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ABSTRACT
        This document contains three papers on managerial
performance issues. "Managerial Skill Requirements: Evidence from the
Scottish Visitor Attraction Industry" (Sandra Watson, Martin McCracken)
presents the findings from an exploratory study of those skills that managers
in the Scottish visitor attraction sector considered most important to
success as a manager in the sector. The study established that most managers
focused on operational-level skills and gave little credence to
strategic/general, technological, and self-management skills, thus
accentuating the need for training and development to equip managers with the
skills needed to deal with rapid change. "An International Assignment and
Managerial Performance: Job-Related Variables Relative to Effective
Performance of Japanese Expatriates" (Kiyoe Harada) discusses a study that
identified a significant relationship between the effectiveness of Japanese
expatriates and job-related variables and explored the human resource
development implications of the identified relationship. "Modeling the Impact
of Managerial Behavior in a Store Environment" (Allan H. Church) reports on a
study that provides an applied example of linkage research leveraging various
sources of organizational data and uses the framework to model a predictive
relationship between managerial behavior and internal performance measures
across 500 different stores in a retail organization. All three papers
include substantial bibliographies. (MN)

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Managerial Skill Requirements: Evidence from the Scottish Visitor Attraction Industry

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This paper presents the findings from an exploratory study into Scottish visitor attraction managerial skills, providing an insight into the range, diversity and perceived importance of current and future skills. The main findings highlight a focus on operation skills, but the 'soft' people skills are seen as being important in the future.

Keywords: Scottish Visitor Attractions, Managerial Skills and Competence Development, Future

At present Scottish Tourism is experiencing a growth in the development of major visitor attractions and in 1998 the Scottish Tourist Board Visitor Monitor identified 976 visitor attractions in Scotland (STB, 1998:2). A visitor attraction has been defined as:

> 'A permanently established excursion destination, a primary purpose of which is to allow public access for entertainment, interest or education, rather than being principally a retail outlet or venue for sporting, theatrical or film performances. It must be open to the public for published periods each year, and should be capable of attracting tourists or day visitors as well as local residents.' (Scottish Tourist Board, 1991:1)

Recent developments have added to the diversity and competitiveness of the visitor attractions sector of Scottish Tourism (Scottish Tourist Board, 1998) and therefore it is not surprising that the importance of having managers with appropriate skills, has been recognised as fundamental to the current and future success of Scottish Tourism. Tourism Training Scotland's Strategy (1998) identifies a priority for the next five years as providing, 'Management skills to equip the industry to be innovative in meeting the changes taking place in tourism and the broader business environment'. Although much research has been undertaken into current managerial skills and knowledge, little work has been conducted on specifically identifying skills and knowledge requirements for managers in visitor attractions either now or in the future.

This paper reports on an exploratory research study designed to address this void. The aim of the research was to examine the range and importance of current and future managerial skills in the visitor attraction sector. Although the research setting is Scotland and the findings are particularly pertinent for the management of Scottish visitor attractions, they should also be informative for managers in other established international travel destinations.

Relevant Literature and Theoretical Framework

The subject of developing management skills and competences and their potential role in contributing to organisational success have received much attention (Prahalad and Hamel 1990; Hamel, 1994). Stinchcombe (1990:63) contends that the foundation of an organisation's capabilities is the competences of its individual members. This has led to a competence-based approach being suggested as one-way forward for developing skills in managers (Schroder, 1988; Talbot, 1997). Such competence-based approaches rely heavily on the notion that a specific set of skills and knowledge, which encompass all aspects of a manager's work, can be identified.

The approach taken in the UK, has been to develop agreed classifications of what managers 'do' rather than what management 'is', as noted by skills, knowledge and understanding needed by managers. The ability of a manager to function successfully in the workplace is then measured against these competences. As Day (1988) articulates, it is related to 'the ability to put skills and knowledge into action'. This is different from the US approach, which is more concerned with identification of competencies, which differentiate superior managerial performance. (Boyatzis, 1982; Schroder, 1989). Not surprisingly given the above, much debate and confusion has arisen regarding the concept of *'competence'*. The terminology of *competence* and *competency* are often confused which has led to the statements being used simultaneously. Hirsch and Strebler (1994:83) highlight three 'recurring features' of *competence(s)* as: being seen in the context of a job or job role and the organisation in which that jobs exists; are positively associated with superior performance; and can be described in terms of specific behaviours

which can be observed in the job. Boyatzis (1982) differentiates 'competency' from the job-related concept of 'competence' by defining managerial competency in relation to the attributes of an individual, which are 'causally related to effective or superior performance in a job'.

In competence-based management development approaches, typified by the UK's National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and Management Charter Initiative (MCI) schemes, individuals are assessed as either 'competent' or 'not yet competent'. Winterton and Winterton (1999:26) however propose that a 'continuum of degrees of competence, with a threshold of competence where the individual meets the defined standards, but has scope for developing further skills, knowledge and understanding' is a more realistic approach to take, when considering both organisational and individual development.

The ability to exercise both technical expertise and management skills to identify and implement productivity improvements is clearly imperative to operational success. Jacobs (1989) proposes that attention needs to be paid to the development of both systems and people in the operation, i.e. the 'hard' or technical aspects of management and the 'soft' or behavioural characteristics. In support of this hypothesis, the McKinsey 7-S framework, initially developed by Peters and Waterman (1982), illustrates that organisational capability is influenced by the 'soft' elements of *style, staffing, skills, and shared values*, as well as the traditional 'hard' areas of *strategy, structure and systems* (Fifield and Gilligan, 1997).

Winterton et al. (2000) present a range of competences and competencies that will be required of successful managers in the future. Such competences which are considered to be critical include: possessing knowledge based on a technical speciality; ability to see and act beyond local boundaries; learning and innovation; managing change; flexibility; possessing a group oriented view of leadership, and transformational leadership. Competences, identified as being important are cited as facilitation skills; communication across national boundaries; self-reliance; responsibility; self-monitoring, and ability to learn from experience. Finally, some of the critical capabilities which organisations need to have in place in their managers are presented as being: shared value; trust; honesty; sustainable development; influence; instinct and judgement, and learning.

Although the above discussion centres on generic managerial competence and competencies, there has been a burgeoning interest in understanding what are the most important managerial skills and competences for managers in the tourist and hospitality industries. Much of the research, which has explored these sectors, has focused on identifying core managerial skills. For example Hay (1990) examined core managerial competences and characteristics, which are essential in a rapidly changing world, and Tas (1988) and Christou and Eaton (1997) identify the most important competences for hotel general management. In essence these surveys all identified 'Soft' or 'human relation' associated competences as being the most significant. Ladkin (1999:170) when reviewing the empirical research into hotel managers found that when researchers have concerned themselves with more applied research and looked at what managers in hotels actually do, four principal roles of entrepreneur; cost controller; marketer, and service and quality control assurance, could be identified.

Also receiving some attention in the literature has been the research that has specifically attempted to identify the importance of managers possessing a balanced range of skills and competencies (Gamble et. al., 1994; Ladkin and Riley, 1996). Guerrier and Lockwood (1989) question the validity of the traditional approach to developing hospitality managers, which has led to an operational perspective on developing skills. At the time of their study there was little evidence of any focus on 'the development of human relations skills for managers and indeed little acceptance for this sort of development' (Guerrier and Lockwood, 1989).

Swarbrooke (1995: 363) interprets the following issues to be important for the future success in managing visitor attractions: increased emphasis on quality; flatter structures and empowerment of staff; more emphasis on recruitment, development, appraisal and performance related pay; increased use of integrated computerised management information systems; increased professionalism of managers; greater emphasis on marketing, and a focus on ethical and social responsibility. This brief overview of the research into managerial competence serves to reinforce the fact that research into managerial skill requirements in tourism have been preoccupied with examining the hotel sector, and have neglected other sectors of the industry.

Research Questions

In an earlier phase of this research study (see McCracken and Watson, 2000 for further details) the views of experts at the strategic level of Scottish Tourism regarding future skills requirements of managers in visitor attractions were gathered. This information along with that uncovered in the literature briefly reviewed above was used to design a questionnaire to elicit manager's views on the importance of stated managerial skills, both now and in the future. The main objective was to address two research questions, which were:

- Which skills/competences and competencies do general managers in the top Scottish visitor attractions

consider to be most important both now and in the future?
- Could differences in managers' perceptions surrounding the importance of skills/competences and competencies be explained by contextual variables associated to the attraction or the respondent?

Methodology

By using previous theories on skill requirements from other generic and specific sectors, to inform the construction of the questionnaire the authors adopted a deductive or positivist stance because attempts were made to see if the skill requirements reported elsewhere were relevant in the visitor attraction sector. Gill & Johnston (1991) argue that this position is only attainable if the 'realist' ontological stance articulated by Burrell & Morgan (1979) is adopted. Burrell and Morgan (1979: 4) summed up this position neatly by observing that: '...for the realist, the social world has an existence which is as hard and concrete as the natural world.'
 The questionnaire was issued to the top-twenty attractions in Scotland based on visitor numbers, which charge admissions and also the top-twenty where admission is free (Scottish Tourist Board, 1998). Additionally nine visitor attractions were included in the population. These attractions had opened since the Scottish Tourist Board data had been complied, but were felt to be likely to feature in the top twenty paid or free attractions list in the next monitoring survey. This purposive sample was selected to enable the researchers to examine the perceived skill requirements amongst managers of the most successful attractions in terms of visitor numbers.
 After piloting, the final survey instrument contained 45 skills statements divided into seven categories. Respondents were asked to rate current and future importance of the skill on a five point Likert scale. The lowest rating equated to 'no' importance, and the highest option in terms of importance was labelled as essential. The questionnaire also included seven factual biographical questions and four open-ended questions where the manager could describe general organisational as well as training and development issues in the visitor attraction. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the number of skill items within each skill category in the questionnaire.

Table 1. Skill Categories and Number of Items

Skill Category	Antecedents (From literature & interviews)	Number of items listed
Strategic General Management Skills	External awareness: networking: understanding contradictions: benchmarking: maintaining shared values: knowledge management: commercial/Ecological awareness and decision-making.	9
People Management Skills	Attracting, recruiting and leading employees: motivation: training & development: teambuilding: involvement ,openness trust: managing diversity &conflicts	11
Financial Management Skills	Pricing, budgeting, external funding, planning	4
Technological Skills	Enhancing visitor experience, decision-making & promotion	3
Self Management Skills	Influence, enthusiasm, self-reliance, learning, problem-solving, communications creativity & innovation	8
Operational Skills	Customer focus, marketing, quality, languages	7
Legal /Ethical Skills	Legislation, honesty, safety & security	3

The questionnaires were mailed to the General Managers in the selected sample in January 2000. A second mailing took place in early February for those who had not replied by the end of January. It was decided to mail the questionnaires at this time because it was 'low season'. After the two mailings 25 completed questionnaires were received giving a response rate of 51%. At this point it should be stressed that although the sample was very small a response rate of 51% useable questionnaires can be considered good for a mail-based survey.

Results and Findings

Of the 25 attractions that returned completed questionnaires, the majority (14 or 56%) were located in Scotland's heavily populated central belt, which includes the cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Stirling. Six attractions

or 24% of the responses came from visitor attractions in the Northeast, which includes Inverness and Aberdeen. Three (12%) attractions were located in the Northwest, and lastly two attractions or eight percent were found in the South of Scotland.

A broad range of attractions were included in the sample. The two biggest groupings were in the Interpretation and Visitor Centre, and Museums and Art Galleries categories. Castles, Historic Houses, Gardens and Industrial and Craft Premises made up the remainder of the sample. Just over two-thirds (67%) charged an entrance fee to the attraction or some part of the site, for example for a guided tour or special displays. On average the attractions in this sample employed around 70 full-time employees, with 80% employing less than 100 people.

In relation to the biographical data of the respondents, over three-quarters (76%) were male which indicated that there was an under-representation of female managers. The average age of the male respondents was 43.5 years, whilst the females' average age was 29.3 years. There was quite an even distribution across the age categories but over one-third (34.8%) of the respondents were aged between 35-44. On average the visitor attraction managers in this sample had been working in this sector for 6.16 years and their current place of work for 4.38 years. In relation to other biographical details it was found that 43.5% described themselves as general managers, 34.2% as supervisors/officers and 21.7% as directors. In terms of qualifications, 45% of the sample was educated to degree level or above and 20% possessed diplomas in various disciplines.

Perceived Importance of Managerial Skills

The responses to the skill statements were analysed using the same system as Tas (1988). Therefore those skills statements which attained a mean response rating over 4.50 across the sample were described as essential managerial skills; when a mean rating was between 3.50 and 4.49 it was deemed to be of considerable importance, and when the mean rating was between 2.50 and 3.49 the skill was rated as moderately important. By using this approach, it was found that 11 of the skills statements were perceived as being essential by the respondents, 26 were rated as being of considerable importance, and the remaining eight were moderately important. The skill statements that had the highest mean rating and topped the essential scale across the sample was the statement, 'Keeping up to date with relevant legislation, for example, Health & Safety and Employment'. The respondents also rated as essential the ability to 'provide a safe and secure environment for visitors'. Amongst the skill statements that were rated as being of considerable importance, were 'attracting and recruiting appropriate staff' with a mean rating of 4.48, and 'encouraging team-working' with a mean rating of 4.40. For those statements which were rated as being of moderate importance, being able to 'bench-mark against international standards' with a mean response rate of 3.36 was at the top of this category. According to the mean response ratings at the bottom of this scale of 45 skill statements was 'speaking a foreign language(s)'.

Table 2. Skill Statements Rated as Essential by Respondents

	Rank (Overall)	Rank (Cat.)	Mean	SD
Keeping up to date with relevant legislation. For example Health & Safety and Employment	1	1	4.76	0.52
To provide a safe and secure environment for visitors	1	1	4.76	0.44
Understanding customer needs	2	1	4.64	0.64
Understanding how to lead the organisation's employees	3	1	4.60	0.65
Training and developing staff	3	1	4.60	0.65
The ability to establish trust between staff and management	3	1	4.60	0.65
To be enthusiastic and committed to the attraction	3	1	4.60	0.58
Meeting customer needs	4	2	4.56	0.65
To motivate and enthuse employees	4	2	4.56	0.65
To communicate effectively	5	2	4.52	0.51
The ability to deal honestly in business	5	2	4.52	0.59

As was mentioned in the methodology section the respondents were also asked to rate the skill statements in terms of their importance for the future. At the top of the essential category here was the skill statement 'understanding how to lead the organisation's employees'. Another skill which was rated as being essential by the managers here echoing their views on current skill needs was 'Keeping up to date with relevant legislation'. Statements regarding the skills of 'marketing the attraction effectively' and 'being able to manage visitors' problems with understanding and sensitivity' were at the top of the considerable importance category. The skill statement regarding the 'ability to see and act beyond local boundaries - in a global tourism market', was placed at the top of

the moderately important future skills needs bracket. Rated lowest overall in this category was the statement, which referred to a manager's ability to 'understand the contradictions between stakeholders'. According to these results, the managers felt that possessing the 'ability to speak a foreign language' was also low in importance in the future. Again this is similar to how they felt about the importance of this skill currently.

Differences in Perceptions According to Certain Visitor Attraction Contextual Characteristics

In this section some of the more significant differences in perception surrounding the importance of various managerial skills are compared on the basis of the attractions contextual characteristics. The contextual variables, investigated were: Size, as measured by number of employees; whether the attraction was in an urban or rural location, and finally whether the attraction charged an entry fee or was free to the public. In sum it was felt that such contextual factors could go some way to explain how the respondents rated certain skills for importance.

The first contextual characteristic considered was whether the attraction charged an entry fee and those, which were free to the public. In the total sample, 67% of the attractions charged an entrance fee whilst 33% were free to the public. When the mean responses were analysed using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U statistical test for significance (where significance was taken to be $p <0.05$), it was found that there was a significant difference in perceptions of respondents for a number of skills, according to whether a entrance fee was charged. The skill statements: 'The ability to see and act beyond local boundaries', 'speaking a foreign language' and 'using the internet to promote and sell the attraction' were found to be more important amongst paid attractions (both now and in the future). When the attractions were considered according to their size, where those with 50 or less full-time employees (64%), and those with more than 50 employees (36%), only two variables were found to be significantly different. Firstly, for 'The ability to create and maintain shared values in the organisation (currently)', there was a significant difference of $p=0.032$, where the mean importance for those attractions with 50 full-time employees or less was M=3.81, and for those establishments with 51 full-time employees or more M=4.50. Secondly, for the skill of 'understanding the need for an appropriate pricing strategy (currently)', it was found that the mean for those sites with 50 employees or under was, M=3.53. The mean for those establishments with more than 51 employees was M=4.44, ($p = 0.020$). In the sample 16 (64%) of the attractions were located in an urban location, i.e. they were located in or close to a town or city, whilst the remaining nine or 36% were located in rural areas. Table 3 shows the statements for which there was significant difference (both now and in the future) according to where the attraction was located and the more important issues related to location are discussed further in the following section.

Table 3. Significant Differences in Importance of skills – Rural or Urban Visitor Attractions

Skills Statements (N = Now, F = Future)	No.	Mean Response (Urban)	Mean Response (Rural)	Mann-Whitney U Test (Significance)
Ability to see and act beyond local boundaries. (N)	25	2.44	4.44	0.015
Ability to see and act beyond local boundaries. (F)	25	2.81	4.67	0.013
To encourage team-working (N)	25	4.19	4.78	0.044
Speaking a foreign language(s) (N)	25	2.31	3.67	0.001
Speaking a foreign language(s) (F)	25	2.81	4.00	0.005
Keeping up to date with relevant legislation. (N)	25	4.94	4.44	0.023
To be creative and innovative (N)	24	4.00	4.78	0.013
Willing to learn new skills to cope with change (N)	25	4.13	4.67	0.018
Using technology in decision-making (N)	24	2.93	3.78	0.012
Using Internet to promote and sell the attraction (F)	25	4.31	5.00	0.013

Training and Development in the Attractions

As was mentioned previously, the respondents were also asked to comment on the training and development, which they had received for their present positions. Table 4 lists the various training and development activities which these managers had received as well as the types of training that they felt they were most lacking, categorised according to the specific skill sections as were presented in the main body of the questionnaire. This table illustrates that the most popular types of training and development were 'people management' and 'self-management' related. Examples of 'people management' type activities were: appraisal skills training; discipline and grievance training, recruitment and selection training and various other courses aimed at developing staff. In terms of 'self management' the most commonly mentioned activities were related to management development activities provided by various suppliers both in higher education and by private training and development

organisations.

Table 4. Skills, Training and Development Received or Lacking in Managers

Skills Types	T&D Received Frequency	Skills Lacking Frequency
Strategic/General management	3	1
People management	11	9
Self management	10	1
Operations management	1	3
Legal/Ethical management	4	1
Financial management	2	1
Technology	2	4
None	7	12

When questioned about skills/competence and training and development gaps in their organisations, almost 50% of the respondents felt that 'none' existed. This was perhaps not surprising given the fact that these general managers may be unlikely to criticise either their own operational and managerial skills level or that of others in the attraction. For those who did fell there were skills lacking most frequently they were related to 'people management' skills amongst managers. The types of management skills that were mentioned were for example: team thinking; communication skills; self-empowerment; leadership skills, and motivational skills.

Discussion

It can be seen that although constrained due to the small sample size, the above data has produced some interesting findings. Generally the mean importance ratings given to all the skill statements were relatively high. This portrays a high degree of homogeneity in the sample, with few skills identified as unimportant, either currently or in the future. On the one hand, such a result was predictable, bearing in mind that these were some of the most successful attractions (in terms of number of visitors). However, the diversity of the attractions involved, in relation to ownership, size, purpose and location, could have resulted in greater divergence of views.

In examining essential skills, it is interesting to note the predominance of 'legal and ethical concerns', with an emphasis on those skills which have to be held to satisfy legislative requirements. Those managers in rural locations, rated keeping up to date with relevant legislation lower than their urban counterparts. Although these skills were not identified as being essential in the literature, they were raised as an area for attention through the key informant interviews in the first phase of this research study. 'People management' skills were also generally rated as being essential amongst the respondents in the sample. In the literature 'soft' or human relation skills were identified as being important (Jacobs, 1982; Geurrier & Lockwood, 1989; Christou & Eaton, 1997). This emphasis on people management skills appeared to increase when the respondents rated future skill requirements. For example managers, particularly within rural attractions, indicated that encouraging team working was an essential skill. The ability to 'effectively manage diverse employee groups, including volunteers and seasonal workers' was also perceived to be an essential skill in the future, particularly by managers in publicly owned attractions. Such a finding is perhaps not surprising, given the reliance on such employees in these attractions, often charitable and voluntary in nature.

As was seen above, Winterton et al (2000) highlighted the importance of certain personal competences for managers in the future. Only possessing 'effective communications and enthusiasm and commitment' were generally rated as essential, currently and in the future, by managers in this sample. Further analysis revealed that managers in privately owned sites rated being innovative and creative higher than their counterparts in publicly owned attractions. This could be related to the competitive environment, and the continued need for such attractions to be commercially viable. This external environmental factor may be considered to have led managers of privately owned attractions to rate the need to ensure the commercial viability of the attraction as essential (M=4.80). Similarly private sector managers rated skills associated to marketing the attraction effectively both now and in the future as essential. Again these are managerial skills which were judged to be fundamental to the future success of visitor and tourist attractions both in the literature (Swarbrooke, 1994; Ladkin, 1999) and amongst the industry experts interviewed in the first stage of this study (see McCracken and Watson, 2000 for further details)

One of the most interesting facts to emerge in this study were the generally low importance ratings given to those skills which are 'strategic/general management' in nature. Almost 50% of the 'strategic/general management skills' were located within the moderately important category, with 33% remaining in that category when the managers rated the importance of skills for the future. This finding supports those of other researchers within the hospitality industry, who exposed an emphasis on operational type skills (Geurrier & Lockwood, 1989). Some

interesting findings emerged when the contextual circumstances of the attractions were considered in relation to these strategic skills. For example managers in rural locations rated the ability to 'see and act beyond local boundaries' as considerably important now and essential in the future. One explanation for this finding may be that, their often-isolated location may require them to be more creative and innovative in how they manage the attraction, with less local support mechanisms to utilise. When asked directly about this skill of 'being creative and innovative' it was generally found to be essential by managers of rural attractions. Other factors, which support a view that rurally based attraction managers, have to be more self-reliant, relate to their perceptions surrounding the future use of the Internet. Willingness to learn new skills to cope with change was also rated as being essential in the future, by rural attraction managers. When the data was analysed on the basis of size, it was found that managers of attractions employing 51 or more employees felt that the 'ability to create and maintain shared values in the organisation' was currently essential. Winterton et al. (2000) present this as a key organisational capability needed for future success.

In terms of other operational skills those associated with 'understanding and meeting customer needs' were also generally seen as being essential, both now and in the future. It was surprising however that at the current time, the use of technology to aid managerial decision making, and to enhance the visitor's experience, were rated as only moderately important skills. In certain sections of the literature (Winterton et. al, 2000; Keep & Mayhew, 1999) the ability to use Information Technology was emphasised as being a critical skill. These skills however were felt to be becoming more important and hence were rated higher in the future by these managers. For example 'using technology to promote attractions' was currently seen to be of considerable importance, but to be essential in five years time. In analysing this further, it was found that managers within paid attractions seemed to appreciate the importance of using technology, both now and in the future more than managers in free attractions. It was somewhat illuminating however that speaking a foreign language was clearly perceived as being the least important of all the skills listed. Further analysis, revealed that those attractions which did not charge an entrance fee rated this most lowly, both now and in the future, whereas paid attractions rated this as being currently of moderate importance and in the future of considerable importance. Managers of urban-based attractions rated foreign language skills much lower than rural attractions. It was considered that this may be associated with size (as measured by number of employees), but this was not found to be of significance when analysed.

In examining the training and development that these respondents had received, it can be seen that the managers appeared to want more courses and activities that were essentially operational in nature. Given the high degree of importance that the managers associated to possessing these types of skills this finding was not surprising. This finding also reflects what has been written by various authors who have argued about courses designed to enhance the skills and competence of employees in visitor attraction and tourism industry. For commentators like Ladkin, (2000) and Swarbrooke (1995) educators should focus in the future on providing skills related to customer service, retailing skills training, or food and beverage skills training to staff in these visitor attractions. But also they stress the need for more strategic training and development for these types of managers. Also significant here was the respondents views that 'people management' training and development was needed. Given the attention that such issues have attained both from generic and industry based researchers it would appear that attraction managers appreciate the need to develop these skills.

However less reassuring was the finding that when asked about managerial skills gaps present in their sites, almost 50% of the sample felt that none existed. There appeared to be evidence of a distinct lack of training aimed at enhancing technological skills in these attractions and only a small minority of respondents identified technological skill gaps in their organisations. This may convey a rather complacent attitude towards training and development needs or highly effective training, which has filled the gaps.

Conclusion and Contribution to HRD

An increasingly competitive environment is focusing attention on the managerial skill requirements for visitor attractions in Scotland. The purpose of this research was to explore what key skills were important to managers in the most successful visitor attractions. The discussion centred on key findings from the survey, in the context of the literature reviewed and the views elicited from the preliminary interviews. (McCracken & Watson, 2000)

The most illuminating finding was the importance given to operational level skills by the managers. Little credence was given to 'strategic/general, technological and self management skills', which were emphasised in earlier studies as being the very skills managers will require to deal with rapid change. This accentuates the need for training and development to equip managers with the skills needed to cope with the evolving business environment.

The survey revealed that some 'people management' skills were felt to be vital by managers and that training/development had taken place in many of the establishments. However, this was by no means universally supported and often there was a perceived lack of people management skills, above all others. This is obviously an area where further training and development is required. If these findings are indicative of the most successful

visitor attractions the study highlights the need for further research across the sector as a whole. This would enable policy and decision makers at the macro level in this industry to address appropriate training and development issues and thus enhance the position of visitor attractions as a whole in Scotland.

This paper contributes to the HRD body of knowledge in two ways. Firstly, scant attention has been paid to the tourism industry by HRD researchers. The growing importance of Tourism to many economies is making this a vital sector to research, which has developed distinct educational and training programmes. Secondly, this unique pilot study can be used as a platform to stimulate further discussion and debate surrounding managerial requirements not only in this industry but also at a more general level.

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An International Assignment and Managerial Performance: Job-related Variables Relative to Effective Performance of Japanese Expatriates

Kiyoe Harada
HRD Research

> *Despite the importance of international assignments in global business, expatriate failure has been a persistent problem in the literature. The study focuses on the effectiveness of Japanese expatriates and job-related variables to examine relationships between them. Multitheoretical frameworks; the theory of job characteristics, role perception, and work adjustment, were applied. The set of job-related variables were significantly related to expatriates' effectiveness. HRD implications and discussion are provided.*

Keywords: Expatriate Effectiveness, Job-Related Multidimensional Approach

An international assignment is one of the critical activities for the company and individual managers. In the literature, several studies have focused on expatriates' cultural adjustment, selection and training, including cross-cultural training, as well as on performance in international assignments. These studies contribute to finding dimensions of cultural adjustment, the premature returning criterion, selection criteria, and types of training programs (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Hanada, 1984; Katz & Seifer, 1996; Kealy, 1996; Nagai, 1996).

Problem Statement

Despite the importance of expatriates' roles in international business activities, failure in international assignments has been a persistently occurring problem in expatriate studies. Many studies discuss expatriate failure, defined by premature returning or financial burden due to premature returning. However, there have been questions raised regarding (a) relying on a single criterion, premature returning, and (b) a lack of descriptions of job-related success and/or effectiveness (Caligiuri, 1997; Harada, 1999; Kealey, 1996). This might have limited understanding of expatriates' effectiveness in actual international assignments. In fact, approximately 50% to 80% of expatriates tend to perform less effectively than expected (Kealey, 1996) and three-forths of Japanese expatriates tend to be adequate to lower performers (Sadamori, 1994). The criticality of these remarks is that these managers could be seen as successful, based on the premature returning criterion, even though they may not be effective. However, few studies have looked into effectiveness relative to job-related variables (Caligiuri, 1997; Harada, 1999).

Given these cautions, understanding the job-related effectiveness of expatriates has been a critical issue. Responding to this issue, the assessment of expatriates' effectiveness should take a multidimensional approach in an international work setting where more responsibilities and a wider range of work activities are required. In addition, an effectiveness measure should be based on job-related criteria (Bird & Dunbar, 1991; Borkowski, 1999; Harada, 1999). The purpose of the study was to examine relationships between the effectiveness of expatriates and the following set of independent variables: (a) job content, (b) job context, (c) role conflict, (d) role ambiguity, (e) cross-cultural work adjustment, and (f) length of stay in a host country, and the dependent variable (the effectiveness of expatriates' performance in their international assignments). The study also examined a proposed model of expatriate effectiveness. The focus was on Japanese expatriates in their U.S. assignments. Results of this study will contribute to the body of HRD knowledge through providing empirical data and closely job-related information. This information also provides implications for HRD roles in international management and suggestions relative to expatriate training and development.

Theoretical Frameworks and Hypotheses Development

Job-related factors influence the effectiveness of expatriates in the ways they perform the daily tasks, interact with local employees, and deal with different perceptions toward work. Based on these notions, the study used the

following theoretical frameworks; (a) the theory of job characteristics, (b) role perceptions, including role conflict and role ambiguity, and (c) cross-cultural work adjustment.

Theory of Job Characteristics

The characteristics of a given job can be seen as a part of the complex nature of international assignments, which could relate to the way expatriates carry out their assignments (Bird & Dunbar, 1991; Dowling, Schuler, &

Welch, 1994; Naumann, 1992). The job characteristics theory concerns the designing of a job and tries to understand how job characteristics relate to individual effectiveness. The theory suggests that certain kinds of job characteristics tend to increase the effectiveness of job performance. Based on this assumption, characteristics of a job are composed of job content (job characteristics) and job context (immediate work environment) (Oldham, Hackman, & Pearce, 1976; Sims, Szilagyi, & Keller, 1976).

Job content refers to the summated scores from four dimensions; (a) variety (the wide range of tasks, equipment and procedures in work), (b) task identity (whole or a portion of work to be defined), (c) autonomy (given freedom for work scheduling, procedures to be followed and tools), and (d) feedback (receiving job information) (Sims et al, 1976). These dimensions of job content can be magnified in the U.S. work environment where Japanese expatriates are given a wide range of work activities under limited operational resources and support from headquarters. The dimensions of job content indicate aspects of the job in international assignments. Therefore, job content that Japanese expatriates perceive would relate to effective performance.

Job context concerns the immediate work environments relative to social relationships. This is based on the assumption that a social environment could relate to the effectiveness of employees through minimizing distractive relationships within a workplace. Therefore, employees are able to concentrate on their performance (Oldham, Hackman, & Pearce, 1976). Job context includes two dimensions: (a) friendship opportunity and (b) dealing with others. The former dimension refers to the degree to which Japanese expatriates see opportunities to have friendships with America employees. The latter refers to the degree to which Japanese employees involve American employees in the course of the completion of their jobs. International transfer inevitably requires expatriate managers to build new social relationships with local employees. In this regard, how Japanese expatriates see social relationships with American employees would relate to their effectiveness in the assignments.

Hypothesis #1. There will be a relationship between job content that expatriates perceive in their jobs and the effectiveness of their performance.

Hypothesis#2. There will be a relationship between job context that expatriates perceive in their jobs and the effectiveness of their performance.

Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity

International management exercises the set of practices where an organizational system is operated in a different socio-economic system with different organizational systems. Within the multiplicity of these systems, demands for success from different organizations may bring different interpretations of role requirements and expectations. Such different interpretations can depend on how expatriate managers perceive their roles in carrying out their assignments. A role perception study is derived from organizational structure as well as managerial control and coordination. The focus of the study is on employees' reactions to the given organizational roles and about information concerning performance expectations (Van Sell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981). The assumption is that when employees perceive a high level of conflict and ambiguity in the given role, these perceived roles are negatively related to their performance due to increased stress, which leads to employees who become dissatisfied (Jackson & Schuler, 1985). The role perceptions include: (a) role conflict and (b) role ambiguity. Role conflict is defined as "the dimensions of congruency-incongruency in the requirements of the role" and a definition of role ambiguity is "the degree to which clear information is lacking regarding the scope and responsibilities of the given organizational position" (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970, p155).

Role conflict and role ambiguity have also been applied in expatriate adjustment studies, which found that expatriate managers tended to have difficulty in predicting the outcomes of their behaviors in foreign assignments (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999). Due, in part, to Japanese companies often giving higher managerial positions to their expatriates, they often experience difficulties in role adjustment to the given international assignments (Sonoda, 1998). In addition, perceived expatriate roles may be different between Japanese

and American employees, which results in Japanese expatriates ending up with role conflict and role ambiguity in their U.S assignments.

Hypothesis #3. There will be a relationship between role conflict that expatriates perceive in their assignments and the effectiveness of their performance.

Hypothesis #4. There will be a relationship between role ambiguity that expatriates perceive in their assignments and the effectiveness of their performance.

Cross-Cultural Work Adjustment

Due to international assignments automatically involving physical and psychological transitions from one country (home country) to another (the host country), studies have indicated adjustment problems as a major reason for expatriate failure (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Tung, 1981). Cross-cultural adjustment suggests that as individuals go through adjustment stages, they become adjusted to a host country environment, and as such they can function in their given assignments (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Unlike domestic work adjustment, international work adjustment usually requires expatriates to deal with greater disruptions of role routines in work, tasks, and social relationships. Therefore, the level of uncertainty that expatriates have to deal with is much greater in an international adjustment than in a domestic adjustment (Janssens, 1995; Shaffer et al., 1999). In addition, a study by Thomas and Toyne (1995) examined adjustment of managerial behaviors among Japanese expatriates. Their study showed that when American subordinates perceived that Japanese expatriates were well-adjusted to American-style managerial behaviors, the Japanese were perceived to be more effective. While expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment has been studied, cross-cultural work adjustment has not been included in examining the effectiveness of Japanese expatriates.

Hypothesis #5. There will be a relationship between cross-cultural work adjustment that expatriates perceive in their assignments and the effectiveness of their performance.

Furthermore, studies examining a relationship between work adjustment and expatriate effectiveness have shown inconsistent results, relative to statistical significance and magnitude of relationships (Harada, 1999; Parker & McEvoy, 1993). These inconsistencies raise a question about what factors really matter for expatriate performance when they are in assignments.

Research Question 1. Which of the two variables, job content or cross-cultural work adjustment, will have a stronger relationship with the effectiveness of expatriate performance?

Length of Stay in a Host Country

The assumption underlying the length of expatriates' stay in a host country is that the longer they stay, the more familiar they become with their jobs and working conditions, and the more familiar expatriates become, the better their performance will be. Therefore, the length of stay in a host country can be one of the influential factors that could relate to effectiveness of performance. However, the length of stay depends on the specific companies and the specific assignments the expatriates are given. Therefore, expatriates' lengths of stay in U.S. assignments vary from individual expatriate to individual expatriate.

Hypothesis #6. There will be a relationship between the length of stay in a host country and the effectiveness of expatriate performance.

Expatriate Effectiveness

In the expatriate literature, expatriate failure, defined as premature return from a host country, has been a major criterion, while a clearly defined description of expatriate success remains lacking (Kealey, 1996). In addition, expatriate effectiveness has been equated with cultural adjustments, job satisfaction, expatriates' intention to stay, and/or intercultural effectiveness (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Clark & Hammer, 1995; Feldman & Thompson, 1993; Janssens, 1995). However, predictors and criteria are used interchangeably and findings tend to be inconsistent. Few studies have looked into expatriate effectiveness relative to managerial skills, measurement of effectiveness, and cultural influence on managerial behaviors (Black & Porter, 1991; Caligiuri, 1997; Clark & Hammer, 1995; Harada, 1999). However, understanding about what variables may relate to effective expatriate performance still remains

somewhat inadequate. Based on the complex nature of international assignments, assessing the effectiveness of expatriate performance should take a multidimensional job-related approach. Through the discussions on each job-related factor, this study proposed a linear relationship between the selected independent variables and the effectiveness variable.

Hypothesis #7. There will be a relationship between the set of independent variables: (a) job content, (b) job context, (c) role conflict, (d) role ambiguity, (e) cross-cultural work adjustment, and (f) length of stay in a host country, and (g) the dependent variable (the effectiveness of expatriates 'performance in their assignments).

Research Question 2. Which independent variables in a Model of Expatriate Effectiveness contribute to explaining the effectiveness of Japanese expatriates in their U.S. assignments?

Methodology

The sample for this study was Japanese expatriates assigned to work in the United States from their home offices. The sample size (n=105) was based on the use of multiple regression analysis. Survey questionnaires were sent to 103 Japanese companies who agreed to participate in this study. The final usable data (n=77) was obtained from 87 companies who responded to the questionnaires (84.4% response rate). The questionnaires: (a) Job Characteristic Inventory, (b) role conflict and role ambiguity, (c) cross-cultural work adjustment, (d) effectiveness measure, and (e) demographic information about companies and individual participants, were sent to the companies. Most Japanese expatriates (87.6%) were in their first international assignments.

Measurements

Measurements used in this study have been developed in the U.S. Therefore, translation and back-translation processes were undertaken. Job Characteristic Inventory, by Sims et al (1976), consists of 30 items, including job content (20 items) and job context (10 items). A five-point scale is used, which ranges from 1 as "very little and/or minimum amount" to 5 as "very much and/or maximum amount." Role conflict and Role ambiguity, by Rizzo et al. (1970), consists of 21 items, including role conflict (11 items) and role ambiguity (10 items). It measures the degree of role conflict and ambiguity that expatriates perceive. A seven-point scale is used, ranging from 1 as "very false" to 7 as "very true." Cross-cultural work adjustment contains four items, developed by Black (1988) and these items have been applied to Japanese samples (Black, 1990; Nagai, 1996). It measures how well adjusted expatriates are to the given assignment. A seven-point scale is used, ranging from 1 as "very unadjusted" to 7 as "very adjusted." The length of stay in the U.S. was indicated by the number of years and months the expatriates had been in their assignments. Effectiveness, which was adapted from Sims and Szilagyi (1976), was modified for this study. It includes four items: (a) quality of work produced, (b) quantity of work produced, (c) knowledge of work in the given assignment, and (d) overall performance effectiveness. A seven-point scale is used, ranging from 1 as "the lowest effectiveness" to 7 as "the highest effectiveness."

Findings and Conclusions

Of 77 final usable data sets, 88.3% were from Japanese wholly-owned companies and the remainder were from joint ventures. The major industries were manufacturing and combined manufacturing and sales (52.4%), and others included finance, trading, and chemicals. The mean age of Japanese expatriates was 36.5 years and the mean of length of stay in their U.S. assignment was 3.2 years. The top three rankings of current positions in the given assignments were middle management (57.3%), line management (20.7%), and supervisor (11%). Job functions that Japanese expatriates held in their assignments included marketing, finance & accounting, production engineer, dual job functions, etc.

Results of testing Hypotheses 1-6, examining the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable are shown in Table 1. Hypotheses examining relationships between job content (r = .38, p < .05), role ambiguity (r = .29, p < .05), cross-cultural work adjustment (r = .63, p < .05), as well as length of stay in the U.S.(r=.15, p<.05) and the effectiveness of expatriate performance were supported. However, hypotheses, examining relationships between job context and role conflict were not supported at p< .05. The result of Research Question 1 showed that work adjustment (r = .63) had a stronger relationship with effectiveness than job content (r = .38).

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for All Variables (n=77)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Effectiveness	19.98	3.22	(.83)						
2. Job content	81.68	9.54	.38*	(.84)					
3. Job context	33.17	5.48	-.03	.43*	(.87)				
4. Role conflict	47.01	7.40	-.05	.42*	.29*	(.67)			
5. Role ambiguity	47.19	6.27	.29*	.32*	.29*	.15*	(.70)		
6. Work adjustment	20.25	3.11	.63*	.18*	.10	-.06	.26*	(.79)	
7. Length of stay in the U.S.	3.26	2.29	.15*	.03	-.16*	-.08	-.06	-.03	1.00

Notes: *p< .05, Numbers in parentheses are reliabilities.

Hypothesis #7 examined the linear relationship between the set of independent variables and the dependent variable by using multiple regression with simultaneous entry for the independent variables (Table 2). This relationship formed the proposed model of expatriate performance effectiveness in an international assignment. The results of the full regression model were: Multiple R = .74, R-square = .56, F =. 14.8, and p < .05. Therefore, there were statistically significant relationships between the set of job-related variables and the effectiveness of expatriate performance. The proposed model was applied to this data set. The results for Research Question 2 showed the following rankings; 1st-work adjustment (ß = .54, p < .05), 2nd - job content (ß = .40, p < .05), and 3rd - job context (ß = -.23, p < .05). On the other hand, role conflict, role ambiguity, and length of stay in a host country did not show statistical significance. Therefore, the effectiveness of Japanese expatriate performance in their U.S. assignments was explained by adjustment to their work, content of tasks in their jobs, and context of their workplaces.

Table 2. Regression of Expatriate Effectiveness on the Independent Variables (Simultaneous Entry) (n=77)

Full Regression Model	B	□	t	Sig.
Constant	1.34		.45	.65
Variables				
Job content	.14	.40	4.01	.00
Job context	.13	-. 22	-2 .45	.12
Role conflict	-.06	-. 14	-1 .52	.13
Role ambiguity	.06	.11	1.31	.19
Work adjustment	.56	.54	6.48	.00
Length of stay in the U.S.	.16	.11	1.43	.16

Full regression model: R-square=.56, R-square change=.559, F=14.81, p<.00

Discussion, Recommendations, and Implications to HRD

The study focused on the relationship between job-related variables and the effectiveness of Japanese managers in their U.S. assignments. A multidimensional framework was applied to test each relationship between variables and multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the set of independent variable and expatriate effectiveness. The Theory of Job Characteristics suggests that a high score on job content and job context tend to result in increased effective performance. The effectiveness of Japanese expatriates is related to job content in the U.S. assignments, which also explains a large amount of the variance in effectiveness. However, job context in this study did not support the theory. In this respect, regardless of the immediate work settings, Japanese expatriates can be effective. Regarding the high level of job content (highly complex and demanding in U.S.

assignments) and the fact that most Japanese expatriates were on their first international assignments, these expatriates face a major challenge in the given assignments. In this regard, Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals and Human Resource (HR) managers should understand the task characteristics in an international assignment. As such, HRD professionals can integrate job-related training programs that widen the range of job skills into a part of pre-departure preparation. Some possible job-related training can be done through job rotations and/or project assignments. Then, HR manager can set up job rotations and/or project assignments according to individual career interests.

Role conflict and role ambiguity were examined to see whether perceived roles in the given international assignments related to the effectiveness of expatriate performance. These two concepts suggest that higher role conflict and ambiguity tends to result in lower effective performance. In this study, Japanese expatriates showed some levels of role conflict and ambiguity. However, role conflict showed a negative, but not statistically significant relationship with effectiveness. In contrast, role ambiguity, involving performance expectations and organizational factors, showed a statistically significant positive relationship. However, these inconsistent findings may not be so surprising. Rizzo et al. (1970) states that employees tended to put up with stressful situations and to develop adaptive behaviors when they knew their length of stay in that situation. Based on this notion, the duration of overseas assignments among Japanese companies assign expatriates to stay between 4 and 5 years and the average years in the U.S. assignments was 3.2 years. In this regard, Japanese expatriates might have had an idea how long they were going to be in the assignments, which tended to reduce stress and to allow them to acquire adaptive behaviors. However, further study, examining relationships between role perceptions and expatriates, should provide additional information. The results of this study provide implications for HRD professionals. For instance, Japanese companies often give higher managerial positions to their expatriates, which tends to cause Japanese expatriates role conflict and ambiguity. In addition, Japanese expatriates often face unclear performance expectations because of different perceptions in effective performance between Japanese and U.S. managers. In this respect, HRD professionals can assist home and local offices to establish guidelines, regarding role requirements, performance standards and appraisal criteria. These guidelines are provided to expatriates at pre-departure briefing sessions.

Cross-cultural work adjustment is based on the assumption of a relationship between a high level of work adjustment and effectiveness of expatriate performance. The study conformed this assumption and cross-cultural work adjustment was the variable contributing most to the Japanese expatriates' effectiveness. Regarding this result, HRD professionals should focus on work-related adjustment issues in training programs, which help expatriates adjust to the given assignments in a relatively short period of time. To do this, local HR managers collect actual job-related problems and HRD professionals provide problem-solving skills at expatriate work sites. In addition, adjustment training should not exclude cultural aspects, such as differences in work culture (e.g., values, motivation, and attitudes).

Length of stay in a host country examined whether the time to become functional in the given assignment would relate to effectiveness. The result was no significant relationship with the effectiveness of Japanese expatriate performance. Interestingly, none of the independent variables in this study showed a significant relationship with length of stay in a host country. This result might be due to the mean length of stay in the U.S. assignments (3.2 years) among Japanese expatriates. However, further research should be done and accumulated date will provide a possible explanation for this result.

The linear relationship of the independent variables with the effectiveness of expatriate performance was intended to examine a model of effective expatriates in an international assignment. The full regression model found a substantive relationship between the set of job-related variables and effectiveness. In this regard, HRD professionals can help management and the HR manager provide the following information: (a) adequate task-related information in international assignments, (b) individual career plans and delineating job rotations and project assignments, (c) clearly-defined role requirements, performance expectations, differences in role perceptions, and (d) cross-cultural work-related adjustment issues.

Limitations of this study are the sampling method and size. Due to the small sample size used in this study, the findings tend to be unstable and the results can only generalize to those companies, which took part in this study. For future research, a large random sample is required. The nature of an international assignment varies with the type of business, such as manufacturing, finance, and trading. The variability of business could influence results of a study. In this regard, specifying types of businesses is another possible consideration for future study. Because some independent variables showed inconsistent results, other variables should be taken into the model of effectiveness in future studies. Possible additional variables include contextual managerial factors, specific expatriate factors, and cultural factors. The study contains an inherent common method problem; therefore, assessing the effectiveness of expatriates requires a third party.

Contributions to New Knowledge in HRD

The results of this study, focusing on job-related variables in examining the effectiveness of expatriates in international assignments, expands HRD knowledge in the following areas: (a) job characteristics theory and cross-cultural work adjustment concepts are applied in an expatriate study with foreign expatriates, (b) a multidimensional approach is useful in the expatriate study and multiple theoretical frameworks specify boundaries of effectiveness where variables are controlled for hypotheses testing and (c) factors contributing to the effectiveness of expatriate performance are found. Particularly, multiple theoretical frameworks provide HRD professionals the following practical contributions:

1. Making collaborative efforts in international management by helping home and local management to provide information about (a) tasks in international assignments, (b) individual career plans and delineating job rotations and project assignments, (c) role requirements, performance expectations, and differences in role perceptions in an assignment, (d) cross-cultural work-related issues, and (e) expatriates performance problems.
2. Expanding roles of HRD professionals through participating in expatriate selection, career management, and performance evaluation.
3. Developing job-related training, such as a wide range of tasks, work-related problem-solving skills, and different role perceptions in international assignments.
4. Redesigning cross-cultural training programs by focusing on the local business and work culture (e.g., motivation, values, attitudes), which help expatriates understand local employees' behaviors underlying cultural influence.

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Modeling the Impact of Managerial Behavior in a Store Environment

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> *Organizations measure different aspects of workplace behavior and performance, yet few capitalize on these data by empirically demonstrating key relationships among variables. This study contributes to the literature by: (a) providing an applied example of linkage research that leverages various sources of organizational data; and (b) modeling a predictive relationship between managerial behavior (multisource feedback) and internal (climate survey ratings) and external (sales and shrinkage) performance measures across 500 different stores in a retail organization.*

As products of the information age (or perhaps more appropriately now, the *internet* age), it should come as no surprise that organizations are relying more and more on measurement to drive their assessments of employee talent, managerial behavior, and various organizational outcomes such as satisfaction and empowerment. As Hronec (1993) predicted several years ago, these data have indeed become the *vital signs* of organizational health and performance in contemporary life. Unfortunately, despite the significant amount of time, energy, and expense invested in these processes, many firms have failed to take full advantage of the wealth of rich information that has been collected (Church & Waclawski, 2001). Whether due to political concerns, methodological complexities, disconnected information technology, or general lack of awareness, there is a tendency among many firms to conceptualize their various measures and data sources as independent entities with unique foci.

This situation, however, can be improved. As applied researchers in HRD, OD and I/O psychology, we have a unique set of analytic skills and conceptual thinking that can be used to help organizations make better use of their data, and simultaneously contribute new knowledge and findings to these fields in general. In fact, one could argue that as organizational scientists we have an inherent professional *obligation* to help organizations leverage (and ultimately align) their various data sources to help drive understanding, utilization and improvement. To this end, the purpose of this study is contribute to the literature in two ways. First, this paper will provide an applied example of linkage research in action that leverages various sources and levels (individual, group and organizational) of organizational data. Second, the results of this applied analysis are intended to build on our current understanding of the effects of managerial behavior on internal and external measures of performance across a large set of organizational sub-units. More specifically, this study will explore the predictive relationship of individual managerial behavior (assessed via multisource feedback ratings) on both "softer" internal outcomes (as measured by results from an organizational culture/climate survey) and "harder" external outcomes (as measured by actual sales and product shrinkage) using data collected from over 500 stores in a retail organization. The results of this study will have significant implications for (a) our theoretical understanding of the effects of day-to-day supervisory behaviors on both employee attitudes and true bottom-line performance, as well as for (b) the continued viability and relevance of other related HRD, OD and I/O psychology interventions such as management and leadership development efforts.

Managerial Behavior as a Key Driver of Performance. Before describing the study itself, it is important to review the existing literature and research on the effects of managerial behavior on performance at the individual and organizational levels. As almost anyone with experience in the workplace will tell you, the behaviors of one's immediate manager (i.e., supervisor) have a significant and lasting impact on the way in which work gets performed. Although there are a myriad of systemic and contextual factors that also impact individual and organizational performance—such as the visibility and/or perceived ethics of senior leadership, alignment with the mission and strategy, the nature of the internal systems and processes, the organizational culture, and the nature of the job-

person fit (e.g., Burke & Litwin, 1992; Katz & Kahn, 1978)—none of these have as much of a direct influence as the day-to-day actions of a given manager on the shop floor. At the most basic micro level of analysis, managers impact the individual experience of each direct report under their supervision. They do this by engaging in such activities as providing direction, communicating decisions, recognizing employees for their contributions, and offering career development opportunities, all of which in turn, creates a work group climate (Church, 1995a; Daniel, 1985; Schneider & Bowen, 1985) that affects the way work is performed. Moreover, at the meso and macro levels of analysis, the cumulative actions and decisions of managers reflect (and indeed shape) the overall culture of the organization and the operationalization of its managerial subsystems as well (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Thus, understanding effective managerial behavior in a given context is critical for organizational survival and success.

It is for these reasons that day-to-day behavior is one of the key targets of and levers for HRD, OD and I/O psychology related change efforts. Although typically approached from an individualistic perspective via some form of behaviorally-based diagnostic measure such as multisource feedback (Antonioni, 1996; Bracken, 1996; Church & Waclawski, 1998; McLean, 1997; O'Reilly, 1994), the larger design is often one of communication and reinforcement through one-on-one coaching to enhance self-awareness with the expressed purpose of creating a significant change in the behaviors of the leaders and managers of the company toward some new desired outcome or future state (Church, Waclawski, & Burke, 2000; Goodstone, & Diamante, 1998). Moreover, many different approaches to executive and leadership development--from the Leaders Developing Leaders (LDL) model (Tichy, 1997), to more traditional skill based training (e.g., Shipper & Neck, 1990), and more recently competency modeling--also heavily emphasize the importance of the manager-direct report dyadic relationship in organizational success and performance.

In general, there is strong support in the literature for the impact of managerial behaviors on certain individual attitudes and perceptions as experienced in the workplace. For example, relationships have been demonstrated in the following areas: providing direction and autonomy to feelings of empowerment (Coruzzi & Burke, 1994), a dual emphasis on task and people concerns to feelings of team spirit (Daniel, 1985), participation in decision-making to satisfaction and acceptance of workplace change (Sagie & Koslowsky, 1994), inspiring and motivating employees around a shared vision on satisfaction and feelings of contribution (Church, 1995a), and relationship management skills on peer to peer influence effectiveness (Church & Waclawski, 1999).

While these studies and their associated findings are certainly important for understanding the "internal" or subjective impact of managerial actions on employees (such as culture/climate, job satisfaction, or feelings of empowerment), few studies, or organizations for that matter, have taken the next step in the process to include *external* measures of performance. Largely, this is due to either (a) unforeseen complexities inherent in the data linking process itself (e.g., such as lack of foresight regarding the depth to which a certain organizational survey effort might need to be examined, or the anxieties associated with collecting certain demographic information on a multisource feedback measure), or (b) internal turf wars and/or fear of releasing confidential performance information and metrics that are vital to the organization's position in the marketplace. Despite these often justifiable concerns, however, making data-based connections between specific behaviors in a given setting and hard organizational outcomes provides a very powerful means for diagnosis and assessing levers for change (Church, 1995b; Rucci, Kirn, & Quinn, 1998; Wiley, 1996). Moreover, these same linkages can provide an important and very credible means of justifying the impact of OD, HRD and I/O psychology related interventions (Cady, 1998; Church, 2000). Since much has been written, and many criticisms levied, at the impact (or lack thereof) of many organizational change initiatives in general (e.g., Golembiewski & Sun, 1990; McLean, Sullivan & Rothwell, 1995), research and practice that support this approach and demonstrate its impact are sorely needed. In sum, demonstrating these types of linkages is useful to three sets of constituents: (1) the organization itself from a larger decision-making perspective; (2) other practitioners and organizations who might benefit from leveraging their existing data sets in a similar manner to build internal predictive models; and (3) the fields of HRD, OD and I/O psychology from a research and theory-building perspective.

Research Questions

Although exploratory in nature, the following research will attempt to demonstrate the effects that specific managerial behaviors have on both soft and hard outcomes in a retail store environment. Based on prior research in service organizations (e.g., Schneider & Bowen, 1985), it is hypothesized that certain behaviors (or clusters of behaviors) will emerge as significant predictors of various aspects of the store climate as experienced by employees. For the purposes of this study, climate is conceptualized as an *internal* outcome or performance measure since it reflects the

state of employee perceptions and attitudes toward their work and the organization in general. Next, it is hypothesized that the resulting climate (i.e., employees' perceptions and attitudes) will, in turn, affect actual *external* store performance. While managerial behavior is also expected to be significantly correlated with the same set of external outcomes, since employees are the primary point of interface with the customer, the relationship to be modeled is the path between behaviors → climate → performance.

The final research question to be considered is the potential effect of self-awareness on both internal and external outcome measures. Much applied research over the last ten years has been directed at understanding the effects of different levels of managerial self-awareness (MSA) on effectiveness and performance. While several studies have linked MSA to individual performance such as supervisor assessments, promotions, or even client ratings (e.g., Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Church, 1997a; 1997b; Furnham & Stringfield, 1994; Van Velsor, Taylor, & Leslie, 1993), few have extended their analysis to include the same sorts of internal or external performance measures such as those examined here. Thus, it is hypothesized that higher levels of MSA among store managers will be significantly related to more positive store climates and improved store performance.

Method

The data used in the present study were collected over a twelve month period in multiple stages from individuals in over 500 different stores of a nationally known chain with their corporate headquarters located on the East Coast. More specifically, following the administration of an all employee organizational culture/climate survey, multisource feedback data regarding the day-to-day behaviors of store managers were gathered from the managers themselves (i.e., the focal individual), up to 7 of their direct reports, up to 8 of their peers, and their supervisors (i.e., the district and/or regional managers) in several stages of administration (this was done to avoid response burden and time lags associated with the extended delivery process.). Both the survey and feedback efforts were part of a larger organization development and change initiative being driven by the new CEO of the firm in an effort to reshape the culture for the future. To this end, the behaviors being assessed focused on such areas as integrity, customer focus, respect, teamwork, learning, vision and accountability.

Measures. The culture/climate survey instrument used in the study was administered to all store employees (and all corporate and regional staff as well, though that data is beyond the scope of this paper). Responses were obtained from a total of 22,374 employees overall, 11,086 of which were store employees and therefore included in these analyses. The survey itself was a 94 item measure designed specifically to assess the key aspects of the organization's new strategy (e.g., excellence, respect, learning, teamwork, etc.). The items were primarily descriptive in nature and covered areas such as the employee's immediate manager, the work location, the organization as a whole, and the employee's personal internal state (e.g., "management acts according to the highest ethical standards," "people feel valued as employees of this company," "employees trust and respect management"). The majority (92 of 94) of these questions used a standard 1 to 5 extent scale where 1 equaled "to a very small extent" and 5 equaled "to a very great extent." A total score (based on the uniformly scaled 92 items) reflecting the overall average rating level (or "general positivity") was created for initial analysis purposes. Since the survey responses used for this paper were comprised only of ratings from store managers and employees (not the entire company), these data are arguably more representative of store climate (an internal outcome measure) than organizational culture.

The instrument used for the multisource feedback (MSF) process was also a custom designed measure. It was comprised of 40 items that assessed the level of practice of the desired behaviors (representing the same seven core values as assessed in the survey, though there were not the same items) for the future of the organization. A similar 1 to 5 extent scale was also used. In total, MSF data were collected on over 1,700 individuals in the organization. For the purposes of this study, however, the data examined consisted of self-ratings from 508 store managers, 2,650 of their direct reports, 900 of their colleagues, and 513 of their supervisors. This translates to average responses of 4.95 direct reports, 1.74 peers (note that peer responses were lower here than in typical research of this nature, probably due to the fact that in many cases these represent other managers located in other stores), and 1 supervisor per store manager being rated. Alpha coefficients for the total scores by perspective are listed in Table 1.

In terms of demographics, the average age of these 508 store managers was 44.67 years old, and ranged from 22 to 67. The vast majority were "old line" males (93.7%) with 20.58 years tenure in the organization, and 17.91 years

in a supervisory position. With respect to education, 62.1% had finished high school, 7.1% technical school, and another 19.8% had a Bachelors degree.

Finally, hard (external) performance data by store for the same timeframe was obtained from the HR departments across the various regions and linked directly to the survey and MSF results. These performance data included: total sales, average sales per week, and stock on hand (a measure of shrinkage). Although aggregation at the store level, which is required for this type of approach, resulted in a reduction in total sample size, the final linked datasets contained approximately 500 cases of matched responses.

Analyses. In general, the approach to analysis involved three stages. First, summary scores were compared for overall effects across the various measures. Averaged ratings by source (e.g., for direct reports and for peers) were used for those individuals with more than one direct report or peer responding to the MSF process. Next multiple regression models were examined using principle components derived factor scores to determine specific areas of impact with respect to managerial behaviors (the independent variable) and outcomes (both internal—i.e., climate perceptions from the survey results, and hard performance metrics). Finally, the relationship between self-direct report congruence (the operationalization of MSA) and performance was examined using both a difference score and categorical agreement approach (e.g., Atwater & Yammarino, 1992; Church, 1997a; 2000; Church & Waclawski, 1999; Van Velsor et al., 1993) for comparison purposes with prior research.

Results & Discussion

Table 1 presents a correlation table and descriptive results for each of the key summary level measures in the study. In general, there are several interesting points to note here. First, in examining the upper quadrant only (i.e., the within-method MSF results) it was apparent that store managers and their direct report ratings yielded higher correlations overall ($r = .22$) than those of managers with either peers or supervisors ($r = .17, r = .13$, respectively).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Among Key Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Self (MSF)	3.83	.43	.95							
2. Direct Reports (MSF)	3.83	.41	*.22*	.98						
3. Peers (MSF)	3.77	.35	*.17*	*.30*	.97					
4. Supervisors (MSF)	3.51	.45	*.13*	*.19*	*.32*	.96				
5. Climate Survey	2.99	.45	.06	*.28*	.03	*.13*	.98			
6. Total Sales	11.71	7.02	.01	*.13*	*.22*	*.29*	.02			
7. Avg. Weekly Sales	0.24	0.14	.01	*.15*	*.18*	*.32*	.08	*.85*		
8. Stock	-13121.29	45553.91	.08	*.13*	*.13*	*.10*	*.27*	-.07	-.02	
9. Age of Manager	44.66	8.58	*.12*	-.03	.01	-.03	*-.10*	.07	.04	-.03

Notes: Reliabilities are printed on the diagonal. Significant correlations are in bold italics. Sales figures are in the $1,000,000. Mean scores reported for multisource feedback (MSF) measure and climate survey represent summary scores across all items.

This is encouraging as many other applied ratings studies (e.g., Church, 2000; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988) have found self and direct report assessments to be the *least* related overall. Often attributed to political maneuvering, and probably based on the nature of the populations typically studied—i.e., senior executives in major corporations—it is both interesting and useful to see that front line store managers appear to share more similar perceptions with their direct reports than anyone else. Moreover, while self-ratings were significantly higher than that of supervisors ($t = 12.37, p < .001$) there were no other major level differences evident among self, direct report or peer assessments, which is also somewhat unusual in the ratings literature, and is probably supportive of the differential nature of this front-line managerial population.

The second item of interest here is that while there was no significant relationship present for self-ratings and climate survey responses overall (i.e., an indicator of "general positivity"), direct report ratings regarding the extent to which the store manager practiced the 40 behaviors was significantly correlated ($r = .28, p < .001$) with both

the internal experience (i.e., survey results) and total sales ($r = .13$, $p < .01$). Weekly sales and stock inventory were also related. As expected, the simple relationships with managerial behavior (i.e., direct report ratings) were stronger with the internal than with the external outcomes. While these correlations represent a relatively small percentage of variance explained, they do suggest the presence of significant relationships which might be further explored. Interestingly, both peer and supervisor ratings on the MSF instruments were significantly correlated with performance as well, though in the case of the supervisor, part of this relationship may have been enhanced by his/her knowledge of that individual's overall performance. As might be expected, survey results and ratings from these two sets of raters did not yield particularly strong relationships (as they were not located in the store itself).

One other interesting set of findings regarding store manager age is also worth mentioning. While older managers gave themselves higher behavior ratings, they tended to receive lower ratings at the store level on the climate survey overall. Although this might seem a trivial finding at first, it does suggest that older managers may not have, as some researchers have suggested, a more positive ratings bias in general. Interestingly enough, tenure with the organization was unrelated to any of the other variables except age ($r = .53$, $p < .001$). Years as a supervisor, however, while uncorrelated with the survey results or any of the behavior ratings other than self-ratings again ($r = .12$, $p < .01$), was significantly related to total sales ($r = .14$, $p < .01$) and average sales ($r = .11$, $p < .05$), though not stock. This would suggest that, independent of the behaviors being demonstrated, there is a tendency for more experienced managers (though not necessarily those who are older or those with more tenure in the same company) to be better at managing the total sales for their stores. Additional analyses are required, however, to test the effects of this relationship above and beyond those exhibited with respect to the behavior ratings.

Finally, while the data were examined for potential response rate related issues, no significant effects were evident between the number of co-workers providing ratings on the MSF instrument and the level (i.e., mean scores) received. Thus, consistent with recent research on MSF applications in a professional service firm setting (Church, Rogelberg, & Waclawski, 2000), managerial performance did not have an impact on the total number of ratings received (with correlations ranging from .00 to -.05). Interestingly enough, however, there was a significant relationship on the parallel survey side of the data collection process. That is, the higher the financial performance of the store, the more surveys were returned per store ($r = .40$, $p < .001$, $r = .48$, $p < .001$), though this was not related to survey ratings overall ($r = -.03$), stock ($r = -.04$) or to the MSF ratings received. Moreover, store performance was also related to the number of peers responding to the MSF process with respect to total sales ($r = .12$, $p < .01$) and weekly sales ($r = .12$, $p < .01$). The only conclusions that can be drawn from these findings is that better performing stores yielded a more cooperative or compliant response tendency in general, but this tendency did not affect the level of survey ratings overall, or the number of direct reports or supervisors responding to the MSF process. It did, however, seem to reinforce peer's willingness to respond to the feedback effort. One interesting implication of this ancillary finding is that survey response rates are indeed affected by unit level performance. Or to put it another way, poorer performing business units are likely to yield less cooperative and compliant employees, and therefore lower response rates.

Predictive Modeling. Next, in order to explore the results and their relationships in more detail, principle component factor analyses were performed independently on the survey results and on the behavior ratings to look for specific clusters of items. Although a detailed description of these results is beyond the scope of this paper, four key dimensions on the behavior measure (using aggregated direct report data only) were identified. For the most part, these factors corresponded relatively well with the conceptual level dimensions based on the organization's seven core values. The first factor was comprised of 16 behaviors from the responsibility/accountability, teamwork, learning and excellence areas and represented 62.5% of the variance overall. A mere 4.6% of the variance was attributable to practices related to the integrity and respect dimensions (13 items), with the remaining variability split between 3.1% for the original six item cluster related to demonstrating a strategic vision, and 2.1% for the original five items cluster regarding customer focus.

The results of the factor analysis of the survey items yielded a somewhat uninspiring three-factor solution. More specifically, the first factor identified was comprised of 58 items and represented 61.9% of the total explained variance. The majority of these questions reflected "my management"—i.e., the climate created--so this may explain the singular factor here and probably represents the level of general management positivity as noted earlier. The second factor, based on 23 items and which accounted for 6.2% of the variability, centered around employees' perceptions of their organization in the eyes of the customer and with respect to their position in the marketplace. Thus, for the purposes of these analyses, this factor was labeled "marketplace and customer image." The final factor was comprised of 11 items and represented only 2.9% of the remaining variance. Based on the item content, this final factor was labeled "employee moral and satisfaction."

Next, factor scores derived from these analyses were used in a series of multiple regression equations to determine the behavioral predictors of internal and external outcomes. Figure 1 provides a graphic summary of the major relationships identified. Overall, three of the four management behavior factors were significant predictors of the three sets of internal measures derived from the climate survey data. The nature of these relationships were as one might expect. For example, store manager behaviors demonstrating customer focus were the strongest predictor for employee perceptions of marketplace and customer image. Interestingly, however, integrity and respect related behaviors were the only factor that predicted employee morale and satisfaction ratings. The extent to which manager behaviors fostered teamwork, learning and responsibility were the largest predictors of positive work climate in the store. Although demonstrating strategic vision is often an important variable for senior leaders in organizations, perhaps the lack of relationship with other measures here reflects the front line nature of the present sample.

Figure 1: Regression Results for Managerial Behaviors on Internal and External Outcomes
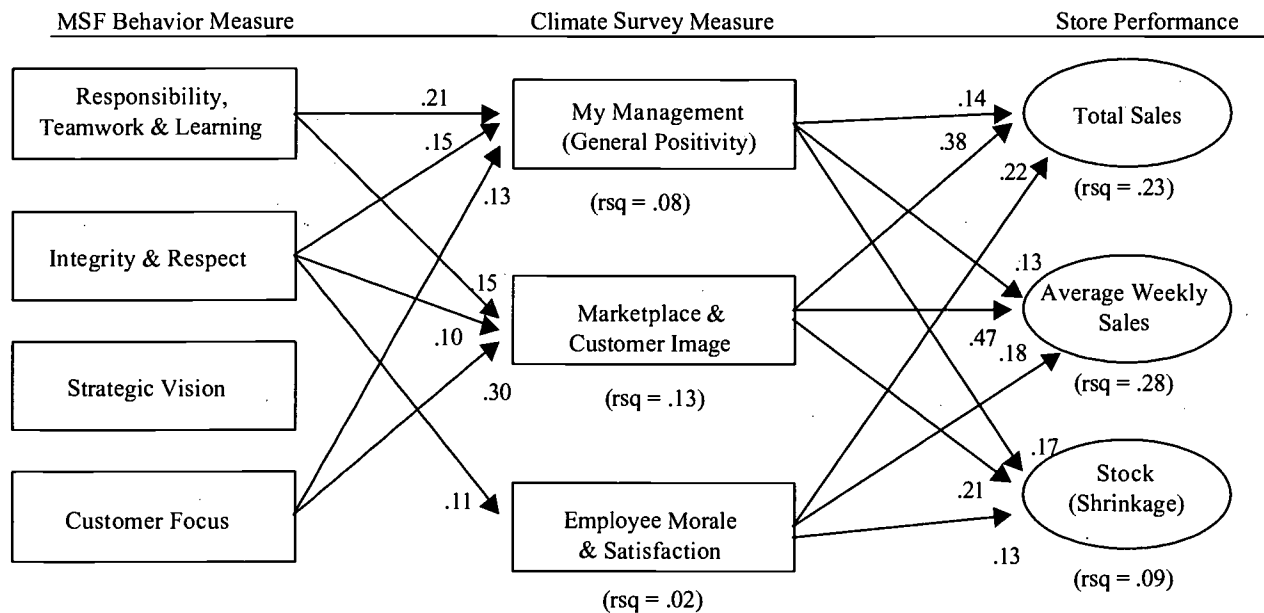
All equations and Beta values reported are significance at p < .05 or better.

Regarding the link between internal and external outcomes, in each model the three climate survey factor scores significantly predicted each of the hard outcome metrics which provides considerably better information than the correlation based on just the total score measure (see Table 1). In general, the relationships regarding the two sales measures were quite strong and were affected by the marketplace and customer perceptions the most. Clearly, these results have implications for both this specific organization, and the larger fields of OD, HRD and I/O psychology in general. While the relative degree of positivity toward management has an impact, it appears to be the emphasis on customer focus that is the strongest driver of performance at the store level. Thus, the more managers demonstrate by their own actions the importance of serving the customer, the stronger the climate overall *and* the focus on customer perceptions in the store, which in turn significantly increases sales and decreased product shrinkage.

Managerial Self-Awareness. The final set of analyses concerned the issue of MSA. Assessed in this study first via a profile similarity measure across all 40 behaviors (a standard measure of self-direct report item-by-item agreement—see Nunnally, 1978, and Church 1997a; 1997b for more on this measure), the results indicated that store managers were generally quite perceptive (i.e., accurate) overall at assessing their own strengths and areas for improvement ($d = .80$, $SD = .25$), and indeed compared favorably on this index to other samples including higher performers, influencers in a government agency, and senior service providers. When examining the correlation

results with respect to performance, it was apparent that while greater MSA was significantly (though modestly) related to the store climate (i.e., summary of survey results, $r = -.10$, $p < .05$), the relationships with the two sales measures and the stock inventory were non-significant ($r = -.04$, $r = -.05$, $r = -.08$, respectively).

When the data were examined using the four group categorical approach to self-awareness, which corrects for some of the problems inherent in difference scores, a similar pattern emerged. More specifically, accurate higher *behaviors* (i.e., those who had high levels of agreement and were rated more positively by their direct reports) and under-raters (i.e., those who rated themselves lower than did their direct reports) both had store climate survey results that were significantly more positive than the other two groups (see Table 2). While total sales and stock inventory yielded no significant effects by group (though the trends in means were in the expected direction), average weekly sales was, in fact, significantly higher--roughly $50,000 on average--for the accurate high *behaviors* as compared with over-raters. This would suggest that the extent to which managers are aware of their own behaviors and the impact they have on others in the workplace does indeed have a significant impact on performance. Further, MSA in this study was also consistently linked to the "softer" internal employee climate measure reflecting satisfaction and a general sense of positivity toward the workplace. These findings have significant implications for the application of feedback-based development initiatives in organizations since these programs are fundamentally aimed at enhancing such skills. Clearly, it is worth emphasizing self-other comparisons and the effect that improved self-awareness can have on people (soft) and financial (hard) results in these programs. While self-awareness alone is not enough to ensure success, it does make a significant contribution overall.

Table 2: Relationship of Self-Direct Report Ratings Congruence and Performance Outcomes

| | $\underline{N}$ | D | Behavior Ratings | | | | | Outcomes | | |
			Self	Direct Report	Peer	Super	Survey Results	Total Sales	Av. Weekly Sales	Stock
a. Under-raters	156	.89	3.50	4.09	3.77	3.53	3.07	1.28	0.27	-9609
b. Accurate low behaviors	99	.62	3.64	3.62	3.69	3.47	2.94	1.20	0.24	-20322
c. Accurate high behaviors	99	.60	4.07	4.12	3.82	3.52	3.05	1.27	0.28	-11624
d. Over-raters	144	.91	4.16	3.52	3.77	3.48	2.89	1.17	0.23	-12021
F		87.34***	136.41***	137.37***	1.07	0.61	4.45**	0.72	2.84*	1.84
Significant Comparisons		b, c < a, d	d, c > a, b b > a	a, c > b, d			a, c > b, d		c > d	

N.B. All post-hoc comparisons done using Scheffé tests. p <. 05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. Sales figures are in the $1,000,000.

Conclusion

In general, the findings from this paper have several implications for practice and research. Aside from the uniquely relevant information for this particular organization, these results should serve as an important and meaningful applied example of the relevance and potential power of linkage research for other practitioners and organizations with collections of untapped and disconnected datasets. Although linking different measures can be challenging, the benefits typically far outweigh the complexities involved. Probably the biggest contribution of this paper, however, is the nature of the relationships observed. While primarily reflective of a front-line service environment, as discussed above, these findings clearly demonstrate the effect that managers have on the attitudes and perceptions of employees (i.e., the climate of the workplace) *and* on bottom-line performance metrics. Clearly, customer focused behaviors were the single strongest diver of both internal and external performance at the store level, which suggests that future HRD, OD and I/O related interventions (e.g., training, feedback, incentive systems) with front-line staff should be concentrated in this area.

Study Limitations. As with any study there are several limitations in the research design and analyses described here. The present research was conducted on a single retail organizational and based on a custom set of measures (i.e., both the survey instrument and the multisource feedback tool were tailored to reflect this situation) which limits its generalizability overall. Although certainly sizable and therefore potentially robust in nature, future studies should be directed at replicating these findings with more diverse populations and in other settings and industries. Moreover, the role of the manager's personality was not assessed which might have helped to further explain certain types of behaviors and outcomes as recent studies have shown.

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