoes & Esposito, 2014).

It is worth noting that for some of the non-significant findings obtained leading to unsupported hypotheses, the magnitudes of the effects suggest the relationship between variables is not negligible. For example, although change process perceptions was only significantly related to openness of communications ($\beta = .45, p < .05$) and trust in the Executive Team ($\beta = .32, p < .10$), the magnitude of the non-significant coefficients found for quality of change communication ($\beta = .30$) and trust in immediate supervisor ($\beta = .24$) suggest that a relationship does exist. As such, the findings outlined in the following paragraphs should be interpreted conservatively, given the low power ($1 - \beta = .68$) and small sample obtained for this study.

Based on previous research, it was expected that employees' experiences of previous change processes would predict their perception of the openness of communications during change (Allen et al., 2007; Frahm & Brown, 2007; Van Dam et al., 2008). Consistent with Hypothesis 1, the findings revealed a significant positive relationship between change process perceptions at Time 1 and perceptions of the openness of change communications at

Time 2, indicating that the better management's handling of previous changes, the more likely employees are to view change-related information as being bidirectional and transparent. It was also predicted that employees' perceptions of previous change process management would be positively related to employee perceptions of the quality of change-related communication at Time 2 (Allen et al., 2007; Van Dam et al, 2008); however Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Although the findings were not statistically significant, the magnitude of the relationship ($\beta = .30$) indicates that perceptions of previous change management have some impact on appraisals of the quality of change communications. That is to say, employee perceptions of how change has been managed in the past has an influence on whether change-related information is viewed as timely, accurate and useful during future change initiatives.

It was also anticipated that employees' perceptions of previous change process management would be positively related to perceptions of trust in employees' immediate supervisor and the Executive Team during change (Brockner et al., 1997). Contrary to Hypothesis 3, change process perceptions at Time 1 were not significantly related to employee trust in immediate supervisor at Time 2. As with Hypothesis 2, despite the non-significant findings, the magnitude of the relationship ($\beta = .24$) and the low standard error ($SE\beta = .12$) indicates that perceptions of previous change management has some influence on employee trust in immediate supervisor during change. This means that successful management of change in the past somewhat predicts employee perceptions of trust in their immediate supervisor in the future. Consistent with Hypothesis 4, change process perceptions were significantly positively related to employees' trust in the Executive Team. This illustrates that when employees view that change has been governed well in the past, they are more inclined to invest high levels of trust in the figures that represent the organisation as a whole during future change efforts. This is consistent with previous research that has

highlighted how employees' perceptions of past change process management influences appraisals of future behaviour (e.g. Allen et al., 2007; Brockner et al., 1997; Van Dam et al., 2008).

Based on previous research, it was also anticipated that affective organisational commitment before a change would be positively related to perceptions of the openness and quality of change communications (Elving, 2005; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Contrary to both Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6, the findings did not support these predictions, indicating that pre-existing organisational commitment did not influence employees' perceptions of either the openness of change communications, or the quality of change-related information. Interestingly, although the findings were not significant, the directionality of the relationship between organisational commitment and the openness of change communication ($\beta = -.13$) and the quality of change communication ($\beta = -.10$) was opposite to that which was predicted, indicating that being affectively committed to the organisation may be associated with negative perceptions of change-related information. One potential explanation is that employees' emotion-driven experiences in an organisation tend to be relatively short-lived (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). This means that sentiments regarding change communications may be reflective of the fact that the change is still a relatively fresh notion (due to the survey being administered during the early stages of change implementation), and as such employees' feelings pertaining to change-related information may become more positive as the change unravels.

It was also expected that the findings would reveal positive relationships between affective organisational commitment and employee trust in both their immediate supervisor and the Executive Team (Bennet & Durkin, 2000). However, contrary to Hypothesis 7 and Hypothesis 8, these predictions were not supported, meaning that being affectively committed to the organisation before change did not influence whether or not employees

trusted their immediate supervisor or the Executive Team during change. Similar to the relationships between organisational commitment and the openness and quality of change communications, the directionality of these relationships was also opposite to that which was expected. Although the negative relationship between organisational commitment and trust in both immediate supervisor and the Executive Team during change was not statistically significant, the magnitude of relationships ($\beta = -.14$ and $\beta = -.21$ respectively) indicates that a negative relationship might exist. As mentioned by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002), affective commitment can result in negative change-related attitudes due to a desire to preserve the status quo in the organisation. As such, highly committed individuals may sense that the trust between themselves and management has been breached, particularly if they perceive the change as unnecessary or to threaten the organisation's values (Sørensen et al., 2011). Furthermore, the anxiety that can arise in employees as a result of organisational change often leads to reduced trust in management, meaning that other contextual factors might contribute to these findings between organisational commitment and trust in immediate supervisor and the Executive Team (Paterson & Cary, 2002).

The above average means on all dimensions of the survey (for example, change process perceptions responses range $4.62 < M < 6.34$) indicate that employees have a generally positive attitude towards the way change is managed at this organisation. The t-tests showed that managers are significantly less affectively committed to the organisation than non-managers. However, there has recently emerged in the literature discussions surrounding the discrepancy between commitment to the organisation as an entity, and commitment to one's team (Neininger, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Kauffeld & Henschel, 2010). Research suggests that affective commitment to one's work team is not only more commonly reported than organisational commitment, but also more strongly associated with organisational outcomes such as turnover, job satisfaction, and citizenship behaviours

(Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). Team commitment during change is particularly important as changes can threaten the team dynamic, which can cause feelings of insecurity and loss of belonging for employees (Lüscher & Lewis, 2008). The distinction between commitment to one's team and commitment to the organisation has implications for the trust employees have in management, and as such is a distinction that needs to be clarified in future research (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002).

Research Limitations

A major limitation of the current research is the small sample size. Given the magnitude of some of the effects obtained that were non-significant (i.e. all change process perceptions results at $\beta = .24$ or higher), it is reasonable to assume that a larger sample size might have led to more significant results being found. Given the effect size of $r = .15$, the recommended power of .80 and $p < .05$, a minimum sample size of 68 is required for the current study (Cohen, 1988). As the organisation undergoes a lot of surveying every year especially during transitions, it is possible that employees suffered survey exhaustion. This, combined with the stress of organisational change, may be a reason why so many employees chose not to respond to the survey. In future, it could be useful to provide incentives for survey completion in order to increase the response rate from 20% to the recommended rate of 50% (Babbie, 2007).

Although the time-lagged design is a major strength of this study, survey research has some drawbacks. Although useful for understanding individuals' perceptions before and after change, information collected via surveys provides only a snapshot of the overall situation. This is a major problem of using surveys to research change, as variables beyond those surveyed could be having a large impact on individuals' attitudes and perceptions (Aron, Aron & Coups, 2009). To remedy this problem, organisational archival data could be analysed to uncover contextual information and data trends. Furthermore, a longitudinal

design whereby further surveying is carried out at other points throughout the change process would reveal how employee attitudes develop as change is implemented.

Future Research

Further research is needed in this area to investigate the relationships between the variables in this study and other contextual factors. One suggestion is to investigate the possibility of trust as a mediator between pre-change attitudes and employee perceptions to change activities. Trust has been treated as a mediating variable in several other change-related studies (i.e. Hopkins & Weathington, 2006; Mayer et al., 1995; Neves & Caetano, 2009). However, trust in leadership has not previously been investigated as a mediator between employees' pre-change attitudes and perceptions of change communications in a time-lagged study. The current research provides a sound basis for such research to be carried out. Given the salient role of change process perceptions in the current research, it could also be useful to investigate how this relates to other important change-related variables, such as change-related self-efficacy (Jimmieson et al., 2004) or change readiness and resistance (McKay et al., 2013; Simoes & Esposito, 2014).

Another suggestion is to extend the research regarding the openness and quality of change communications so that it also looks at the source from which information is being received. Formal communication may be disseminated from immediate managers or senior level leaders, and the nature of the communication from these sources can differ. Research has shown that typically information received from senior management centres on strategic issues such as the organisation's rationale behind a change, whereas immediate supervisors provide operational job-related information (Allen et al., 2007). Investigating the varying sources of change-related communication in alignment with employees' trust in these different organisational referents would provide a more thorough picture of employee attitudes during change.

As aforementioned, it could also be useful to consider employees' affective commitment to change leaders or one's work team rather than to the organisational entity. The current research indicated that employees were affectively committed to the organisation, but this did not translate to predicting positive attitudes towards change leaders and change activities such as communication and trust. Research has shown that employees are more often committed to their team rather than the organisation as a whole, thus investigating affective commitment to the team could prove to be a better predictor of change-related attitudes than organisational commitment (Neininger et al., 2010).

A final recommendation is to extend the current time-lagged study to a longitudinal design. Longitudinal research allows for repeated measures of the variables of interest over time. The current research has shown that perceptions of previous change process management impacts of employees' perceptions of communication and trust in future change efforts during the early stages of implementation. As mentioned earlier, employees' affective experiences are not necessarily sustained over time (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Longitudinal research would be useful for uncovering whether the relationships found in the current research are true for the entire change process, or whether employees' attitudes develop over time.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The current research has added to the organisational change literature by researching connections between previously under-investigated linkages and testing relationships between change process perceptions before change and components of change communication perceptions and trust in management during the early stages of change implementation. In particular, this research has highlighted the important role that employees' past change-related experiences have in shaping their future appraisals of managerial change activities. Although affective organisational commitment was not

significantly related to change communications or trust as initially expected, the relationships that were found suggest that affective commitment to the organisation might be negatively related to organisational outcome variables. Future research should employ a larger sample and investigate if significant effects are found between affective organisational commitment and perceptions of change communications and trust in management during change.

In a practical sense, this research suggests that it is important for organisational leaders to ensure change is always managed well, as perceptions regarding how appropriate and effectively change is carried out impacts on employees' attitudes towards future change events. In particular, it is important that changes are communicated clearly and openly, as this affects trust levels and consequently buy-in to the change. Furthermore, although more research is needed, employees' affective commitment – whether it is to the organisation or their work team – undoubtedly impacts of employees' change-related attitudes and is therefore an important considerations for practitioners.

Conclusions

This research sought to investigate the relationship between employees' pre-change attitudes and perceptions, and employees' change-related behaviour. In particular, it assessed whether commitment to the organisation and perceptions of previous change process management predicted employees' perceptions of change communications and trust in management during the initial stages of change implementation.

The significant positive relationships between change process perceptions and openness of change communication and trust in the Executive Team suggest that employees' previous experiences of change strongly influence future change-related attitudes. Although affective organisational commitment did not significantly predict any relationships, literature

supports the fact that commitment to one's organisational team might still be a predictor of change-related attitudes.

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Appendix A: Information and Consent to Participate

Information

The purpose of this survey is to **gather your views regarding the upcoming systems change at [organisation's name]**. Your input is invaluable and it will a) enable the People and Support team to diagnose member needs associated with the change, and take the necessary steps to facilitate this process, and b) contribute to our academic understanding of individual responses to organisational change, and how they influence implementation success.

Your involvement requires you to **complete two online questionnaires**: one now and another later in the year once the change is implemented. Each of these questionnaires should take **no longer than 20 minutes to complete**.

The project is being carried out as a requirement for two dissertations under the supervision of Dr. Joana Kuntz, who can be contacted at joana.kuntz@canterbury.ac.nz. She will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project. **Please note that the results will be presented at the branch level, therefore no individual responses can be linked to you. Further, the datasets will be fully de-identified** by Dr. Joana Kuntz prior to being analysed by the two students involved in the process. Your two surveys will be linked and then assigned a random code.

Participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw, by emailing Joana, until the dataset has been de-identified. If you withdraw, any information relating to you will be removed.

A dissertation is a public document and will be available through the UC Library. The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. **The identity of participants or the organisation will not be made public**. All data and participant information will be held under direct responsibility of the primary supervisor. The data will be stored for 10 years, locked securely in a file cabinet and password protected on a computer.

The project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee, and participants should address any complaints to The Chair, Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch (human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz).

Consent

- I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis, I agree to participate as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding the anonymity will be preserved.
- I understand also that I may withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided, without penalty.
- I am aware that the project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

By completing this survey you are agreeing to participate in this research project.

Appendix B: Time 1 Survey Questions

Gender

- Male
- Female

Age

How long have you worked at [organisation's name]?

Please let us know what your role is:

- Manager
- Non-manager

We would like to gain an understanding of your perceptions of how change is typically managed at [organisation's name].

(1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – somewhat disagree, 4 – neither agree nor disagree, 5 – somewhat agree, 6 – agree, 7 – strongly agree)

- The Executive Team evaluates the current situation (e.g. financial, member requirements, staffing) prior to setting change goals
- The gap between “where we are” and “where we want to be” is clearly determines prior to change implementation
- The Executive Team identifies critical team member skills and capabilities needed to implement change
- [Organisation's name] develops necessary skills and capabilities through training, coaching or other means in order to respond to change
- Team members are kept informed about the ongoing status of change processes
- Change outcomes, including milestones, are communicated in a timely fashion
- Team members are rewarded for supporting change efforts

Please note down any comments you may want to volunteer regarding your previous answers.

We would like to gain an understanding of your commitment to [organisation's name].

(1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree)

- I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with [organisation's name]
- I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to [organisation's name]
- I feel like "part of the family" at [organisation's name]
- [Organisation's name] has a great deal of personal meaning to me

Please note down any comments you may want to volunteer regarding your previous answers.

Appendix C: Time 2 Survey Questions

We would like to gain an understanding of your perceptions of the openness of communications and decision-making regarding the changes at [organisation's name].

(1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – somewhat disagree, 4 – neither agree nor disagree, 5 – somewhat agree, 6 – agree, 7 – strongly agree)

- Those who implement change had no say in developing the proposals
- Decisions concerning change are typically taken in consultation with the team members affected
- The Executive Team takes into account team members' input before implementing change
- Branches are sufficiently consulted about changes
- Team members are well informed of the reasons for changes
- Team members can raise change-related topics for discussion
- We are provided sufficient time for consultation regarding upcoming changes
- It is possible to talk about outmoded regulations and ways of working at [organisation's name]
- The way change is implemented leaves little room for personal input (R)
- The Executive Team conveys a positive vision of the future
- Team members are sufficiently involved in the implementation of changes at [organisation's name]

We would like to gain an understanding of the quality of change communications.

(1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree)

- There is good communication between change drivers and team members about the upcoming change implementation process
- Information concerning the upcoming change reaches us mostly as rumours
- The Executive Team keeps all branches informed about its change-related decisions
- Two-way communication between the Executive Team and the branches regarding this change is very good
- The Executive Team clearly explained the reason for this change

Please note down any comments you may want to volunteer regarding your previous answers.

We would like to gain an understanding of your trust in your immediate manager.

(1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree)

- I feel quite confident that my manager will always treat me fairly
- My manager would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving team members
- I have complete faith in the integrity of my manager
- I feel a strong loyalty to my manager
- I would support my manager in almost any emergency
- I have a strong sense of loyalty toward my manager

We would like to gain an understanding of your trust in Executive Team.

(1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree)

- I feel quite confident that the Executive Team will always treat me fairly
- The Executive Team would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving team members
- I have complete faith in the integrity of the Executive Team
- I feel a strong loyalty to the Executive Team
- I would support our Executive Team in almost any emergency
- I have a strong sense of loyalty toward [organisation's name]'s Executive Team

Please note down any comments you may want to volunteer regarding your previous answers.

Appendix D: Exploratory Factor Analyses

Table 3. Factor Loadings for 7-item Change Process Perceptions Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item	Factor 1
1 The Executive Team evaluates the current situation (e.g. financial, member requirements, staffing) prior to setting change goals	.59
2 The gap between “where we are” and “where we want to be” is clearly determines prior to change implementation	.74
3 The Executive Team identifies critical team member skills and capabilities needed to implement change	.78
4 [Organisation’s name] develops necessary skills and capabilities through training, coaching or other means in order to respond to change	.72
5 Team members are kept informed about the ongoing status of change processes	.81
6 Change outcomes, including milestones, are communicated in a timely fashion	.73
7 Team members are rewarded for supporting change efforts	.74
Eigenvalue	3.72
Percentage of variance explained	53.16

Table 4. Factor Loadings for 4-item Affective Organisational Commitment Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item	Factor 1
1 I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with [organisation’s name]	.68
2 I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to [organisation’s name]	.94
3 I feel like "part of the family" at [organisation’s name]	.88
4 [Organisation’s name] has a great deal of personal meaning to me	.81
Eigenvalue	2.77
Percentage of variance explained	69.24

Table 5. Factor Loadings for 11-item Openness of Change Communications Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item		Factor 1
1	Those who implement change had no say in developing the proposals (R)	.55
2	Decisions concerning change are typically taken in consultation with the team members affected	.72
3	The Executive Team takes into account team members' input before implementing change	.76
4	Branches are sufficiently consulted about changes.	.70
5	Team members are well informed of the reasons for changes	.66
6	Team members can raise change-related topics for discussion	.65
7	We are provided sufficient time for consultation regarding upcoming changes	.75
8	It is possible to talk about outmoded regulations and ways of working at [organisation's name]	.73
9	The way change is implemented leaves little room for personal input (R)	.70
10	The Executive Team conveys a positive vision of the future	.56
11	Team members are sufficiently involved in the implementation of changes at [organisation's name]	.79
Eigenvalue		5.29
Percentage of variance explained		58.09

Table 6. Factor Loadings for 5-item Quality of Change Communications Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item		Factor 1
1	There is good communication between change drivers and team members about the upcoming change implementation process	.76
2	Information concerning the upcoming change reaches us mostly as rumours (R)	.77
3	The Executive Team keeps all branches informed about its change-related decisions	.81
4	Two-way communication between the Executive Team and the branches regarding this change is very good	.87
5	The Executive Team clearly explained the reason for this change	.76
Eigenvalue		3.15
Percentage of variance explained		63.00

Table 7. Factor Loadings for 6-item Trust in Immediate Supervisor Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item		Factor 1
1	I feel quite confident that my manager will always treat me fairly	.89
2	My manager would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving team members	.82
3	I have complete faith in the integrity of my manager	.93
4	I feel a strong loyalty to my manager	.91
5	I would support my manager in almost any emergency	.72
6	I have a strong sense of loyalty toward my manager	.94
Eigenvalue		4.57
Percentage of variance explained		76.14

Table 8. Factor Loadings for 6-item Trust in Executive Team Scale using Principle Axis Factoring and Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin)

Item		Factor 1
1	I feel quite confident that the Executive Team will always treat me fairly	.87
2	The Executive Team would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving team members	.82
3	I have complete faith in the integrity of the Executive Team	.93
4	I feel a strong loyalty to my the Executive Team	.92
5	I would support our Executive Team in almost any emergency	.77
6	I have a strong sense of loyalty toward [organisation's name]'s Executive Team	.88
Eigenvalue		4.50
Percentage of variance explained		76.96