A thesis submitted to the University of Southampton in the Faculty of Business, Law and Art

2019.

The Trust Dividend: The strategic implications of trust building in B2B client relationships and the way towards enhancing them to create mutual economic value.

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Personal motivation

I have spent my career involved in business to business relationship development from an implementation perspective through to operational management and strategic development. These have been across multiple sectors and varying degrees of value and strategic importance. In my current role within Customer Attuned, I am directly involved in B2B relationship development and management. As a B2B customer manager, I've seen how trust can work effectively in B2B customer relationships; I have also witnessed how it can be easily lost or abused.

My fascination with trust in a B2B context started through a MBA undertaken from 2000-2004. My dissertation and subsequent journal article (Hollyoake 2009) posited that trust forms one of the four foundational pillars of an effective customer relationship. It then took a further 10 years of exploration and questioning before returning to the subject of trust once again from a doctoral perspective. The aim was to provide an academic evidence-based approach to uncover B2B trust as a dynamic within a customer-supplier relationship and the triggers of trust building and/or trust dilution.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Malcolm Higgs and Dr Melanie Ashleigh for their supervision. Their guidance and encouragement have played a significant role in the completion and success of this thesis. I am also very grateful to the examiners of this thesis. My thanks also go to the University of Southampton Business School, including the post-graduate office and librarians, who have provided great support and scholarly access required for this work; additionally, to my colleagues in the doctoral cohort who have offered continuous motivation. I also thank my partner (Christina Sanders) and friends who have supported me throughout this journey. Lastly, I extend my thanks to the following companies and organisations, without whom this research wouldn't have been possible; Atos Plc, Mylan Pharmaceuticals

Ltd, Marketing Republic Ltd, Treasury Wine Estates Ltd, Lactalis Ltd, Morrisons Supermarkets Plc, Nomad Foods Europe Plc, SellaField Ltd, Phoenix Healthcare Ltd, Luke Rowe Ltd, Allianz Plc, Customer Attuned Ltd, Deep Insights Ltd and Twinings Ltd.

List of abbreviations

B2B = Business to Business

B2C = Business to Consumer

CRM = Customer Relationship Marketing

ROI = Return on investment

CR = Critical realism

SLA = Service Level Agreement

CEO = Chief Executive Officer

FMCG = Fast Moving Consumer Goods

WBS = Wines, Beers and Spirits

P&L = Profit and Loss

CIT = Critical Incident Technique

GT = Grounded Theory

IJV = International Joint Ventures

RBV = Resource-based view

JBP = Joint Business Plan

Abstract

There is a noticeable lack of clarity around the construct of trust in the Business to Business context. This thesis considers how trust building antecedents operate dynamically within a Business to Business (B2B) relationship, and how they can be used proactively to help develop trusting relationships.

It deployed grounded theory qualitative research undertaken through a focus group, feedback workshops and 37 semi-structured interviews utilising critical incidents as units of analysis. The interviews were multi-level (inter-organisational, inter team and interpersonal) between dyads.

The findings evidenced cognitive and affective dissonance occurring when relational intentions failed to meet expectations, engagement and experience that both sides intentionally set out. The thesis also evidenced B2B relationships being strategically driven from an organisational level through relational intent and the establishment of mutual relational benefits. Finally, the thesis addressed where trust resides in B2B relationships between both sides and levels. At organisational level, trust resides in the moral bonds that have achieved a cultural quality,

This thesis, therefore, contributes to the body of literature and theory in B2B trust between two organisations in a relational context in the following areas:

Firstly, it contributes to understanding the importance of relationship intentions, as opposed to commitment, at an organisational level, highlighting the strategic mediating effect of the cross dyad role through the relationship intentions. Additionally, the thesis highlights both commitment and communication as important antecedents of B2B relational trust at group/team and interpersonal level, as intention moves from intangible to tangible action between both sides of the relationship.

Second, the study confirms the proposition made by social exchange theory that emotions and feelings play a role in business relationships, which involve social exchanges as

evidenced in the role of affective trust expansionist/reductionist antecedents between both sides of the relational dyad. The theory of dissonance and consonance that incorporate two different groups of characteristics (affective/emotional & cognitive/rational) with a reductionist and/or expansionist effect on B2B relational trust is also developed.

The third contribution identifies trust residing at organisational level, manifested through: moral bonds (cultural), action and behavioural conceptualisation, shaped through the development and signalling of relationship intentions. At an operations, group, team and interpersonal level, the contribution builds on structuration theory, demonstrating that trust resides at these levels as a manifestation of artefacts (relationship charter/mission/vision) standard norms (contracts, processes, systems and ways of working) and cognitive social stuff in the effective memories of the relationship agents /actors.

Finally, a model of business to business relationship trust development contributes to academic research and new knowledge. It does this by developing an intention-ability-credibility-interdependence-mutual value outcomes– time framework that works across all organisational levels and between dyads. It builds on the definition of B2B trust and sheds light on how both sides of the relationship can work proactively to use trust to enhance the relationship.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Trust is recognised as a central concept in relationship marketing (Blois 1999) and this may be attributed to the significant impact on many outcomes in this area (Seppanen, Blomquist and Sundquist (2007).

This thesis considers the strategic implications of trust building in B2B client relationships, the way trust-building antecedents operate dynamically within a Business to Business (B2B) relationship and how they can be used pro-actively to help develop trusting relationships between two businesses to co-create mutual economic value.

Although not extensive in quantity (Lyon et al. 2012b), B2B research has experienced increasing levels of research innovation over the last thirty years (Lyon et al. 2012a). In 1995 Berry commented that *"relationship marketing was being built upon a foundation of trust"* (Berry, 1995, p242), and the die was already cast for trust as an enabler within B2B customer relationships, setting it apart from business to consumer relationships.

This thesis draws on academic research in B2B trust, and critiques the literature establishing and defining B2B trust. The difference between B2B and business to consumer (B2C) is explored before the definitions of trust within a B2B construct and positing a definition of B2B trust is investigated.

1.1. What is Business to Business (B2B)

In this section the meaning of the term 'business to business 'is developed. A search was conducted on the 20th of May -2019 through the University of Southampton Library Delphis covering 2009-2019 using the following search criteria: A description of B2B vs B2C; How is B2B described? and how is B2B defined?; A paucity of academic research in this area meant the results were unforthcoming in providing a suitable definition of B2B. This led to the following definitions of B2B**.**

1.   Business-to-business to <u>relating </u>to <u>business arrangements </u>or <u>trade </u>between different

businesses, rather than between businesses and the public, especially when this takes place over the internet (Cambridge Business Library, 2015).

2. Business to Business done between one business and another rather than between a business and its ordinary customers (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2015).

3. B2B can also be defined in terms of "B2B commerce", referring to the business conducted between companies, rather than between a company and individual consumers (Bloomsbury Business Library - Business and Management Dictionary. 2007, p604-.). B2B relies on interactions and transactions between groups, individuals and organisations to exchange goods, services and/or solutions to create mutual value. In this context trust appears to operate as the lubricant or oil to the relationship ensuring the inherent risks or vulnerabilities are mitigated through positive behaviours and outcomes, (Rousseau, 1998). Without trust as the 'oil' the relationship resides at the transactional, co-existence and contractual levels incurring additional transaction costs. Scholars such as Williamson (1995). Mayer et al. (1995),Zaheer (1995), and Doney et al. (2009) all posit that the selection of firms they can trust and work with is predicated upon a level of reliability with their performance and a demonstration of an interest in the other's well-being (benevolence). Therefore, trust is an important enabler of mutual economic value, selection and relationship dynamics within B2B relationships.

1.2.1. Differences between Business to Business (B2B) versus Business to Consumer (B2C)

Trust does not operate within a purely B2B market place and consideration needs to be given to the potential influences and synergies of B2C. This is necessary in order to enable analyses of the two sectors for insight generation, informing the literature review, research questions and potential gaps in the research. Understanding the difference between the ways B2B and B2C operate is useful in identifying the relationship differentiators and how trust operates within this environment. B2B relationships are more complex, involving multiple

stakeholders, organisational structures, and differing sectors and geographies. B2C tends towards a simple relationship structure of one individual or small group (shopper, friends or family). The B2B actors – buyers and sellers within an organisation – are acting on behalf of the business to meet a business goal, need, or stated or implicit objective, whereas within a B2C case they are acting to meet personal needs. The decision-making criteria within B2B are often based around the use of the product, service and/or solution within the production of other value-added goods, or to help people run their business more successfully. Conversely, within a B2C context, the decision-making criteria differ as they may be more relationally orientated and likely to be motivated by emotion, intuition or impulse (Schmitt, 2003).

Within B2B the customers' sales team often interact with a professional function of buying, sourcing and/or procurement. Within this context it is often unlikely they will use the product directly (e.g., heat exchangers for nuclear power plant cooling, wing assemblies for an aircraft). These elements differentiate B2B from B2C and enable a focus on behaviours that drive and develop trust within B2B that may not affect B2C in the same way (Appendix 1, Table 2) due to the complexity of the contacts and interactions, and the way the relationship develops from affective to cognitive over time (Dowell, 2013). Actors are often removed from the actual consumption or usage process, retaining an objective bias. Consequently, relationships often need to operate at multiple levels and across a number of contacts within a B2B relational context, and trust is an element that improves its efficiency and effectiveness (Williamson, 1995; Dowell, 2015). Dowell et al. (2015) examined affective and cognitive trust and their effects on business relationship outcomes. They used 458 B2B people to evaluate both the early and mature relationship lifecycle phases. Their research highlighted the importance of affective trust in the early phase and cognitive trust in the mature phase of the relationship lifecycle. Further, the mediating roles of commitment and linking between trust and relationship performance were also developed. The research increases understanding of how relationships evolve – in particular, the role of affective and cognitive trust in influencing

relationship performance. This could have potential implications for trust-building at an interpersonal level, as the importance of affective trust gives way to the antecedents of cognitive trust-building as the relationship moves beyond one actor into numerous actors, at group or customer team levels. The research however falls short of establishing a time frame or mutual value benefit from doing so. Furthermore, we have little knowledge of how affective/cognitive trust is conceptualised at a group level or an inter-organisational level and whether different levels can exist within and between organisations – for example, cognitive trust at organisational level – whilst experiencing affective trust at interpersonal levels or affective trust within the buying organisation and cognitive trust within the selling organisation.

1.2.2. B2B versus B2C trust

On a basic 'everyday' trust level, the difference is not that manifest between B2B and B2C as it is more about 'doing what you say' (Giffin1967) or delivering on the promise (Butler 1991). As the complexity of the relationship and level of trust develops the gap between B2B vs B2C becomes more evident. Where the interaction met expectations, the risk (vulnerability) paid off and delivered what was expected and would be repeated if required, (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998) – e.g., one makes oneself vulnerable by sitting in a chair, trusting the chair not to collapse. This links and supports the work of others (Kohn, 2008; Sztompka, 1999; Uslaner, 2002) who take a sociological view, describing that below this level exists chaos, social breakdown and social mistrust. At this level, the B2B relationship may be contractual and adversarial, negotiated as each side tries to win the optimum deal. The B2C relationship may also operate transactionally and, should the transaction deliver on the expectations, it is likely to be repeated. The difference between B2B and B2C appears more manifest within B2B, as the relationship develops, the evolution of trust can be identified through the different stages of the B2B relationship as proposed by Doney and Cannon (1997). They offer a process and drivers that could build, move and develop a B2B relationship. Within their work, the authors highlight five levels: calculative, prediction, capability, intentionality and transference. These link to the horizontal dimensions

of shallow dependence, shallow interdependence, deep dependence and deep interdependence as identified by Sheppard and Sherman (1998) and Lewicki et al (2006). Clark, Scholder and Boles, (2010) apply Mayers' (1995) definition of Benevolence, Integrity and Ability to Shepperd and Shermans' (1998) relationship development framework. The research of Clark et al. (2010) supports the multi-dimensional construct at each level of Shepperd and Shermans' (1998) relationship dependency model. This deductive approach to proving the Shepperd and Sherman (1998) hypothesis, however, is based on research conducted from only one side of the relationship dyad. It therefore reveals a research gap, as current literature assumes trust is experienced and represented at the same level between organisations, and at inter-organisational, inter-group and interpersonal levels. Clark et al. (2010) highlight three areas of ability, integrity and benevolence that appear to travel across both sides of the relationship. However, it is unclear whether ability has a greater significance in the early dependency stages, and is then taken over by benevolence, which offers further research potential and study inclusion.

Trust also has the propensity to operate across a vertical dimension, with trust at inter-personal, inter-group and inter-organisational levels as posited by Ashnai (2014), .Currall (2002) and Fang (2008). These studies provide a key differentiator from B2C given the potential for inter-organisational trust and inter-group trust to develop within relationships and over time (Currall 2002).Within a B2B context this still remains an under-researched area as Blois (1999) points out; in the work of Doney and Cannon (1997). Doney and Cannon (1997) stated; "*We evaluate both trust of a supplier firm and its salesperson*" (p.36) when their study actually investigated the trustworthiness of the supplier and its staff as perceived by a buyer. So, in this instance, Doney and Cannon (1997) used a single point of contact and view, as a representation of the supplier firm. This dyadic representation of organisational-level trust is present elsewhere. Hammervoll and Toften (2013) investigated organisational trust, yet rely on responses from a single point of contact within the representing organisation, as does Ashnai (2014). This is a key consideration to take forward in the

research as an apparent gap within current thinking and is missing within the current definitions. To prevent misspecification and misappropriation, the research methodology and design needs to ensure that what is researched is a true representation of the level, be it on a horizontal level from everyday trust to excessive trust or at a vertical level of interpersonal, inter-group, inter-organisational, i.e. a reflection of inter-group trust that posits the total group view, actions, behaviours, processes and procedures and not the opinion or view of a group leader or the strongest voice within the group (Creswell, 2014). Aiming at avoiding misspecification and building on the work of Currall and Inkpen (2002) to move beyond an inter-organisational view that is predicated on only an interview or questionnaire completed by the owner or the CEO. A common assumption also revolves around the type or conceptualisation of trust posited by scholars as being the same at interpersonal level as it is at inter-organisational level and this offers another gap for potential research.

Table 1 summarises the key differentiators between B2B and B2C, building on the arguments above providing clarity on the contextual positioning of B2B vs B2C.

Table 1: Key Differences between B2B and B2C.	
B2B	B2C
Acting on behalf of the business to meet a business goal, need or objective.	Acting to meet personal needs.
Business customer; buying/ procurement is a job. They are unlikely to use the product.	Can be affected–consciously or unconsciously – by product design, branding, advertising, etc. within a lifestyle context. Go online, into the shops and make rational, irrational, or impulse purchase - or just window shop.

Minds and Hearts: Can they use your product in the production of other value-added goods? Help them run their business more successfully.	Hearts and Minds: Make rational decisions about a purchase at times; however are just as likely to be motivated by emotion, intuition and impulse.
TABLE 1	Bernd H. Schmitt (2003) Customer Experience Management: A Revolutionary Approach to Connecting with Your Customers. Wiley

Procurement is not immune to the influences of experiencing products, solutions and services as consumers, using this experience back within their B2B environment. This means that research must take note and evaluate B2C for areas that have potential transferability and cross over for B2B enhancement. It is also of note that the lines between B2B and B2C can appear blurred due to the customer management business model of certain organisations. For example, companies such as Viking Direct (office equipment), Barclays (business banking) and Vodaphone (business telecoms) will operate a B2C- orientated model for their small business customers; however, they remain intrinsically B2B within the division.
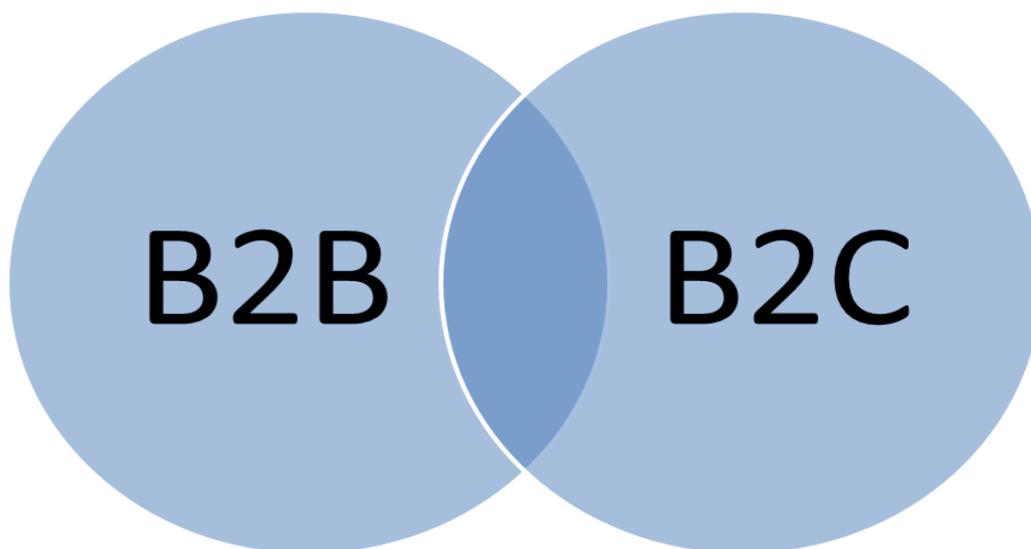
Figure 1: B2B/B2C potential synergy-overlap

Consequently, there appears to be confusion surrounding these two terms, as

there are areas of grey and overlaps between B2C and B2B as indicated in fig 1.

The position between B2B and B2C is developed and explored in more detail

(Table 2, Appendix 1) allowing the two opposites to be identified. The B2B/B2C

potential synergy overlap highlights a number of areas that need to be considered and related to the original question, which are the multiplicity of contact, complexity, professional and objective procurement and subject expertise/specialism. Within B2C, the number of customers often precludes a deeply engaged relationship due to resources, cost to serve and actual ability to identify and interact effectively with each individual customer. With the advent of personalised technology, greater access and social media, this is starting to change as mass personalisation and tailoring becomes possible. However, this is still in its infancy.

1.2.3. B2B relationship

The complexity of the B2B relationship necessitates the development of effective contact frameworks, stakeholder maps and interactions to unpack essential insights from a more complex set of contacts. The importance of effective contact builds upon Doney and Cannon (1997) who used a theoretical model tested on data collected from more than 200 purchasing managers to research trust between buyers and sellers. One of their key findings was that trust of a supplier firm is positively related to the likelihood that buyers plan to do business with suppliers in the future as they found social interaction, open communication and customer orientation as important relational trust-building antecedents. So, it is important to build upon the findings and identify whether and how their importance changes at different levels as the relationship develops. This thesis considers whether the antecedents identified in Table 2 (Appendix 1) operate dynamically within the relationship and if so how they can be affected pro-actively to trigger relationship development. The antecedents identified within the research (Doney and Cannon 1997) were posited as positive relationship developers; however, they fail to determine where the relationship moves from and to where it has travelled and if this is applicable at others levels of the organisation. This requires further research to explore the trajectory of relationship development through the positive application of antecedents. This study therefore questions whether antecedents transfer effectively from

interpersonal level to inter-group and inter-organisation levels. The findings from   Doney and Canon (1997) are also supported through the findings of Dowell (2015) who researched affective and cognitive states among 458 B2B people, which highlighted the importance of contact frequency which is the number and types of contact to develop trust in the early stages of a B2B relationship. In the latter stages of the relationship, competency was identified as developing to become a key antecedent and contact became more formalised and regular within the relationship. Dowell (2015) focused much of the study and research within the initial affective stage of   the relationship; however, it is less clear how or what moves the relationship into a greater focus on the cognitive elements (competence), other than commitment as the relationship matures. This offers the potential to explore the effect of cognitive trust elements on relationship development and the level at which they develop which could mean that an organisation that is still applying affective elements (relational, liking and intuition)   may harm the relationship. If so, how can they be affected pro-actively to trigger relationship development? The antecedents identified within the research of Doney and Cannon (1997) were proposed as positive relationship developers, although they failed to determine where the relationship moves to and from where it has travelled, and whether this is applicable at others levels of the organisation. This requires further research to explore the trajectory of relationship development through the positive application of antecedents. Through the thesis, the author therefore questions whether antecedents transfer effectively from interpersonal level to inter-group and inter-organisation levels, offering the potential to explore the effect of cognitive trust elements of relationship development and the level at which they develop. This is because one could interpret the meaning as that an organisation still applying affective elements (relational, liking and intuition)   may be failing to realise true potential from the relationship (Akrout 2017) as it has not transitioned into the cognitive stage as the relationship develops   and matures (Dowell 2015). The level and nature of contacts points to the increased importance of the type, nature and frequency of contact between the actors within B2B, how   the contact within the relationship is managed, and how trust as the

foundation/enabler developed. Two key areas that need to be considered in the B2B

relational context and a subject for further research are:

 1. The length of time or relational timeframes (Hammervoll and Toften 2013) that normally elapse, and the frequency of transactions/interactions between both sides.

2. The interactions in the B2B relational construct resulting in positive changed outcomes of mutual value.

These link to the gaps identified within the literature and form the additions to the conceptual B2B definition and findings proposed within this thesis.

Lewicki and Bunker (1995) explore the development of relationships along a time continuum and relate this to the number and depth of the relationships. They postulate that the longer the time the more the relationships develop. They argue that relationship depth is possible as an outcome to different types of trust, from calculus (risk)-based trust (Williamson 1995) to identification-based trust. The development of identification trust will develop a much deeper relationship with a few relationships. This correlates to the research undertaken by Sheppard and Sherman (1998) who build on the elemental work of Fiske (1990) to map relationship development and the role of interdependence and trust. The longer the relationship has been in existence the greater the potential exists for interdependence to develop and mutual commercial benefit to emerge as a relational outcome, which operates as a relational reinforcement, forming a virtuous circle of relational development. The mutual commercial benefits that emanate from a positive trust-based relationship can be seen in relationship/partnership performance (Gulati and Nickerson, 2008) in team sales and profits (Davis et al., 2000), team performance (Dirks, 2000), problem solving and proactive idea implementation (Parker, Williams and Turner, 2006), and creativity (Ford and Gioia, 2000). Colquitt et al. (2007; 2011) argue that in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour are also enhanced and a key outcome. In this context, the mutual commercial benefit becomes the outcome that encourages the continuation of the relationship. The literature reviewed in this section gives rise to a further need in building understanding of how it has been incorporated into B2B relationship trust definitions.

Akbar Zaheer and Venkaraman (1995) identify a number of triggers to relationship development within B2B-intermediated, broker and distributor relationships. These authors also explored such factors as uncertainty, size, reciprocal investments, joint actions, degrees of integration and trust. However, they failed to illuminate what assets exist and at what level they operate in the intermediated relationships. In essence, current B2B research fails to address the way in which trust travels and changes within the relationship as different identifiable triggers affect it. This supports Doney and Cannon's (1997, p.47) call for further research as they state, *"finally, we need to know more about how trust develops over time and whether the processes that foster trust at the outset of a relationship are the same as those that maintain it in later stages"* .

Studies have set out to answer inter-firm- or organisational-level trust (Ashnai et al. 2015; Doney and Cannon 1997; Fang et al. 2008; Hammervoll and Toften 2013; Zaheer et al.1998). However within three of the studies (Ashnai et al. Doney and Cannon; Hammervoll and Toften), the research methodology focused on the interaction between individuals, offering an interpersonal dyadic perspective of organisational-level trust; an anthropomorphising of trust where the organisation is being transposed into that of an individual at an organisational level. In essence, it is: I trust you, I trust the organisation. However, the source point remains that of the individual. This presents a mis-match as the level of analysis does not equate to what the research intends to measure. Furthermore, the identification of the cognitive and affective antecedents that are required to develop trust and the relationship positioning/level into another identifiable form are limited (Dowell 2015; Akrout 2017). Such limitations provide an opportunity to establish a research construct that explores trust as a dynamic on both the horizontal and vertical (interpersonal, inter-group, inter-organisational) relational levels.

This thesis sets out and answers the research question: *What are the mechanics and dynamics of trust building within B2B client relationships, and how can this understanding be applied proactively to enhance client relationships and create mutual economic value*?

1.3. Research aim

This thesis explores the dynamic nature of trust within the context of B2B relationships, by investigating triggers (e.g., antecedents) of trust. The study considers what level of trust companies operate at and how they dynamically develop their business to business relationship. Research into the concept of B2B trust is still in its infancy across this organisational domain (Lyon 2012). Therefore, the limited empirical work in this area (Bearman , R. Zaheer, A 2006; Saunders, M, Skinner, D. Dietz, G. Gillespie,N. Lewicki, R 2010) provides a novel and rich arena in which to explore some of the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours associated with trust within this context. Methodologically, the study adopts a pragmatic critical realism perspective, through an approach that is qualitatively led through semi-structured interviews and critical incident technique to unpick and unlock positive and negative insights related to trust. Using the critical incidents as units of analysis enables the development of a quantitative element within the research. Through this approach the research remains open to new theories, trust antecedents and how trust operates as a relationship develops, but also at different levels of the organisation. The use of case studies allows a longitudinal possibility to the research with future follow up and replication. This research adds significant insight and builds upon the research to date in the field of B2B trust.

1.3.1. Research objectives

The key research objective is to determine the dynamics of trust building in B2B customer relationships at interpersonal, inter-team/group and inter-organisational levels. Through this understanding identify how to apply the dynamics and how they enhance customer relationships. This overall objective then frames the sub and more specific objectives outlined in this section. When viewed graphically (Figure 2) Trust is placed first, which influences the relationship affecting the performance.
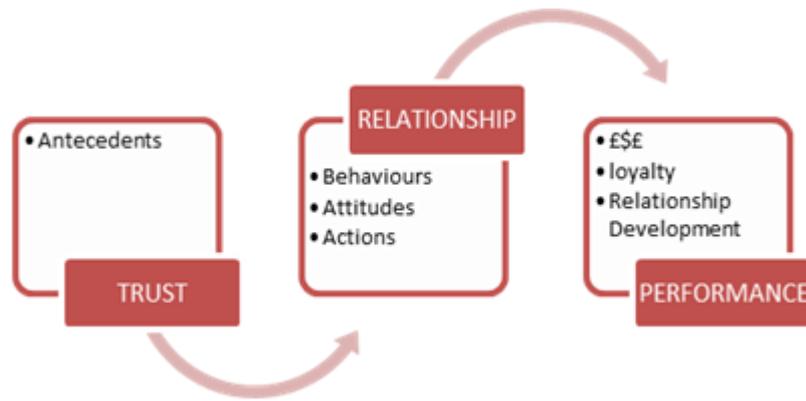
Figure 2:Trust, relationship, performance framework

1. Establish whether trust in B2B relationships can be developed on a horizontal and vertical (interpersonal, inter-team, inter-group) basis through research within a practical critical realism world view that deploys case study and critical incident technique captured through focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

2. Through the exploration of buyer organisation – seller organisation levels of trust – establish what triggers the development of trust and if the level is reciprocal across both dyads, using the case studies developed and analysed.

3. Provide a non-didactic perspective to the development of organisational-level trust through the application of research methods that explore trust as an action conceptualisation.

This thesis answers the gaps in B2B trust identified in the literature, as discussed in the following sections. This provides the basis, context and platform for the thesis, unlocking and unpicking trust within a B2B relationship construct.

1.4. Thesis structure

This thesis is composed of six chapters. The thesis commenced with an introduction to the study, covering background, research purpose, aims, research question to be addressed and intended theoretical contribution. Chapter 2 reviews and evaluates the extant B2B trust

literature, developing and identifying the gap in current literature, which this thesis then addresses, through the research questions. Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, philosophy, deployment of pragmatic critical realism and the research methodology. This chapter also details the research sample, and the use of critical incident technique through qualitative interviews. Chapter 4 explains the treatment of the qualitative data and analysis. Chapter 5 evinces and explains how the research was conducted and developed through thematic analysis, providing the research findings and evidence. The findings and evidence are discussed in relation to the literature review and research questions. This thesis concludes with Chapter 6 which presents the theoretical contributions and research limitations.

Chapter 2: Systematic literature review

The next section reviews the extant literature into B2B trust and relational development and examines the various approaches to develop them. This review unpacks and unpicks inter-organisational trust, cognitive and affective B2B relationship trust, the intangible to tangible nature of trust in a B2B context, trust across levels of the relational dyad, and the key antecedents that underpin trust in B2B relationships. The critique explains how these various elements of trust in B2B relationships are related to and inform this research.

The final section of the literature review summarises the discussions and focuses on trust as a foundational element of B2B relationship development.

2.1. B2B trust definitions

Lyon et al. (2012) trace research on trust in work back to the 1960s and 1970s, highlighting influential exploratory pieces (Garfinkel, 1967; Rotter 1967; Zand 1972; Deutsch 1973). In the 1980s and 1990s research focused on the conceptual aspects, supported through a wide range of empirical and experimental studies from the late 1990s to the present (Lewiciki and Bunker, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998; Dietz and Den Hartog, 2006; Bachman and Zaheer, 2006; Mollering, 2006) as trust research gained interest and focus from the academic community (Lyon at al., 2012).

Table 3 shows that trust in academic literature is based on the findings from an online search of the University of Southampton Library Delphi S search programme of academic articles, conducted on 12/6/2015 and again on 25/3/2019. The author accessed Journal articles that focused on Trust in Relationships and Trust in Business to Business Relationships between 1950 and 2015, and further augmented from 2015 to 2019. The time chosen extends 10 years beyond that indicated by Lyon et al. (2012); this is aimed at capturing any early outliers that may have subsequently come to light since the meta study undertaken by Lyon et al. (2012). In this study, articles on Trust in Relationships were

discarded as offering either an internal organisational view of trust or a generalised

perspective of trust or business to consumer view of trust.

Table 3: Trust in Academic Literature		
	Date	Journal Article number
Trust in Relationships	1950 - 2015	205,253
	1950 - 1999	32,801
	2000 - 2015	172,452
	2016 – 2019	41,732
Trust in Business to Business Relationships	1950 - 2015	29,563
	1950 - 1999	3,769
	2000 - 2015	26,969
	2016 – 2019	8,079

Throughout the literature a number of authors have built on generalised theory to define trust within a specialised B2B context. The key definitions are listed in Table 4 below in date order.

Table 4: Key definitions of B2B trust	
Authors	Definitions
Schurr and Ozanne (1985, p. 940)	The belief that a party's work or promise is reliable and a party will fulfill his/her obligation in an exchange relationship.
Anderson et al. (1987, p. 87)	Mutual trust is the degree to which the channel member perceives that its relationship with the suppliers is based on mutual trust and is willing to accept short-term dislocation because it is confident that such dislocation will balance out in the long run.
Dwyer, Schurr and Oh (1987)	A party's expectation that another party desires co-ordination, will fulfill obligation, and will pull its weight in the relationship.
Anderson and Narus, (1990, p. 45)	Trust is the firm's belief that another company will perform actions that will result in positive outcomes

	for the firm, as well as not take unexpected actions that would result in negative outcomes for the firm.
Anderson and Weitz (1990)	One party believes that its needs will be fulfilled in the future by actions taken by the other party.
Moorman, Zaltman and Deshpande (1992)	A willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence.
(Ganesan 1994; Kumar, Scheer and Steenkamp 1995; Morgan and Hunt 1994)	Trust is defined as the confidence in the exchange partner's reliability and integrity, and has been described as the cornerstone to developing close buyer–seller relationships.
Currall and Judge (1995)	A decision to act in ways that place one's fate in another's hands. Thus, under a condition of risk, a party's trust is signified by a decision to engage in action (i.e. reliance) that allows its fate to be determined by the other party.
Doney and Gannon (1997, p. 36).	We define *trust* as the perceived credibility and the benevolence of a target of trust
Geyskens, Steenkamp and Kumar (1998, p. 225)	The extent to which a firm believes that its exchange partner is honest and/or benevolent' or some variant thereof.
Doney, Barry and Abratt (2007)	Adopt Doney and Cannon's (1997, p.36) definition of trust in buyer/supplier relations as '*the perceived credibility and benevolence of a target of trust*'.
Maguire and Phillips (2008, p. 372)	An individual's expectation that some organised system will act with predictability and goodwill.
Gillespie and Dietz (2009, p. 128)	Trust at the organisational level is based on their assessments of the organisation's collective competencies and insight into its reliability in achieving its goals and responsibilities (i.e. ability), combined with the levels of genuine care and concern for the well-being of stakeholders and their adherence to commonly accepted moral principles, such as honesty and fairness (i.e. intentions).
Suvanto (2012, p.928)	Trust as trustor's state of mind, not just behaviour, which is a consequence of trust.
Hammervoll and Toften (2013,	We define inter-organisational trust as the exchange

	partners' mutually perceived credibility and
p. 227)	benevolence of each other.

Definitions of Affective trust in management and B2B marketing literature, adapted from Akrout et al. (2017) are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Definitions of Affective Trust	
Authors	Affective Trust Definitions
Johnson-George and Swap (1982)	"Emotional trust refers mainly to the extent to which a trustor is willing to be open to the trustee and does not fear emotional harm from the trustee"
Lewis and Weigert (1985, p. 969, p. 972)	"Trust succeeds where rational prediction alone would fail"; "trust in everyday life is a mix of feeling and rational thinking"
McAllister (1995, p.26)	"Affect-based trust" stems from "emotional bonds between individuals" and from the expression of "genuine care and concern for the welfare of partners"
Costigan et al. (1998, p. 306)	"Affect-based trust involves a deep emotional investment in relationship. A trustor's deep care and concern for the trustee characterize such a relationship"
Swan et al. (1999, p. 94)	"Affect is feeling secure or insecure about relying on the salesperson"
Scott (2000, p. 84)	Affective trust is "the social view of trust and has a more emotional connotation. It encompasses care, concern, benevolence, altruism, a sense of personal obligation, commitment, mutual respect, openness, a capacity for listening and understanding, and a belief that sentiments are reciprocated"
Hansen et al. (2002, p. 43)	"Affective trust is subjective in nature because it is based on the moods, feelings, or emotions that one has concerning the

	perceived trustworthiness of an individual, group, or organization"
Webber and Klimoski (2004, p. 1000)	"Affective trust is grounded in reciprocal interpersonal care and concern or emotional bonds"
Anderson and Kumar (2006, p. 531)	"Trust based on affect is assumed to create deeper levels of trust, which can create conditions for closer collaboration that may even resist trust violations"
Ng and Chua (2006, p. 45)	"Affect-based trust, on the other hand, arises from social interactions with others, and reflects confidence in others that develops along with concern for their welfare"
Ergeneli et al. (2007, p. 43)	"Affect-based trust requires deep emotional investment in a relationship"
Chua et al. (2008, p. 436)	"Affect-based trust involves empathy, rapport, and self-disclosure"
Wang et al. (2010, p. 359)	"Affect-based trust occurs as a product of social exchange, i.e. the positive emotions generated via perceptions of care and concern motivate one to continue reciprocating socio-emotional benefits"
Huang and Wilkinson (2013, p. 456)	"Affective trust is based on beliefs that the exchange partner cares about your welfare, will act positively towards it and take care to avoid harming it"
Akrout et al. (2017 p. 262)	"Affective trust is a psychological state comprising the acceptance of vulnerability based on expectations in terms of socio-emotional benefits"

McAllister (1995) distinguished cognition-based and affect-based trust and found them closely empirically related. The earlier work of Lewis and Weigert (1985) posited that trust combines reason and emotion – they described it as *'a mix of feeling and relational thinking'* (p.272); however this remains at the theoretical level. The development of an affective connection to the trustee is seen in practice as support to the 'leap of faith' (Mollering 2001) through the reduction of the trustor's perception of their vulnerability (Nikolova.et al. 2014). This is supported through the earlier work of Naslund (2012, p.23) suggesting that

"interpretation and expectation are largely based on cognition, while the leap of faith relies more on the affective aspect".

2.1.1 The most common elements within B2B trust definitions

The definitions have been analysed (Table 6) against key word frequency, extracting the most common elements within B2B definitions (from 1985 to 2013) and then mapped to the authors. This has surfaced some interesting and unique B2B-specific definitions which are explored in the next section after Table 7.

Table 6 below highlights the frequency of the elements across the definitions.

Table 6: Key word frequencies from B2B definitions	
Key Word	**Frequency**
Trust	13
Party	8
Exchange	5
Relationship	4
Partner	4
Benevolence	4
Perceived	4
Actions	4
Firm (Company or Organisation)	4
Confidence	3
Credibility	3
Define	3
Fulfil	3
Mutual	3

Organised	3
Reliability	3

Table 7 expands on this to identify similar word groupings and the authors citing these elements/antecedents within their work. This points towards the key drivers and antecedents of trust definition and building within a B2B context.

Table 7: Word groupings and the authors citing these elements/antecedents	
Elements	**Authors**
Action(s)	Anderson and Narus (1990), Anderson and Weitz (1990), Currall and Judge (1995)
Believe, Belief	Anderson and Weitz (1990), Anderson and Narus (1990), Geyskens et al. (1998)
Benevolence	Doney et al. (2007), Geyskens et al. (1998), Hammervoll and Toften (2013)
Confidence	Anderson et al. (1987), Moorman et al. (1992), Ganesan (1994), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Kumar et al. (1995)
Credibility	Doney and Cannon (1997), Doney et al. (2007), Hammervoll and Toften 2013)
Exchange	Schur and Ozanne (1985), Moorman et al.(1992), Ganesan (1994), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Kumar et al. (1995), Hammervoll and Toften (2 0 1 3)
Partner	Moorman et al. (1992), Ganesan (1994), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Kumar et al. (1995), Steenkamp and Kumar (1998), Hammervoll and Toften (2013)
Party	Schur and Ozanne (1985), Dwyer et al. (1987), Anderson and Weitz (1990), Currall and Judge (1995)
Perceived	Anderson et al. (1987), Doney and Cannon (1997), Doney et al. (2007), Hammervoll and Toften (2013)
Relationship	Schur and Ozanne (1985), Anderson et al. (1987), Dwyer et al. (1987), Ganesan (1994), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Kumar et al. (1995)

Rely, Reliance, Reliable, reliability	Schur and Ozanne (1985), Ganesan (1994), Morgan and Hunt (1994), Currall and Judge (1995), Kumar et al. (1995), Moorman et al. (1992), Gillespie and Dietz (2009)

2.1.2. Critique of B2B definitions

Within this section the B2B definitions are analysed to identify common patterns, potential gaps, linkage to B2B antecedents, and the generalised definitions.

Surprisingly risk and vulnerability are missing from all but one definition, that of Currall and Judge (1995), as it is key within the generalised definitions   (Bialaszewski and Giallourakis, 1985; Govier, 1994; Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). However, when studying the meaning of the definitions, risk and vulnerability are already implicit within the statement and good examples of this can be seen in the definitions put forward by Schurr and Ozanne (1985) and Anderson and Weitz (1990). Furthermore, vulnerability can be fundamentally linked to risk as identified through the definitions of, Dahlstrom and Nygaard (1995), Doney, Cannon and Mullen (1998) and Akrout (2017). So, implicitly, risk and vulnerability can be built into a B2B definition, without necessarily stating them as an underlying condition, as the action undertaken between the two parties.

A key element emerging from analysis within B2B definitions is one of reliability and credibility, underpinned by belief, confidence and benevolence. However, action and exchange surface as the link, focusing on the relationship rather than on the outcomes. Two key areas emerge as gaps within the current B2B definitions. The first is the duration of the relationship: How long have the parties been in the relationship? For example Hammervoll and Toften (2013) referred to the passage of time within a relationship as a significant antecedent to trust development within B2B relationships. This is further supported in the work of Zaheer (1995) who concluded that the B2B relationship is often conducted through numerous transactions over time. This negates opportunistic behaviours and builds trust through resource expertise, importance, processes, procedures,

joint actions, mutual   investments. Only Anderson et al. (1987) made reference to a longitudinal dimension within the definitions as a potential balance to short-term dislocation. However, none of the definitions is explicit in the use of time as a key element within the definition and its inclusion   could enhance the B2B specific definition.

The second key area is the mutual value and/or benefit that emanates from a B2B relationship as a key outcome. Zaherr, McEvily and Perrone (1998) and Nikolova et al. (2015) highlighted the importance of trust in reducing costs and   improving performance. In essence this is an outcome from a positive trust-building relationship. Anderson and Narus (1990) referenced   positive outcomes as a result of a trust-based relationship; however elsewhere the references are ambiguous or predicated on a mutual   status quo. The more generalised theories echo positive outcomes as a key element and antecedent as can be seen with Mayer et al. (1995), Anderson and Weitz (1989) and Rousseau et al. (1998). This is seen as a key component missing within B2B specific definitions   and its inclusion would further enhance a B2B-specific definition.

2.2. Determining effective B2B relationships

Many different definitions of both generalised trust and B2B trust have been posited and argued by scholars (Table 4). Through analyses of the available literature on B2B trust the gaps have been identified in order to enhance the B2B definition of trust. Few existing B2B definitions embrace the importance of time, as its often implied through the exchange process (Mc Neil, 1978 ; Huemer, 1998; Hammervoll and Toften, 2013). Yet, without a customer dynamic which allows for repeated interaction, the reliability, credibility and benevolence as outlined above can be undermined through opportunistic behaviour, (Williamson 1975), coercive power or relational conflict (Hollyoake,. Ashleigh and Higgs, 2016). This thesis therefore addresses two key gaps, which are fundamental to the development of trust within a B2B relationship:

a). The addition of time (Dowell, 2015). As Ring and Van de Ven (1992) discussed, the longer the relationship and more often the transactions between the parties take place, the more important trust becomes and could be a controlling/governing factor within the relationship.

b). The mutual value exchange (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Currall, 2002),as the link between the relationship and the outcomes from that relationship (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Anderson and Weitz, 1990) .

Within the B2B literature and across the four generalised groupings already developed in the previous section, six common themes emerge which are now explored within the next section.

2.2.1. Time and trust in B2B relationships

Researchers argue that time is a key factor/antecedent to the development of a B2B relationship and enabler; however, they fail to qualify the actual timeframe(s) required (Dowell, 2013; Hammervoll and Toften, 2013). Furthermore, in their meta analyses of multi-level trust, Fulmer and Gelfand (2012) highlighted key gaps in the research at an inter-organisational level. They argued for the need to explore how organisation members come to share trust in different referents of trust, such as trust in *leaders*, trust in *teams*, and trust in *organisations*. They posit that within the culture climate literature, multi-level factors have been identified that affect the formation of organisational cultural climate. They point out that these can range from organisational structure and practices, to employee homogeneity, social interactions, leadership and workgroup influence (Schneider and Reichers, 1983; Ostroff et al., 2003). In this context some factors may be more relevant than others – i.e. What the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)/organisation sets out in the mission/vision vs organisational practice. Fulmer and Gelfand (2012) hypothesised that certain emergent processes are more relevant to the construct of trust; that is, consistency is highlighted as a key enabler in trust building (Mayer et al. 1995). Therefore, the link between what the organisation intends and the reality and ultimate effect of its stated values could be an

essential trust builder at this level. In essence this equates to organisational credibility. It is therefore important to explore intention, reality and effect at an organisational level, and the capacity to build or negate organisation-level trust. Further work needs to be done into trust building in the organisational climate, regarding how to develop it while preventing cognitive lock in (Saunders, 2016).

Time is also a factor in the development of collective experiences within the B2B relationship, often through the numerous transactions conducted over time. This in itself is key in negating opportunistic behaviour, through repeated timely and honest communication (Strong, Ringer and Taylor, 2001; Dowell et al., 2015; Hammervoll and Toften, 2013). A relationship is unlikely to thrive within an opportunistic environment, unless wrapped within contractual protection to mitigate the risk. This attracts additional relationship transaction costs as identified by Williamson (1995), which negate opportunistic behaviours in order to build trust. Within their work into   intermediated relationships Zaheer (1995) identified key antecedents that enhanced the development of interdependence and trust within   the relationships through resource expertise, importance, processes, procedures, joint actions, and mutual investments. These build mutual value within the relationship and 'barriers to exit' that outweigh any potential from either side undertaking opportunistic behaviours. Hammervoll and Toften (2013) suggested the sharing of strategic information as a key driver of interdependence due to its mutual added value/benefit potential and reliance on it within the relationship. Dowell et al. (2015) argued the importance of relationship commitment as a constant and mediating variable. They contended that the B2B relationship develops within the early stages driven through affective elements –relational, liking, and intuition. As it moves into the mature stage the cognitive elements gain in importance, particularly competence, outweighing the early stage 'relational' elements. Dowell et al. (2015) proposed that this enhances performance, builds barriers to exit, and supports shared values and goodwill in the relationship. This poses   a conundrum for organisations working with key customers on how to transition from an affective stage to a cognitive stage. How can the

relationship achieve its true potential when it is being held back through an inability to effectively transition from the affective to cognitive states? A relationship may be stuck in the affective stage and could fail to realise the true potential the relationship has to offer as it is unable to harness multiple stakeholders under a cognitive stage. This prevents the introduction of other stakeholders with fresh value-enhancing perspectives and co-creation potential. The research to date also assumes that trust between both sides of the relational dyad is being experienced at the same level at the same time.by both sides within the relationship. For example Ashnai (2013) and Currall and Inkpen (2002) discussed trust at different relationship levels of an organisation – interpersonal, inter-team, and inter-organisation. However, trust is dealt with or assumed to be the same between both sides. To date, little exploration has been undertaken to determine the consequences of misplaced trust between two parties – i.e. buyer side operates *risk-based* trust and supplier side operates *deep dependence* (Shepperd and Sherman, 1998). Additional research is therefore required into how the antecedents develop between both parties to develop the overall relationship in the first place, and then at the interpersonal, inter-team and inter-group levels.

2.2.2. Customer contact in B2B trust-based relationships

Due to the number of contacts, complexity of the contact patterns and interwoven nature of B2B relationships it is hardly surprising that   contact forms a strong element of trust-building activity and is a key antecedent. Zaheer (1995) argued that the results from their research indicate a buyer's trust in a supplier firm is based, in part, on encounters with the supplier's salesperson. They argue that the company   could teach its salespeople how to develop trust (cf, Doyle and Roth, 1992). This is further supported within Doney and Cannon (1997, p.47) who found that social interaction, open communication and customer orientation are important antecedents. This study surfaced two key drivers of trust development through the salesforce and/or customer management team, interactions, expertise and empowerment. They   based their research on data collected from more than 200 purchasing managers, and identified a positive outcome to their hypotheses   that '*buying firm trust in the supplier's salesperson is*

positively related to the buyer's perceptions that the salesperson has expertise', and that buyers trust salespeople they perceive to be expert. This links to competency-based trust as a dynamic and insight for the research question. Doney and Canon (1997) found that sales people should contact customers often, because the study results show that frequent contact plays a central role in developing trust. However, is contact still important once the relationship has developed? As Dowell (2015) revealed, it is key in the early (affective) stage but gave way to a more formalised contact and competency in the cognitive stage as time elapsed and the relationship matured. This could prove to be an important antecedent to understand and research.

2.2.3. Economic exchange in B2B trust-based relationships

Within the B2B literature the economic benefits identified from the research examine distinct areas; economic exchange as a benefit within B2B relationships and the role of trust as a governing factor. Zaheer (1995) investigated the economic exchange as a benefit within B2B relationships and the role of trust as a governing factor. This research supports Williamson's (1995) more generalised view of the economic nature of trust through transaction cost reduction; however, according to Zaheer (1995) the focus is within a B2B context. This is a key link to the research question as an indication of the economic benefits of trust as a key trigger/antecedent and dynamic within B2B relationships, in essence identifying the value generated from trust as the relationship develops.

The share of the total business increases through a focal supplier within a trust-based and interdependent relationship as developed by Zaheer (1995), Inkpen and Currall (2004) and Hammervoll and Toften (2013). Doney et al. (2009) also demonstrated that trust has a significant linkage to loyalty commitment and share of purchases. They posited that social interaction has both an indirect and direct effect on loyalty commitment. Their research supports the mediating influence that trust has on the linkages between social interaction and loyalty commitment. These findings have important implications for marketing theory and practice. In essence, superior offerings do not necessarily develop loyalty or business

expansion on their own. Doney and Cannon (1997), Inkpen and Currall (2004), Doney et al. (2009) and Laaksonen et al. (2007) all identified that the costs of doing business and transaction costs are reduced as it is easier and more cost-effective to do business with an organisation you trust. This is due to a reduction in and simplification of transactional-related contracts, structured procedures and processes as concluded by Zaheer (1995).

2.2.4. Information and communication in B2B trust-based relationships

Hammervoll and Toften (2013) identified relational investments, relationship length, and sharing of strategic information as the key drivers of inter-organisational trust (measured for the whole exchange relationship and not as either buyer or supplier trust). Contrary to common assumptions (Ashnai 2014) the presence of international experience and sharing of logistical (operational) information show no association with inter-organisational trust. Hence, previous successes are no guarantee that exchange relationships will work well in the future. This study highlights three useful drivers:

- *Time*: The trading history and interactions over time, the opportunity for shared experiences and understanding to develop.

- *Strategic Information*: Providing information that adds mutual value to the relationship

- *Relationship Commitment*. The amount both sides invest into the relationship.

It does separate out information sharing into strategic, or operational and detected that operational information sharing is seen as a hygiene factor or a 'so what!' Strategic information sharing was a trigger to trust building and relationship building, and may well be interpersonal as the research targets are owners and/or managers of the businesses. This is a key dynamic to take forward and explore further within a research context.

2.2.5. Joint actions and mutual investments in B2B trust-based relationships

A key area emerging from the literature and differentiator within B2B is the level of joint

actions and mutual investments undertaken   within the relationship indicated by Zaheer, (1995), Wilson (1995), Doney and Cannon (1997), Doney et al. (2009), Currall (2002) and Inkpen and Currall (2004). This offers the optimal example of a trust definition in action with both sides taking a risk through mutual   investments, joint actions and activities in the expectation it will lead to mutual value. This has been evinced within the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Wines, Beers and Spirits (WBS),Financial Services (FS) and Industrials Sectors through joint planning, co-   creation of product development, and joint business planning. Anderson and Narus 1990) suggested a positive path from cooperation (joint working) to satisfaction. They discussed that working together with a partner firm in pursuit of mutual benefits increases each firm's perception of compatibility, as well as the fulfilment associated with attaining the desired outcomes. This affords a strong feeling of 'chemistry' and results in satisfaction with the partnership. The findings also suggest that buyers who perceived that suppliers are   willing to make idiosyncratic investments judged their partners to be trustworthy. Although customer-specific adaptations imply costs for the seller, their findings suggest that these are investments that tie the firms together in strong buyer-supplier relationships. Because   such investments contribute to forging strong buyer trust in the selling firm, they can be expected to pay off in the long run. This links with Zaheer's (1995) study that identified joint action and mutual investment as antecedents to relationship development and trust   within insurance sector intermediated relationships. This is important to consider in relation to when and where one could pro-actively   apply joint action and mutual investment to influence and develop the relationship. Too soon and it opens up 'the opportunity for   opportunistic behaviour' and too late could mean a relationship failing to achieve its true value potential.

2.2.6. Commitment in B2B trust-based relationships

A number of scholars (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, Dowell, 2013, Ashnai, 2014) suggested commitment as a key enabler to the development of a trust-based relationship. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) seminal work on commitment-based theory and model developed trust as an

antecedent of commitment, positing that commitment within the relationship is a key indicator of relational trust. The presence of commitment within an attitude-behaviour –outcome framework highlights the requirement for commitment within the relationship for trust to develop (Ashnai, 2014, Dowell, 2015). However, this is counter to scholars (Cook and Emerson, 1978; Dwyer et al., 1987; Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Jap and Ganesan, 2000) who put forward commitment as an antecedent to trust. Commitment has been developed as a key satisfaction/relational metric and indicator of trust as can been seen within Net Promoter Score (NPS), an overly simplistic approach to measuring this area and the more robust 'deep customer insight' (customer relationship quality (CRQ) built upon the work of Morgan and Hunt (1994). This poses something of an academic 'chicken and egg' question – what comes first? Does trust need to be in place before commitment can develop within the relationship and, once established, is it a key enabler to the development of trust? Is the opposite the case in that commitment needs to be in place before trust has a chance of developing?

Dowell (2015) uncovered commitment as a meditating variable between cognitive elements of trust and relationship performance. Commitment has been cited previously as a mediating variable with trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). Without the presence of trust, it is likely the necessary confidence in the partner to meet obligations would not be sufficient, causing the relationship to either falter or discontinue (Aurier and N'Goala, 2010) So, in this case, trust precedes commitment, with a level of trust needing to be present to create the conditions necessary to commit (Aurier and N'Goala, 2010; Dowell, 2013).

This poses another potentially interesting research area bringing together the two views of commitment and its role as an antecedent or fundamental element, which helps form the research question in section 2.8.

2.3. Trust as a vertical and horizontal dynamic within B2B relationships

A number of scholars (Currall 2002; Currall and Inkpen 2004; Fang 2008; Ashnai. 2014) explored the way trust operates at different levels (interpersonal, inter-group and inter-organisation) on a vertical axis within an organisation. These scholars explored trust vertically within an organisation with the research focused on trust as a dynamic at three levels – interpersonal, inter-group and inter-organisational. This links to the research question in terms of a potential dynamic within trust building. It also offers another dimension to the potential of that developed by Sheppard and Sherman (1998) and Lewicki et al. (2006) as they explored the development of trust on a horizontal plane. If trust is a dynamic on both the vertical and horizontal planes, then it may be possible to research the inter-relatedness of trust within the two axis and its role in developing the relationship.

2.3.1. Levels of trust within B2B relationships

This section explores the literature that uncovers the potential for trust to operate at differing levels within a B2B customer relationship. It is apparent within the literature that trust has the potential to develop along a *vertical* axis as explored by Currall and Inkpen (2002) and on a *horizontal* axis as explored by Doney and Cannon (1997). This inter-action between the vertical and horizontal has yet to be researched in any depth. Research uncovers trust operating on both a horizontal plane (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Dowell (2015) and a vertical plane (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Fang, 2008) within B2B organisations.

Lewicki and Bunker (1995) proposed that there are different levels of trusting relationships. Relationships built on calculative trust form the lowest and most fragile level. This links to co-existence and shallow dependence levels, driven through everyday trust and vertically within an organisation between sales person (interpersonal), group, team, division (Inter-group) and the organisation (inter-organisational). Doney and Cannon (1997) introduced a framework that provides a link to calculative trust. The highest level of trusting relationship is based on internalising the other's desires and intentions – where trust emerges through the

process of intentionality. This links to the deep dependence and deep interdependence levels of relational trust posited by Sheppard and Sherman (1998). They built their model on the foundations of the work undertaken by Fiske (1992) who explored levels of community development. The middle level links knowledge and competency trust to shallow interdependence and deep dependence.

Trust built on closely identifying with the partner is more flexible to changing conditions and a more difficult bond to break than is calculative trust (Lewicki and Bunker, 1995) and this forms a key characteristic of deep interdependent relationships. This suggests that the interpersonal trust engendered by salespeople and transferred to the supplier firm plays a key role in developing and maintaining enduring buyer-seller relationships. Currall and Inkpen (2002) also proposed the ability for trust to operate along horizontal dimensions identified by Sheppard and Sherman (1998) and Lewicki et al. (2006). Currall and Inkpen (2002) suggested the process and drivers that could build, move and develop the relationship as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Potential drivers of relationship development					
Trust-Building Process	*Calculative:* Trustor calculates the costs and/or rewards of a target acting in an untrustworthy manner	*Prediction:* Trustor develops confidence that the target's behaviour can be predicted	*Capability*: Trustor assesses the target's ability to fulfill its promises	*Intentionality.* Trustor evaluates the target's motivations	*Transference:* Trustor draws on "proof sources":·from which trust is transferred to the target
Generic Driver of the Process	Costs are higher when a target makes larger and/or relationship-specific investments	Trustor learns more about the target through repeated and broader experience	Evidence of the target's ability to fulfill its promises	Target's words and /or behaviour indicates concern for the trustor	Identification of trusted sources closely associated with the target
Factors that invoke the Trust- Building Process	supplier firm's reputation supplier firm size	length of relationship with supplier firm salesperson likability	salesperson expertise salesperson power	supplier firm's willingness to customise supplier firm confidential information	supplier firm's reputation supplier firm size

	supplier firm's willingness to customise	salesperson similarity		sharing	trust of supplier firm
	supplier firm's confidential information sharing	frequent social contact with salesperson		salesperson likability	trust of salesperson
		frequent business contact with salesperson		salesperson similarity	
	length of relationship with supplier firm			frequent social contact with salesperson	
		length of relationship with salesperson			
	length of relationship with salesperson				

Table 8: Potential drivers of relationship development

They go on to suggest three distinct trust-building activities developed through their research (Doney et al., 2007), frequent social interaction with a salesperson, open communication between firms and an organisation's customer orientation (commitment). These three distinct activities have statistically proven to have a positive impact upon relationships with the buyer's trust of a service provider. This study also offered two related antecedents of trust – the perceived value of service and the quality of that service. This supports an earlier grouping and builds on the potential triggers for further research consideration. Doney and Cannon (1997) argued that the implications of these different routes to trust are important; in their seminal thesis Doney and Cannon (1997) argued that a long-term relationship with a highly trusted sales person can preserve customer commitment during difficult times created by management policies that appear contrary to the customer's best interests (e.g., Schiller, 1992). This supports Currall and Inkpen (2002) who proposed that a positive relationship can operate at a certain point on the vertical axis, irrespective of a potentially negative relationship at another. This is further supported within the conference thesis delivered from B2B organisations, titled the Great B2B Debate-Trust (Qtr1, 2015). This offers a potentially interesting research area by bringing together the

findings of Currall (2002) and Doney and Cannon (1997) to explore the vertical and horizontal   dynamic nature of trust with B2B organisations.

McEvily and Zaheer (2006) suggested that like trust, interfirm exchange relationship performance has been conceptualised as multidimensional (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Noordewier et al., 1990; Heide and Stump, 1995). Building on this construct of multi-dimensionality is Zaheer et al.'s (1998) discussion on the explicit recognition that trust between organisations was also a multi-level phenomenon. In this section the study explores the extant B2B literature that explores and develops insight into trust across levels of an organisation (Doney and Cannon 1997; Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Fang, 2008; Schilke and Cook, 2013; McEvily Zaheer,, Darcy and Kamall 2017).

2.3.2. B2B trust misspecification and misapplication

Often research into trust in inter-organisational relationships focuses on a single level of analysis, typically the individual or organisational level, and treats trust as a fairly static phenomenon (Schilke and Cook, 2013) Furthermore, trust research can often focus on one level of the relationship - buyer-seller, for example – yet extrapolate the findings to other levels as can be seen in the studies of McEvily and Zaheer (2006) and Ashnai (2014) Currall and Inkpen (2002) highlighted the paucity of research in this area related to international joint ventures; however they pointed to multi-level trust studies in other inter-organisational contexts;

McEvily and Zaheer (2006) suggested the growth in theoretical and empirical development of the idea of multi-level trust between organisations; however, little attention has been paid to the role and link of interpersonal and inter-organisational forms of trust. When studying trust across levels it is important to understand both the level of the organisation being measured and the level of measurement (i.e. Likert scale, or low to medium to high, etc.) (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). The authors continued to explain that "level of theory" refers to the unit (i.e. person, group or firm) and whether the researcher seeks to explore and

understand which attribution and generalisations are made (p.480). This is built on the fundamental concepts (Rousseau, 1985; Kliene, Dansereau and Hall, 1994) where research on organisations identified *level of theory* and *level of measurement*. For example; when exploring trust between two organisations at the organisational level and how that affects the relationship performance, the unit of theory is the organisation (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). The level of measurement refers to the source of the information and establishing the level where the source measurement resides – again, in this example, the *organisation*.

The next grouping attempts to research trust at and within an organisational level and context (Zaheer., 1995; Doney et al., 2009; Suvanto, 2012; Hammervoll and Toften, 2013; Ashnai, ,2014). In all instances the research attempts to extrapolate single point contact into an organisational context. Blois (1999) argued that this has the propensity to bias the findings as one person's view does not an organisational construct make! Significant antecedents are put forward by the authors identified, despite the flaws within the target and extrapolation of the research. These need to be linked to the research question and may offer an opportunity to re-visit these antecedents validating them in a research framework that explores a true reflection of inter-organisational trust.

Table 9 below, adapted and updated from the work of Currall and Inkpen (2002), highlights examples of level of theory misspecification in B2B trust research.

Table 9: Adapted from Currall and Inkpen (2002)		
Scholars	Level of Theory	Misspecification
Aulakh et al. (1996)	Firm. Relationship between interfirm trust and performance of interfirm partnerships.	Misspecification as the level of measurement was person. Survey completed by a single key informant (n=181).
Johnson et	Firm. Relationship between	Misspecification as the level of

al. (1996)	interfirm trust and strategic integration in interfirm alliances.	measurement was person. Survey completed by a key informant (n=96 matched dyads of key informants from each alliance firm).
Inkpen and Currall (1997)	Firm. Relationship between trust and performance of interfirm JVs.	Misspecification as the level of measurement was person. Survey completed by a single key informant (n=35).
Nooteboom et al. (1997)	Firm. Relationship between interfirm trust and relational risk of alliances.	Person-level survey completed by a single key informant (n=97).
Rao and Schmidt (1998)	Group. Relationship between negotiator's' trust in counterpart negotiators and negotiating tactics.	Person-level survey completed by a single key informant (n=81).
Ashnai (2014)	Interpersonal and inter-organisational level relational trust.	Person-level survey by a single informant from each side of the relational dyad.

To ensure both empirical and conceptual clarity the levels of defining theory and measurement must be aligned or consistent (Klein et al., 1994). A common mistake or misspecification can occur when one level is used to measure another, i.e. a buyer – seller study is extrapolated to organisation level or group level. This is significant when researching and analysing trust across levels, ensuring the theory level is the same one as that being measured. Currall and Inkpen (2002) discussed a couple of examples of misspecification

undertaken in pursuit of unpacking trust across levels. The study of Parkhe (1993) attempted to measure the perception of organisation-level opportunistic behaviour, using a person-level survey. On the basis of the person-level study the author claimed that trust existed at the organisation level. Such obfuscated shifts in level occur and the results and validity of the hypothesis is reduced when a different level of measure is used to test another. This misspecification can still be seen as the recent study by Ashnai (2014) attempted to establish an organisational-level and interpersonal-level theory of attitude-behaviour-impact on trust. The study used a buyer – seller dyad quantitative study, where the respondents at the interpersonal level were asked to respond to question about the organisation and relationship and the organisational level. Although a significant study and contribution, the misspecification is evident through the use of a person-level study to try and establish organisational-level trust insight and theory development.

Currall and Inkpen (2002) argued that treating trust as a multi-level phenomenon is particularly relevant to International Joint Ventures (IJVs) due to the complexity of interactions which occur at the interpersonal, inter-group and inter-organisational levels. If this is theoretically sound for IJVs the same would hold true for any B2B relationships experiencing complexity of interactions. Based on this they further suggested that trust also exists and occurs at these three levels and across levels (person to person, organisation to person, team to organisation, and others) and that, more importantly, trust at one level has the potential to effect trust at other levels (inter-organisational effects, interpersonal, etc.)

The potential for trust to operate at multiple levels and effect trust at one level over another is predicated on how this could occur across levels. In their investigation of the extant B2B literature on how trust travels across levels, Schilke and Cook (2013) explored the role of the boundary spanner in the development of trust between and across levels. They posited that scholars treat trust as a fairly static phenomenon. In this respect the formation stage is explored from the individual to the organisation; transferring trust from an individual to the organisation. To a certain extent, at this stage, this aligns with the work of Dowell (2015) who

discussed the importance of affective trust in the early stage relationship, as the boundary spanner (account manager, sales person, client director, etc) is responsible for ensuring that the early stage expectations are met through a commitment of resources necessary to achieve this in the organisation relationship (Schilke and Cook, 2013). Currall and Inkpen (2002) suggested and focused on the concept of trust as a decision to explore the 'how' applied to persons, groups and firms. They discussed that through this definition, trust may be said to travel (Osigwel, 1989) across levels as trust viewed in the decision to action construct allows it to be extended to group, team and organisational levels. A watch-out at this stage and key element of organisational-level trust is the emphasis on the psychology of expectation; this has the capacity to create the impression that managers can foster trust merely by appearing trustworthy (Whitner, Bradt, Korsgaard and Werner, 1998, p. 252; Currall and Inkpen, 2002). In this case an emphasis on impression without supporting actions could be a mistakenly held belief by managers that they only need to display the appearance of trustworthiness to create trusting relationships. A pivotal point regarding the 'how' of cross-level trust development, initially in the formation stage, however, has the potential to extend to new initiatives in the relationship or relationship change. They present the premise that, *'behind the concept of trust transfer is that trust is not necessarily based on direct experience with a particular trusted entity. It can also be extended from a third party related to that entity'* (Schilke and Cook, 2013, p.29). In this case the 'how' – mechanism – process is through third party transferral. Strut and Priest (1976) supported this view, describing how trust transference from the better known third party to a closely associated, but less well known entity. In essence the relationship boundary spanners spread trust between the dyad and across levels through a transference process. So, trust that is placed in the third party is used as a proxy (Krackhardt, 1992) and the third party assumes the role of distributor or broker of trust (Shapio, 1987; Coleman, 1990; Schilke and Cook, 2013). As trust moves between the dyad and across levels it changes state from intangible (Intentional trust) to active trust (Giddens, 1994), and the boundary spanner plays an important role as

the guide in the process, mitigating the 'leap of faith' (Mollering, 2002). The boundary spanner to a certain extent holds the hand of the other side as they make the step and acts as the guide in the transition from the intangible to tangible.

The boundary spanner can also manifest as a broker or third party as Institutional Trust research posits that a third party individual can serve as an intermediary who brokers trust in the organisation in which that individual is employed (Zucker, 1986). Interestingly, the extant research uncovers that the sentiments and characteristics displayed by a manager, client directors, and other players are assumed to reflect the values and attitudes of the organisation in general that they represent. The counterpart representing the organisation is perceived as having the responsibility for and acting in line with the partner organisation they are representing (Schilke and Cook, 2013). They act as the referent in this formative stage signalling trustworthiness of the partner organisation. This could be extended beyond the formative stages, as this perceived responsibility has equal importance during inter-organisational relationship change and/or initiative development. This has implications because, as the relationship develops, cognitive trust develops through increased interactions and actions at multiple levels (Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017), maintaining a clear and consistent signal   from the relationship lead/boundary spanner. This would lead to trust existing at differing levels across the relationship as the boundary spanner interaction and influences flow outward. Scholars often assume that trust levels between dyads are equal; however, Zaheer et al. (2002) deployed inductive research across six case studies and theorised that all levels of interpersonal trust are not equally important; CEO's matter far more in affecting outcomes than lower hierarchical-level boundary spanners. Furthermore, if the inter-organisation starts to falter and under-perform, inter-organisation trust drops first and this has a knock-on effect into interpersonal trust (Zaheer et al., 2002).

 B2B literature scholars attempt to determine this apparent link between inter-organisational performance and trust through empirical research on the outcomes of trust across the levels. This research could be seen as testing which is the stronger (McEvily and Zaheer, 2006)

This poses a significant problem for trust researchers as determining inter-relational outcomes requires longitudinal research, which is difficult to undertake and scarce in this field (Lyon, Mollering and Saunders, 2012). Financial performance could be viewed as a key outcome of a B2B inter-organisational relationship, as two sides come together to create mutual benefit. This is supported through the study of Fang (2008) uncovering that financial performance is positively affected by resource investment made by both sides of the organisational dyad and their responsiveness. There appears to be a real paucity of research in this area and a challenge for trust researchers going forward.

Recent research into the levels of trust argue that expectations can differ between exchange partner and levels of the relationship based on dissonance of goals, preferences and vulnerabilities in their shared relationship (McEviliy, Zaheer et al. (2017). Such research points to three key sources of inter-organisational trust; this study uses the extrapolated perceptions of the buyer and seller to determine and conceptualise at an inter-organisational level. McEvily, Zaheer et al. (2017) used the work of Schilke and Cook (2013) as the basis for their conceptualisation and consistency with inter-organisational literature (Gulati and Sytch, 2007). With this in mind they posited that the inter-organisational relationship is open to the effects of supplier exchange hazards, buyer exchange hazards and the power imbalance. In this study exchange hazards are derived from non-transferable asset-specific investments and environmental uncertainty (Williamson, 1985) taking a lead from Transaction Cost theory. The reference to power positioning uncovers that the lower the power the more attention to the actions and intentions of the other to steer the relationship in a difficult relationship exchange context. This links to the work of Sheppard and Sherman (1998) where they refer to dependence on one party and inter-dependence between them.

An interesting and importantly significant finding uncovered was that a one-standard-deviation increase in power imbalance decreases the supplier representative's trust in the buyer organisation by 49%. Contrast this with the other way around when a one-standard-deviation increase leads to a 37% increase in buyer trust. So, power imbalance affects the

trust negatively in the supplier organisation and positively in the buyer organisation. Lastly, buyer exchange hazard effects are stronger than suppliers on both supplier boundary spanner trust in the buyer organisation and the buyer's trust in the supplier's organisation. This increases our understanding of the role of power and exchange hazards in trust across levels and creates a bridge to the work of Sheppard and Sherman (1998)

On exploring trust across levels we return to Currall and Inkpen (2006) who discussed trust moving or failing to move from one level to another based on the evidence regarding the trustworthiness of a trustee, person, group or organisation. They concurred that this is what makes trust a dynamic construct; the constant flow of trust-related evidence based on behaviour at personal, group or organisational levels means that the counterpart is constantly updating and/or re-calibrating their assessment of the trustworthiness of the trustee (Currall and Inkpen, 2006; Stevens et al., 2014). Stevens et al. (2014) developed the thinking of Curral and Inkpen (2006) into two district actions related to the dynamic nature of trust based on recalibration (fine-tuning the relationship based on the constant flow of relational information, evidence and performance), and once again this supports understanding of the dynamic nature of trust rather than as a static concept, and of its ability to travel across levels (Currall and Inkpen, 2006).

2.3.3. Organisational-level trust

Scholars still debate whether organisations are entities capable of experiencing trust psychology or whether they can only choose to trust in a behavioural context (Jong, Kron, and Schilke, 2017).

'Considerable ambiguity is evident in the literature about the precise role of trust as it operates at different levels of analysis and its influence of performance' (Zaheer, McEvily and Perrone (1998, p.141).

At an organisational-level trust research has struggled to break from a dyadic approach, (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014). Trust researchers face a difficult task as they attempt to measure something as conceptually complex as trust (Lyon et al., 2012b).

A number of researchers (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006; Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014) have attempted to explore trust at different levels of an organisation. This follows a dyadic view and therefore opens the research up to the question of perspective (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). The research pursues a single point perspective to trust – I trust you and I trust the organisation; however, the view is still emanating from a single point 'I', as someone else in the same organisation/relationship may not share the same belief. This could lead to conflicting views regarding the trustworthiness of the organisation, based on the view of these individuals.

Debate between academics still continues about the concept of trust at organisational and group levels (Aulachet et al., 1996; Nooteboom et al., 1997; Perrone et al., 2003; Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006a, Stevens et al., 2015). Can an organisation and group actually trust? Is it sentient and able to make conscious decisions and think? Is it the amalgamation of all the individuals that form the organisation, in essence *gestalt* or the sum of all the individual parts that transcend the people element, as argued by Currall and Inkpen (2002)? Conceptually there are few attempts to tackle the question of what it means for an organisation to trust. (Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006b) Those scholars that apply individual-level terminology and logic to the organisational level, without specifying the link between the micro and macro levels are inaccurate, as they *'anthropomorphise the organisation'* (Zaheer et al., 1998 p.142). In this strict sense of the word an organisation cannot trust: only an individual can (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Inkpen and Currall, 1997; Zaheer et al., 1998; Dyer and Chu, 2000). Currall and Inkpen (2002) expanded on this as they discussed a focus on trust as an expectation becomes problematical for a multi-level approach because forms are incapable of subjective mental states. Additionally, obtaining reliable data on inter-organisational trust is more challenging if conceptualisations involve the organisation as trustor. Janowicz and Noorderhaven (2006a) argued that when trust is attributed to an organisation, only the behavioural definition of trust is appropriate. In this case it is proposed that a behavioural (action intention) definition will be used. This is

supported by Currall and Inkpen (2002) and Stevens et al. (2015) who discussed that, in cases like these, one could resort to investigating agreements and corporate statements, as well as direct observation of the organisation's actions –and these can be characterised as trusting. Janowicz and Noorderhaven (2006) believed it unfeasible to gather direct observational data of the organisation actions, due to the scale of the study required. However, this does not apply if the observations are constrained to areas that are feasible to study, such as communications, documents, policies, vision, and strategies, among others, yet deliver the data on the organisation's actions. Fang et al. (2008) argued that most studies into trust at different levels of an organisation and between organisations focus on trust only at a single level, raising the possibility that the type of trust they explicitly examine may be confounded with trust at another, unobserved level. They further discussed that trust is critical to the survival and long-term performance of collaborative entities (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Doney and Cannon, 1997; Dirks and Ferrin 2001), believing that disentangling the role of trust at multiple levels is critical. Table 10 builds on the work of Fang et al. (2008) to list research on trust at the inter-organisational level, co-entity level and the individual representative (interpersonal) level.

Table 10: Adapting and building on Fang et al. (2008)

Summary of illustrative research on the influence of inter-organisational, agency and intra-entity trust on key outcomes

Illustrative Research	Context	Outcome Variables
Interorganisational trust between two organisations		
Smith and Barclay (1997)	Suppliers of computer equipment to business customers	Relationship investments, communication, and opportunism
Zaheer et al. (1998)	Electrical equipment manufacturers and their component suppliers	Negotiation cost, conflict and performance
Grayson and	Advertising agencies and their clients	Commitment, quality or interaction,

Ambler (1999)		involvement, and performance
Selnes and Sallies (2003)	Suppliers to medium – sized and large business customers	Multidimensional measure of relationship performance
Agency trust in an organisation's representatives		
Gilliland and Bello (2002)	Suppliers and their industrial product distributors and dealers	Loyalty commitment
Child and Mollering (2003)	Corporate managers and their representatives in foreign (Chinese) ventures	Growth in sales and profits
Ashnai (2014)	Procurement managers / Buyers	Attitude – behaviour – outcome framework and improved commitment.

Two broad approaches have been developed when trying to define trust at an organisational level (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006). These constitute a behavioural approach and an attitudinal approach which are explored in more detail.

The behavioural conceptualisation allows the extension of the concept of trust to the level of a group or an organisation (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). It is a question of the object of trust, which a behavioural conceptualisation to trust allows: *'the willingness to increase one's vulnerability to another whose behaviour is not under one's control…..'* (Zand, 1972, p.230) So, in this case the organisation could be the subject, and the behaviour attributable to the organisation with trust attributed to the organisation as an entity. Unfortunately, it is not as clear and straightforward as the trust behaviours being exhibited and observed may be through other factors than trust; for example relationship lock-in, contractual obligation, and dependence on a partner (Nooteboom et al., 1997).

Turning to the attitudinal approach the view of trust becomes an expectation of the

partners; reliability regarding its obligation, predictability and fairness in business dealings, when faced with the potential to behave opportunistically (cf Zaheer et al., 1998). This poses the conundrum when considering the subject of trust regarding an attitudinal approach to organisational-level trust, as an attitude cannot be attributed to an organisation as it is an inherently individual phenomenon. Organisations do not possess the ability to experience an attitude (Madhok, 1995; Aulakh et al., 1996; Dyer and Chu, 2000) However, the individual agents that define the attitudes and behaviours do. Therefore, the subject of an attitudinal approach is less about inter-organisational trust and more about the organisational members; *'the subjective probability that one assigns to benevolent actions by another agent or group of agents'* (Nooteboom et al., 1997, p.311).

This appears to be less about the approach and more about the subject of trust at the inter-organisational level. It also surfaces the problem of how to infer the presence of trust in a relationship (Janowicz and Noordhaven, 2006). However, the literature suggests that in reality an either/or approach to this conundrum (Nooteboom et al., 1997; Zaheer et al., 1998; Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Janowicz and Noordhaven, 2006) rests somewhere in between as an attitude exhibited by an organisation may be delivered not only through an individual agent or actor, but rather through an organisational system, process, technology or communication. Janowitcz and Noordehaven (2006) proposed a conceptualisation of the levels of inter-organisational trust that hinges on the role of an individual in shaping an organisation's behaviour. In this case the misspecification referred to in the work of Currall and Inkpen (2002) could be seen to come into play – that is, the subject and level of that researched needs to be what is *actually* researched. Currall and Inkpen (2002) pointed to the over-use of individual- or personal-level research to inform organisational-level study.

At an organisational level an action conceptualisation enables a trust construct to be applied. This explores trust as organisational intentions with trust building on the actualisation of trust as an outcome of an organisational intention. In this way it is possible for an organisation to demonstrate trust through its intentions, past, current and future

relationship-related trust building activities – i.e. product quality, delivering on expectations, living the trust definition (not using opportunistic behaviour or leveraging coercive power), and co-creating for mutual commercial benefit. Fang et al. (2008) posited that a resource-based view (RBV) highlights two mechanisms where an organisation can generate superior gains and competitive advantages; first, resource investments (Barney, 1991), and second, resource utilisation (Dyer and Singh, 1998; Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas, 2004; Palmatier, Dant and Grewal, 2007). The researchers were pursuing a perspective of transferring the conceptualisation of trust at an interpersonal level to that of an organisational level – In essence; I trust you, I trust the organisation. However, the point of trust still remains with a single point, 'I' the individual.

Stevens et al. (2015) argued that trust exists at the inter-organisational level when one organisations members hold positive expectations towards another organisation and its members (Zaheer et al. 1998; Schoorman et al., 2007) drawing on expectational assets such as shared identity, role and rules (Kramer and Lewicki, 2010). Even though process, systems and relationship dynamics that develop trust may not be the managerial focus point, it is continually affected by and emerges from them. Manifested through the steady flow of small commitments made, fulfilled and everyday routines of exchange and discussion.

Dyer and Chu (2000), Jeffries and Reed (2000), and Zaheer at al. (1998) all support and treat trust at an organisational level as a conceptualisation of a shared attitude of organisational members. Saunders (2016) discussed the board level of an organisation to be so far removed from the actual operational nature of the business as to essentially operate under a different set of workplace realities. Saunders et al. (2016) developed an interesting point that could have direct applicability for research into trust. They discussed that in a business management context it is important to look at organisations from the perspective of differing groups of people. This links with the potential multi-level approach to trust (Currell and Inkpen, 2002) and could help in framing the groups and levels. They argued that the ways in which the CEO and board see and experience the organisation as opposed to

managers, suppliers, workforce, and support staff are different. They posited that this difference can be so great that it could arguably be seen as experiencing different workplace realities. This has transference into trust as the different levels may be developing or limiting trust at each level through their actions and/or intentions. Messaging from one level as an intention could be interpreted incorrectly and acted upon by a different level causing inconsistencies to the suppliers and customers (Saunders et al., 2016)

Schoorman et al. (2007) discussed and offered the view that research should be examining trust at both the macro and micro levels within an organisation (Zaheer et al., 1998; McEvily, Perrone and Zaheer, 2003). Schoorman et al. (2007) further argued for a need to understand trust, within and between organisations, however the absence of a clear multi-level conceptual model poses difficulties (Mossholder and Bedian, 1983; Rousseau, 1985). They conceptualised and extended their original interpersonal model of ability, benevolence and integrity, so that it could be applied to interpersonal, inter-group or inter-organisational levels of analysis. Schoorman et al. (2007) touched on an interesting area – that of propensity to trust. They proposed that, like individuals, some organisations develop greater propensities to trust than others. They further suggested that for organisations, these propensities develop from geographic, industry, and economic histories (Schoorman et al., 2007, p.346) Building on Gyert and March (1963) and Simon (1957) Schoorman et al (2007) proposed that the trust of either the dominant coalition or management team is critical to understanding organisational trust, as this level governs the strategic actions of the organisation.

In their thesis Legood et al. (2016) posited that leaders, with different organisational positions, do play a pivotal role in building trust not only towards themselves, but also the organisation they represent. They argued for a need to consider the leaders' behaviour as an important determinant of trust in these two important referents. However, the findings are not only consistent with Gillespie and Dietz's (2009) theories on the determinants of organisational trust but also with the more general line of research that has shown

employees generalising attitudes towards supervisors and to the organisation as a whole (e.g., Eisenberger et al.,2010). However Legood et al. (2016) went further by articulating the specific kinds of behaviours that build organisational trust.

2.3.4. Positive and negative aspects of B2B trust

Both positive and negative aspects of B2B trust can exist simultaneously within virtually any relationship (Flores and Solomon, 1998; Gargiulo and Benassi, 2000), but trust can also change rapidly from the extreme of too *much* trust to the extreme of too little trust. Trust-building activities can have positively reinforcing effects on the level and persistence of trust (Pfeffer, 1994; Dirks, Lewicki and Zaheer, 2009; Kramer and Lewicki, 2010), but a negative spiral likewise can lead to low-trust traps (Ghoshal and Moran, 1996; Elangovan and Shapiro, 1998).

This approach gains some support through the study by Clark (2010) who posited that trust passes into a collective entity over a period of time. This state lives beyond the collective of the individuals. It also has robustness to endure beyond relational ups and downs, and new starters, and appears to become embedded into the organisations, culture, signs, stories and rituals. The recent study and work of Fleetwood (2018) goes further by identifying where trust could reside at organisational level on a formal and informal norm basis. Fleetwood (2018) argued that formal norms represented as artefacts, signs, rules, regulations and policies. This could represent the trust-based intentions of an organisation at both internal and external levels. He then explored different cognitive constructs that exists in the form of informal norms represented as agents' memories. In this case it is the enacted memories of the agents that represent the reality and ultimate effect of organisational trust through their actions, attitudes, behaviours, processes, systems, communications, values and ability to do the right thing when interpreting organisational intentions (Fleetwood, 2018).

At this stage it is worth considering structuration theory in relation to the above and the structure and agency related to trust at an inter-organisational level (Fleetwood, 2018). The

following are argued to be structural, on the basis that they structure the thoughts and actions of the agents at one and the same time, both enabling and constraining their thoughts and actions through; agreements, ceremonies, customs, codes, conventions, distractions, duties, etiquette, guidelines, institutions, laws, mores, obligations, precedents, procedures, regulations, relations, responsibilities, rights, rituals, routines, rules (formal and informal) scripts, standards, structures, templates, traditions and values (Fleetwood, 2018). These could be referred to as formal and informal norms: In this context, norms are kinds of rules. This conception of norms as rules is something coined by Fleetwood, (2018). If looked at in a slightly different context in terms of where they are located and at what level of the organisation, a question is posited that is rarely answered or asked, an exception to this being Jones (2010, p.399) in relation to norms where we ask; *'what is the ontology of a norm"? Exactly where is the norm located'*. He also referred to *'the place of norms'* (Jones, 2008, p. 385). This has significance as it starts a journey that concludes with an understanding of norms as different kinds of constructs (Fleetwood, 2018). He further argued that rules are social-structural constructs located in artefacts, and that norms are socio-cognitive constructs located in the agent's cognitive systems as memories. This opens a way to see rules and norms as different kinds of construct which have very different properties that enable them to govern the agent's thoughts and actions in entirely different ways. This offers an interesting perspective on where trust is located and resides in the organisation, and whether the rules and norms differ at the inter-organisational, inter-group and interpersonal levels, and between dyads. Saunders, (2016) touched on this through the discussion around trust residing in the collective memories of all individuals of an organisation. This does not deal with organisational level and also assumes that all individuals share the same level, view and perspective of trust and trustworthiness.

2.4. Moving from intangible trust to tangible trust: Transitioning

Despite a paucity of research in this area there is one significant conceptual outcome in the move toward a process perspective. Trusting can be described as a process of interpretation

that leads to expectations supported by a leap of faith suspension (Mollering, 2001). In this thesis the research highlights highly referenced codes focused on signalling relationship intentions, relational ability, relational attitudes and commitment. In this context the focus is on how to move the intangible intention to trust into the tangible orientation of action 'active trust' (Giddens, 1994) in pursuit of mutual value benefit (s).Prior conceptual work on the leap of faith in trust looked beyond indicators of trust worthiness and suggested a process perspective to trusting when faced with uncertainty and vulnerability (Mollering, 2001). Gluckler and Armbuster (2003) argued that, in the instance of client-consultant relationship development, they are based on market reputation, direct experiences, or communication for a network of trusted acquaintances. (Joni (2005), May (2004) and Robinson and Robinson (2006) discussed and explored credibility, reputation, experiences and the capacity for caring. However, little is known around how trust is created and how one side can actively enhance perceptions of trustworthiness (Nikolova et al., 2015), making it easier to move from inter-organisational intangible trust to tangible trust.

2.5. Cognitive/affective theory and trust

This section explores the literature that relates to cognitive and affective theories and how they relate to trust. The definitions of affective trust are discussed in Table 10, while Table 11 details and defines elements related to cognitive and affective trust. The section concludes with the interplay of cognitive and affective trust in relation to the development of the relationship over time.

Dowell (2015) argued that affective based trust is related to emotions and the social skills including both care and concern (Dayan and Di Benetto, 2010). It involves emotional bonds related to care and concern for the other party (Massey and Dawes, 2007). On this basis Dowell (2015) posited that affective trust has two components; an emotional intuition and some type of faith in the partner. Akrout et al. (2017) discussed affect as referring to both affective attachments (feeling connected and joined) and affective states (general liking and

sentiment). Sentiments and attachments are seen as enduring affective states or feelings about one or more social objects such as relationships between exchange partners (Lawler, 2001). Lawler (2001) argued that repeated social interactions, by means of trust, not only reduce the uncertainty of exchange partners, but also help to create an 'emotional buzz'.

The extant literature points to the following key variables and drivers to the development of affective trust. In the early relationship phase, these are manifested through the values both sides hold, the attitude to relational development, the mood of the key actors in the relational interface, and the emotional expectations one side has for the other and vice versa. Lastly, in the early phase of the relationship both sides are making sense of the level of altruism that exists between both sides as an early indicator of the level of vulnerability
(Rempel, Holmes and Zanna 1985; McAllister, 1995; Jones and George, 1998).
McAllister (1995) discussed how attitude, motivation and contact build citizenship behaviour, as the ultimate driver of affective trust. Finally, liking was found to be the mediating variable between the affective elements of trust and relationship performance. So, it is important for the account managers, client director, sales person and other stakeholders to develop liking in the early stage in a B2B relationship as it helps explain performance (Nicholson et al., 2001). Hawke and Hefferman (2006) highlighted that personality congruence and communication (style and frequency) were drivers of liking in B2B relationships.

Dowell (2015) builds on two components of affective trust as two distinct elements – *relational* and *intuitive*. Relational trust is related to the norm of reciprocity and the 'leap of faith' aspect of affective trust. Relational trust is almost quasi-religious, with faith placed in the other partner that they will act as they should in a trustworthy way (Mollering 2001). This builds on a few seminal ideas developed in the work of Georg Simmell (1950 (1908), 1990 (1907). Simmell described trust as related to knowledge; however, at the same time, "*both less and more than knowledge*"*,* as it entails "*a further element of socio-psychological quasi-religious faith*" (Simmel, 1990 (1907) p.179) and "*some additional affective, even mystical ,* "*faith of man in man*" (Simmel 1950 (1908), p.138). This argument of trust is used

prominently by Giddens (1990). Nikolova al., (2015) discussed an important conceptual outcome of this work as the move toward a process perspective. They stated that trusting can be described as a process of interpretation that leads to expectation supported by a leap of faith (Mollering, 2001). Anderson and Narus (1984, p.66) identified the definition of satisfaction as "*a positive affective state resulting from the appraisal of all aspects of a firm's working relationship with another firm*". Note that satisfaction in this instance is affective and can be contrasted with an objective summary assessment of outcomes (Anderson and Narus, 1990).

Dowell (2015) explained affective trust as a trusting attitude or motivation focused on another person which is not causally driven (Beckert, 1996). Affective trust is based on interpersonal reciprocity, care and concern displayed (McAllister, 1995). Johnson, George and Swap (1982) and Dowell (2015) posited that, essentially, affective trust is the confidence placed in another generated through the feelings, care and the concern that the partner demonstrates. This could be seen as an affective cue or risk mitigator in the relationship encouraging the 'leap of faith' or even its replacement. It is also based on experience developed through interactions over time and alters depending partly on the frequency of contact (Johnson and Grayson, 2005). Dowell (2015) discussed affective trust as being summarised as an emotional bond, driven by feelings related to welfare and concern (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). Akrout et al. (2017, p. 262) went one step further by proposing a definition for affective trust in the maintenance phase of a B2B relationship: "*Affective trust is a psychological state comprising the acceptance of vulnerability based on expectations in terms of socio-emotional benefits*".

From this definition we can identify security and attachment as two key affective trust states (Akrout et al. (2017). Through the work of Dowell (2015) we can add relational and intuitive states, underpinned through reciprocity (McAllister, 1995) and subjective judgement based on moods and feelings of another person's character (Newell and Swan, 2000; Nasen, Morrow a nd Batista, 2002). Johnson and Gayson (2005) raised the frequency of contact as

having an altering state, time and interactions. Once again the area of risk mitigation through relational cues is discussed (Dowell, 2015) as one side looks for cues from the other as demonstrated through affective trust antecedents of care, concern and feeling for the other, as a potential mitigation of relationship vulnerability and/or substitute for the 'leap of faith' (Mollering, 2001).

In this study 'cognitive' means a psychological process (or processes) involved in acquisition and understanding of knowledge, formation of beliefs and attitudes, and decision making and problem solving; a sense-making of the relationship and one's perceptions and place within it. Historically, cognitive forms of trust have been the focus of the marketing literature (Young and Daniel, 2003).

Cognition in the relationship toward trust building is largely based on interpretation and expectation (Naslund, 2012). In an early qualitative study, Sako (1992) not only helped define but also established that trust had three elements, influencing B2B relationship outcomes; these are contractual, competitive and goodwill trust. These can all be seen as cognitively based, founded on rational thinking and empirical evidence (pp.38-39). Another qualitative study of note uncovered competency, integrity and good will trust influencing success in international business partnerships (Ahmed, Patterson and Styles, 1999). Further to this, Ganeson (1994) examined relational performance and uncovered two elements of trust – *credibility* and *benevolence* – as having a positive effect. Similar to this, competency and benevolence were also seen as positive influences (Sirdeshmukh, Singh and Sabol (2002).

Dowell (2015) discussed how a relationship could develop over time through the transition from an affective approach (affective trust) to a cognitive approach (cognitive trust). By implication a certain level of dynamism exists in this argument to affect the move from one to the other. In this study, Dowell (2015) argued the following as being the conditions or

triggers to the development from an affective /trust-based relationship to a cognitive/ trust-based relationship.

Table 11 details the elements of cognitive and affective trust adapted from the work of Dowell et al. (2015)

Table 11: Elements of cognitive and affective trust adapted from the work of Dowell et al. (2013)		
Base	Element	Definition
Cognitive	Competency	A person's ability to complete a task to a desired level. An industry or academic attainment that creates a perception of a person being capable to complete a task.
	Integrity	Adherence to or delivering on what is promised and contracted and conforming to ethical standards
	Goodwill	Completion of task over and above what is required and agreed to. The presumption of a positive orientation, motives and intentions of the other person.
Affective	Relational	Faith in the norm of reciprocity
	Intuitive	Results from friendship with and/or feelings towards another

2.6. Redefining B2B trust

In this section the relational definition of B2B trust is broken down and each area explored in turn. The researcher explores the definition posited as an example of a 'good practice' B2B relationship, allowing the use of this to determine and establish the level of relationship currently in existence. Through pro-active application it explores how it could be enhanced. This provides a perspective of current relationships and the potential that exists for its development. It provides an initial prioritisation and outline of a B2B relationship through the application of the definition, and could also offer the opportunity to focus and re-orientate the

relationship. In essence; you may think you have a positive relationship; however, Das and Teng (2001) pointed to an expectation of technical competence within role performance as a trust/relationship builder. So, if the customer's ability to activate at the point of purchase/decision within the channel and/or sector is ineffectual, this impacts on the relationship performance unless you step in and 'make it happen yourself', thereby compensating for the apparent lack of ability. This becomes a consideration that needs to be factored into the relationship, the ability shortfall to deliver within the sector, and its potential to impact relationship performance (Caldwell and Clapham, 2003). When evaluating the relationship against the definition parameters suggested, the credibility of the customer within the sector is deemed as less than positive, as perceived by your customers (Doney and Canon, 1997). This has the potential to affect a co-created solution (Jensen, 2003) or may require your support within the relationship to provide the credibility to halo the initiative. A B2B-specific definition that includes the two gaps of time and mutual value exchange has been developed. Working with an accurate and clear definition determines how a customer relationship within B2B can be seen to be effective or ineffective. Perhaps it is no coincidence that hazy definitions have been the reason that relationship development has been misapplied to B2B, or applied with indifferent results to date. It is important, however, to develop a definition that relates to trust within a B2B context, encompassing the key elements of the relationships – vulnerability credibility, longevity, interdependence, reciprocity and mutual value. The following definition is posited: *"The willingness to be vulnerable to another party and the decision to engage in actions   based upon an interpretation of their ability, credibility and the expectations of mutual value exchange over time".*

2.7. Literature review summary

In summary, this research attempts to understand the extent of the influence that B2B organisational-/firm-level trust exerts on the other levels and actors in the relationship. It examines the relationship across the dyad at all three levels (Inter-firm/organisation, inter-

team/operations, and interpersonal) to understand the level of impact and the relationship to the behaviours, attitudes and actions in the B2B relationship. It investigates how trust at the different levels and across the dyad is linked to the organisation, is it strategic in nature and how is it related to the intentions in business relationships. Additionally, the B2B management literature highlights the importance of the need to understand what elements affect, influence and impact the outcomes of business relationships. This could be on a rational (cognitive) level, an emotional (affective) level, or a blend of the two.

The way trust is operationalised from organisational intention is investigated, which gives rise to a model with the potential to mitigate and systemise the process which is discussed and presented later in this thesis. Through the study into three differing levels and a focus on the antecedents that affect individuals in the B2B relationships, the researcher establishes where trust resides in B2B relationships at each level of the organisation (i.e. inter-organisational/firm, inter-group/team, interpersonal) Each of these questions could be considered and expanded into a research study in their own right, However, in this study in line with these questions, the role of organisation-level trust is established, a model is developed, and perspectives on where trust resides at each level of the relationship dyad are discussed in the following chapters.

2.8. Research question(s)

In this section the research questions are discussed. This is led by the general research aims, objectives and the relevant B2B trust-related research literature, which have been developed in Chapter 1 and 2. The general research objectives are developed based on the literature review and were introduced at the end of Chapter 1, section 1.2.

As explored through this thesis, trust is the foundation of business to business relationships. It is growing in importance as a significant construct for studying, understanding and gaining insights into the B2B relationship and its role in their development (Anderson and Weitz, 1989; Donney and Cannon, 1997; Mollering, 2002; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006).

Trust is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon (Lyon, Mollering and Saunders, 2012). Ambiguity exists in the literature regarding the precise role of trust at its different levels (Zaheer et al., 1998). Business to business organisational research to date has set out to answer the conundrum of trust not only between the dyads, but also at the three stages in the vertical axis and their interactions/interfaces (inter-firm, inter-team and interpersonal) as discussed by Currall and Inkpen (2002).

The fact that it operates at multi-levels – inter-firm, inter-group and interpersonal – is important in inter-organisational studies (Mouzas et al., 2007; Ashnai, 2014). Studies have set out to answer inter-firm- or organisational-level trust (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Zaheer et al., 1998; Fang, 2008; Hammervoal and Toften, 2013; Ashnai 2014; Nikolova, 2015) as trust application in inter-organisation relationships, so focusing on a comparison between the dyad at all levels requires careful evaluation (Dwyer and Oh, 1987; Ashani, 2014). However, little focus has been placed upon the positioning/level of the type of trust and characteristics of the relationship it supports (Curral and Inkpen, 2002).There is a paucity of empirical studies in this context although Fang (2008) does make a contribution in this area. Furthermore, studies on what antecedents are required to move the positioning / level into another identifiable form are also scarce (Schoorman et al., 2007). Scholars have also attempted to explore the cognitive (Dowell 2015) and affective (Nikolova, 2015; Akrout, 2017) nature of trust between dyads. However, there is a paucity of studies that look between dyads at multi-levels and the positive as well as negative effects on the relationship, in terms of attitudes and behaviours.

A gap in the literature is apparent, regarding an understanding of the role of trust at the inter-firm, inter-group and interpersonal levels, how they interrelate, and what role these aspects play in business relationship development or dilution. In particular, how they influence and impact the actors in the relationship and their attitude, behaviours and actions requires further investigation. This understanding and potential insight contributes to the B2B relationship and cross-dyad studies as it explores how these aspects work at inter-firm ,

inter-group and interpersonal levels. This understanding of cognitive, affective, social and structural components contributes to our knowledge of trust in B2B relationships (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Jiang et al., 2011; Dowell, 2015; Nikolova, 2015). It is also important to understand the nature of trust at an organisation level in terms of how it is , whether it is intentional, and its conferred importance impact on the actors in the relationship (Zaheer et al., 1998; Currall, 2002; Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006; McEvily and Zaheer, 2o06; Clark et al., 2010). Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate how they potentially impact on relational outcomes and performance (Palmatier et al., 2007a). This could extend to a framework and/or model bringing elements of B2B inter-firm trust together to improve relational outcomes and trust understanding.

Scholars have wrestled with the conundrum of where trust actually exists in the organisational and relational dyad (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; Mollering, 2002, Bachman and Zaheer, 2006; Saunders, 2016). Those scholars that apply individual-level terminology and logic to the organisational level, without specifying the link between the micro and macro levels are inaccurate, as they 'anthropomorphise the organisation' (Zaheer et al., 1998, p.142). In this strict sense of the word, an organisation in and of itself cannot trust: only an individual can (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Dyer and Chu, 2000; Inkpen and Currall, 1997; Zaheer et al., 1998). Currall and Inkpen (2002) expand on this as they discuss a focus on trust as an expectation becomes problematical for a multi-level approach because forms are incapable of subjective mental states. This study tries to understand where trust resides in the relational dyad and how this manifests at the different levels. Exploring recent thinking and work in Structuration Theory (Fleetwood, 2018).

In addressing this gap it contributes to our knowledge of business to business relationships and the role/impact of trust. This study attempts to address this gap, investigating trust at three different aspects (inter-firm/organisation, inter-team/group, and interpersonal) and how they operate in the dyad. The aim is to develop insights on one to apply to another. It is informed by existing knowledge in the literature regrading trust in B2B relationships and

inter-firm/organisation, inter-group/team, and interpersonal aspects and aims unlock and unpick trust in a B2B relational construct.

The research questions are comprised of an initial principle question, which gives rise to four sub-questions;

1. *To what extent is B2B trust at an organisational level strategic, perceived and intentional in nature, and does it differ at operations/team and interpersonal levels?* (Currall, 2002; Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006b)

Trust between organisation is a multi-level phenomenon (Zaheer et al., 1998). Inter-organisational-level trust operates directly and is seen as a predictor of exchange performance; however, the link to interpersonal trust suggested both/multiple levels played a role (Zaheer et al., 1998). Currall and Inkpen (2002) argued that organisations could be viewed as trusting, if trust is conceptualised as an action rather than as an expectation. This research sets out to understand how the impact of action and/or intention could affect the relationship at other levels and relationship outcomes. This naturally leads to the first sub-question:

a) How does B2B trust at an organisational level have an impact on the actors in the relationship? (Zaheer et al., 1998; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006: Clark et al., 2010)

This goes some way to addressing the suggestion surfaced by Zaheer et al. (1998) of an apparent link between inter-firm and interpersonal roles that both levels of trust played. The nature of organisation/firm-level trust and how that manifests in the actors in the relationship could have implications for the realisation of the intention and turning the intention into a trust-based reality (Giddens, 1994). This could give rise to a model that links organisation-level intention to relationship-actor impact.

The second sub-question:

b. How do the behaviours of trust at an individual level impact through B2B trust

antecedents? (Kumar et al., 1995; Kumar, 2012)

The third sub-question:

c. How do these antecedents affect the behaviour, attitudes and actions of

individuals within these B2B relationships? (Zaheer 2006; Schoorman et al., 2007)

The fourth sub-question:

d. What is the effect of these factors on B2B customer performance?

This study investigates the relationship between the impact of B2B trust antecedents, both on the behaviours and attitudes at an individual level (Kumar et al., 1995; Zaheer, 2006; Schoorman et al., 2007; Kumar, 2012). Businesses behave in certain ways in their relationship with other businesses. This may vary at different levels (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). They could invest significantly in a relationship (Heide and John, 1992), develop strategic information exchange (Cannon and Homburg, 2001; Hammervol and Toften, 2013), and level of commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). They may also work together, and share co-creation and relationship-specific assets (Anderson and Narus, 1992). Anderson and Weitz (1989) argued that a relationship could exist between trusted and related constructs and behavioural attributes. Fang (2008) discussed how a higher level of trust can result in a higher level of investment in the relationship, which supports the thinking of Lewicki and Bunker (1995) and Sheppard and Sherman (1998).

This thesis explores the relationship between these aspects of trust (i.e. inter-firm/organisation, inter-team/group, interpersonal levels) and cognitive and affective characteristics. Therefore, it examines how a business's intentions, attitudes and behaviours influence how they behave and develop trust in the relationship. McEvily and Zaheer (2006) suggested that financial outcomes are among the most relevant and compelling indicators of inter-firm / organisation performance. Luo (2001) and Dwyer and Chu (2003) both uncovered a positive link between trust and performance enhancement. The author of this current

thesis investigates the nature of the effect on B2B customer performance through the fourth sub-question.

Chapter 3. Research methodology

This chapter explores the methodological considerations that underpin the proposed research and the paradigm selected; followed by a discussion of methods to be employed. Finally, section 3.2. details and describes the research strategy.

Trust research employs a diversity of methods, disciplines and traditions (Lyon et al., 2012b). Lyon et al. (2012) proposed that as research on trust matures this creates an opportunity to consider the innovative developments by trust researchers into the methods they have used in order to examine this concept. These have been taken into consideration, discussed and evaluated prior to identifying and selecting the grounded theory (GT) method and critical incident technique (CIT) approach in this thesis to collect, codify, analyse and generate insight. The methodology developed and deployed involved firstly a focus group and then qualitative interviews.

Lyon et al. (2012) confirmed that research on trust can be traced as far back as the 1960s and 1970s through the influential and exploratory work of Deutsch (1973), Garfinkel (1967), Rotter (1967) and Zand (1972). This laid a platform and foundation from which the 1980s and 1990s saw research on the conceptual elements of trust, followed by a wide range of empirical and experimental studies from the late 1990s to the present (Lyon et al., 2012b).

Section 3.1. Philosophical approach

Trust researchers face a difficult task as they attempt to measure something as conceptually complex as trust (Lyon et al., 2012b). A number of researchers (e.g., Currall and Inkpen, 2002; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006; Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014) have attempted to explore trust at different levels of an organisation. This follows a dyadic view and therefore opens the research up to the question of perspective (Currall and Inkpen, 2002). The research pursues a single point perspective; *I trust you and I trust the organisation*; however, it is still from a single point 'I', or interpersonal level, as someone else may not share the same belief. This

could lead to the assumption that the organisation is therefore untrustworthy, in the views of that individual or group at an individual/interpersonal level.

Debate between academics still continues about trust at organisational and group levels (Nooteboom et al., 1970; Aulachet et al.,1996; Perrone et al., 2003; Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006). Can an organisation actually trust? Is it sentient and able to make conscious decisions and think? Is it the amalgamation of all the individuals that form the organisation, in essence *gestalt* or the sum of all the individual parts (Currall and Inkpen, 2002) that transcend the people element? Conceptually there are a few attempts to tackle the question of what it means for an organisation to trust (Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006b; Schilke and Cook, 2013). Those scholars that apply individual-level terminology and logic to the organisational level, without specifying the link between the micro and macro levels are inaccurate, as they 'anthropomorphise the organisation' (Zaheer et al., 1998, p.142). In this strict sense of the word an organisation cannot trust: only an individual can (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Inkpen and Currall, 1997; Zaheer et al. 1998; Dyer and Chu, 2000). Additionally, obtaining reliable data on inter-organisational trust is more challenging if conceptualisations involve the organisation as trustor. Janowicz and Noorderhaven (2006a) argued that when trust is attributed to an organisation, only the behavioural definition of trust is appropriate. In this case it is proposed that a behavioural (action intention) definition will be used. This is supported by Currall and Inkpen (2002) who discussed how, in cases like these, one could resort to investigating agreements and corporate statements, as well as undertaking direct observation of the organisation's actions, and these can be characterised as trusting. Janowicz and Noorderhaven (2006) considered it unfeasible to gather direct observational data of the organisation actions, due to the scale of the study required. However, this does not apply if the observations are constrained to areas that are feasible to study, such as communications, documents, policies, vision and strategies, among others yet deliver the data on the organisation's actions. At an organisational level an action conceptualisation enables a trust construct to

be applied. An action conceptualisation explores trust as organisational intentions with trust building on the actualisation of trust as an outcome of an organisational intention. In this way it is possible for an organisation to demonstrate trust through its intentions, past, current and future trust-related building activities, i.e. product quality, delivering on expectations, living the trust definition (not using opportunistic behaviour or leveraging coercive power), and co-creating for mutual commercial benefit.

Underpinning the research approach is an ontological objectivism that embraces realism. It does this through questioning the external environment. Then, within a realist perspective based on one true reality (universalism), a level of granularity is applied through 'things' that have an order to them. This does not preclude the study or inclusion of social phenomena. Trust at its different levels may vary according to different cultural, societal, business and organisational values; however, all operate within a structural and organisational construct. This may differ but the essence of the different levels is broadly the same. Hence an ontological stance is adopted that aims to uncover the triggers, laws and processes that govern trust development and management attitudes, behaviours and actions, and to predict how this currently operates and how it may change in the future.

Framing the trust proposal paradigm takes elements from the functional and interpretive paradigms (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). The research sets the premise that organisations are rational entities, in which rational explanations offer solutions to rational problems (Saunders et al., 2016). This is overlaid within the context of interpreting and/or attempting to understand the way humans make sense of trust within a B2B relationship construct. This however means looking not only for the relational explanation but also the fundamental meaning. This paradigm sets up the framework for the philosophical approach to the research proposal. Consideration needs to be given to the optimum philosophical 'worldview' or paradigm to address the research aim and question.

Table 12 below contrasts key paradigmatic tenets of CR in alternative paradigms (Lee, 2016). This supports the selection and deployment of critical realism approach in this thesis.

Table 12: Comparison of positivism, constructivism and critical realism			
	Positivism	**Critical realism**	**Constructivism**
Ontology	Realist. Naive realism: a "real" and discoverable reality.	Critical realist. Reality is stratified and imperfectly apprehendable. Socially real entities exist and are not reducible to discourse. Reality is imperfectly apprehendable.	Relativist. Local and specific constructed realities.
Epistemology	Objectivist Findings are true. What can be observed is real; the status of the non-observable is doubtful.	Subjectivist Findings offer provisional descriptions and accounts of phenomena. They are subject to critical examination and always open to revision.	Subjectivist Findings are created through interaction among investigator and respondents.
Axiology	Value-neutral Research is independent of human interests.	Values aware Science is a social activity that is in a continual process of transformation.	Value-laden nature of research
Methodology	Experimental / controlled conditions Verification of precise hypotheses. Deductive approach and quantitative methods.	Critical multiplism Multiple data and contextual information are required. Quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods.	Focus on natural settings Inductive approach and qualitative methods.

Inquiry aim	Explanation through demonstrating invariable, statistical relationships.	Explanation through systematic discovery; identification of causal mechanisms whose operation in given cases will vary.	Understanding and reconstruction of previously held constructions. Extended and accurate Description.
Place and role of theory	Ideal theory is a set of laws or well-founded generalisations from which conclusions can be deduced.	Theory is a conjecture about the connectedness of events and their causal sequences.	If used, theory has a general meaning as a perspective, genre or approach; or with reference to 'local' generalisations and identification of patterns.
Sources:	Ackroyd (2004, pp. 150-151) Guba and Lincoln (2000; 1994), Johnson and Duberley (2000), Lee (2015, pp. 70-71),		

The focus of the study spans an interpretative and functionalist paradigm (Figure 3). It is pragmatic in nature as the research seeks and is concerned with rational explanation and recommendation development within the current organisational constructs. Within these constructs the aim is to interpret trust, in order to understand the fundamental meanings attached to trust within organisational life. The focus is on involvement in the organisation's everyday activities in order to understand and explain what is going on (Keleman and Rinen 2008). Within these constructs we can determine how trust could be interpreted.
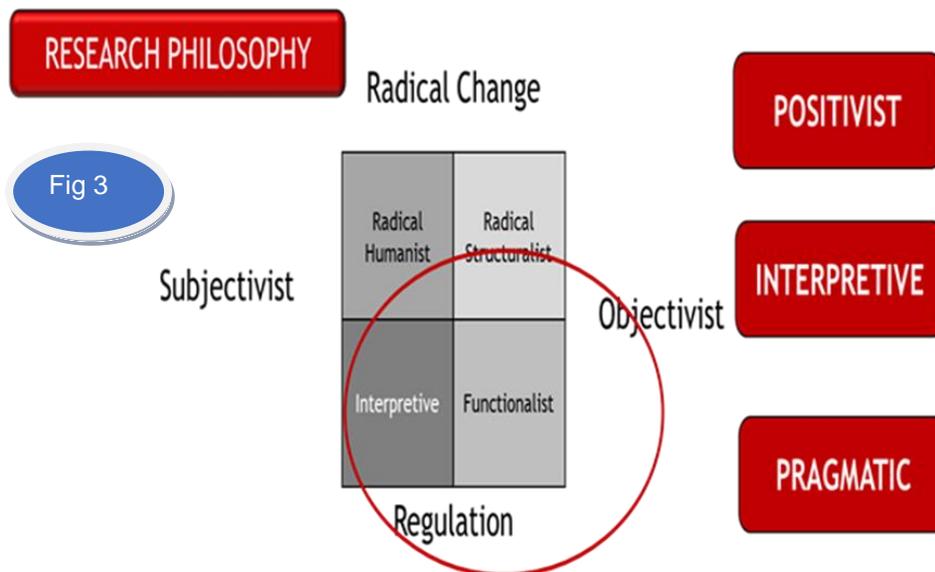
Source: Developed from Burrell & Morgan (1982)

Fig 3: Philosophical paradigms and research approaches

Figure 3 represents the philosophical paradigms overlaying the research approaches developed and adapted from the work of Burrell and Morgan (1982). This underlines the functionalist and pragmatic philosophical approach deployed in this research.

A positivistic philosophical approach operates within a frame that is objective with an observable reality. The status of non-observable findings is questionable in a positivistic frame (Creswell, 2014; Lee, 2016; Saunders et al., 2016). Within a positivistic worldview, hypotheses and theories are often already formulated and then tested. This 'locked-in' approach leaves little room for alternative theory or insight development. In this context a positivistic approach would limit the scope and potential of the research to unlock and unpick trust within a B2B context, as we do not have predetermined theories/hypotheses to test. The approach is the interpretation of the research to surface new theories and thinking relating to trust within the B2B relational paradigm.

The philosophical approach also considered is that of pragmatism, which has its foundation in the work of Cherryholmes (1992). Other scholars of note within this area include Murphy (1990), Patton (1990) and Rorty (1990). Pragmatism as a worldview /paradigm arises out of

action, situations and consequences rather than from antecedent conditions (as in positivism) (Creswell, J2016). Within a pragmatic worldview there is a focus on the application, what works, and what solutions there are to problems (Patton, 1990). Rossman and Wilson (1985) argued that instead of focusing on methods, researchers place emphasis on the research problem and the use of all approaches available to understand it. This provides a philosophical foundation for a mixed methods approach. Cherryholmes (1992), Creswell (2016) and Morgan (2007) discussed how, for the mixed methods researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis. This approach aligns with the research aim and question(s) as it attempts to consider the relationship impact of trust on performance.

The constructivism worldview or social constructivism (often combined with interpretivism) is typically seen as an approach to qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). This philosophical approach believes that individuals seek to understand and derive meaning from the world in which they live and work (Mertens, 2010). Due to the complexity of the meaning the researcher needs to remain broad in thinking and approach rather than narrowing these down to a few categories or ideas. Reliance is placed upon the participant's views of the situation. The questions need to be open, thereby allowing the participants to construct meaning from the situation (Grotty, 1998). Within this approach the intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have of the world. This is counter to starting off with a theory (as in post-positivism), as the enquirer generates or inductively develops a theory or pattern of meaning (Creswell, 2014). When considering the research approach this aligns as the approach undertaken in this thesis to uncover the critical incidents and emergent theories as the aims and questions are explored and developed. It allows theories and critical incidents to emerge and shape the thinking through the actual process of the research as opposed to closing off the opportunity by having a fixed theory or hypothesis that is being validated as in a deductive /positivistic approach.

However, an area for potential pitfall needs to be avoided with this philosophical worldview. In contrast, constructivism's interpretive focus has been accused of lacking in critical spirit (Crotty, 1998). For many constructivists, each person's way of making sense of the world is as valid and worthy of respect as any other: interpretations are equally "true". In valuing subjectivity, constructivism may be criticised for lacking credibility and rigour (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). This will be countered in this thesis by deploying an objective and independent observer to check the categorisation and grouping of insights that emerge from the research (Butterfield et al., 2005).

3.1.1. Pragmatic critical realism

Lee (2016) argued that critical realism (CR) appears to offer the optimum approach by combining the interpretive emphasis of constructivism with positivism's concern for explanation and rigour. There is increasing acceptance of CR as a fully-fledged inquiry paradigm (Ackroyd, 2004), and numerous examples illustrate its adoption in organisational and leadership research, and in other disciplines (e.g., Healy and Perry, 2000; Lawson, 2003; Fleetwood and Ackroyd, 2004; Boal, 2010; Easton, 2010; Kempster and Parry, 2011; Mingers et al., 2013; Edwards et al., 2014). Saunders et al. (2016) discussed how research that is carried out within a functionalist context is likely to be supported through a positivistic research philosophy. Unlike positivism, causality in CR is not established through a cause and effect relationship or constant conjunction between variables. Instead, critical realism focuses on the explanatory potential of the underlying causal powers of entities in accounting for certain events or outcomes (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). For critical realists, all knowledge is fallible: however, it does not follow that it is all *equally* fallible (Sayer, 1998). The term *critical* realism refers in part to its capacity to evaluate competing knowledge claims or theories on a systematic basis, even though all theory is open to revision (Boal, 2010).

The research in this thesis sets out to address areas of trust within a functionalist context which links to this philosophical approach. A certain element of interpretative context is

predicted as the research sets out to explore how humans attempt to make sense of the world around them (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Johnson and Duberley (2000) stated that applying a critical realist stance to management research entails understanding the interpretations and intentions that consciously motivate individual behaviour as well as the structures or conditions which affect social activities. This links with this thesis' research questions, which explore staff and managers' responses to trust development or dilution, within the explanatory context of organisational structures, such as the triggers and impact associated with the development or dilution of trust within the strategic trust organisational context. At the same time, CR allows for the complex, interrelated and dynamic nature of the phenomenon to be investigated, which does not suit single cause and effect relationships (Lee, 2015). An element of the research will attempt to interpret the insights that emerge for qualitative analysis by exploring linkage, themes and the impact of variables on trust building or dilution. The aim is to identify new emergent theories from within the research and not be restricted through the testing of discreet hypotheses.

An issue with a social constructive and critical realism approach is remaining neutral and detached from the research and data to avoid influencing the findings (Crotly, 1998). With a concern for in-depth, subjective meanings and naturalistic settings, constructivism regards the researcher as an active participant in the research process rather than a detached observer (Johnson and Duberley, 2000). The researcher constructs an interpretation of others' meanings and experience, and the findings reflect the values and prior experiences of the researcher and the social and cultural context of the research (Lee, 2015). This may be an issue when employing interview-based qualitative research and an interpretative approach to the outputs and analysis as it is virtually impossible to disconnect one's values from the research undertaken. This is because values are hardwired from historical, cultural, organisational and ethical perspectives (Locke, Spirdiso and Silverman, 2013), which are, in essence, ever-present within the process (Sieber, 1998; Isreal and Hay, 2006). Creswell (2014) highlights the importance of the researcher's role in a mixed methods approach, due

to the sustained and intensive experience the researcher has with the participants. Locke et al. (2013) introduced a range of strategic, ethical and personal issues into the qualitative research process. With this in mind it is important to understand the areas that could shape the researcher's interpretations during the study. A personal values statement is provided (sections 3.4.2 and 6.7) as a reference point for any insights, analysis and findings that may appear at odds with the data. In this way complete transparency is maintained throughout the process. This also offers up issues around replicability as, unlike a questionnaire, the same interview question can be asked in different ways, potentially soliciting a different response and making exact or similar replication difficult to achieve (Gill and Johnson, 2002).

The phenomenologist approach to interpretivism is employed, looking at the actual trust experiences of the research participants, their 'lived-in' recollections, and interpretation of those experiences (Butterfield et al., 2005). This approach ensures that insights into trust development and or decline are not lost if the complexities and interactions are boiled down to a series of generic rules or general laws. Saunders et al. (2016) raised an interesting point that could have direct applicability for research into trust. They attest that in a business management context it is important to look at organisations from the perspective of differing groups of people. This links with the potential multi-level approach to trust and could help in framing the groups and levels. They argue that the ways in which the CEO and board see and experience the organisation as differ from how managers, suppliers, workforce, and support staff experience it. They posit that this difference can be so great that it could arguably be seen as experiencing different workplace realities. This has transference into trust as the different levels may be developing or limiting trust at each level through their actions and/or intentions. Messaging from one level as an intention could be interpreted incorrectly and acted upon by a different level, resulting in inconsistencies for the suppliers and customers (Saunders et al. 2016). This ensures that the wealth of the differences

between them and their individual triggers (antecedents) will not be lost and the research will reflect this.

The research approach into trust in this thesis aims to make a difference to organisational practice as it brings together a positivistic, interpretative approach with pragmatism. This is through the deployment of Grounded Theory, using critical incident technique as the unit of analysis. Pragmatism asserts that concepts are only relevant where they support action (Keleman and Rumen, 2008) This research into B2B trust will achieve this by considering theories, concepts, ideas, hypotheses and research findings in a way that has practical consequences in specific contexts rather than simply in abstract form (Saunders et al., 2016). This means the approach starts with the research problem and research question to be addressed. This can be seen in the research question as the emphasis is on practical outcomes.

3.1.2. Qualitative research

A number of scholars have defined qualitative research (e.g., Chell 1998; Creswell, 1998, Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; McLeod, 1997,).McLeod defined it as *'any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of qualification'* (1994, p. 77) Creswell added the concepts of exploring *'a social or human problem'* and the researcher building '*a complex, holistic picture' by analysing words, reporting detailed views of informants , and conducting the study in a natural setting* (1998, pp. 14-16). This links with Chell (1998) who argued that critical incident technique (CIT) as an early qualitative method has changed from one that initially posed as a scientific tool that used quantitative language in order to gain validity and reliability checks (Arvay, 2003; pers.comm.,15 Sept). However, in a post-modern (Gergen, 2001) post-structural era (Lather, 1993) research paradigm where research methods are now commonly used and accepted (Cresswell, 1998; Murray, 2003). Chell (1998, p. 51) argued further that CIT can be used within a post-modern environment as it becomes an investigative tool that can be used within an interpretive or phenomenological paradigm. This supports the proposed approach

to uncovering theories and antecedents of trust through the use of grounded theory and critical incident technique within a B2B organisational, inter-group and interpersonal context.

3.2. The research strategy

Applying an action conceptualisation to a breakdown of the B2B definition of trust highlights how it works within this context. The definition and antecedents are explored, explained and developed from Chapter 2.

The following research methods were applied to capture data, undertake analysis, and generate insight.

3.2.1. Focus group

A focus group is a group interview that focuses upon a particular issue, product, service or topic (in this case trust within B2B relationships) encouraging discussion and sharing in an open and safe environment (Kruger and Casey, 2009). Focus groups of buyers and sellers formed stage one; this was used to shape, scope and provide initial directional insight into the second stage of the research. The focus group included actors from different sectors enabling a cross comparison. Facilitation aims to mitigate the 'loudest voice' syndrome, ensuring that the views of all are heard, captured and represented. The structure of the session aims to collect group perspective, paired and individual perspectives through research exercises during the focus group session. Ashleigh, Ojiako, Chipulu and Wang (2012) used focus groups and, drawing from De Ruyter (1996), ensured the group kept to below 12. This was applied when constructing the first-stage focus groups. Ahead of the focus group participation Ashleigh et al.'s (2012) empirical results from earlier studies were shared and participants were asked to read them as part of the guide to the focus group preparation.

3.2.2. Multiple case studies

The use of multiple cases studies (Eisenhardt, 2007; Stevens et al., 2015) allows the researcher to build depth and breadth into the research. Stevens et al. (2015) used a multiple case study approach, arguing that it is particularly suited to gaining deep understanding (Eisenhardt, 1989; Van Maanen, 1979; Yin, 2003) and the development of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This allowed them to identify a theme from one case, re-examining the other case to refine it, and then repeating the process. This relied on iterative thematic content analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and this approach enabled them to identify re-orientation and re-calibration as two key drivers to the maintenance of optimal trust (Stevens et al., 2015). The approach also allowed an element of longitudinal analysis through the repetition of the case study at different times. This provided not only comparative analysis of one company against the other but also within the organisations relational performance along a time line. This may have implications for the approach to trust research adopted in this study.

3.2.3. Critical Incident technique

Critical Incident Theory has been effectively deployed since Flanagan (1954) used it to identify emergent theory across a number of sectors. It allows the researcher to obtain the data through the identification of critical incidents; which can be in the moment (observed) or retrospective. This has the potential to provide the researcher with current and longitudinal perspectives to the data. Flanagan (1954) argued for clarity around the unit of analysis to be measured as critical incident. To apply a level of precision to the study, he also pointed to the diminishing factor of frequency of recording to the number of incidents, which is something the researcher needs to be aware of and plan for.

Butterfield et al. (2005) added CIT to Creswell's (1998) unique dimensions of five major qualitative traditions by looking at the disciplines' focus, origin, data-collection methods, data analysis, and narrative forms:

1. **Focus** is on the critical events, incidents, or factors that help promote or detract for the effective performance of some activity and or experience of a specific event or situation. This aligns with the research aim and research question to uncover the trust antecedents that build trust within a B2B context and their effect on the relationship behaviour, attitudes and actions, and how this affects B2B customer relationship performance.

2. **Origin:** The CIT discipline emanates from industrial and organisational psychology. This fits with the research aim and focus as the sample base is industrial in nature and at organisational and interpersonal levels.

3. **Data collection methods**: Primarily through interviews, either in person (individually or in groups) or via telephone. Which represents a direct correlation with the planned data collection methodology.

4. **Data analysis** is conducted though a frame of reference, forming categories that emerge for the data, and determining the specificity or generality of the categories.

5. **Narrative forms**: A narrative formed through categories with operational definitions and self-descriptive titles.

 In this instance a positive and/or negative trust incident was employed as a unit of analysis. During the case study development the research explored critical incidents as units of analysis signalled by the form of the research questions (Yin, 2009).

This impacts the levels at which data are collected and analysed and findings are drawn (Patton, 2002). The research focused on the responses of board directors, managers and staff to positive and/or negative activities that affected trust within the organisation between them and a customer or supplier. Both the positive and negative trust incidents are regarded

as embedded units of analysis within the case organisations of trust breakdown or trust development (Flanagan, 1954). Because the unit of analysis is a trust incident the first stage of the qualitative research uses focus groups to explore what trust means at supplier and customer levels.

3.3. Research limitations and risks

The mitigation of the risk of research partner participants being withdrawn or limited was achieved through the following:

1. Research partners were the only representatives from their sector. This provided a sector competitive advantage to any findings from the research as it develops.

2. Research partners therefore gained exclusive access to the findings. In many incidents it can take four to five years for academic theory and insights to effectively transfer to practitioners (Creswell, 2014).

3. Research partners received feedback workshops to socialise the findings relating to their situation for trust building.

3.4. Ethical considerations

It is important to understand the role of values and ethics within the research process and potential impact of the researcher's own values on those of the research participants (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.4.1. Participant anonymity and confidentiality

Prior to commencing the research, each participant received a pre-interview briefing document from the internal research sponsor. This outlined the nature of the research, what they could expect, the confidentiality of the project, the governing process, and assurance of their contribution anonymity. At this stage they were given the opportunity to withdraw. Prior

to each interview a pre-interview ethics briefing in line with University of Southampton's research ethics guidelines (ERGO 2018) was undertaken. This provided reassurance to the participant around the anonymity and the confidentiality of their input into the research. The interview could only proceed once the participant had read the EGRO guidelines and signed the permission forms. Furthermore, the research coding (Chapter 4, section 4.2) is constructed in a way that ensures each participant remains anonymous through their level in the organisation and which side of the dyad they represent.

3.4.2. Personal values

Heron (1998) argued that our values are the guiding research for all human action and Saunders et al. (2016) posited that the role that your own values play in each stage of the research process is of great importance if the research results are to be credible. The concept of trust is loaded with value perspectives and may be subject to research interpretation and conclusions that are open to debate if the researcher's position is unclear. The researcher has therefore offered a personal statement to ensure the reader is clear about the value positions held and decisions taken in deciding what is appropriate ethically and an explanation in the event of any queries (Saunders et al., 2016).

Chapter 4: Treatment of qualitative data

This chapter covers the treatment of the qualitative data gathered from each research partner and their respective participants. In this context the term 'research partner' refers to the paired organisation buyer-seller that allowed access to the researcher (section 4.2.3.1. details each research partner). This was undertaken through focus group and semi-structured interviews related to the research methodology as outlined in Chapter 3.

4.1. Introduction and qualitative research partners/participants

This section introduces the chapter and explains the sections; research sample, data collection and approach to managing the data to extract insights and emergent theory developed through a grounded theory approach informing the thesis. In section 4.2.the unit of analysis gathered as critical incidents were identified through the application of CIT, informants and coding techniques are explained. The sample and the framing of the research approach are discussed in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2. The chapter concludes with section 4.2.3. which details the qualitative interviews.

4.2. Unit of analysis and research partners/informants

This section discusses the level of the organisation with regard to theory development, data collection and analysis in this study. In the first part the significance of clarifying the level that the research relates to is explored and discussed. In the remaining section the research partners, informants, unit of analysis and the level of constructs are addressed.

A theory can operate on more than one level and it is also important to note the levels of the constructs in the theory. The right level of theory, level of measurement and matching analysis are essential when both designing and discussing trust in an organisational context and studies (Ashnai, 2014). In this instance the level of theory describes the target (personal, team, group, organisation, relationship) the study aims to explain. The level of analysis relates to the actual source of the data. Klien et al. (1994) made a valid point by

highlighting that in business and management studies, the level of interest can be an individual, an element in a set, or a member in a unit. The point can be further developed by highlighting that higher levels can include groups and teams as an organisational entity, such as a dyad, team, company or industry.

Currall and Inkpen (2002) argued for research in trust and the accompanying unit of analysis to match the level under investigation. They point to a prevalence of misspecification in trust research where either a single point or one level (i.e. buyer -seller) are extrapolated to represent other levels in the organisation and between dyads. Hence it is important that the level targeted is the level measured.

In this study, the unit of analysis is the level of an organisation between both sides of the relational dyad. Specifically, this represents the relationship between one company (supplying company) at a defined level (i.e. interpersonal, inter-team/group, inter-organisation) and another company at a defined level, which in the case of this research is an actual customer of the supplying company. This aligns with the research aim, objectives, questions and purpose of this study that focuses on understanding B2B relational trust and its role between the dyad at multiple levels.

This study focuses on the identification of critical incidents in the relationship(s) (Flanagan, 1954) between both sides of the relational dyad at multiple levels developed through the application of CIT. This is developed through the deployment of grounded theory and semi-structured interviews as a way to unlock the incidents to develop initial codes for analysis (first-cycle codes). In this study the respondents (the unit of measurement of the critical incidents) represent the three levels of the organisation(s) being researched:

1. Informants from organisational/leadership level who are knowledgeable about the relationship the two organisations have at an organisation-to-organisation level, and how the other levels interact with the leadership/organisational level.

2. Informants from the team/group level who are knowledgeable about the relationship between the two organisations at this level, as well as their relationship with the other levels.

3. Informants from the staff/personal level who are knowledgeable about their one-to-one relationship with the other organisation and the other levels.

This provided the research with respondents and informants covering the three levels of the relational dyad on both sides of the organisation. Previously, many studies into business relationships have focused on the supplier side of the relational dyad (Barnes et al., 2007; Joshi, 2009). In other instances data were was collected from informants with a more functional responsibility (Rindfleisch and Heide, 1997). These include sales managers (Anderson, 1985; 1988; John and Weitz, 1988; 1989) purchasing managers (Heide and John, 1990; Noordewier et al., 1990) or agents' intermediaries (Anderson and Narus, 1992) This research extends the reach of the informants in the relationship between two organisations used previously, to include project managers, customer services, administration, finance, information technology, operations and respondents from three levels in each organisation (personal, group/team and leadership/organisational).

4.2.1. Focus group participants and recruitment

The participants were selected using purposive sampling (Hair et al., 2009) on the basis that they occupy or have occupied a senior position within a B2B organisation within a customer-facing role. They represent a diverse number of sectors:

- Outsource Services

- Pharmaceuticals

- Wines Beers and Spirits

- Fast Moving Consumer Goods

- Information Technology Services

Table 13: Focus group participants

	Role	Company/organisation	Attended
1.	Client Director	Information Technology Services	YES
2.	International Markets Director	FMCG	YES
3.	Commercial Excellence Manager	Pharmaceuticals	YES
4.	Commercial Director - Grocery	WBS	YES
5.	Business Account Manager ~	WBS	YES
6.	MD	Outsource Services	YES
7.	Commercial Director	FMCG	YES
8.	Sales Development Director	Information Technology services	NO
9.	MD	Outsource services	YES
	Lead researcher / facilitator		
	Support researcher / notes		
	Support researcher / sound		

The seniority of the participants helped to achieve a multi-level view of trust within B2B relationships. Zaheer et al. (1998) argued that the leadership team can reflect the action conceptualisation of trust through their intentions, actions, behaviours, attitudes, reality of the actions and the effect they have both internally and externally. Furthermore, the experience

and roles of the group also offer the potential to provide insights into the group/team and interpersonal levels of trust in B2B relationships.

4.2.2. Focus group procedure

All of the focus group participants were known to the researcher either professionally and / or personally. They agreed to participate through direct contact over the phone, face-to-face meeting and email. Once agreement had been obtained an outlook meeting request was lodged in their meeting management system. This was reconfirmed two weeks prior to the event. Through accepting the request, they confirmed participation in the event.

Each participant was personally contacted two months ahead of the event to gauge interest and agreement to take part. This was followed up one month ahead of the event using a letter of invitation to detail the timing, venue location, and subject for discussion. Two weeks before the event an email was sent to verify and confirm attendance. Participants were asked to approach the event with an open mind and not prepare materials in advance.

The room was prepared with a flipchart. Research assistant 1 (RA1) set up the recording equipment and research assistant 2 (RA2) set up the note-taking position. Each participant had a numbered table card enabling the note taker to attribute the comment to a participant while retaining anonymity. Before starting, the researcher asked each participant to read the ethics pack and complete the ethics consent form. This added a level of formality and seriousness, enabling the group to get straight into the discussion without preamble. The researcher facilitated the entire focus group, using the flipchart to capture key themes and emergent thinking as the session unfolded.

Concluding the session, a debrief was undertaken amongst the research lead and assistants:

- Flipcharts were gathered, numbered and filed.

- Two separate recordings of the focus group were made; these were checked and downloaded for transcription.

- RA2 took touch-type notes during the focus group. These were spell-checked and saved for later analysis.

- Each member of the group was thanked by follow-up email.

- The initial theming and coding of the focus group was undertaken based on the flipchart output and touch-type notes. These were uploaded into NVivo and analysed for critical incidents and frequency of reference.

- The initial codes form Table 14, and Appendix 3 provides the audit trail for additional detail.

First- cut initial themes and coding emerging from focus group 2/3/17 based on the touch-type notes are reported in Table 14.

Table 14: First cut initial themes and coding emerging from focus group 2/3/17 based on the touch-type notes.	
Level one coding	Level two coding
Inter-organisational	Common purpose
	Common agenda
	Role models
	Organisational leadership
	Altering their values
	Way of working
	Sentiment
	Indispensable contracts (too big to fail)
	Culture
	Values
	Rational
	Emotional
	Directness
	Integrity

	Human Touch
	Getting the basics right
	Symbolism
	Gestures
	Intentions
	History:-past experiences limiting expectations
	Mutually beneficial
	Conflicting requests/actions
	Mutual respect
	Actions
	Language
	Mis-aligned – intention to reality
	Credibility
	Multiple stakeholders
Inter-Group/team	Multiple stakeholders
Interpersonal	Conflicting messages
	Conflicting language
	Elasticity (where does it snap and what are the consequences?)
	Ability to fix
	Consistency
	Integrity
	Indispensable relationships (too important to fail)
	Respect
	Long-term relationships
	Straightforwardness
	Mutual respect
	History
	Common agenda
	Common purpose
	Rational
	Emotional
	Challenging when trust being broken or tested.
	Doing the right thing

	Reliability
	Mutual dependency
	Transparency
	Vulnerability
	Two-way thing

This formed the pilot output for the qualitative research theming and coding, as outlined above and detailed in appendices 3 and 12. The initial codes aim to capture the attributes of the participants. The focus group codes and themes form the foundations and framework for participants' coding and development across inter-organisational, inter-team and interpersonal levels.

The above formed the foundation, which was built upon and refined using the full focus group transcription based on the recording of the group event. The focus group coding resulted in the foundations for onward coding development (Table 14). At this stage the focus group outputs were independently verified (Section: 4.3.4 Stage 1: Working with the data corpus).

4.2.3. Qualitative interviews

The sample drawn upon consists of 37 interviews; 18 interviews with representatives from selling side organisations and 19 interviews with representatives from buying side organisations.

4.2.3.1. Research participants and recruitment

The respondents represented organisations from the following sectors:

Financial Services, Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Outsourced Information Technology Services, Utilities, Pharmaceuticals, and Retail.

Each organisation and key contacts were known to the researcher through longstanding professional relationships. They were approached in the initial thesis concept stage (research proposal), where the research aims and objectives were shared and potential organisational insights for relational improvement discussed. The typology of the organisations selected is as follows:

Relationship One: Financial services organisation to a key intermediary; the relationship has existed for over five years; is mature; and the exchanges represent a combination of channel marketing and distribution.

Relationship Two: Pharmaceutical organisation to a key wholesale/retail/hospital organisation; the relationship has existed for over 10 years; is mature; and the exchanges represent a combination of supply chain, channel partner and specialist service provision.

Relationship Three: Fast-moving consumer goods organisation to a multiple retail grocery company. The relationship has existed for over 15 years; is mature; and the exchanges are across multiple categories, facia formats and locations at a shopper / consumer level.

Relationship Four: Outsourced technology, information and data organisation to a key utility provider. The relationship has existed for over five years; is maturing; and the exchanges represent the provision of contracted services across multi functions, departments and sites.

The breakdown of the informants by organisational level is as follows:

Table; 15: Number and level of qualitative research respondent			
Level of respondent	Number of respondents		
	Supplying / Selling organisation	Buying / customer organisation	Total

Leadership / organisational level	5	8	13
Team/Group/ Operations level	11	8	19
Personal / staff level	2	3	5
Total	18	19	37

4.2.3.2. Research participant procedure

All the interviews took place face to face, and extensive notes were taken during each interview. All of the interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim. Only four interviews were not recorded, due to internal security procedures and regulations. In this instance the handwritten notes were transcribed. Each side of the relationship was represented and had respondents from all three levels of organisational structure; leadership level – inter-organisational, management level – inter-group/team, and operational/ activation level – interpersonal.

The interviews followed a semi-structured approach, in each instance of the fieldwork. Respondents were interviewed against a research protocol which forms Appendix 5. Research to date has aimed to uncover cross-dyad relationship insights, organisational leadership and/or the leadership level; however, this has failed due to the incorrect focus of the research (DeChurch, Hiller, Murase, Doty and Salas, 2010) which is the extrapolation of single point to multi point/multi-level (Currall and Inkpen, 2002; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006; Ashnai, 2014). The design of the research conferred a critical advantage in that it has examined the organisational level from two distinct positions – within and between. This has been relatively neglected or overlooked by researchers – senior and middle management from both sides of the relational dyad.

4.3. Thematic analysis from interviews

This section explains and evidences the key phases of thematic analysis following the processes offered by Cresswell (2014), Saldana (2016) and Saunders (2016). It is worth noting that the non-linear nature of qualitative thematic analysis as an iterative approach was used to build, enhance and increase the depth of the analysis and findings. However, in this chapter the key phases are reported in a linear and logical approach (Saldana, 2016) to improve understanding of how the codes and themes emerged and developed from the qualitative research.

4.3.1. Qualitative data collection

The data were coded in two separate stages in order to demonstrate the objectivity of both the approach and development of the first-cycle and second-cycle codes. This provides the objective platform for emergent theory development. The data were collected from two primary sources – focus group and research partner interviews.

4.3.2. Focus group

The focus group comprised eight (Table 13) senior organisational-level informants. Creswell (2012) and Saunders (2016) indicated the use of focus groups as an effective way to develop emergent themes and categories. They suggested the use of an independent source(s) to code in parallel ensuring research bias is mitigated. The focus group transcript was double-coded and parallel-coded by two independent sources. The double coding and independent sources indicated a variation of less than 10%, providing assurance of objectivity of the initial focus group data , emergent categories and themes. The doctoral research deploys a qualitative approach through critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954) and multiple case studies (Eisenhardt, 1989) to investigate B2B trust in a relational context. The research into B2B trust commenced with a focus group as pilot, which was conducted at offices in Central London.

4.3.3. Research Interviews

A total of 37 interviews were undertaken as detailed in Table 15. All of the interviews took place face-to-face, at the interviewee's place of work. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to two hours, with an average length of 44.81 minutes. Overall inductive thematic saturation (Saunders et al., 2017) was achieved around 32/33 interviews, with no additional codes emerging from the interviews/interviewees other than validation of the codes developed and captured through the preceding interviews (Glazer and Stauss, 1967; Urquhart, 2013).

4.3.4. Stage 1: Working with the data corpus

The first stage involved transcribing the focus group session from a recording of the entire event conducted with eight respondents into a word document. This provided the researcher with the opportunity to listen to and compare the transcript to the notation taken in parallel as the fall back plan to check for validity. During this process the narrative was coded to each participant in a way to ensure anonymity yet allow analysis of the respondent's answers within the focus group session. The second step involved loading the transcript into NVivo 11. An initial word frequency query provided insight at a high level and a cross-check against the focus group common themes that emerged from the session. This allowed the first-code generation. At this step, the focus group transcript and themes were shared with two independent observers to verify the initial themes and a less than 10% divergence was observed validating the approach. The third step involved transcribing the 37 digitally recorded interviews into individual word documents. These were individually coded to allow respondent analysis – i.e. by level, by supplier/customer – while retaining individual and organisational anonymity. A reference for the level and number of respondents is shown in Table 15. Each respondent was attributed with a code; the first number related to the number of the group of interviewees in the research partner, represented as 1 (as not more than one group per research partner was involved, each respondent code started with a 1). The second number in each code reflected the level in the organisation the respondent

represented – i.e. I = organisational level and 2 = group/team level. The last number in each code is an indication of the number of the respondent interviewed – i.e. 1 = first, 2 = second, and so on. Therefore, a code of 1.1.2 represents group 1; organisational level; second respondent. This reference is then preceded with a letter relating to the researched organisation, allowing the researcher to determine which side of the dyad it represents while retaining organisational anonymity – i.e. A.1.2.1, A represents a supplier side organisation, 1= research group one, 2= team, group/operations level and 1= first respondent. An initial word frequency of the 37 interviews provided a comparator against the focus group and an initial view versus the focus group codes. This provided the data corpus in an outline format ready for stage two

4.3.5. Stage 2: Developing the initial codes

Systematic interrogation of each transcript of the interviews was undertaken to identify themes that related to the focus group and critical incidents that surfaced in the interview. Specific coding approaches were selected and developed based on 'fit' to the subject and qualitative nature of the research. Three methods were deployed at this stage which are explored – initial coding, invivo coding and process coding.

Initial coding. Earlier publications refer to initial coding as "open coding" (Saldana, 2016, p.115). Chamaz's (2014) term "initial coding" is used in this research context, since it implies an initiating procedural step in harmony with first-cycle coding. Initial coding breaks down qualitative data into discrete parts, closely examines them, and compares them for similarities and difference. The goal of initial coding is to "remain open to all possible theoretical directions suggested by your interpretation of the data" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.102). Initial coding can employ invivo or process coding which have also been selected as methods for the first-cycle coding. Drawing from Saldana (2016) initial coding creates a starting point to generate analytic leads for further exploration. Glaser (1978) argued that initial coding helps to guide the direction of the study. All proposed codes during

this cycle are tentative and provisional, where some codes may be reworded as analysis progresses. The task can also alert the researcher that more data are needed to support or build an emergent theory. Charmaz (2014) suggested that detailed line by line initial coding is potentially more suitable for interview transcripts than researcher-generated field notes; however in relation to this project the selection focuses on invivo and process coding as described in the next section.

Invivo Coding. Invivo coding has been labelled "literal coding," "verbatim coding," and "inductive coding," among others (Saldana, 2016, p.105)) The root meaning of in vivo is "in that which is alive," and as a code refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record, "terms used by (participants) themselves" (Strauss, 1987, p.33). Saldana (2016) posited the appropriateness of invivo for virtually all qualitative studies, particularly for novice qualitative researchers learning how to code data, and studies that prioritise and honour the participant's voice.

Process Coding. Process coding has also been termed "action coding" in selected methods literature (Saldana, 2016). In this current research, process coding is used as it implies broader concepts, the action elements link to the research question and are aimed at understanding the potential dynamic nature of trust in a B2B construct. Process coding uses gerunds ("-ing words) exclusively to connote action in the data (Chamaz, 2002) Simple observable activity (e.g., reading, drinking,) and more general conceptual action (e.g., negotiating, adapting, struggling) can be coded as such through process coding (Saldana ,2016, p.111). Processes also imply actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as those things that emerge, change, occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented through time (Saldana, 2003; Hennik, Hutter and Bailey, 2011). Processes can also be broken down into sub-processes for finer detail. This links with the study, as the researcher explores psychological concepts and their actions/interactions.

Using these methods, each transcript was coded, returning to previous interviews and the focus group as necessary to refine and review codes. This included creating an outline for each new code and a definition to ensure consistency across all interviews and data corpus (Table 16 and full list forms Appendix 2).

Table 16: Example of coding, definition and times referenced.		
Code	Definition	Refs
Acting Adversarial	Where one side operates the relationship from a re-active, SLA and contractual perspective. Dispute, disagreement and conflict are the norm with high levels of protracted negotiations. High levels of dis-trust creep into the relationship as each side tries to second best the other.	20
Acting on first impressions	The initial impression a person or organisation can create that encourages you to trust them from the get go!	16
Adapting successfully	On an interpersonal level, understanding yourself sufficiently (self-aware) to successfully adapt to the other person.	25
Affiliating	Where one or both organisations have an affiliation with a buying group, trade body, etc. This affiliation adds credibility to the organisation, through the prestige of belonging, access to a network, knowledge, expertise, information or buying/selling clout.	7

This evidences the method and an example of the iterative approach undertaken, where continued understanding of the data corpus facilitates the generation and refinement of the initial codes. After exhausting the initial analysis of the data corpus, 175 distinct codes were identified and referenced across the entire data corpus. The codes are shown in thematic form (Chapter 5) and summarised in Appendix 2 with the definition and number of times referenced.

An example of a typical code is *Conflicting actions* which was applied whenever respondents referred to actions in the relationship that caused or have the potential to cause dissonance and/or conflict between both sides. For example, a, Interviewee P.1.1.2.: *some people are absolutely doing the right thing for their position, but it could be almost 100% the wrong thing for the group;* Interviewee S.1.2.2.: *The fallout from this is we have started to man mark and we are reluctant to say to A, "Ok you PM it". I think we are scared of them*

changing things and losing control as changes need to go through Q36, site change regulation. It also emanates from us being cautious to relinquish control, due to IT touching so many parts of the organisation, and Interviewee Mo.1.1.1: *They don't do it because they believe it's going to be bad for the relationship; actually it's the reverse of that: in* not *doing it it's bad for the relationship.*

4.3.6. Stage 3: Searching and developing themes

The next stage involved searching for themes across 175 codes in two discreet steps outlined in this section, one of which offers a new methodological approach to qualitative research. Salandar (2016) went some way to signpost the transitions from first-cycle to second-cycle categories or theme(s). However, as a check step from first cycle to second cycle, a 'bridging process' was developed and deployed. This adds to academic trust research and methodology as this bridging process where the research findings are presented back to the research partners for validation, verification and development has not been encountered elsewhere in B2B trust research methodology. Initially the referencing frequency was used as a guide and decile analysis across the total customer and supplier data corpus to focus on trust building and trust dilution antecedents, by level. The researcher's interpretation was built in as having greater importance than the code frequencies and subsequent themes (Javid and Zarea, 2016) related to the insights the cross-relational dyad research highlighted. Each side was broken down further to reflect the level of respondent.

Level	Supplier		Customers	
	What's Working	What's Not	What's Working	What's not
Org Level				
Group/Team				
Interpersonal				

[The detailed analysis between the relational dyads, by level and positive/negative factors is contained in Appendices 13-18.]

Once the data were separated out into all the customers' coding/ references and suppliers' coding/references an initial sweep was undertaken. This highlighted codes that have no references on the customer's side and those with no references on the supplier's side, and one single code that emanated from the focus group, yet failed to reference for either side.

Table 17: Codes removed from the first cycle	
Customer	Supplier
Elasticity of personal trust	Averting Destruction
Improving customer satisfaction	Enforcing trust
Operating open book	Smack in the face
Paid for promise	Starting to erode trust
Trust as threat (no reference in the customer transcripts)	The whole body language
	Trust as threat (no references in the supplier transcripts)

In parallel and as an output of analysis at this level, three research partner feedback sessions were undertaken, referred to in this thesis as the *bridging process*. This enabled two distinct interventions at this stage:

1. Analysis of a discrete relationship from within the data corpus looking at both sides of the relationship, once again reflecting 'what's working' and 'what's not'. This allowed a cross-relationship analysis and insight generation.

2. Undertaking a feedback session/workshop, including both buyer and seller representatives (often the same people that participated in the actual interviews). The

sharing of the analysis, and insights in interactive workshop format providing the forum and opportunity to objectively reflect on the analysis and insight generated. The workshop format with research partners provided further third party validation of the first-cycle coding. It also provided directional input into the accuracy and impartiality of the analysis, insights and findings and established the trustworthiness of the analysis at this stage through the cross-dyad feedback (Appendices 3, 19, 19.1 and 19.2).

To explore the total data corpus for code frequencies for qualities (Saldana 2016), the data corpus was split into the two sides of the relationship – buyer/suppliers – and code frequency was once again used to explore the data for qualities within and between the two datasets. [Appendices 13-18) provide the detail between both sides of the relational dyad and, at each level, the positive factors and negative factors are developed.] At this stage Harding (2013) advised summarising and comparing as a fundamental analytic technique once the data have been coded. Simple charting enables the scanning and construction of potential patterns from the codes, to develop initial assertions or propositions and explore possible dimensions which might be found in the range of codes (Saldana, 2016).

Feedback sessions for two of the research partners developed the data corpus into an analysis format that interrogated both sides of the relationship; with emphasis on 'what's working', 'what's not working', and undertaking a comparative analysis. Once again, the coding frequency was used to explore the data for qualities, however the researcher moved beyond this to explore where codes were common across the dyad and referenced more frequently. However, the opposite was also evidenced where codes failed to gain a reference from one side of the relationship, yet were referenced and present in the other (Table 17).

 In one case both sides of the dyad indicated operating in a positive relationship borne out through collaboration. However, on first impression collaboration could be viewed as a positive trait and a trust-building antecedent: "*The Cyber project was a good example of*

collaborative working; we worked as a project team, with a S team, A service team and the security team. Another good example of collaborative working would be the A/ISO AW deployment – that's Windows 7 roll out and deployment", Respondent A.1.2.1. On closer analysis in the context of trust building it could be seen as a rather 'arm's length' way of working, maintaining one's internal organisational integrity/structure, while finding common ground with the other side to work together – to 'collaborate' on something." *Trust us to deliver collectively*", Respondent S.1.1.3. When viewed in this way, it could stall the relationship and prevent it from moving on as although both sides think and demonstrate working together, they however do not give anything of themselves or the organisation (remaining guarded) towards working together, as opposed to working in partnership. "*A has certainly used the term previously to us and that would be what I would want to see. I would want to see a much more partnership-oriented engagement and it's the softer side of the implications of partnership which is missing from the current relationship*", Respondent S.1.2.3.

The other case study also indicated a cross-dyad positive relationship. One side of the relationship referred to partnership and working in partnership: "*When it comes to some of the business interaction, they have differing views on many things, as is fair. But also, you know, in a real partnership, a true partnership, you can say, 'No,' on both sides and everybody just moves on without it being an issue*", Respondent M.1.1.1, yet the other side referenced it significantly less within their interviews. However, both sides referred to 'joint working' – " *how well two companies could work together, joint work*", Respondent P.1.2.1, as the core indicator of working together effectively. Buyer/customer side referenced joint working 52 times and the supplier side 51 times, yet the supplier side referenced working in partnership 53 times and the buyer/customer side referenced it 28 times. Once again both of these antecedents could be seen as positive relationship trust builders. However, in this case it highlights the imbalance in relational intent and trust levels in the relationship, with the supplier side operating at a trust level, with relational intent greater than that of the buying side. In effect the trust and intent levels are at variance in the relationship. During the feedback session

this created significant debate and the development of a joint plan to address the imbalance, as it could erode trust going forward in the medium term.

The next step was reframing the data corpus to reflect the level of respondent. The research was organised and conducted to reflect the different levels/structure in both sides of the relationship; Leadership – inter-organisational level, Management – inter-team/group level and Staff – interpersonal level. At this level, the analysis focused on variance between levels and across the dyad, 'what's working' and 'what's not working' at each level, highlighting and captured as code charting (Harding, 2013).This led to the identification of:

- 14 trust-building themes
- 16 trust-diluting themes

4.3.7. Stage 4: Reviewing the initial themes

In this section the themes emanating from the bridging process (Appendices 3, 19. 19.1 and 19.2) are explored in relationship to the data corpus with each code by level, by supplier/customer reflected as a decile analysis against the number of times referenced; for example, the suppliers' data at interpersonal level reflect the interviews at this level coded against the 167 overall codes and ranked to reflect their frequency of referencing.

The first-cycle coded data corpus and bridging analysis provide the platform for second-cycle coding. As Morse (1994, p.25) so aptly put it; *"linking seemingly unrelated facts logically,…fitting categories one with another",* developing coherent meta-syntheses of the first-cycle data corpus through bridging analysis.

Similar to the approach undertaken with first-cycle methods, some second-cycle methods can be compatibly interchanged (Saldana, 2016) Two coding approaches have been deployed in the second-cycle – focused and then theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin and Strauss, 2015).

Focused Coding: This searches for the most frequent or significant codes to develop the most salient categories in the data corpus. Focused coding is seen as appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies, but particularly for grounded theory methodology, and the development of major categories of themes from data.

Saldana (2016) described a theoretical code as functioning like an umbrella that covers and accounts for all other codes and categories formulated in the analysis so far. Integration begins with finding the primary theme of the research – what researchers in grounded theory refer to as the central or core category. In theoretical coding, all categories and concepts become systematically integrated around a central/core category that suggests a theoretical explanation to the phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2015, p.13) It is a key word or key phrase that triggers the discussion of the theory itself. Theoretical coding integrates and synthesises the categories derived from coding and analysis to create a theory. The most important during this cycle of theory building is to address the "how" and "why" questions to explain the phenomena in terms of how they work, how they develop, how they compare to others, or why they happen under certain conditions (Hennink et al., 2011; Saldana, 2016, pp.258-61, 277)

Using the lens of focused coding in conjunction with theoretical coding applied to the 30 themes emanating from the bridging process led to the amalgamation of the 30 themes into

a) Four core themes: Cognitive dissonance, Affective dissonance, Cognitive consonance and Affective consonance.

b) Five supporting themes: Relational intention, relational ability, relational credibility, relational interdependence and relational mutual benefit, and

c) Two linking themes:- Relational commitment and relational communication.

The transcripts were re-interrogated and research partner feedback workshops organised to explore the themes proposed. At this point, two key insights of dissonance and consonance were identified which further validated the themes proposed in terms of their reductionist and expansionist potential, which are covered in the contribution to theory section (Chapter 6)

4.3.8. Stage 5: Thematic analysis summary

The final phase of this thematic analysis documents the phases in the form of an audit trail for the research (Appendix 12). This aims to underpin the reliability of the qualitative data and their treatment. This chapter explored the iterative nature of each phase supported through the methodological approach to qualitative data treatment and theme development. This approach introduced a contribution to qualitative research treatment through the use of a bridging process. Figure 4 presents the final data structure. .

Thesis Research Process Data Audit Trail

Signalling Relational intent
Communication (style)
Commitment to the relationship (both positive and negative)
Mutual commercial benefit
Collaborating
Positive attitude
Creating a positive environment to change
Demonstrating the opportunity
Understanding the others reality
Understanding each other
Joint working
Multi level contact
Regular contact
Measurement framework

Dissonance (Cog/Affect)
Consonance (Cog/Affect)

Relational Intention
Ability
Credibility
Mutual Benefit
Interdependence

Communication
Commitment

THEMES
CORE
SUPPORTING
LINKING

Focus Group (25 codes) → First Cycle (167 codes) → Bridging Process → Second Cycle

Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours
Conflicting values, beliefs and commitment
Contradicting
Consistency (Lack of)
Dealing with conflict and vested interests
Clarity of vision
Knowing your stuff
Communication style
Reliability of systems and processes
Empowerment
Flex to react

Figure 4: Data structure

4.3.9. Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the qualitative data treatment as a part of the research methods design (sections 3.1 and 3.2) to demonstrate the rigour in presenting the findings and clarify understanding through the approach undertaken. The data treatment deployed five phases

of thematic analysis and this process identified 175 codes, and 30 bridging codes/emergent themes leading to four core themes, five supporting themes and two linking themes.

 Table 18 (see Appendix 4) provides a summary of the initial codes, bridging codes/emergent themes and finally core, supporting and linking themes from the qualitative date treatment. The next chapter (5) draws on the literature review contained in Chapter 2 and the treatment of qualitative data in Chapter 4 to present the findings, discussion and theoretical contributions of this research and thesis. Table 18 (see Appendix 4) provides the detail from the initial codes through to final themes.

Chapter 5: Findings and discussion

In this chapter, the thematic analysis (Chapter 4) and literature review (Chapter 2) are developed and bought together into the findings and discussion. It is developed into six areas as informed from the data. The research questions are introduced as they relate to the definition of B2B trust: *'The willingness to be vulnerable to another party and the decision to engage in actions   based upon an understanding of their ability, credibility and the expectations of mutual value exchange over time'.*

The section starts with the exploration of the themes of B2B trust.

1. Exploring each of the 11 themes of trust building and/or dilution that emanated from the thematic analysis (Chapter 4).

2. Identifying the triggers of Cognitive and Affective trust when in dissonance across all three organisational levels, between both sides of the dyad.

3. Exploring the move from intangible trust to tangible (active) trust (Giddens, 1993) in a B2B relational construct. The role of the boundary spanner in ameliorating the move.

4. Establishing where trust actually resides in the relationship and the levels in the relationship.

5. Looking into trust across levels in the relational dyad, and the key antecedents on a cognitive and affective basis.

6. How the organisation demonstrates and activates trust in the relationship between both sides and its strategic importance in trust development.

Researchers into B2B trust have tried to represent both sides of the relational dyad (Doney and Cannon 1999; Fang 2008) in order to construct B2B trust from both sides. A common flaw in the research is the extrapolation of single point sources – the buyer and seller, for example – and using the findings as a total organisational construct (Rao and Schmidt, 1998; Ashnai, 2014; Graebner et al., 2018).

The research undertaken in this thesis addressed these issues through a multi-level study across both sides of the relational dyad. It was conducted through 37 qualitative interviews; 18 from the buying/customer side of the relationship and 19 from the supplier side of the relationship. This allowed the exploration of trust at an organisational level, an operations level and an interpersonal level.

Trust at an organisational level has been a conundrum scholars have been trying to address for nearly two decades (e.g.,.Zaheer, Mc Evily and Perrone, 1998; Currell and Inkpen, 2002; Perrone et al., 2003, Stevens et al., 2015; Jong, Kron and Schilke, 2017). The findings and insights from this thesis at organisational level evince what customer leaders say they need in order to develop a positive trust-based relationship with their suppliers. They indicate a need for the relationship to focus on *intent/vision, needs understanding,* and *positive mutual change/benefit.* This is developed from the data and analysis in Chapter 4 Section 4.3.

What supplier leaders say they need in order to develop a positive trust-based relationship with their customers focuses on *relational intent, relational vision, the relationship potential, strategic lens, needs understanding,* and *positive mutual benefits.*

The cognitive elements of trust are seen as an important prediction of relationship performance in the early and mature stages of the relationship. In the early stage of the relationship, the cognitive elements of integrity-based trust had the greatest impact. This manifested through the importance of delivering on promises or expectations established at the intention stage, both written and verbal, in a responsive and timely way. Furthermore, sufficient resources and time need to be made available to allow strong communication links between both sides to develop (Dowell and Hefferen, 2014; Dowell, 2015).

In the mature phase, Figure 5 identifies where competency-based trust comes to the fore (Dowell, 2015) with competency developing through inter-relational performance and expertise (Dowell and Hefferman 2014). In this context, performance relates to both sides fulfilling the role expected and expertise in the knowledge and qualification needed to

undertake and successfully complete the task (McAllister, 1995; Dowell and Heffernan, 2014).

Source: Dowell, Morrison, M, Heffernan, T (2013)
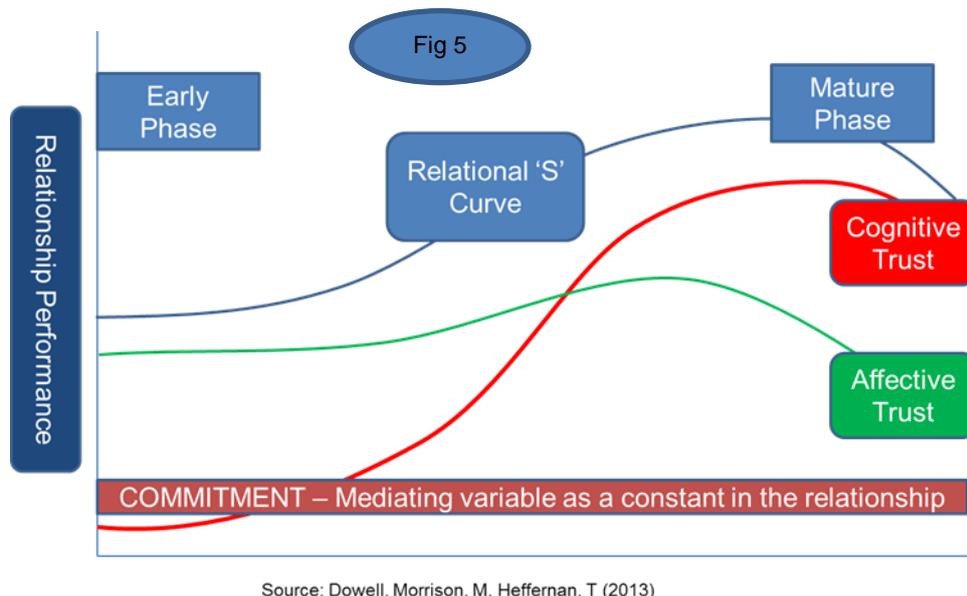
Figure 5: Affective and Cognitive trust in relational development

The same could be inferred in the study of Akrout, et al. (2017). However, they argue the opposite to Dowell (2015), positing the development of affective from cognitive trust over time. Zhong, Su, Peng and Yang (2014) argued that too much of a trust-based relationship can introduce a finite value-generating capacity on the relationship. They cite similar factors to those suggested by Gargiulo and Ertug (2006) that cause value deterioration, such as:

- Excessive trust resulting in extremely low levels of monitoring and safeguards in a relationship, which could invite opportunism or reduce the ability to identify its occurrence.

- Relational complacency leading to sub-optimal outcomes.

- Passivity when faced with inadequate relational outcomes.

- Excessive obligations in the relationship leading to over embeddedness, consuming resources without bringing the associated benefits.

Nikolova, (2014) and Gargiulo and Ertug (2006) pointed to a level of over dependence in the relationship borne out of excessive trust. A lack of creative tension and accountability surrounds the mutual value benefits had it been allowed to develop between both sides of the affective-orientated relationship.
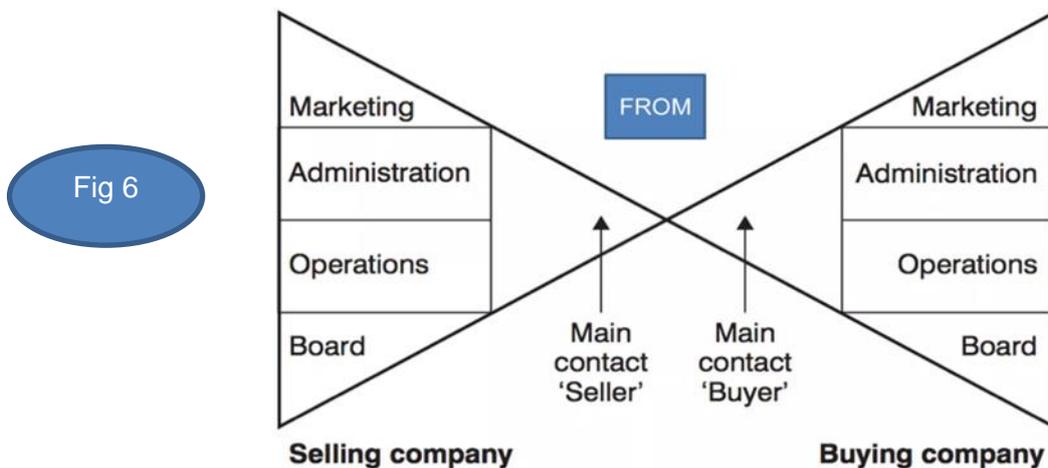
Figure 6: Principal stakeholder relationship management

Although apparently contradictory in nature, the two studies of Dowell (2015) and Akrout, et al. (2017) do have complementariness. Dowell (2015) argued that a B2B relationship needs to develop through an affective stage to a more cognitive stage in order to maintain mutual benefit and prevent the development of over dependence and excessive trust,
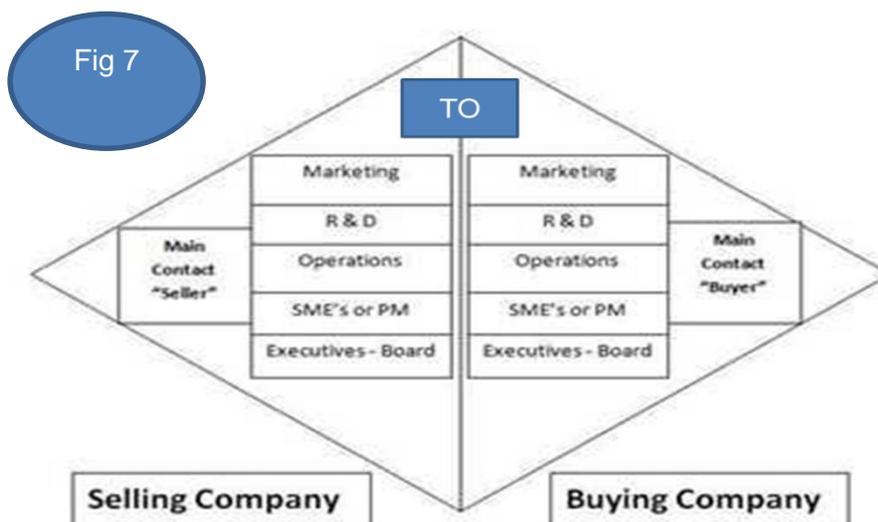
effectively moving the relationship beyond a one-to-one as in Figure 6 – buyer -seller to a multiple stakeholder-based relationship as outlined in Figure 7.

Fig:7: Multiple stakeholder relationship management

On the other hand, Akrout et al. (2017) argued that the development of affective relational trust in a cognitive trust-based relationship can offer additional opportunity such as enhanced loyalty and mutual benefit creation (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Zaheer 1993). Overlaying the work of Akrout et al., 2017) onto the findings of Dowell et al. (2015) surfaces the merit in the argument in so much as when a B2B relationship is introducing additional actors into the relationship as it develops from affective (single point), to cognitive (multi-point), the new actors in the relationship will have to develop affective (person-single point) relationships in the early stages for the benefits to be unlocked and flow into the (multi-point) cognitive/trust-based relationship, as shown in Figure 7. However, Dowell (2015) deployed a measurement scale for the affective trust construct that is totally different from that developed and deployed by Akrout et al. (2016; 2017). Dowell (2015, p.123) posited a lack of affective trust scales in the extant literature, using relational (McAlliaster, 1995) and intuitive scales (Morrow et al., 2004) as proxies. This needs to be taken into account when considering Dowells' (2015) contribution versus that of Akrout et al. (2016, 2017). As trust builds on the affective level, it could then develop into more cognitive multi-point contacts, as both sides build depth and breadth of relational contacts across multiple levels of both sides of the organisations. In the next section, cognitive and affective trust are explored through the findings of this thesis and then discussed in relation to B2B trust literature.

5.1. Defining the themes in B2B relational trust

In this section of the thesis the findings are formed under the 11 themes, that were derived from the thematic analysis in Chapter 4:

a). The core themes of 1.Cognitive, 2.Affective Dissonance, 3.Cognitive and 4.Affective Consonance. b). The supporting themes of 5.Relational intention, 6. Relational ability, 7.Relational credibility, 8.Relational interdependence, and 9.Relational mutual benefit.

c) Lastly, the linking themes of 10.relational commitment and 11.relational communication. This is an iterative process building on the re-interrogation of the data corpus, research partner feedback workshop insights and literature review leading to the following themes and definitions.

Core theme 1: Cognitive dissonance

This theme presents the negative effect on a relationship when it is cognitively (rationally) mis-aligned. This occurred at all levels of the relationship dyad and between levels with it being a key contributor to the reduction of trust in the relationship. Cognitive dissonance has a reductionist effect on relational trust. The key antecedents in Table 18 below come together to form under the **cognitive dissonance** theme.

Table 18. Key cognitive dissonance antecedents	
Dealing with conflict and vested interest	"*In their business – they've got different business needs, so whilst it all sounded a good idea, it didn't work out very well to have them tied into that relationship at that point in time*". Respondent A.1.1.1.
Conflicting values, beliefs and commitment	"*There has been this lack of customer care in terms of following up on promises. Because of that, you know, you just don't trust them. People keep their promises, meet commitments, and you can start to build on that, but if they're to*". Respondent S.1.1.2.
Consistency (lack of)	"*If its performance is not as good as it should be, a) define "good" but b) have the tools to be able to measure a level of consistency*". Respondent A.1.2.5.
Clarity of vision (lack of)	*They don't understand who we are or what we want to do and*

	a lot of people just think, "Well, yeah, well we'll raise a purchase order and they'll go and deliver that for us," Respondent A.1.2.7.
Reliability of systems and processes	"*Commercial can be one of the main blockers for agility and getting things – and in delivery terms, you know, they are so slow to process things and it does slow down the delivery, and it causes great frustrations*". Respondent A.1.1.1.
Commitment to the relationship (negative)	"*Lack of pro-activity around monitoring and root cause analysis*". Respondent S.1.1.3.

Appendices 6, 7 and 8 provide additional detail by level.

Core theme 2: Affective dissonance

This theme presents the negative effect on a relationship when it is affectively (emotionally) misaligned. This occurred at all levels of the relationship dyad and between levels with it being a key contributor to the reduction of trust in the relationship. **Affective dissonance** has a reductionist effect on relational trust. The antecedents in Table 19 below surfaced as the key contributors to affective relational dissonance.

Table 19: Key antecedents of Affective dissonance	
Conflicting messages, attitudes and behaviours	"*You can have some very positive discussions at one level, but if that doesn't transfer down, it's hard to get the rest of the team on board*". Respondent AI.1.2.1.
Lack of empowerment	"*They spend a lot of time trying to get things just right or trying to do the right thing – "just get on and do it" as by the time we get there it's often irrelevant*". Respondent A.1.2.1.
Flex to react	"*It comes back with exclusions in the contract; go and find out, that's what you are paid for*". Respondent S.1.1.4.
Not knowing your stuff	"*How's she supposed to deliver a branded message? She's an*

	out-and-out generic girl". Respondent P.1.1.1.

Appendices 9, 10 and 11 contain additional detail by level.

Core theme 3: Cognitive consonance

This theme presents the positive effect on a relationship when it is cognitively (rationally) aligned. This occurred at all levels of the relationship dyad and between levels, with it being a key contributor to the expansion of trust in the relationship. **Cognitive consonance** has an expansionist effect on relational trust. The significant antecedents related to cognitive consonance follow below in Table 20.

Table 20: Key Cognitive consonance antecedents	
Joint Working	"*It feels like we've switched to a position where we know that we can help each other, and we're adding more value to each other. Still a lot more that we can do, but, in terms of the value piece switching, I don't think it's switched, I think it's enhanced both sides*". Respondent AL.1.1.1.
Understanding each other	"*Listened and help shape, selectively initially and then more so.*" Respondent S.1.1.3.
Consistency	"*there isn't a silver bullet in terms of building trust, it's about consistency*". Respondent Be.1.1.1.
Measurement Framework	"*I mean, it kind of went hand in hand with us introducing the KPIs*". Repsondent M.1.1.1.
Collaborating	"*So, it's less about the needs of the business and more about where is collaboration possible and how do we get some positive impacts across the whole SSA?*" Respondent S.1.2.4.
Clarity of Vision	"*They are starting to think about where they can take their business in the next six months, the next year, the next five and the next ten*". Respondent Al.1.1.1.
Regular contact	"*We're trying to increase the frequency of meetings to the point*

	where once a week or once a fortnight as a very worst case". Respondent: A.1.25.
Mutual commercial benefit	*"I think we are kind of missing opportunities. Jamie and I are deeply discussing some other opportunities where there's new business for both parties, so we would have something on the table that's interesting for us. I've mentioned it to Jamie, and it's also interesting for them"*. Respondent P.1.1.2

Core theme 4: Affective consonance

This theme presents the positive effect on a relationship when it is affectively (emotionally) aligned. This occurred at all levels of the relationship dyad and between levels, with it being a key contributor to the expansion of trust in the relationship. **Affective consonance** has an expansionist effect on relational trust. The antecedents in Table 21 come together to form the developers of the umbrella theme of affective consonance.

Table 21; Affective consonance antecedents	
Positive attitude	"*Desire to improve from A.*" Respondent S.1.1.1
Creating a positive environment to change	"*I think it's been a real success to go from something that was really quite difficult to something now which it needs work, but it's moving in the right direction*". Respondent A.1.2.7
Flexibility to react	"*they're able to adapt their approach which worked very well for all of us*". Respondent P.1.2.3
Empowerment	"*So, there was clear sharing of targets right through the piece and there was a common goal in the early stages*". Respondent Be.1.1.1.
Understand the others reality	"*On a Pan Euro level, I think they are not so much a sleeping giant, but they could potentially come to the fore in a slightly stronger way than they potentially have in the past, I would say*". Respondent P.1.1.2.

Supporting theme 1: Relational intention

This theme represents the instigator of the relationship between both sides and the expectations the relationship could deliver in its as yet intangible state. The intentions one side has to the other, related to the relationship they wish and or seek to develop. It is the reason for two or more B2B parties to interact and form a relationship. It could be seen as the motivator for both sides to make the leap of faith moving the relationship from intangible to tangible trust. This occurred primarily at the inter-organisational level of the relationship dyad; however, it does have manifestations at inter-team and interpersonal levels. This supporting theme comes together through two key codes:

Signalling relational intention; "*Now more close, more face-to-face, having open and honest conversations has started to build that different mind-set of how we're going to work and to a certain extent the trust, they're absolutely driving a dedicated relationship*". Respondent A.1.2.7.

"*Demonstrating the opportunity; Understand what win-win looks like*". Respondent S.1.1.1.

Supporting theme 2: Relational ability

This theme looks at the capability and competency in the relational dyad to turn the relational intentions into relational reality. It is the first manifestation of in-tangible trust into tangible trust and how well the leap of faith has been managed or continues to be managed. This occurred at all levels of the relationship, between levels, and refers to both sides of the relational dyad equally. It also has the potential to build between levels. This supporting theme comes together through three key codes;

Creating a positive environment to change: "*C will say himself that was actually, in hindsight, the best thing that ever happened for this business, because that used to consume so much of his time that his role as MD was a bit clouded, and we have all noticed a massive change*". Respondent: AI.1.2.1.

Knowing your stuff: *"I think, they train the people superbly. I think they're absolutely dedicated to that professionalism in making sure that their staff are as good as they possibly can be, and they also help us to try and make our staff as good as they possibly can be as well*". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

Understanding each other:" *We have to have partner days and a partner day will be where everybody who is a stakeholder in our business and everybody who is a stakeholder in their business gets together for a full day to talk about how can we make things work better, looking at what's really working well, and what's not working quite so well, and how do we improve it*". Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.

It is closely linked and associated with supporting theme 3: Relational credibility.

Supporting theme 3: Relational credibility

This theme contains the elements that both sides see as important for the effective transition and continuation of relational intention into relational reality, the move from intangible to tangible. This emanated from three core codes:

Understanding the other's reality: "*One of the things in our business and any business that I've been working in, is always seeing it initially from their point of view and having a clear understanding of what they're trying to achieve and how you can help them and then actually talking to them about how you can help them and how together you can help each other*". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Regular Contact: "*Face off to the application management team K W and C E. Meet once a month on a formal basis with a shared agenda; improve the requirements, service issues, etc. Also have contact with the service management team and incident mgrs., however trying to let that be managed between A and the service team with less intervention from applications. We alternate our meetings between the two sites, there are about 10-12 of us and it shows flexibility*". Respondent: S.1.2.1.

Reliability of systems and processes; "*It felt as if we had achieved a base line and this is what we expect going forward. This is not a one off process, it's recognition of a sustainable process, and we both now have tool sets that are available to improve how project s is managed. Moved out of spreadsheet land. The process is agreed and sustained as it's a core system and underpins other systems*". Respondent: S.1.2.1.

This occurred at all levels and has the potential to build between levels, as the relationship gains credibility through the activation of relational intent into relational reality (in-tangible trust to tangible trust).

Supporting theme 4: Mutual relational benefit

The theme explains the effect of turning the relational intent into reality for both sides of the relational dyad. This manifested through the core codes of:

Mutual Commercial Benefit: "*Okay, well as you have done that I commit to you that you have every opportunity in winning that business," and then we delivered on that commitment and, you know, and that says it all really, again it was a decent win*". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

Demonstrating the opportunity:" *Another improvement that we did was … again, it cost nothing, you know, this is the beauty, if it costs nothing it's great, then they got a new application portfolio manager in so we met him at one of the monthly meetings and I just said to him, "So, why don't you come and spend a day with us in the office and meet the people who, you know, our subject matter experts for your applications … spend some time with them. Listen, you know, they can understand what your pressures are, you listen to them at what they find with their applications," and all of sudden you build a relationship and, you know, a bit of a common understanding. That worked – that worked well. As I say, it cost nothing, you know, you could just ignore him and they can see what you're doing, it builds that trust, and I think when things do go wrong and you tell them that you're doing something about it they trust what you're doing*". Respondent: A.1.2.4. This occurred at all levels of the relationship and between levels; however, it manifests in different attributes of value at different levels.

Supporting theme 5: Relational interdependence

This theme looks at and refers to the level of dependency between both sides and differing levels of the relational dyad in order to turn the relational intent into relational reality. It encompasses the core codes of:

Joint working: "*It has to come with mutual buy-in and it's about the holistic picture, every single segment and category, having a plan for it, both of you buying in to the opportunity and a way of working*". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Collaborating: *"So my opposite number, he's new into his role, really quite pragmatic, wants to entertain very much a collaborative working arrangement, wants to work in an open, constructive and an aspirational way"*. Respondent: A.1.2.5.

Multilevel Contact: *"It's quite a relaxed, open, frank and honest conversation you have with them, and I'd say that's true at all levels"*. Respondent: AI.1.2.1.

Commitment to the relationship: "*Well that's someone we should deal with more so it works quite nicely; there's that potential to do a lot more business together*". Respondent: P.1.2.3

This occurred the most strongly at inter-team and interpersonal levels as the relational intention turned into reality through the inter-action, ways of working and interdependence of both sides of the relational dyad.

The supporting themes (5-9) have the potential to work as a framework for relational trust development as they have an interlinked virtuous potential if applied positively; however, they also have the opposite effect if applied negatively. The model underpins relational consonance and/or dissonance, having a reductionist effect if applied negatively and an expansionist effect if applied positively. The last two themes form the links and enablers for the model and supporting themes.

Linking theme 1: Relational communication

This theme captures the different methods, styles and types of communication that the relational dyad requires to effectively transition relational intention into relational reality and relational effect on a continual and consistent basis. The theme manifested through two key codes:

Regular contact: "*We see each other at least once a month and we speak on the phone probably maybe two/three times a week and things like it*". Respondent: P.1.2.1.

Communication style:"*Rather than people sitting on things and letting them fester and building up resentment, just bring them out in the open as early as possible, as soon as you think, bring them out in the open and discuss them*". Respondent: A.1.2.2.

It occurred at all levels and between levels; however, the requirements changed one level to the other and between levels as the needs of the dyad change by level.

Linking theme 2: Relational Commitment

This theme explains the level of commitment each side demonstrates in order to effectively turn the relational intention into relational reality. This is formed through:

Joint working: *"They got all of us together as a group and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up they're able to adapt their approach which worked very well for all of us"*. Respondent: P.1.2.3.

Multi-level Contact: *"people within different teams in my branch, whether it be in fleet or property and casualty, that we align to that brokerage, to develop relationships"*. Respondent: AI.1.1.1.

Collaborating: "*It's what we can do together. And that's about being brave as well*". Respondent: A.1.2.6.

Regular Contact: "*We're trying to increase the frequency of meetings to the point where [we hold them] once a week or once a fortnight as a very worst case*". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

Commitment to the relationship: *"It is about that sharing and getting people on side with the bigger picture, not their own individual bit"*. Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

These were evidenced at all levels and between levels of the relational dyad, continually and consistently.

5.1.1. Thematic maps

This section presents the evidence for the 11 thematic maps, and one hundred and seventy five codes, grouped by the core, supporting and linking nature of the themes as explanation

5.1.1.1. Core themes: dissonance/consonance construct

Theme 1
Cognitive Dissonance

Theme 2
Affective Dissonance

Dealing with conflict and vested interests

Clarity of vision (lack of)

Conflicting value, beliefs and commitment.

Reliability of systems and processes

Conflicting messages, attitudes and behaviours

Flex to react

Consistency (Lack of)

Commitment to the relationship (negative)

Lack of empowerment

Not knowing your stuff

Theme 3
Cognitive Consonance

Theme 4
Affective Consonance

Joint Working

Collaborating

Positive attitude

Flex to react

Understanding each other

Clarity of vision

Creating a positive environment to change

Empowerment

Consistency

Regular contact

Measurement framework

Mutual commercial benefit

Understand the others reality

Figure 8: Thematic Map (core themes one to four)

Support
Theme 1
Relational
intention

Signalling
Relational intention

Demonstrating
the opportunity

5.1.1.2. Supporting themes: trust DNA

Support
Theme 2

Relational
Ability

Creating a positive
environment to
change

Understanding
each other

Knowing your
stuff

Support
Theme 3
Relational
credibility

Understanding the
others reality

Reliability of
systems and
process

Regular
contact

Support Theme 4

Mutual Relational
benefit

Mutual commercial
benefit

Demonstrating the
opportunity

Figure 9: Supporting thematic maps (core themes one to five)

5.1.1.3. Linking themes: relational commitment and communication
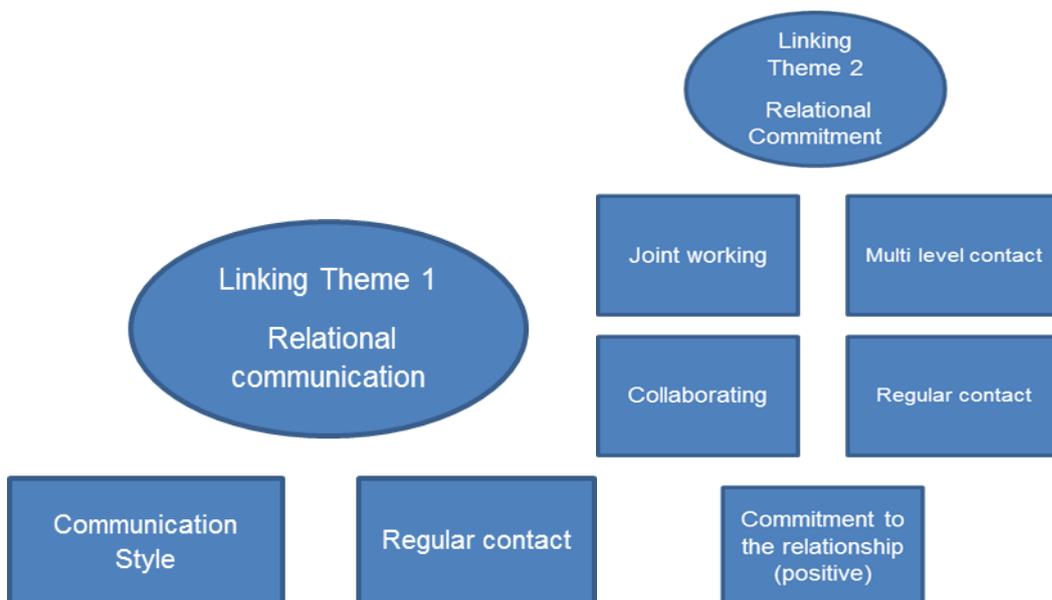
Figure 10: Linking thematic maps (core themes one and two)

5.2. Findings in cognitive and affective dissonance in B2B relationships

The findings in this thesis found cognitive and affective dissonance occurring between the relationship dyad when the relational intentions (trust in an intangible conceptualisation) failed and continued to fail to match and/or meet the expectations, engagement and experience both sides set out in their relational intention(s) with each other. This was demonstrated in the cognitive antecedents identified as 'not working', between the dyad and in the affective antecedents identified as 'not working', and between the dyad as explained and demonstrated.

The findings indicate two separate, yet interlinking elements that cause dissonance and trust dilution in the relationship researched; cognitive dissonance and affective dissonance. Dowell et al. (2015) suggested that both cognitive and affective trust have roles to play in the development of B2B relationships. The research points to the same two factors in play for the dilution of trust and its effectiveness to deliver mutual value. Cognitive dissonance appears to occur in the relationship in different ways and at different levels.

5.2.1. Cognitive dissonance in B2B relational trust

Cognition is the mental process involved in knowing, learning, and understanding things. Dissonance occurs when these are not in alignment or if conflicting positions are held in the relationship. The top five vignettes of cognitive dissonance, based on participant referencing, at organisational level are represented below. The remainder are developed in Appendix 6.

5.2.1.1. Inter-organisational level

At the inter-organisational level, from the supplier side of the dyad, the intention in the form of the vision for the relationship, joint plan and mutual values objectives was evidenced as being undermined through the coercive actions at lower levels of the relationship. In certain instances, the organisational level agreement failed to happen or ran counter to the thinking

at operations and/or interpersonal levels. However, on the buyer/customer side, the intention in the form of strategy, joint plan and mutual benefits agreed at organisational level failed to deliver the results or effect at lower levels of the relationship. The top five vignettes based on participant referencing at inter-organisational level are represented below. The remainder are set out in Appendix 6.

Table 22: Cognitive dissonance at inter-organisational level	
Supplier	Buyer
This in manifested in: - Contradicting: "H*e was going to write out to all the insurers to explain his decision as to why, and he told me he was going to do that, he never did it. So, again, credibility-wise, he damaged himself"*. Respondent: Al.1.1.1. - Communicating style; - *"Just it's a very derogatory language that is used"*. Respondent: A.1.1.1. - Conflicting needs; "*I'll tell you what doesn't work between our two organisations, and that's the mismatch and alignment of our business drivers"*. Respondent: A.1.1.1 - Dealing with Conflict – vested interest; "*In those first phases, it would have been quite easy not to confront the individual category issues and let individual sales directors, category directors plough their own furrow and then try to recover, so straight away it was when something like that was happening, "No, we can't do that" because this is part of the bigger picture and you need to play your own part"*. Respondent: Be.1.1.1.	This is manifested in: - Conflicting messages; "*The guys that have come from M traditionally see it as a generic company, the guys that are in power see it as a branded company and they haven't yet worked out what it actually is"*. Respondent: P.1.1.1 - Communicating style; "*And when you do challenge it and you get silence, generally speaking that says something as well. I mean, silence is a wonderful tool. When you're negotiating, silence is a killer"*. Respondent: P.1.1.1 - Dealing with Conflict – vested interests; "*Probably managing that is the biggest thing, and getting people to step out of the emotion of the day. Sometimes it just does need them to sleep on it or leave it for a week and then we'll, "Okay, do you still think the same?" And that's from both sides"*. Respondent: Mo.1.1.1. - Contradicting; "*SAA have different drivers and directions of travel. 80% vol of activity is us, yet we only get 25% voting rights within the group. It's a challenging balance"*. Respondent:

• Knowing your stuff; "*There is no harm in not knowing the answer to a question, as long as you say I'll find that and get back to you, and you do*". Respondent: AI.1.1.1.	S.1.1.1. • Conflicting actions; *"The first one was highly charged and adversarial. The second one was better. However the day after the meeting A slapped an early warning notice on us. It made me smile as it was a total disconnect and juxtaposition"*. Respondent: S.1.1.1.

Cognitive dissonance occurs at this level through *thinking, beliefs, actions and messaging* that run counter to the intentions established towards the relationship at the organisational level. This would suggest from the data that both sides agree something and then either both or one side does something else that impacts negatively on the relationship for both sides or one side.

At the organisational level, the conceptualisation of trust as an intention/action orientation is supported (Currell and Inkpen, 2002). The intention to trust is created and owned by the leadership team from both sides. It is an intangible trust intention(s) until enacted (brought into being –*actualised*) through actions, with the reality and effect, seen to the benefit of both sides. Intention enacted with positive mutual outcomes encourages the continuation and increased intentions towards improved mutual outcomes which gives rise to the emergence of an intentional trust virtuous circle. However, the effect of cognitive dissonance has the potential to disrupt and/or break the virtuous circle or the development between both sides.

5.2.1.2. Inter-team/operations level

When exploring the supplier side at this level, the actions and messaging from the buying side indicate either opportunistic or coercive activity which negatively impacts the expected mutual benefits, and the ability to affect change is evinced through the research as "changed outcomes" in the relationships. The level of trust between both sides appears at odds with

the organisational level and out of balance (not at the same level) between the two in the dyad.

On the customer/buyer side of the dyad at this level, the leadership intention does not carry sufficient weight to counter the beliefs in the relationship that run counter to making it happen at the operations/management level. The buying side see little evidence of a change in the supplier's operations/management to turn the expected intentions into reality. In effect, they fail to deliver on what was believed and/or expected through the relational intent. The top five vignettes based on what participants referenced and found to be the most salient at inter-team/group level are represented below. The remainder are set out in Appendix 7.

Table 23: Cognitive dissonance at inter-team/group level	
Supplier	Buyer
This is manifested in: - Commercial 'Rough and Tumble': "*We'd made some changes and they wouldn't sign off the contract amendment which meant that we weren't getting paid for the work we were doing on application support, so we downed tools on application support and it caused the – I mean, it took – it was a ballsy thing to do, it really, really was*". Respondent: A.1.2.5. - Contracting trust: "*Historically we've been drawn back and said, "Well, this is what it says in the contract, this is what's funded in the contract, this is the only thing that you can do in the contract," even if it's wrong what it says in the contract, we've got to be able to do what's in the contract*".Respondent: A.1.2.7.	This is manifested in: - Conflicting messages: "*We've had a lot of positive responses from other people in the market who have said, "Yeah, look, we want to write this. It's a good-size premium" – you know, you're talking pushing up towards £50,000, so it's a good-size premium, and we've had a lot of people come back to us saying, "Yeah, look, we're interested in this, we want to quote on it"*". Respondent: LR.1.2.1. - Communicating style: "*There's a lack of transparency of the leadership team; who are they, where have they come from and who do we talk to*". Respondent: S.1.2.2. - Contradicting: "*Unrealistic expectations about the contract, delivery potential. It needed to be more*

- Competing pressures: "*Having grown up conversations: put the commercial to one side, let's do the right thing, then bring them back in to the equation*". Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Conflicting needs: "*The central team that manage the four PEs from a contractual assurance perspective still see us as delivering to the governance that was preconceived when the contract initially won. So, there's a bit of a dichotomy there*". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Contradicting: *"So, I think there are … there are people within ISO who see it – are starting to see a brave new world, and there are people who only know a way of working which is the way they've worked for the last 20 years"*. Respondent: A.1.2.6.

- Conflicting actions: "*We'll agree to that price and there's been occasions where they're not at that point, they still then don't buy it from us, and, you know, you think oh okay what else can we do here? What's the reasoning?*". Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- *of a relationship of equals*". Respondent: S.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions: "*So, there's definitely something there about formalising and the lack of formality is jeopardising our relationships*". Respondent: S.1.2.4.

- Reliability of systems and processes; "*Proposal generation and review process can take 30 days, sign off can take 2-3 months and then takes A 30 days to actions*". .Respondent: S.1.2.1.

- Balancing the commercials: "*We assumed the relationship would roll along much the same as it has under CSC, that cost relationship didn't happen as A are far more contractual*". Respondent: S.1.2.2.

At this level, the two sides are coming together to turn the relationship intentions into a reality – in effect, 'making it happen'. Failure in cognitive ability and credibility at this point introduces dissonance between intended ability/credibility versus the actuality experienced and the impact this has on the expectations and mutual value intended from the relationship. A good example of this is the level of interdependence between both sides in the form of joint working, working in partnership, co-creation, etc. However, in one of the dyads researched, both sides referred to collaboration as opposed to: joint working and/or working in partnership. This could be considered a positive antecedent; however, it has an arm's

length connotation or a 'commitment with strings' as collaboration indicates a retention or reluctance to fully engage, rather than a more integrated/interdependent approach by each side might view this as a guarded commitment to the relationship, withdrawn without too much impact on each side – i.e. lower barriers to exit. The research also indicated a dissonance towards relationship commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994), with one side referring to *working in partnership* and no references from the other side, only to *joint working*.

5.2.1.3. Interpersonal level

At this level, the relationship was generally more positive and focused on 'what's working' in the relationship. References to 'what's not working' in a sense of cognitive dissonance come much lower in the relational referencing. The supplier's side of the dyad was evidenced in a *conflict of needs* with the *rough and tumble of the commercials* and *posturing (egos).* Messages were delivered and communicated in a confrontational way, often at odds with the overall relationship. The greatest impact on the relationship comes from the interactions with their opposite number as opposed to other levels. The cognitive dissonance focuses on *ways of working, getting things done,* and *the ability and credibility of the other side*, with the outcome seen as *destroying value, failing to keep promises* and *a transactional approach to the relationship*. However, at the buyers/customers side the customer/buyer interpersonal relationship appears far more orientated towards relational efficiency and their opposite number's ability to deliver. Do they have sufficient knowledge and consistency? Cognitive dissonance is evident through *conflicting messages*; saying one thing and then doing another, and *conflicting actions*; agreeing to a course of activity and then implementing something different or with different outcomes. The top five vignettes based on participant referencing and salience at interpersonal level are represented below, in Table 24 and the remainder are contained in Appendix 8.

Table 24: Cognitive dissonance at interpersonal level

Suppliers	Buyers
Manifested in Conflicting needs: *"It's difficult because I think for me it's the way that the S organisation, well, the IT organisation is constructed. They've constructed themselves as a bit of an insourcing model, however they outsource their IT, so this is back to the man marking piece".* Respondent: A.1.2.7. Commercial 'Rough and tumble'*: It may be they're sitting on a volume of stock, it may be that they've not been able to let's say switched their other supplier off quick enough. So, they may be tied into a longer period, or that cynic might say they were just testing the water to see if they could get a better price from us anyway, (laughs)":* Respondent: M.1.2.3. Posturing: *"He'll make a joke, "Yes, but you didn't do that thing for me three months ago," and you're thinking, "God, are we still talking about that?" And it is slightly in jest, but I think, sometimes, you can tell those that cling on to it, and get a bit bitter about it all"* Respondent: A.1.2.1. Communicating style: *"I think the difficulty is we as an A team are really close, so we know what everyone's doing in terms of the lead management team, so myself, C, P, H, A, and obviously C managing that together, we're quite a close knit".* Respondent: A.1.2.7. Knowing your stuff: *"But really, on the whole, it just all got dropped on us and it was a case of the people that were already doing the generics suddenly had the brands, so there wasn't really*	Manifested in Knowing your stuff: "*We were initially told we were getting SME's on SharePoint (an ability issue) which wasn't the case*". Respondent: S.1.3.1. The reliability of systems and processes: "*So lately they've changed their internal system, so we've not been able to place orders for two weeks*". Respondent: P.1.2.3. Competing pressures: "*Good PM's tend to be over worked – access can be an issue*". Respondent: S.1.3.1. Commercial 'rough and tumble': "*A lot of what we do is about market information – it's about molecules(?) going short, getting ahead of the game, getting stocks in your depots to supply your customers before the market becomes ridiculously short, and your customers are paying way above tariff*". Respondent: P.1.3.1. Consistency: "*Once the sale team moved on we are faced with and handed off to operations who we didn't know. It was literally a case of here one day gone tomorrow. It is important to have continuity of people*". Respondent: S.1.2.2. Conflicting actions: "*So Product X might be locked down at their end, because they need to have a conversation with us on price, because the market price has moved. Now, Product X is a product we might have had with them for five years, and there's never been an issue, but pick the phone up and have a conversation, and let's not us go out of stock because you haven't had*

a lot from the M side (laughter) coming over on the branded side. It was just us taking it forward and making it part of what we already do". Respondent: M.1.2.2*.* Behaving opportunistically: *"And actually it came up quite recently that B then decided that he wasn't happy with him disposing of the goods. It would be a case of… I should have brought this up earlier actually; it would be a case of M, sort of, paying for their disposal".* Respondent; M.1.3.1.	*that conversation and it's locked down".* Respondent: P.1.3.1.

At this level, both sides are working together to turn the reality of working in the relationship into an effect that delivers the expectations (mutual benefit) both sides have agreed. Where cognitive dissonance emerges at this level, it is in the inability of either side to realise the expected benefits, a lack of clarity over the mutual benefits, or differing expectation one side to the other. The actions or messages from one side do not match the *'thought of expectation/ intention or way we agreed or thought it would work"*. Both sides will take their cues from the operational level, and sense-making from the organisation level. Relying on standard normativism (Fleetwood, 2018), where signs, policies, plans, etc provide a framework for trust-building, where dissonance can occur is when the standard norms are mistranslated, misunderstood and misaligned at an interpersonal level. For example, one of the researched relationships (A and S) was operating positively, with joint working in place and an overall strategic perspective. However, in a few of the interpersonal relationships, it functioned as transactional supplier/buyer, with one side failing to translate the new way of working into their relationship. The dissonance this caused was quite significant and opened one side to opportunistic behaviour, further eroding trust (In effect, one side was still operating under the informal norms as cognitive stuff of memories (Fleetwood, 2018) of the

past transactional buyer-seller relationships. They ignored or misinterpreted the cues from operational and organisational levels.

5.3. Affective dissonance in B2B relational trust

Early literature focused on the effect of cognitive dissonance on relationship development and effectiveness (Festinger, 1957; Festinger and Carlsmith, 1957; Festinger, 1962). Section 5.1.1 of this thesis explored a key factor in trust deterioration/dilution of a B2B relationship; however, the findings surfaced not only the impact of cognitive dissonance on relationship trust, but also highlighted the presence of affective dissonance and its capacity to deteriorate and dilute trust in the B2B relationship (Akrout, 2017).

When referring to affective dissonance, it can be explained as the relational elements linked to attitudes, behaviours, emotions and relational communication between both sides, or from one to the other. This points to the more linear nature of the relationship between two individuals or distinct groups (Dowell, 2015). Affective dissonance follows the same patterns as cognitive dissonance in that it differs between levels and both sides of the relational dyad, which represents a key finding in this thesis.

5.3.1. Inter-organisational level

At this level, the good intentions for the relationship from one organisation to the other are negated by the actions of individuals, key leaders or organisational actions/direction in the relationship. The core antecedents from the supplier's side of the dyad at organisational level indicate a dissonance from the customers through commitment to the relationship (lack of) and contradiction in the relationship (Respondents M.1.1.1.and S.1.1.1). The use of commitment in this context had a negative connotation as it failed to live up to the intentions signalled, vision developed and opportunity identified, giving rise to a contradiction and imbalance in the relationship. Furthermore, the overly personalised nature of the relationship, as opposed to a corporate one, also contributed and led to dissonance through

the emotional versus rational, emergence of opportunism, adversarial actions and coercive behaviours.

This thesis evinced that commitment intended is not always enacted in the relationship, This is seen in conflicting attitudes in the various stakeholders, plus relational control operating through 'gate keepers, as opposed to a multi-point/multi-level contact. The behaviours between both sides changed and lacked consistency or predictability from that agreed/expected. The relationship was prone to emotional rather than rational behaviour and transactional, adversarial actions based on short termism. However, from the buyer/customer side, at organisational level a lack of internal alignment in the suppliers as they approached the relationship was seen, initially flagged as *conflicting messages* and *the way the messages are delivered*. The lack of internal alignment in the supplier is further accentuated at lower levels through *conflicting attitudes, behaviours and actions. The personal rather than corporate nature of the relationship* and coming across *reluctant attitudes* were evidenced as negative affective elements. All combined they produced *a feeling of being let down or taken advantage of.*

This manifested as the customer experiencing deteriorating attitudes and behaviours at odds from that initially or regularly expected and described in the relational intent. A reluctance towards the relationship demonstrated through the attitudes of the supplier's leadership team.

Lastly, this thesis evidenced that negative use of *politics and egos of the key contact (s)* coming into play in the relationship, leaving the customer/buyer side leadership *feeling let down or taken advantage of.* The following Table 25 evinces the top five antecedents and vignettes based on participant referencing and salience at inter-organisational level are represented below in Table 22. The remainder are contained in and form Appendix 9.

Table 25: Affective dissonance at inter-organisational level

Suppliers	Buyers

This is manifested in:

- Commitment to the relationship: *"What you're not doing is coming to us and saying, 'Look, you are one of our strategic partners, we do want to increase the range. What we would like to do is for you to target 200 lines within our proposition'. What they come to us with is, 'Well, there's an opportunity,' and then it's for us to come to them all the time and say, 'Well, can we have this?' 'Well, you can have that, if your price is cheap",* Respondent: M.1.1.1.

- Conflicting behaviours: *"Then often it's some of the behaviours that other people demonstrate in the business that like throw a total curve ball or cause issues. (Laughter) We just agreed all of this, and then whilst G and B were sitting in a meeting to discuss rebates with them, everybody was smiling, everyone was happy, and then exactly the same time they were trying to take about six months' worth of stock out of our warehouse",* Respondent: M.1.1.1..

- Contradicting: *"Because of the size and complexity, where it didn't work so well was individual category directors in retailers wanting to take individual decisions for the benefit of their own individual category but to the detriment of our business if you like where we kept having to bring people back and say, "Well look, you can't just do that because it's part of a bigger plan and you need to see the holistic implication of your decision".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

- Personal basis, rather than

This is manifested in:

- Conflicting messages: *"The first one was highly charged and adversarial. The second one was better. However, the day after the meeting A slapped an early warning notice on us. It made me smile as it was a total disconnect and juxtaposition",* Respondent: S.1.1.1.

- Style of communication: *"Because part of it is how you front face your customer, your supplier, etc., is that they have a challenge in terms of people with ability to front face and how you actually front face an organisation, which is very challenging because it's not like you're coming to one point. You've mentioned already we've got doctors, P. We've got N. We've got hospitals. How you actually front face an organisation like us which is different to the other two big guys that you may well have sat down with".* Respondent: P.1.1.1.

- Conflicting attitudes: *"Unfortunately, we thought we would have a direct relationship, however SAA want back in, yet only for a year. So, this leaves the contract still with SAA, yet us trying to forge a direct relationship",* Respondent: S.1.1.3.

- Contradiction: *"Delivery tardiness: see the intent, hear the reality – don't see the effect".* Respondent: S.1.1.1.

- Conflicting actions: *"Years of adversarial approach, hasn't really worked. We need to do something different".* Respondent: S.1.1.4.

corporate: *"I think from a personality's perspective, generally speaking, the relationships are all pretty good throughout the whole business. I think on the P side of the business, or side of the relationship, they do have a couple of quite quirky characters".* Respondent: M.1.1.1. • Style of communication: "I*t's a very derogatory language that is used".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.	

Emotional, attitudinal commitment and alignment emerge as key elements at organisational level. However, customers highlight suppliers lacking an 'organisational level' alignment within their own organisation to the relationship and an inconsistency in the level of enthusiasm for the opportunity the relationship could deliver. Thus, customers are seeing contradictory action, behaviour and communication in the relationship. To a certain extent suppliers at organisational level are failing to emotionally and attitudinally "buy-in" to the intent, vision and opportunity outlined between both sides.

From the supplier's organisational-level perspective, the contradictory nature of the commitment and behaviours gives rise to emotional rather than rational opportunistic and coercive behaviour and fails to keep promises. This occurred when the suppliers' side faced competing pressure and the commercial rough and tumble of relational interaction from the customer side. At this level, this thesis explored and highlighted how the customer side of the relational dyad reverted to transactional short-termism that undermined the basis of the relational intent – *opportunities* and *expectations*. To overcome this, a process is required to manage and negate this in an overall relationship framework. This was evidenced in one of the relationship cases researched, where an organisational structure, system and process was agreed to manage any short-termism and commercial rough and tumble, while staying true to the overall relationship intent/goal/vision and expectations.

5.3.2. Inter-team/group level

At this level, affective dissonance is more apparent on an operational level through the coding and antecedents that explore the actualisation of turning relationship intentions into relationship realities, or, in this case, standing in the way of achieving them. Suppliers at this level indicated affective triggers that undermine the coming together of both sides to operationalise the relationship intentions. Suppliers at the operations level made themselves vulnerable, yet referenced opportunistic behaviour the most often from the customers' team at this level. Posturing/egos/politics were also referenced resulting in stretching personal trust in the team, a lack of consistency through contradictory actions and a lack of desire and passion from the other side. The research in this thesis also surfaced reluctant and conflicting attitudes which pointed to an intention at organisational level that failed to travel effectively or with sufficient weight/importance to the customer team required to operationalise it with the supplier.

The use of language emerged as a mechanism to deliver bad news while maintaining the relationship between the dyad at this level. In essence, the language operated as a deflection to maintain the relationship already established at this level. This was evidenced through the use of, statements such as *"nothing personal, but".* The feeling of getting too close, overdependent and feeling let down or taken advantage of were referenced, if coercive/opportunistic and/or adversarial action were proved in the relationship. These had a dissonant effect on the operational effectiveness as they tried to make things happen between both sides.

On the buyer/customer side of the dyad, the affective dissonance demonstrated in the messaging from the supplier and the way the messages are communicated were highlighted. As both sides operationalise the relationship, *conflicting behaviours, attitudes and actions* were referenced, leading to an internal feeling of being let down or taken advantage of. Surprisingly, customers at this level also agreed that *coercive behaviour and*

reluctant behaviour impacted on the relationship. Once again, this points to a lack of emotional and attitudinal buy-in/adoption of the relationship intent that this developed at the organisational level. It also indicates a level of inconsistency and/or lack of discipline in the group/operations level introducing dissonance into the operationalisation of the relationship and creating mistrust.

Operations/group level on the customer side indicated a *level of politics*, *posturing* and *the moving of people around* as having an impact at this level undermining continuity and trust. In Table 26 the top five antecedents and vignettes based on participant referencing and salience at inter-team/group level are represented; the remainder are contained in Appendix 10.

Table 26: Affective dissonance at inter-team/group level	
Suppliers	Buyers
This is manifested in: • Behaving opportunistically: *"To go and do that and it just – as I say, it just left a really bad taste on Friday and I had my boss who was pissed off, you know? Very pissed off".* Respondent: M.1.2.1. • Contracting trust: "*I mean, this is kind of, it comes back to a little bit more of non-intangible relationships, it's more, "Are you delivering to your contract?"* Respondent: A.1.2.5. • Posturing: *""Well, I think that's absolutely rubbish," although he might use words a bit more colourful than that. "Your systems are rubbish. I don't agree with that. Bloomin' red tape everywhere. Bit corporate organisation." He'll have a moan, and I'll say, "N, what do you want me to do*	This is manifested in: • Conflicting messages: "*The only response we got from A was an email saying, "No, this is outside of our appetite, it's a no-quote from us," and I just feel, sometimes, when you're getting what should be – well, what are – A's main competitors, so you're getting your Xs, your Y's – companies like that, and companies that we wouldn't consider in the same bracket as A either saying they want to quote on it, then we feel that either they're not understanding the risk properly, or they're not wanting to understand the risk properly".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1. • Style of communication: *"They'll send an email to one person, and expect that email will be passed onto ten others".* Respondent: P.1.3.1.

about it?" And he'll say, "Nothing, I know it's 'No', but I just wanted to raise it." He does go above my head sometimes, but he'll always come back to me and say, "Look, I have raised it to…" and by above my head, I mean, he'll go in at the top". Respondent: Al.1.2.1.	• Conflicting behaviours: *"They were funding that, they'd got to a point and gone, "Right, that works for us, so we're going to pull back and just stay where we are" would be my understanding of their strategy".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.
• Contradicting: "*Setting unrealistic expectations. A good example is the surface pros that were left over from another project. A exec agreed to develop, based on an expectation of use for meeting minutes, etc. It got out of control – lack of management of the project, questions around expectations and technology led. There was a distinct lack of up-front communication and why are we doing this".* Respondent: A.1.2.1.	• Contradicting: "*Unrealistic expectations about the contract, delivery potential. It needed to be more of a relationship of equals".* Respondent: S.1.2.1.
• Conflicting actions: "*And it was all written in the old language. So, I think there are … there are people within ISO who see it – are starting to see a brave new world, and there are people who only know a way of working which is the way they've worked for the last 20 years".* Respondent: A.1.2.6.	• Conflicting actions: "*The contract laid out what was required from a compliance perspective. Sales seem ok, yet operations appear to push the boundaries and sometimes get caught out. This introduces a constant tension within the relationship. E M (A security) would go crazy and the non-contract people try and work outside of the system".* Respondent: S.1.2.2.

The operations/team level, in effect, turns intangible trust (Relational intention) into tangible trust through their actions (interdependence) ability and credibility. It is at this point that the reality of relational trust becomes apparent in how effectively the organisational level intent has been communicated and then the level of commitment is conveyed to the next level. This is a key level in trust development with the potential for early-stage affective dissonance through misalignment as evinced in the findings through conflicting attitudes and behaviours from both sides around how to make the relational intent a reality in the relational dyad.

5.3.3. Interpersonal level

At this level, the emotional elements of an interpersonal relationship between both sides are in-play to either limit or dilute trust. Often the relationship could be on a one-to-one basis between supplier services/sales and customer buyers or project managers. The relationship develops along affective lines through frequent contact, liking, positive behaviours, positive attitudes and not being let down or taken advantage of. This is the emotional side of trust building manifested as "I like you"; "You demonstrate benevolence and empathy, so I trust you".

However, when exploring the trust-diluting elements, the respondents referred to affective antecedents in the relationship that were eroding trust, and over time were introducing an element or undercurrent of mistrust. This is developed in Table 27 through the top five antecedents and vignettes based on participant referencing and salience at interpersonal level which are represented below. The remainder are set out in Appendix 11.

Table 27: Affective dissonance at interpersonal level	
Supplier	Buyer
Manifested in:	Manifested in:
• Reluctant attitude: "*Setting un-realistic expectations. A good example is the surface pros that were left over from another project. A's exec agreed to develop, based on an expectation of use for meeting minutes, etc. It got out of control – lack of management of the project, questions around expectations and technology led. There was a distinct lack of up-front communication and why are we doing this*". Respondent: A.1.2.1. • Posturing: *"I don't like getting involved in all of the S politics and there are excuses not to do things and they*	• Personal basis, rather than on a business basis: "*They have a new MD who I don't really know much about to be honest but I would – from what I hear, he's a very different character to his predecessor*". Respondent: P.1.2.3. • Consistency: "*Since he moved on – he got promoted and moved to their London office – the relationship, on that part of the business, hasn't been the same. We don't get the pro-active responses. So we can send a risk into them, and you know, it falls into one of these black holes of never hearing from*

overdramatise things as well".
Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Eroding trust: "*Economic with the truth yes so, they say, "Yes T's price is £4," but then that was three months ago. The landscape's changed since then".* Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Style of communication: *"It's … email should be used as a confirmation not as a lobbed instruction into the ether, you know, there are no subtleties and nuances in email and people interpret what they think you've written".* Respondent: A.1.2.2.

- Behaving opportunistically: *"I think that's lost a lot of loyalty as well because they're just looking at price now whereas before it was a lot more about consistency of supply".* Respondent: M.1.2.2.

- Conflicting actions: "*And there's a lot of man marking going on across the board and I think this comes back to the lack of trust as well".* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

somebody, and we don't get the response – and when we do get responses, it's often actually a, "This is not one for us". Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions: "*The share point upgrade. It's currently facing an 11 month delay. We were initially told we were getting SME's on SharePoint (an ability issue) which wasn't the case".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

- Dealing with conflicting, from vested interests: *"Good PM's tend to be over worked – access can be an issue".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

- Conflicting behaviours: "*Then they've continued to buy from us, or try to buy from us so, they say, "Oh, well we can buy some stock at a cheaper price but not all of it that we need, so we'll buy a bit from you as well." So it's kind of wanting their cake and eat it if you like. So, sorry that did seem quite detailed and convoluted but it's an example of the dynamics of the relationship if you like".* Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Conflicting attitudes: "*Maybe the programme's view is that it's my job to do that, I don't know, but how I would do that I'm not entirely sure. We're very good at capturing learning; we're not so good at disseminating it".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

At this level, when trying to develop the relationship, the key trigger that suppliers highlighted at an interpersonal level was a *reluctant attitude* from their opposite number and a *degree of posturing /ego/politics* in the relationship. This was evidenced in the negative way

communication happened and the style of that communication, with opportunistic behaviour that created mistrust.

They also indicated a lack of consistency through *conflicting actions and attitudes* towards the relationship, coupled with *a lack of desire or passion* to make it work, e.g., *Failing to keep promises* led to a feeling of being let down or taken advantage of.

The personal basis and affective nature also came to the fore with *a feeling that the customer was getting too close, over dependent and operating on a personal basis rather than corporately*. The buying/customer side of the relational dyad used *deflecting language to deliver bad news*, while trying to maintain an affective personal relationship. However, at the interpersonal level, the buying/customer side evinced that the demonstration of an overly personal relationship, rather than one on a business basis, had an undermining effect on the relationship. This is coupled with a lack of consistency, *conflicting actions and an inability to deal with conflict from vested interest* (Respondents S.1.3.1 and S.1.3.1) in the relationship.

Conflicting behaviours and attitudes led to *a feeling of being let down or taken advantage of* – Respondent: P.1.2.1. When trying to go beyond the interpersonal contact, the *ambiguity of the organisation* created *conflicting messages* also undermining and eroding trust at this level in the relationship.

Affective dissonance at this level can be seen in the inter-play between the individuals in the relationship. Customers indicated an over-reliance on the personal nature of the relationship, rather than on a business basis. In effect they used the personal relationship to overcome shortfalls in the business/cognitive relationships. A lack of overall affective consistency in actions, behaviours and attitudes leaves the customer side of the dyad unsure of what or how much to trust and a general feeling of being let down or taken advantage of by the supplier side. Once the deal is done or the sale is made the attitudes and behaviours change.

An area revealed as having a dissonant effect on the relationship is when the supplier side met a *reluctance of attitudes, posturing and politics* – Respondents A.1.2.5 and A.1.2.1 – in the personal relationship, which differs from that which was agreed or expected. This results in a conflict in actions through opportunistic behaviour and failure to keep to the promises established in the relationship or as a 'relationship given'. Interestingly, suppliers also cite the buying side becoming over-reliant on the personal nature of the relationship, getting too close, and using language in the relationship to deflect conflict from the interpersonal level, aimed at maintaining the personal nature of the relationship while deflecting it upwards or into the cognitive elements.

In this thesis, the cognitive and affective antecedents reduced trust in the relationship and between levels if they are in a dissonant state. This demonstrates cognitive and affective antecedents as having the reductionist potential through a combination of cognitive/affective levels, or through one or the other.

5.4. Cognitive and affective dissonance in B2B relational trust

At the organisational level, from the data dissonance occurred when the rational relationship elements/intentions in terms of beliefs, values, integrity and needs failed to meet expectations once the relationship had moved from an intangible trust state into a tangible trust state. This left one organisation searching to make sense of the dissonance and how to move back to consonance (Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959). In essence, one side did not quite get what they thought they were going to get! "*You can have some very positive discussions at one level, but if that doesn't transfer down, it's hard to get the rest of the team on board":* Respondent: AL.1.2.

At organisational level, affective dissonance appeared to occur when the emotional relationship elements in terms of attitudes, behaviours, culture, messaging, feeling valued and contact fall short of what was felt at the intention stage, e.g., from the 'jumping in – leap

of faith' (Mollering, 2002) stage. This can leave one organisation feeling let down, being taken for granted, or feeling taken advantage of.

This change in attitude can be seen when one organisation works to develop the relationship in a contract/project, etc. Once the organisational level team achieve their objective and all the emotional investment has paid off, it then passes to the operations level to make it happen and the other side's organisational leadership team see/feel a marked change in attitude, behaviour messaging and commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

At the operations/team level, the triggers for dissonance occur differently from organisational and interpersonal levels. Cognitive dissonance occurs when the opposite side of the relationship demonstrated a different understanding, need and mutual value for working together. When addressing the implementation of the relational intention, the ability of the operations/group/team is less effective than thought in terms of knowing their stuff, reliability of systems and processes, getting the basics wrong, agility, and consistency. The credibility mismatched the expected intention for the organisational level in terms of integrity, empathy, benevolence and being able to deliver what was promised. As the trust intention moves from organisation level to the operations/team level for actualisation, the lack of clarity, communication and understanding causes dissonance between both sides. The leadership team can often be so far removed the operational reality operates in a different sphere of trust (Saunders 2016). It is reliant on the actors at this level to 'sense make' of what they understand is required from the level above. Dissonance and mistrust develop through a failure to reflect the changes in trust requirement in the standard norms, which are at odds with new requirements to develop the relationship and build trust (Fleetwood, 2018)

Affective dissonance at the operations/team level occurs when both parties start to work more closely together, and one side is more emotionally committed than the other, which can be reflected in one side demonstrating a reluctant attitude, lack of desire and passion. In effect, they are not emotionally buying into or trusting their opposite team. This can also

occur when one side construes what may have appeared achievable at organisational level, yet struggle at operations and interpersonal levels, due to differences in culture, values and behaviours once both sides come together.

Failure at the outset of the relationship impacted its development. This manifested through a lack of provision to manage differences of opinion, blame, short termism, opportunism and posturing in the wider relationship context, in effect identifying and managing a way to cope with the relational rough and tumble without damaging the overall relational intent. This was also evinced when the relationship intent failed to land with one side and that side remained in the previous transactional/adversarial persona. The transactional side of the relationship failed to understand how or why both sides were trying to come together to build trust and the relationship, leading to dissonance at this level, and affected the relationship up and down the dyad (Currell and Inkpen, 2002).

At the level of interpersonal relationships, the predominant focus was on *the ability, capability, competency, knowledge* and *the level of interdependence* – in short, how both parties work together to deliver in the relationship and realise the identified mutual benefit(s). Cognitive dissonance occurs through an unequal level and matching of commitment in the relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) to work together, and therefore failed to deliver on the mutual value benefit.

When trying to make the relational intent a reality, the systems, processes and ways of working the standard norms still reflect what has gone before, and have not been updated to reflect the changed requirement (Fleetwood, 2018). In this context, both sides are being constrained or one side is working to the new standard norms while the other is working to the old, causing dissonance and mistrust to develop. A failure in clear communication and briefing means the expectations from interpersonal relationship development and trust building are unclear, requiring interpretation or sense-making at the lower levels of the relational dyad. This introduces inconsistency and imbalance from one side to the other. The

lack of an umbrella vision and/or clarity of purpose for the relationship and mechanisms to manage conflict makes the management of coercive behaviour difficult.

The emotional elements of the interpersonal relationship and affective dissonance were found to occur when one side demonstrated greater emotional investment than the other through their attitude and passion (Akrout, 2017). Dissonance and mistrust also crept in when an overly personal and emotional approach is matched by a more rational, corporate and business approach from the other side. In essence, an affective approach was found to attract a cognitive response (Dowell, 2015). This also happens when individuals try to maintain the personal nature of the relationship, while undertaking adversarial/coercive behaviour and then use deflecting language to mask the potential dissonance. The organisation to organisation-level leadership team from both sides of the dyad were identified to be signalling, both internally and externally, the cognitive intent towards each other; an intention to trust or trust as an action intention conceptualisation. For trust to develop there needed to be some demonstration of the opportunity from the suppliers' side, for the customer or for it to be internally jointly developed through customer interactions (Donney and Canon, 1996; Currell and Inkpen, 2002). At the operations/group/team level, in order for trust to develop, the intention needed to be communicated effectively and then demonstratively acted out. It needed to be shared for either side to understand what they needed to do and how to act/respond accordingly. These *intentions, actions, behaviours, beliefs* and *attitudes* pass into the agents of the organisation as norms contained in artefacts, or as cognitive/affective stuff, contained in the agent's memory, supporting the work of Fleetwood (2018) in critical realism and organisational structuration theory.

In this thesis, the evidence demonstrated a duality of intent between cognitive and affective relational intent. It is not an either cognitive or affective, however demonstrated a plurality to relational intent. Both Dowell (2015), Akrout et al. (2017) posited the enabling effect of cognitive and affective trust in relationship development. This thesis adds the dimension of plurality and relationship intent at inter-organisational level. This is reflected in cognitive

intent through signalling relationship intentions, vision and direction. However, it is also reflected through affective intent evinced through empowering, demonstrating, and motivation actions/activities.

The findings at organisational level were both cognitive and affective in their intention to the relationship on both sides. The intention becomes a trust-building action/activity through cognitive and affective stuff, contained in artefacts and/or agent memories.

The findings in one of the research partners indicated trust residing in one side of the dyad at an interpersonal level and overtly affective in nature while the other side of the relational dyad had organisational-level trust, which was more cognitive in nature. This reflected the short-term focus and nature of the buying/customer side and more strategic focus and nature of the supplier organisation. These findings support the differing trust positions in the relationship – the supplier side leading the relationship trust and the customer side following at a reduced level (Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017)

This thesis demonstrates that the cognitive and affective intention can become conflicted as evidenced as triggers of trust erosion and trust diluters, within and between the relationship dyad. Evidence established includes misalignment between relationship intention, organisational norms and cognitive stuff – i.e. agents doing something they have always done; however, it is counter to the organisational intention and risks misinterpretation of the intentions, and lack of understanding, or how to activate the relational intentions. Last, the use of the intention to pursue activities and actions counter to the overall relationship was evinced through cognitive dissonance in the antecedents of conflict of actions, needs, values and beliefs. Affective dissonance was seen through the key antecedents of conflict of attitudes, behaviours and messaging.

At organisational/leadership level, changing outcomes was seen in a positive context, as a validation and reinforcement of the relational intent. At the group and interpersonal levels,

the changing outcomes were seen as mutual value, differing levels of contact, positive attitude, communication style and frequency of contact.

5.5. Cognitive and affective consonance in B2B relational trust

This thesis found cognitive and affective consonance occurring between both sides in a B2B relationship when the relational intention consistently matched /exceeded the expectation, engagement and experience levels that both sides set out in their relational intentions. This was demonstrated in the cognitive and affective antecedents identified as 'working' between the dyad and levels.

5.5.1. Inter-organisational level

In this section, the inter-organisational level findings are explored between the customer – supplier dyads. The antecedents (Table 28) representing the top five based on participant referencing and salience at inter-organisational level are represented below. The remainder form Appendix 20.

Table 28: Inter-organisational level antecedents based on participant significance	
Customer/Buyer	Supplier
Inter-Org Level (+)'s	Inter-Org Level (+)'s
1. Commitment to the relationship: "*The contact point is working really well and I felt great about the support I received*". Respondent: S1.3.1. 2. Communicating style: "*Can we do something on this product to drive some sales? It's more those sort of conversations".* Respondent: P.1.3.1. 3. Benefiting from mutual value: "*A manage the data centre; they made a mistake indicating we were getting close to overloading the centre, potentially causing overheating. We took a joint practical and pragmatic approach to understand the problem and determine why we weren't on maximum. We sat down and looked at the problem bringing together practical and theoretical*	1.Signalling relationship Intentions: "*Look, look what we can do," and I've said it openly people, senior people in (x), that for me personally to see some of this going forward after five years of, you know, banging a drum about what they need to do, it's refreshing and very positive. And that, in turn, translates, I hope, through me eventually to a team around me who will be equally motivated to keep the fight going".* Respondent: A.1.1.1. 2.Clarity of vision – direction: "*So, there was clear sharing of targets right through the piece and there was a common goal in the*

– it helped that I knew the A data centre manager really well for a number of years. We worked it out between us and now have a process in place to manage it going forward". Respondent: S.1.2.2.

4. Joint working: "*What always comes to mind is probably the best product launch we've done, which was Sidupla. We worked closely, we pre-planned; we were probably their main contract with that product. All parts of the P business, it worked for; whether it be my side which is predominantly about price, whether it be the R's side, which is about supply – the same with, probably, N and P. Every part of the company, including me – and that one definitely has worked for me – and they've supported us on it"*.
Respondent: P.1.3.1.

5. Empowering the decision/relationship: "*We are in a much better place now and a stronger relationship. The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate and worked with the team to develop. It felt as if we had achieved a base line and this is what we expect going forward. This is not a one-off process, it's recognition of a sustainable process, and we both now have tool sets that are available to improve how project Sis managed. Moved out of spread sheet land. The process is agreed and sustained as it's a core system and underpins other systems"*. Respondent: S.1.2.1.

early stages". Respondent: BE.1.1.

3. Demonstrating the opportunity: "*That was shown fantastically well when we had our last review meeting, which was about a month ago, where I started to try and poke and prod around C's ambitions for his business and what his plans were"*. Respondent: AL.1.1.

4. Benefiting from mutual value:" *It's about using relationships to positive effect"*: Respondent: A.1.1.1.

5. Strategic versus Transactional: "*Sitting down with that broker and talking around, 'Okay, so how's the business doing? How you were going to plan, in terms of the' – that will be more where I fit in, alongside my Branch Manager, to have those high-level strategic conversations"*.
Respondent:.AL.1.1.

So What!

The key findings;

1. Intent/vision understanding

So What!

The key findings;

1. Establishing the mutual opportunity as a relational intention.

2. Positive mutual change	2. Strategic approach based on an understanding of each other, demonstrating relationship commitment.
	3. Increased penetration, leading to changed outcomes that motivate the relationship at an organisational level.

5.5.2. Inter-team/operations level

In this section, the inter-team/operations level findings are explored between the customer – supplier dyads. The antecedents (Table 29) represent the most important to each side (top five) and are based on participant referencing and salience at inter-team/group level as represented below. The remainder are contained in Appendix 21.

Table 296: Inter-team/operations level antecedents based on participant significance	
CUSTOMER/BUYER	SUPPLIER
Inter-Team/Group (+)'s	Inter-Team/Group (+)'s
1. Joint working: "*Good collaboration between us to put in new desk tops. We worked this out between service ops and A to make it happen*". Respondent:S.1.2.2. 2. Benefiting from mutual value: "*It's a mixture of the different selling arms. So, you know, Nk, PSUK, R, and then, obviously, from M's side, the people there. They, obviously, don't go around selling it into pharmacy. That was our, kind of, job, but, obviously, they'll do advertising, make awareness*". Respondent: P.1.2.2. 3. Understanding each other: "*They know and understand L R, and what we want, how we work, and what we're looking for, and that goes an awful long way as well, if they understand our needs, and what we want from the relationship, then that makes our job a lot easier*". Respondent: LR.1.2.	1. Developing Products: "*Product launch really that went so well that we supported them almost exclusively on to certain areas and we made a really, really good job of it as a team really*". Respondent: M.1.2. 2. .Understanding each other: "*If we hadn't managed to get C out of his office, into a nice restaurant, and get him a bit more relaxed with us, get to hear about his kids, get him to feel like, "I know these people, I trust them, I want to share my business goals with them," we might not be having those kinds of conversations*". Respondent: AL.1.2. 3. Keeping an affective level versus relational inertia: "*I think with P, what I generally feel is because the relationship is there, they do look to buy across our whole portfolio; they*

4. Motivating the organisational relationship: "*We did recognise this achievement at our monthly meeting as a success. Our meetings are now at a level where we bring cake, etc.*" Respondent: S.1.2.1.

5. Contacting regularly: "*I don't know, probably about three, four times a year. Beth, I see every month. This year, we've already been down to their premises for a meeting down there. So, you get to meet the people sitting at their desks and, you know, we've had a walk round and chatted to everybody*". Respondent: P.1.2.2.

certainly don't cherry pick with M, so again that drives that relationship and business partnership really". Respondent: M.1.2.

4. Commercial 'Rough and Tumble: "*Not even service, sort of, underwriting favours, you know. We've had requests for, "We need you to keep the price the same, but I want to earn an extra five points' commission." Well, we don't have that in our rate. "Well, come on, we supported you on X, Y, Z"*. Respondent: AL.1.2.1.

5. Determined the targets: "*It culminated in a series of meetings that initially determined the targets of the individual categories and the individual businesses*". Respondent: BE.1.1.

So What!

The key findings:

1. Activation.

2. Working together for mutual value.

So What!

The key findings:

1. The development of products through the combined relationship (co-creation) and an understanding of each other.

2. Clear targets and process to escalate issues and challenges in the relationship.

3. Organisational culture that earns trust and brings people together, with an ability to celebrate success.

5.5.3. Interpersonal level

In this section, the interpersonal-level findings are explored between the customer – supplier dyads. The antecedents (table 30) represent the most important to each side (top five) and

are based on participant salience and referencing frequency at interpersonal level are represented below. The remainder are set out in Appendix 22.

Table 30: Interpersonal -level antecedents based on participant significance	
CUSTOMER / BUYER	SUPPLIER
Interpersonal (+)'s	Interpersonal (+)'s
1. Commitment to the relationship: "*The contact point is working really well and felt great about the support I received*". Respondent: S1.3.1. 2. Communicating style: "*Can we do something on this product to drive some sales? It's more those sorts of conversations*". Respondent: P.1.3.1. 3. Benefiting from mutual value: "*A manage the data centre; they made a mistake indicating we were getting close to overloading the centre, potentially causing overheating. We took a joint practical and pragmatic approach to understand the problem and determine why we weren't on maximum. We sat down and looked at the problem bringing together practical and theoretical – it helped that I knew the A data centre manager really well for a number of years. We worked it out between us and now have a process in place to manage it going forward*": Respondent: S.1.2.2. 4. Joint working: "*What always comes to mind is, probably the best product launch we've done, which was Sidupla. We worked closely, we pre-planned; we were probably their main contract with that product. All parts of the P business, it worked for; whether it be my side which is predominantly about price, whether it be the R's side, which is about supply – the same with, probably, N and P. Every part of the company, including me – and that one definitely has worked for me – and they've supported us on it*".	1.Signalling relationship intentions: "*We're working really closely with them, and they said, "Right, we know nothing about innovation and an innovation suite, but A, you must do this sort of stuff?" And they've engaged us at the business transformation layer, not just going, "Give me a room and put some flashy screens on and say"*". Respondent: A.1.2.7. 2. Organisational culture: "*The culture is mellower as previous and could be a sign of management maturity*": Respondent:A.1.3.1. 3. Communicating internally: "*Them knowing what we want to be famous for and how we want to work with them and having that communication and exposing them to that I think really does change the way that they think about who we are and what we area and how we do it*". Respondent: A.1.2.7. 4. Positive attitude: "*We are seeing a positive relationship with the account team and a willingness to work together*". Respondent: A.1.3.1. 5. Common set of values; I would like to think that P see us as an upfront company and the people in it are straight-talking. You know, that's the feedback I get from them. We just tell them as it is". Respondent M.1.2.2.

Respondent: P.1.3.1. 5. Empowering the decision/ relationship: "*We are in a much better place now and a stronger relationship. The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate and worked with the team to develop. It felt as if we had achieved a base line and this is what we expect going forward. This is not a one off process, it's recognition of a sustainable process, and we both now have tool sets that are available to improve how project Sis managed. Moved out of spread sheet land. The process is agreed and sustained as it's a core system and underpins other systems".* Respondent: S.1.2.1.	
So What! The key findings; 1. Ways of working (cognitive and affective). 2. Working together for mutual value.	So What! The key findings; 1. Signalling intentions in the relationship through; a positive attitude, common set of value and organisational culture. 2. The basics are in place to support relationship development. 3. Developing products (co-creation), preventing relational inertia and determined targets that set expectations and plot progress.

In this case the cognitive and affective antecedents have an expansionist effect on the relationship and between levels. This highlighted the different focus on trust building between the relational dyad and by level. This thesis found cognitive and affective antecedents could operate in combination (cognitive/affective) or through the application of one or of the other. They have the capacity to impact the relationship in a reductionist way if in dissonance and an expansionist way if in consonance.

5.5.4. Cognitive and affective consonance in B2B relational trust discussed

In this section the findings are brought together and built upon as two emerging groupings emanating from the bridging process (Appendices 3, 19, 19.1 and 19.2) and developed as core themes.

The evidence points to two separate, yet interlinking elements that develop consonance and trust expansion in the relationships researched: Cognitive Consonance and Affective Consonance. Dowell et al. (2015) suggested that both cognitive and affective trust have roles to play in the development of B2B relationships. This demonstrates the same two factors in play for the expansion of trust and its effectiveness to deliver mutual value. Mayer et al. (1995) pointed to consistency in behaviour in an individual as these could contribute to perceptions of higher integrity and trustworthiness. In their definition of behavioural integrity, Whitener (1998) discussed word-deed consistency, along with honesty, promise fulfilment and moral character, which closely aligns with the definition of integrity whereas in this context behaviour and integrity both reflect a consistency. This serves to influence integrity trustworthiness perceptions as the two dimensions are considered distinct. The first refers to the reliability of leaders based on past actions; the latter focuses on the consistency between what leaders say and what they actually do (Whitener, 1998). It is argued that behavioural consistency and integrity could influence perceptions of integrity trust worthiness, which in turn could make an individual more willing to trust, due to the sense of certainty and consistent behaviour development.

This may extend outside of the organisation and into the other side of the relational dyad. The behaviours and integrity point to both the cognitive and affective nature, reflected in the communication style, clarity of direction, and messaging.

This provides the insights and the answers to the initial questions (1 and 2) posed in this thesis which are developed and covered in the next section. The question is first restating, following which the answers are developed drawing on literature and the thesis findings.

5.6. Answering research questions 1 and 2

1. To what extent is B2B trust at an organisational level strategic, perceived and intentional in nature? (Currall, 2002) (Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006b)

2. How does B2B trust at an organisational level have an impact on the actors within the relationship? (Clark et al., 2010; McEvily and Zaheer, 2006; Zaheer et al., 1998).

The theory emerging from this thesis reflects the negative, diluting and eroding nature of trust between both sides. This occurs when dissonance appears on a cognitive or affective or both cognitive/affective level, one side to the other, which also has a positive aspect to the negative through the application of consonance. Taken together, they have the ability to move the trust level up or down between both sides of the dyad. Cognitive/affective dissonance has a reductionist effect on trust and cognitive/affective consonance has an expansionist effect on trust between both sides.
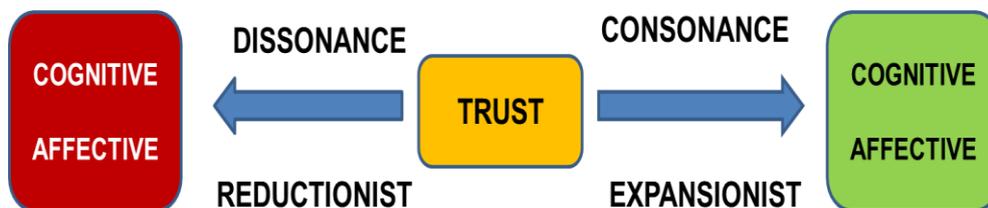
Dissonance was assessed in this thesis, providing further answers to research questions 1 and 2 as conflicted positions through the following key antecedents in the relationship: **actions, messages, attitudes, needs, communication**, b**ehaviours, commitment, ability and value potential.** The signalling of relational intent at an organisation level provides further answers to research questions 1 and 2, manifested through and at the leadership team level: **messaging**, **actions, communication, willingness to work together.** However, **organisational level culture, credibility, ability, and track record** also had roles to play in trust building at this level.

This thesis supports previous studies' (Doney and Canon, 2002; Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017) findings and builds on them through the impact cognitive/affective dissonance and consonance has at the group/operations/team and interpersonal levels.

5.7. Moving from intangible intentions to trust through to activation and development of tangible trust in a B2B relational context: role of boundary spanners

This thesis demonstrates the importance of boundary spanners from each side of the relationship in the facilitation of the move from intangible to tangible trust. Boundary spanning occurs at the periphery of organisations where the outer membrane allows for permeability for organisational actors to look out and others to look in. Boundary spanners can facilitate coordinated activity where new structures are forged to enable the sharing of resources and joint decision making (Williams, 2012).

The analysis points to the boundary spanners containing the capacity and ability to reduce the feeling of vulnerability and to a certain extent mitigate the risk that both sides may contain in the early phase of relational development. Respondents did this through

Communicating regularly: "*An upside is the spin off conversations that occur, facilitated by the flexing of the locations. We can also co-locate in the apps team at R, if needs be dealing with conflict - vested interest*". Respondent: S.1.2.1.

Demonstrating the opportunity: "*What I did was I took that opportunity to make that into a bit of a joint document, how are we as a team going to deliver this as a project? So, it's not just A's document, it's a combined management plan, so these are the combined processes that we've got, these are the roles and the hierarchy and how we face off to one another*". Respondent: S.1.3.1.

Flexing contact levels: "*Our account handler has been looking after the P account for a long time now, B, she knows it back to front and I think that certainly gets us in a lot of doors that other people potentially struggle to get in to. That's all the way from purchasing level, all the way up to leadership of their business in terms of the P S and the Managing Director*". Respondent: M.1.2.1.

Follow through on promises: *"I mean, where we were two years and the red service levels, I mean we've been reporting green for the last six months I think it is. Which is fantastic so they've got less to moan about from that now and we can concentrate on the front-end relationship and driving it forward"*. Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Leading and modelling trust building: **"***There was mutual respect from both businesses in terms of the role that we played in the market and that we could play within their business and how we could help them grow".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Understanding each othe*r*: "*When it comes to some of the business interaction, they have differing views on many things, as is fair. But also, you know, in a real partnership, a true partnership, you can say, 'No,' on both sides and everybody just moves on without it being an issue*". Respondent: M.1.1.1.

Understanding the other's reality: **"***I feel as if they operate a 'your pain is our pain***'.** Respondent: S.1.3.1.

The antecedents above have a mediating role, before both sides could tangibly experience the ability and credibility through actual interaction. Once through the early stages, the boundary spanners still undertook a similar role, mediating and reducing the impact of relational change and/or relational initiatives, and dealing with relational conflict between both sides and/or at a specific level. The boundary spanners act as the bridge from intentions to reality. This means both sides of the relationship were confronted with less of a 'leap of faith' (Mollering, 2002; Niklova, 2014) and more of a small step with the boundary spanners in effect holding their hands.

Having a collective vision, mission or relational objective enabled the boundary spanners to support their side of the dyad toward trust-building activities and consonance.

Communication in terms of style, frequency and the medium deployed were also important and key in preventing mistrust creeping into the relationship.

It was evinced that the boundary spanner needed a balance of cognitive and affective trust to prevent the development of an overtly personal relationship, as this had the potential to

undermine the mutual value benefit from the relationship and lead to overfamiliarity (Gargiulo and Ertug, 2006). It was also demonstrated that it is important for the boundary spanners to be empowered and enabled in the relationship, ensuring the organisation has clear line of sight to the overall aims and performance outcomes emanating from the relationship. This prevents organisational ambiguity when moving beyond the interpersonal contacts, and removing conflicting messaging, actions and behaviours that could undermine or erode trust at this level, and inter-group and inter-organisation levels.

5.7.1. The role of boundary spanner in the development of B2B trust

This thesis identified how the boundary spanners developed the relationship and built or prevented dilution of trust into the middle to latter stages of the relationship. This occurred when the boundary spanners were agreed by both sides to represent the interests of the overall relationship and the delivery of co-created and jointly agreed relational outcomes, including medium-term to long-term mutual commercial benefit. The boundary spanners were empowered and supported by the leadership team at organisation level. The findings support and build on the work of Perrone, Zaheer and McEvily (2003) as they discussed the need for boundary spanners to be trusted, empowered and free from constraints in order to undertake the role of reality makers for the organisational-level trust intentions. The findings in this thesis show the boundary spanners' functional influence and clan culture (Perrone et al., 2003) in several cases, undertaking activities to keep the relationship on track and trust intact, such as managing interpersonal conflict, opportunistic behaviour, tactical dispute resolution or more strategic commercial realignment to maintain and ensure the stated mutual commercial benefits were delivered. The use of an umbrella plan or relationship framework were the common systems deployed by the boundary spanners to manage the overall relationship, using the plan to review performance and steer the relationship, re-calibrating as required to stay on course (Stevens et al., 2015). These factors were seen as trust building and safeguarding between the dyad and inter-levels. The boundary spanners act as the relational red thread, removing organisational and relational ambiguity when going

beyond the regular relational contact and into the wider organisation. This once again removed vulnerability, reducing risk as the relationship developed into other areas, creating new contacts and different parts, functions and levels of each other's organisation to move from intangible to tangible trust (Mollering, 2002; Nikolova, 2015).

In conjunction with the boundary spanners ameliorating the leap of faith (Mollering, 2002) additional antecedents were evinced through the research. This builds on the work of May (2004), Joni (2005) and Robinson and Robinson (2006) who discussed and explored antecedents around credibility, reputation, experience and a capacity for caring. However, in this thesis, a strong antecedent at the intentional, intangible trust stage of the relationship was the signalling of the relationship intentions undertaken between both sides. This often gained traction at organisation-to-organisation level yet, may have originally emanated at interpersonal levels of the relationship. Signalling relationship intentions worked in a way to visualise the relationship post the intention phase: what could be achieved when taking the intangible to the tangible. Solutions often revolved around the creation of mutual commercial benefit or a positive benefit that related to both parties. In this way, the leap of faith in a B2B context becomes the actualisation of relational intent between both sides to move the relationship from intangible trust to tangible trust (Mollering 2002; Nikolova 2013).

This provides the insights and the answers to questions (3 and 4) posed in this thesis. Which is developed and covered in the next section. Re-stating the question and then developing the answers that draws on literature and the thesis findings.

5.8. Answering research questions 3 and 4

Research question 3. How do the behaviours of trust at an individual level impact through B2B trust antecedents? (Kumar, 2012) (Kumar et al. 1995)

Research question 4. How do these antecedents affect the behaviour attitudes and actions of individuals within these B2B relationships? (Zaheer, 2006; Schoorman et al., 2007).

The relational intentions, expectations and engagement moved from an intangible state (intentional trust) to tangible reality (active trust), when actioned at operations/team and interpersonal level. It is here that the thesis identified a move to a different conceptualisation of trust as the relationship moved to a different level between small groups/teams or one-to-one and becomes interpersonal in nature. The interviews surfaced a greater focus on **the ways of working**, **co-creation**, **ability** and **trust in the basics**. Saunders (2016) argues that trust at this level, could be significantly different from organisation level, as they were often so far removed as to be operating in a different relationship reality. It was often cognisant on the operations and interpersonal levels to determine the relationship requirements, making sense of what was required. The findings in this thesis support this view, however not to such an extreme, pointing toward a lack of clarity in **messaging, communication style,** and **expectations,** all of which were cited in the interviews on both sides of the dyad. Additionally, actors wanted to 'do the right thing'; however, they were often unsure what the right thing was or is.

5.9. Where trust resides in B2B relationships by level

This thesis addresses, where trust actually resides in the organisation and how it manifests at the different levels of the relationship. The research, analysis and insights generated in this thesis demonstrate where trust resided between the dyads, this builds and adapts the recent work on the structuration theory of Fleetwood (2018).

Scholars have debated where trust actually resides in an organisational context, and this area remains a hotly contested academic topic (Currell and Inkpen, 2002; Clarke, 2003, Saunders, 2016). The evidence from the thesis demonstrated two areas where trust resides and manifests in the relationship:

a. The standard norms in the relationship which underpin the B2B relationship that both sides referred to when discussing the positive and negative attitudes of trust in the relationship.

b. The informal norms (socio-cognitive stuff) (Fleetwood, 2018) in the relationship which, unless recognised and handled proactively, have the potential to undermine trust and the achievement of the organisational intention through an effect that was not quite what both sides had planned.

Table 31 details the elements and antecedents by organisational level identified in the research relating to where trust resides.

Table 31 – Where trust resides by level		
Level	Standard Norms	Informal Norms
Organisational level	Relationship charter Relationship vision Contract Joint business plan Relationship performance framework	Social gathering ahead of formal review meetings Managing previous crisis (war stories) Previous relationship history of intentional trusts ability to deliver mutual value

Operations/team/group	Project charter
	
	Relationship deliverables
	
	Joint business plans
	
	Contact plans
	
	Communication, i.e.
	
	    Presentations
	
	    'E' mails
	
	    Meeting minutes
	
	    Actions plans
	
	    Web-ex
		Socialising outside of the relationship:(curry nights)
		
		Ad hoc team working
		
		Response time, attitude and passion to support requests
		
		Weekly catch ups
		
		Relational history from past joint working

Interpersonal	Meetings; minutes and action plans	Relational history from past interactions

	Performance reviews/ reports	Response to requests
	Relationship delivery metrics	Reverting to transactional
		Informal network, relying on personal relationships to flex around rigid internal systems and processes.
		Rely on support when the chips are down.

5.9.1. Where trust resides in B2B relational dyads**.**

Building on philosophy, social and structuration theory, and the work of Sztompka, (2016), Saunders (2016) and Fleetwood, (2018) as the foundational insights into where trust resides and the development start point for this thesis findings.

In his most recent work, Sztompka, (2016) explores trust in the moral space; *'the cultural quality of moral bonds provides one additional asset; their long duration. Culture obtains of inertia; it is resistant to change. Once the moral bonds reach a cultural quality they turn in to lasting tradition, reproducing itself and passing from generation to generation'* (Sztompka, 2016, p.16).This has a direct parallel in organisational culture as the moral bonds Sztompka (2016) discusses has a correlation with B2B relational trust and the findings contained in this thesis. Sztompka, argues that through the development of loyalty, opportunities for harmful action is forfeited. Drawing on evidence from this thesis and in a B2B context, it means a reduction in coercive/opportunistic behaviour and a focus on the opportunities the relationship can deliver. ("W*e just basically applied a growth plan to each and we agreed a reward mechanism, so if we got to that £100 million, what we actually agreed with the retailer was that it was an all or nothing in the outset. So, "If you achieve that, we'll pay you X amount of money and improve the margin accordingly*, respondent: (BE.1.1.).

Reciprocity in Szompka's (2016) work translates into B2B relationship investment for medium to long term return (Demonstrating the opportunity. "*I think that'll be a time where we*

say, 'Okay, who wants to come to the table to have a genuine conversation around here's where we see our growth coming from", respondent: *(*P.1.2.), Benefiting from mutual value, "*I think we need to demonstrate commitment and outcomes in the first 12 or 18 months of the new contract and if we achieve that, then I think the seeds are there that would allow it to grow into a real partnership, and potentially a very long-term partnership",* respondent:(A.1.2.2.). Solidarity from Szomptka's (2016) perspective means the allegiance and recognition to the idea of a common good. This transposes in B2B to the relational intention; ("*I took a decision then that because the intention was there, the intentionality of what we were trying to achieve, we still rewarded them and that laid the foundation then for – or a building of trust for year two and year three of the plan",* respondent.(Be.1.1.). Clarity of vision – direction: ("*This was a cohesive story, this is how we're going to take you on your journey to transform you and to support your business transformation, this is what we can do from a digital perspective to enable you to transform and accelerate decommissioning",* respondent: (A.1.1.1) and shared agenda : ("*He wanted that piece of work to be equally as much his piece of work as it was my piece of work",* respondent: (A.1.2.5). Respect is defined by Szompka (2016) as "the mutual recognitions of the achievements of the partners, in the currency of praise, fame, prestige and upward mobility……it means that the respected person has actual, real and not fake achievements" (P.10). In this thesis, that manifests as credibility: ("*So, internally we've got the Customer at Heart programme, and one of the things that we're doing with that is when you add some value to the customer that's, you know, over and above contractual, document it, let them know, get them to agree it and then, you know, we share that internally",* respondent: (A.1.2.4.) ,and knowing your stuff: ("*I think, they train the people superbly. I think they're absolutely dedicated to that professionalism in making sure that their staff are as good as they possibly can be, and they also help us to try and make our staff as good as they possibly can be as well*", respondent : (LR.1.1.). Lastly, Szompka, (2016) argues that justice in the form of received gratification are proportional to the effort put in, however also to the result, in essence, the mutuality of the relationship. This correlates in the thesis to mutual commercial benefit: ("*And I think there's been two things that have changed that, within the last year. A year ago we won a £1/2 million client with this broker, which, obviously, had a real*

positive influence on the size of the account. And also quite exciting to say if we've done that in that short space of time, where can we take it over the next few years as well? a mutually beneficial outcome for both of us"., respondent: (AL.1.1.). It is therefore evident at an organisational level that trust resides in the cultural manifestation through the moral bonds, predicated on organisational intentions from both sides. This means an organisation can be the subject of trust through the actions/behaviours attributable to that organisation This adds, builds on and answers the research challenge set by Currell and Inkpen (2002), as the moral bonds, culture and intentions at organisational level are action and behavioural in conceptualisation.. Trust is therefore attributed to the organisation as an entity (Zand 1972) manifested in:

Reliability of systems and processes: "*Commercial or Trading Support role was internal-facing so it was, "How can I get better systems, develop our people better, have better structures and processes in place to enable our buyers to do a better job in how they deal with other people?*", respondent: (Mo.1.1.),

Actions: "*Delivery tardiness: see the intent, hear the reality – don't see the effect*", respondent: (S.1.1.2)

Behaviours: "I*f you go back to five years ago, and some of it still exists, it's very much supplier bashing mentality, you know, that you were dragged into a room and beaten, you know, and I've been on the receiving end of it*". respondent: (A.1.1.1),

Saunders (2016) argues an interesting, yet controversial point that the board level of an organisation could be so far removed from the actual operational nature of the business as to effectively operate under a different set of workplace realities. This thesis did uncover the different nature of trust at organisation/leadership level, however, not as extreme as to be operating under different workplace realities. It evidenced relational intent (referenced 263 times from 33 sources) ("*And it became very clear very quickly that we shared the same values, we shared the same aspirations, we wanted the same things, and it became easy. What is hard is the rest of the organisation*", respondent (A.1.2.5.) and action/behavioural conceptualisation as

different, providing the trust cue to the operations/group/team and interpersonal levels. Currell and Inkpen (2002) and Saunders (2016) discuss the potential multi-level approach to trust and to look at organisation from the perspective of different groups of people. In this thesis multi-levels of the relational dyad were researched and point to an organisational perspective encompassing leadership/operations level as the interpersonal resides between the two to three actors in the relational dyad. Therefore, this demonstrates trust residing beyond the pure interpersonal one-to-one relationship in the formal norms represented as:

Contracts, process, systems, policies, regulations: ("*Well, you're basically saying,*" *it's a criticism of them, and you then say, "Well, it's – the process is that is your responsibility and I'm pointing it out, it's currently not done," and it might not be done because you're either too busy or you don't have the resources, you don't have the capacity, maybe the stuff that we're handing over to you, you struggle to translate that into what it means*". (Respondent:A.1.2.6). The antecedents represented the intention of the organisation on both internal and across-dyad levels (Fleetwood, 2018) and the structure and agency related to trust at an organisation-to-organisation level. They were organised "on the basis that they structure through the duality of enabling and constraining the agent's thoughts and actions. Manifested in: agreements, ceremonies, customers and are referred to as formal and informal norms, in this context norms they considered as kind of rules" (Fleetwood, 2018, p.50).

This established trust as residing in the social -structural stuff, located in artefacts contained in ***contracts***: "*They're very contract-driven and so a good example of how they dominate is we've gone for a three-year extension and they're looking at the procurement options for above and beyond – what does the organisation need in three years' time from their IT supplier*". Respondent: A.1.1.1.

Systems and processes: "*What I'm working to now is to ensure that we have absolute clarity over whatever A processes are, who the ownership and accountability lies with for each of those steps*". Respondent: S.1.2.4.

Regulations: "*We assumed the relationship would roll along much the same as it has under CSC, that cost relationship didn't happen as A are far more contractual*". Respondent: S.1.2.2.

The socio-cognitive stuff was found in agents' cognitive systems as memories. This manifested as reported below:

Ways of working: "*We agreed a mechanism of targeting individual categories, so six businesses, probably about 18 different categories within those six businesses and we agreed that we'd manage it at a board level and review it on a regular basis with individual trading directors on a category level, individual sales directors and category directors within our business, and then quarterly review it at an exec level*". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Knowing your stuff: "*Now, never before have been allowed anywhere near business people, and the energy in the room was palpable. You could hear – you could feel the recognition for what we were trying to do and we'd brought in partners like Siemens and SAP into the room as well, and the positive energy and momentum that was gathered through that one day, it was just, it was really – it was a pleasure to be part of*". Respondent: A.1.1.1.

Intuitive Feeling: "*You just know. In some instances it's very difficult to put, but you just know that that's the way it is*". Respondent: P.1.1.1.

Emotional versus Rational: "*I don't ever play by the rules. I – no, that's wrong. I do play by the rules but I know when to stretch them a bit*". Respondent: A.1.1.1. (Fleetwood, 2018). This addressed where, and in what form, trust resided. It also addressed an area that Saunders (2016) discussed and confirmed about trust residing in the collective memories of all individuals as an organisation. This supported and builds on the work of Clark (2010), who argued that trust passed into a collective entity over a period of time, living beyond the individual. It also allowed individuals to hold a differing view of the rules and norms providing differing levels of trust. This thesis confirmed that dissonance occurred when some of the agent's memories remained stuck in relational history, while others embrace the new reality, in effect operationalising the organisation-level intent into organisational reality and trust building.

5.10. Relationship intention to relational mutual benefit in the development of B2B relational trust

Trust in the B2B relationships researched in this thesis, was found to have a dynamic potential to move positively or negatively. This thesis found the supporting themes (Chapter 4, section 4.3.10.1) had the potential to develop trust when operating in consonance and to reduce trust when dissonance occurred in the supporting theme interaction. The model is demonstrated in Figure 11.
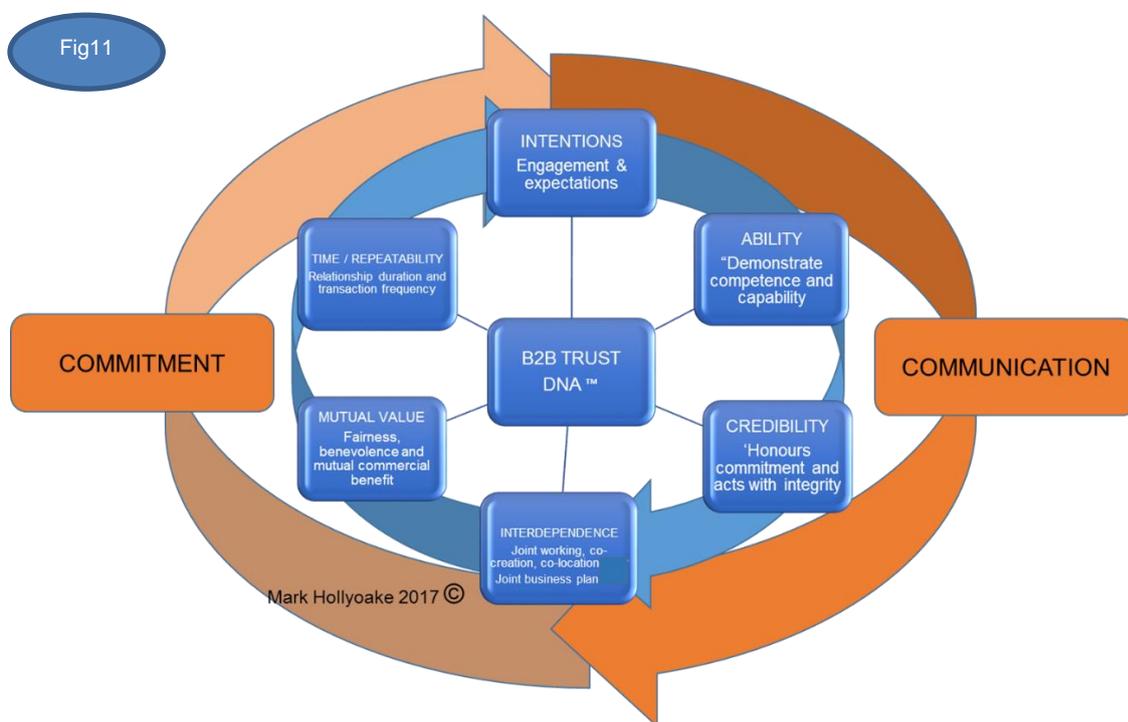
Figure 11: B2B Trust DNA ™ model

When the supporting themes operate in consonance they have the potential to develop a virtuous circle of trust and mutual rational benefit is created as a result. The opposite occurs if the supporting themes are misapplied and dissonance develops in the relationship. This section focuses on each element of the model.

5.10.1. Supporting theme 1 – relational intention and B2B relational trust development

Relational intent can be strategic in nature, developed and led at organisational level:

Relational intent often resides at the leadership/organisational level:

> Customer: **"W**e *started talking to them about, "What else can we do? Can you do Chinese food as well?" because we had got our Chinese food supplied elsewhere but, "What can you do in Chinese food?" And then we started talking to them about other types of meals that we could get into".* Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.

> Supplier: **"**So, we stuck a stake in the ground and said, "Collectively we'll get to £100 million".* Respondent: Be.1.1.

It manifests as an expectation from both sides on what the relationship could/would deliver; however, it remains intangible in nature at this stage as it has yet to be activated. In effect it is intangible trust. The intangible nature of the intention and trust are activated when the relational intent moves to reality through the activation of relational ability and relational credibility at operational level,

> Customer: "*They got all of us together as a group and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up*". Respondent: P.1.2.3.

> Supplier: *"It was just bringing the right people to the table at the right time, you know? I remember it very clearly".* Respondent: M.1.2.2.

and interpersonal levels,

> Customer: *"But yeah, I've always had a very successful relationship with the supply chain and I think, as I say, rapport, respect, a bit of trust, put the effort in, the relationship builds and then you've got that flexibility that you need with each other".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

Supplier: "*Now more close, more face-to-face, having open and honest conversations has started to build that different mind-set of how we're going to work and to a certain extent the trust. They're absolutely driving a dedicated relationship".* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Do both sides have the capability and competency? Will both sides act with integrity and honour their commitments? This move translates the intangible nature of the relationship, intention and trust into tangible trust, and it is at this stage that the relational dyad will start to determine how well the intention is being met (dissonance or consonance) (Nikolova, 2013). This would be through both the rational (cognitive) elements and emotional (affective) elements of coming together to deliver the relational intent (Table 28, Appendix 23).

5.10.1.1. Discussion in relational intention and B2B relational trust development

In this section, the thesis explores the attitude and appetite for risk or level of vulnerability: The attitude to risk and vulnerability is a key element in many scholarly definitions of generalised trust (Mayer et al., 1995; Rosseau et al., 1995). In this instance, the approach to risk within the relationship is an expression of commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Colquitt, Scott and Le Pine, 2007). If you are risk averse and trying to mitigate vulnerability, this attitude can overload the relationship with contractual obligations – in short, you introduce additional costs and barriers to collaboration (Williamson, 1995). This also hampers the potential to co-create and innovate within the relationship (Anderson and Narus, 1990).
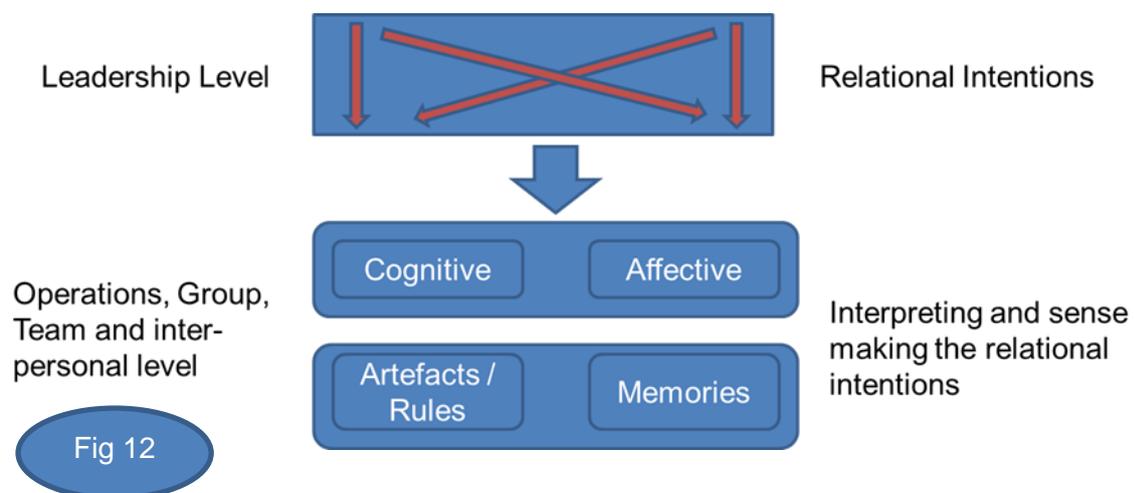
Fig 12

Fig 12: Relational intention led organisational trust development

Organisational trust development therefore takes its lead from the relational intention signalled through the leadership team (Figure 12). These represent the organisation's action and behaviours, between both sides that establish the basis and potential to develop trust. Interpretation at the group, team, operations and interpersonal levels is evinced as cognitive and affective artefacts, rules, policies, processes, systems, ways of working and cognitive and affective memories retained in the relational actors. The retained memories provide the cues as to how to behave and act in the relationship in order to create or dilute trust across the dyad. Lastly, the effect of mutual value creation provides the reinforcing loop for positive trust and relationship development.

In essence: If you are going to invest your time, energy and money, how certain are you it will deliver what you expect? Do you trust the other side to come through with the deal and a mutual value outcome or will it need to be wrapped up in contracts or service level agreements (SLA's)?

 5.10.2. Supporting themes 2 and 3 – relational ability and credibility

The intangible nature of the relational intention and the trust potentiality are activated when the relational intent moves to reality through the activation of relational ability and relational credibility. Do both sides have the capability and competency? Will both sides act with integrity and honour their commitments? This move translates the intangible nature of the relationship, intention and trust into tangible trust. It is at this stage that the relational dyad will start to determine how well the intention is being met (dissonance or consonance), which is seen at organisational level as:

> Customer: *"I think, they train the people superbly. I think they're absolutely dedicated to that professionalism in making sure that their staff are as good as they possibly can be, and they also help us to try and make our staff as good as they possibly can be as well".* Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

Supplier: *"It's about both businesses being fully clear on what the potential is and how you can delight your shoppers and consumers and mutually benefit from it".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Trust development would be through both the rational elements (cognitive) and emotional elements (affective) of coming together to deliver the relational intent.

This stage is often at the operations, team, and interpersonal level as they turn relational intent into relational reality. It is not just a one-off as it represents a continual relational process each time both sides interact, as evinced at operational level:

Customer: *"The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate and worked with the team to develop".* Respondent: S. 1.2.1.

Suppliers:" *"They were the experts. They were the people who knew how to bring the product to market".* Respondent: M.1.2.2.

Interpersonal level:

Customer: *"You know, you've got to respect that you're dealing with somebody who is competent, somebody who knows their subject matter expert".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

Supplier: "*I mean if, you know, X deliver to their customer and we deliver to IX. Well, if we can help X deliver to their customer faster and … get it right first time, surely their customer's going to be better satisfied, X will then get better plaudits within the business".* Respondent: A.1.2.3.

If the relational intention is met through demonstrable ability as evinced above (Tables 29 and 30; Appendices 24 and 25) and credibility at the organisational level, then the relationship moves into consonance:

Customer: *"Extending for three years provides A with the opportunity to recover from the legacy".* Respondent: S.1.1.3.

Supplier: *"There was a real benefit of bringing all the businesses together rather than having one; it built trust and credibility with every retailer".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

Operational Level:

Customer: *"The biggest perspective, you know, they are a global brand that we are comfortable that people will know, and feel comfortable with as an insurer. So if you're telling somebody, "Right, I want to place your business with A," then they're going to be comfortable. That's a name they know, they recognise, and feel comfortable having their business with".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

Supplier: *"It's the best launch they have ever done".* Respondent: M.1.2.2

Interpersonal Level:

Customer: *"The new PM we were given is good at customer management and project recovery, they can put the point across without being confrontational".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

Supplier: *"Well, I'll tell you what to do and you go away and do it". And I'm saying, "Well, no, don't just tell us, let's work together on what the requirement is". We've got a hell of a lot of expertise in the organisation that we can bring in and his first comment was, "Well, will the contract allow that…"* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

These points are further explored in Table 30, Appendix 25.

5.10.2.1. Relational ability and credibility and their role in developing B2B relational trust.

The antecedent of ability is explored, explained and related to the definition posited in this thesis, demonstrating its role in B2B relational trust development. Expectations about another's intentions can include "'technical competent role performance', from those involved within the relationship and systems" (Barber, 1983, p.9). This form of trust has also been referred to as ability (Mayer et al., 1995). Several studies have explored the link between competence/ability trust and performance. This can be seen as having a positive impact on service delivery and performance of the buyer-supplier relationship (Lui and Ngo, 2004; Paul and McDaniel, 2004). An element specific and unique to B2B lies in the understanding of relative ability of both sides of the relationship dyad, to make the relational intent a reality to

impact positively on relationship performance (Lui and Ngo, 2004). Developing positive relationship performance also applies to the suppliers' ability to deliver, consistently and to the standards required. Conversely, the ability of the customer to realise the potential the brand, product and/or service offers in the market, category or sector for relational benefit (Caldwell and Clapham, 2003; Gullett et al., 2009).

In essence: You are seen as the leader in your category or sector. Levering the insights and ability you have justifies your position. Does your customer(s) have the ability to take on board your category, sector insights and recommendations, turning them into mutual commercial benefit? Have they got 'experts' in the organisation who know what you're talking about and see the opportunities making them happen within the organisation, so you see it come to life in your joint performance?

Relational credibility: The credibility your customer has within the market, sector and category is an important factor in realising value for both sides within the relationship (Doney et al., 2007). A lack of credibility could make it more difficult to gain access or at a level that impacts mutual value development. Credibility could be viewed as an antecedent of reputation (Howarth and Moro, 2006). Therefore, a lack of credibility could mean the need for compensatory factors such as proof of concept, demonstrations, and case studies.

In essence: When operating in the category and sector, you both know how it works. Your customer has a track record of performance and delivery in the sector. A good level of shared values and beliefs exists between both sides and, if you both agree to do something, it gets done.

5.10.3. Supporting theme 4 – relational interdependence in B2B relational trust development.

In this section relational interdependence is explored and how it inter-relates with ability and credibility. When ability and credibility come together and effective joint working takes place relational trust develops as evidenced at the three levels (Table 31, Appendix 26):

Organisational:

> Customer: *"Co-developed the strategy for continual improvement".* Respondent: S.1.1.3.

> Supplier: *"Actually sitting down and talking about how we could move things forward even further".* Respondent: Al.1.1.1.

Operational:

> Customer: *"The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate and worked with the team to develop".* Respondent: S.1.2.1.

> Supplier: *"He wanted that piece of work to be equally as much his piece of work as it was my piece of work".* Respondent: A.1.2.5.

Interpersonal:

> Customer: *"I feel as if they operate a 'your pain is our pain".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

> Supplier: *"Neither of us has got a clue what's going on basically, but you know what, we know each other well, we can work this out".* Respondent: M.1.2.1.

When ability and credibility come together and, effective joint working takes place this results in the expected mutual relational benefits, as mentioned above. It is at this point that both sides are likely to do it again. If they do, it brings the relationship into consonance and both sides are motivated to repeat the process. The relationship becomes expansionist in nature and trust builds.

5.10.3.1. Discussion in relational interdependence and the role in developing B2B relational trust

In this section of the thesis, the antecedent of interdependence in the relationship is explored. This includes the way both parties work with each other and the level of reliance that develops (Inkpen, Currall and Steven, 2004). It also addresses the level of dependence of one side on the other in the delivery of the mutual relational benefit (Anderson and Narus, 1990) which is often manifested in joint working, co-creation, co-location, joint business

planning, and shared facilities. In essence, how integrated are both sides at all levels in the delivery of the mutual relational benefits identified at the intention stage? What level of dependence exists (Sheppard and Sherman, 1998) between both sides and what is its effectiveness in delivering the expected and intended mutual benefits?

5.10.4. Supporting theme 5 – relational mutual benefit in B2B relational trust development

At an interpersonal level, both sides are looking for the effect, and whether it is delivering the mutual relational benefits expected and identified at the relational intention stage.

> Customer: *"Proud, yeah. Proud, yeah. Because we were performing as well, we were outperforming other projects around us and we were excelling – now, as it happens, we've hit some issues and now we've sort of – so, we were like well ahead of the project schedule. Well ahead".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

> Supplier: *"We're also going to launch a generic version of S and obviously we want P to be part of that and to be one of our key partners on that product as well".* Respondent: M.1.2.2.

If they are in consonance, then motivation exists to do it again at organisational level;

> Customer: *"We said that we would continue that development and to ensure that we didn't get any rogue buyers who might be taking our overall partnership off-track, because we very much saw them as being a partner of ours; then we'd have this over-arching deal that would sit across all of our business".* Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.

> Supplier: *"Now, it feels like we've switched to a position where we know that we can help each other, and we're adding more value to each other. Still a lot more that we can do, but, in terms of the value piece switching, I don't think it's switched, I think it's enhanced both sides".* Respondent: Al.1.1.1.

and again, at Operational Level:

> Customer: *"They got all of us together as a group and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.

> Supplier: *"Them knowing what we want to be famous for and how we want to work with them and having that communication and exposing them to that I think really does change the way that they think about who we are and what we are and how we do it".* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Over time trust builds as ability, credibility comes together through working together and interdependence develops between both sides, delivering the intended relational mutual benefits (Table 32, Appendix 27).

5.10.4.1. Mutual relational benefit and its role in developing B2B relational trust.

A gap identified within the literature review and posited as a key element of the B2B definition of trust is mutual commercial benefit: The element of time is also missing from previous B2B definitions, yet established as a key antecedent of trust within B2B relationships (Hammervoll and Toften, 2013; Dowell et al., 2015) and interlinked with mutual benefit in a B2B relational context. Continuity in this relational context could be defined as the intention to extend the relationship into the future. Long-term relational orientation has been found to enhance performance (Noordeweir et al., 1990). It could also be viewed as a commitment by both sides to the relationship (Anderson and Weitz, 1989; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Over time, the opportunity to build shared experiences through numerous transactions and joint problem solving/solutions enables relationship development, (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Therefore, time becomes a factor in trust building, if the relationship has been in existence for long, and benefited from continuity of trading over that period (Noordeweir et al., 1990), it is likely to continue. Does the relationship operate across multiple contacts or under the remit of a contract? Have both sides had the chance to work on joint projects/project teams and are the war stories from the relationship used as collective shared experiences? The definition posited in this thesis provides a perspective of "financial outcome and/or value benefit, as these are among the most relevant and often compelling indicators of inter-firm relationship performance" (McEvily and Zaheer, 2006, p.291), with both sides of the relationship investigating how they potentially positively impact on relational outcomes and performance (Palmateir et al., 2007). Furthermore, the equitability or mutual acceptability of the commercial outcome is a key indicator of relationship health and longevity (Anderson and Narus, 1990).In a study of international strategic alliances in China, Lou (2001) found an increase in sales per asset and ROI

through managers' trust in the partner firm and their interaction with relationship risk and interdependence. A study that assessed automakers' trust worthiness of suppliers positively related it to automakers' pre-tax return on assets (Dyer and Chu, 2003). What this study highlighted was a key question that sits at the heart of trust-based B2B relationships in terms of getting your fair share within the relationship (Zaheer, 1995) and whether the relationship appears equitable with mutually acceptable outcomes (Anderson and Narus, 1990).

In essence: When you look at the customer profit and loss (PandL), is the value figure representative of the amount you put in to achieve it? Fang (2008) discussed how higher levels of trust can result in higher levels of investment in the relationship, which also supports thinking from Lewicki and Bunker (1995) and Sheppard and Sherman (1998). Is the relationship commercially balanced when you look at the value the relationship delivers? Who is taking what and does this represent 'fair share'? This does not mean it needs to be 50/50; however, it reflects a share that's good for both sides.

5.10.5. Linking theme 1 relational communication in B2B relational trust development.

In this section the author explores a key finding from this thesis and emergent theory in the terms of the linking theme of relational communication within and between the dyad, at organisational level:

> Customer: "A*re we always clear enough as an organisation in terms of who to engage with so that they can put the right people, structure in place, so engage with us, if you see what I mean*". Respondent: S.1.1.1.

> Supplier: *"In the early phases and the key thing around that was the communication, so bringing people along the journey, talking to them holistically about what we were trying to achieve".* Respondent: Be 1.1.1.

> Operational Level

> Customer: *"Sometimes I think – you know, it's one of these things, everybody's busy, and the easy thing is to fire off an email and not appreciate how that email is being received at the*

other end; and you know, sometimes picking up a phone and having a conversation is so much better than just delivering bad news via an email". Respondent: LR.1.2.

Supplier: *"It is a formal weekly meeting and … and that's minimum. So, we have a number of monthly and quarterly forums as well".* Respondent: A.1.2.2.

The circle of B2B trust development (trust DNA ™) evidenced in this thesis is enabled through two linking themes; relational commitment and relational communication. The way the intention is communicated and interpreted between the levels of the organisation and cross-dyad. The commitment that one side demonstrates to the other and vice versa at each supporting theme point in the model., Lastly, at interpersonal level:

Customer: *"I think you've got to take the time to build the relationship and for me, you've got to put the effort into doing that, you've got to – and that involves face-to-face".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

Supplier: "Think after all the effing and blinding they've given me, generally it's, "Look G, we'll go out and we'll have a beer, it's fine, it's not a personal thing, this is purely business". Respondent: M.1.2.

The type and style of communication was evidenced and identified as a supporting theme related to trust building in the relationship. The antecedent of communicating regularly came from 25 sources and 86 references, with communication style coming from 36 sources and 138 references (Table 33, Appendix 29). The importance of the type of communication was also evidenced and related to trust building in the relationship.

Communicating regularly: 25 sources, 86 references: *"It is a formal weekly meeting and … and that's minimum. So, we have a number of monthly and quarterly forums as well".* Respondent: A.1.2.2.

Communication style; 36 sources, 138 references: *"If I get a call, and E's not happy with something, I know it's something really has gone wrong, or they really need a favour from us".* Respondent: Al.1.2. The face-to-face medium came out strongly as a trust builder and effective communications medium.

Importance of face-to-face; 6 sources, 15 references: "*But now more close, more face-to-face, having open and honest conversations has started to build that different mindset of how we're going to work and to a certain extent the trust*": .Respondent: A.1.2.7.

The overuse of email as a potential source of dissonance and trust dilution

"*Sometimes I think – you know, it's one of these things, everybody's busy, and the easy thing is to fire off an email and not appreciate how that email is being received at the other end; and you know, sometimes picking up a phone and having a conversation is so much better than just delivering bad news via an email*". Respondent: LR.1.2.

Interestingly at interpersonal level, the use of specific language emerged as a way to deflect opportunistic/coercive behaviour, yet maintain the interpersonal level; "nothing personal, but", and "nothing to do with me", were the key statements (sources 10 and 20 references) Reference: *"Think after all the effing and blinding they've given me, generally it's, "Look G, we'll go out and we'll have a beer, it's fine, it's not a personal thing, this is purely business".* Respondent: M.1.2.. These were delivered face-to-face in either formal or informal meeting contexts. Communication between the levels and more precisely the briefing of the organisational level intentions were key in trust activation at organisation/group level and in the interpersonal relationships.

A lack of clarity in the communication of the message: "*Are we always clear enough as an organisation in terms of who to engage with so that they can put the right people, structure in place, so engage with us, if you see what I mean*". Respondent: S.1.1.1.

Lack of passion or lack lustre attitude: "*It's a very interesting mix of talent in there. As I say, I've always felt that people in there have got the knowledge, but I've never felt they've had the application, the desire*". Respondent: P.1.1.1.

This was received by the lower levels as one side not sharing the same commitment to the relational intent ("*some people are absolutely doing the right thing for their position, but it could be*

almost 100% the wrong thing for the Group". Respondent: P.1.1.2).and as the basis for dissonance and/or mistrust to emerge and develop.

5.10.5.1. Relational communication in B2B relational trust development

In this section the author builds on Chapter 4 and section 4.1.10.3 a linking code in the trust DNA model, discussing emergent theory in the terms of communication within and between the dyad. This builds on the work of Saunders' (2016) message clarity and medium (Wilson, Straus and McEvily, 2006; Hill, Bartol, Tesluk and Langa, 2009), communication quality (Stahl et al., 2011), communication of trustworthiness (Kasper-Fuehrer and Ashkanasy, 2001),two-way communication (Van Marrewijk, 2004), positive, smooth communication (Jarvenpaa and Leidner, 1999), transparency in information (Palanski, Kahai and Yammarino,2011), and repeated timely and honest communication (Strong et al., 2001).

This thesis demonstrates the nature of communication in the relationship as a link between dissonance and consonance – conflicting, contradicting, signalling, and messaging. Communication was evidenced as a key antecedent in the triggering of dissonance and/or consonance, through its use or misuse. It also played an important part in reinforcing or confirming the benefits of trust-based action and activities through the feedback loop in the relationship: "*This was a cohesive story, this is how we're going to take you on your journey to transform you and to support your business transformation, this is what we can do from a digital perspective to enable you to transform and accelerate decommissioning*". Respondent: A.1.1.1.

5.10.6. Linking theme 2 – relational commitment in B2B relational trust development

In this thesis the research highlighted the nature of commitment in the relationship as a link between dissonance and consonance in terms of attitude, behaviour, loyalty, passion, and collaborating. This was evidenced at organisational level:

> Customer: "*I think delivering on … delivering on a … I'm kind of looking for another word, to promise really, because you don't want to necessarily make promises but … a commitment, a commitment*". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

Supplier: *"Oh, awestruck by what we were talking about, and since then we have been working with them to establish an innovation suite which is to drive out the thought leadership. It's … the fact that it has technology in it is not its purpose. It is not a showcase for technology. It is using technology in a clean white space to stimulate thought changes, innovation, different ways of looking at processes, that sort of thing, so we're trying to get that set up and the fact that's been welcomed – so, there's lots of … there's lots of indicators of change going on".* Respondent: A.1.1.1

The research demonstrated commitment to the relationship, multi-level contact, regular contact and joint working as antecedents of commitment enabling the development of relational trust through the support of the: intention, ability, credibility, interdependence and the development of mutual benefit at operational level:

Customer: *"We're in this together, I'm physically here with you, we're sharing the ownership of this thing and we're proactively looking to help us do what we need to do", so that journey to go from that point A to point B and still going through it and it has been a long – it's been pretty much the full seven or eight months that I've been here for now journey that I've been doing it now".* Respondent: S.1.2.4.

Supplier: "*They're absolutely driving a dedicated relationship".* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Commitment was evidenced as a key antecedent in the triggering of dissonance and/or consonance, through its use or misuse. At interpersonal level this is evidenced as:

Customer: *"Demonstrates that putting that time and effort in and having that open and – and committing to that open and honest relationship paid off".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.

Supplier: *"We really do want to work with them; be patient because it's – that's the only bad part about being a global business, it's like trying to turn a big ship, it just takes a long time to…"* Respondent: M.1.2.1

Commitment also played an important part in reinforcing or confirming the benefits of trust-based action and activities through the feed-back loop in the relationship (Table 34, Appendix 29).

5.10.6.1. Relational commitment and B2B relational trust development.

This section builds on Chapter 4, section 4.3.10.3 which identified relational commitment as a linking code and discussed the emergent theory in relation to commitment within and between the dyads.

Commitment has featured and been posited as a central element of trust development (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, Dowell, 2013, Ashnai, 2014) arguing it was a key enabler to the development of a trust-based relationship. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) seminal work on commitment-based theory argues that commitment within the relationship is a key indicator of relational trust. The presence of commitment within an attitude, behaviour, outcome framework highlights the requirement for commitment within the relationship for trust to develop (Ashnai, 2014; Dowell, 2015;).

However, this is counter to the findings in this thesis, where the evidence demonstrates the nature of commitment as an antecedent of trust (Cook and Emerson, 1978, Dwyer et al., 1987 Anderson and Weitz, 1992; Jap and Ganesan, 2000). Commitment operates in the relationship as a mediator and links between: intention, ability, credibility level of interdependence and mutual relational benefit that the positive commitment from both sides produces. Dowell (2015) uncovered commitment as a meditating variable between cognitive elements of trust and relationship performance. Commitment has been cited previously as a mediating variable with trust (Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Aurier and N'Goala, 2010). As also seen with communication, commitment was evidenced as a key antecedent in the triggering of dissonance and/or creation of consonance. Dissonance was triggered when one side of the dyad demonstrated less commitment to the realisation of the intention than the other, and consonance was created when both sides demonstrated commitment to the relational intent. Commitment was also seen as a relational cue when the operations and interpersonal levels were looking for affirmation/reassurance that the organisational levels really wanted them to

turn the intention into reality. The type of commitment was also evidenced and related to trust building in the relationship:

Collaborating; 22 sources, 102 references: Collaboration was seen as a demonstration of commitment between both sides of the relational dyad. *"The Cyber project was a good example of collaborative working; we worked as a project team, with a S team, A service team and the security team"*. Respondent: A.1.2.1.

Commitment to the relationship; 33 sources and 184 references: Evidenced as a pivotal element to triggering dissonance or creating consonance. The evidence demonstrated the potential affective nature of commitment when linked with attitude (positive). "W*e really do want to work with them*". Respondent: M.1.2.1, or attitude (negative), "*There is a plan to commit to improvements, the acid test – will it taste, look differently.*" Respondent: S.1.1.3.

In this context, this thesis demonstrates a strong link between commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) and attitude in relation to triggering dissonance or creating consonance. At the operations/team and interpersonal levels, joint working was evidenced as a manifestation and key indicator of relational commitment or even the health of relational commitment – "A*ctually sitting down and talking about how could we move things forward even further*". Respondent: AI.1.1.1. The absence of commitment between both sides would render joint working ineffectual.

5.11. Lack of trust symmetry between dyads

In this section, the thesis evinces the disparity between both sides of the relational dyad and at what level it occurs. Scholars in B2B trust (Das and Teng, 1998; Jefferies and Reed, 2000) have assumed a level of relational symmetry in their research methodology with both sides trusting at the same level and intent. Table 32 presents the frequency of antecedents that both sides indicate is not working at each level. This thesis supports a lack of symmetrical trust in a B2B relationship; however, it posits that at these levels the relationship

was not being disadvantaged as all the dyads researched were longstanding and delivering acceptable mutual benefits to both sides.

Table 32: What is not working from the perspectives of both sides

Drawn on a sample base of the top 99 codes ranked by the number of references.			
Relationship Context	Organisational level	Ops/team	Interpersonal
What customers say is not working	26	24	16
What suppliers say is not working	23	33	30
C to S	+3	-9	-14
S to C	-3	+9	+14

Fig 13: Trust asymmetry
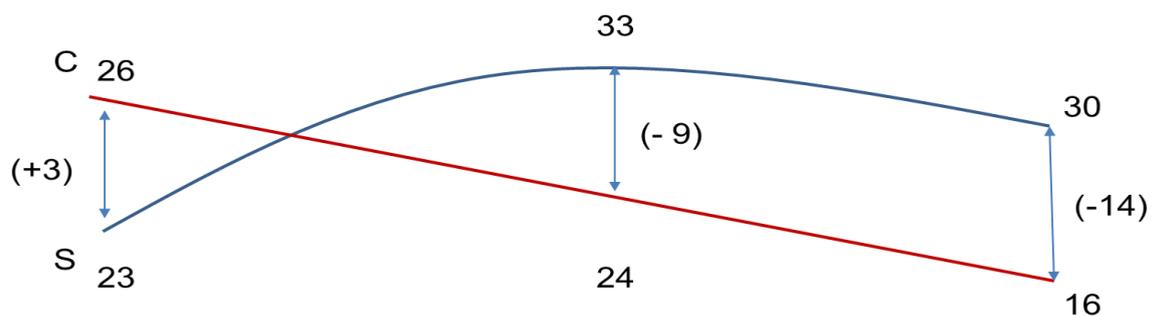
A notable difference is apparent at the interpersonal and inter-operations/team level between both sides of the relationship dyad (Figure 13). In both instances, this is being driven by the supplier side of the dyad. The customer side of the dyad at interpersonal level is concerned with the functional ability and capability of the relationship to deliver at this level, whereas the supplier side points to the supplier intentions and cognitive dissonance as significantly impacting on trust and relationship development.

If suppliers need to improve the relationship at an interpersonal level, they need to clarify their intentions to the relationship and avoid conflicting needs, messages and thinking. Suppliers need to ensure they know that their stuff, system, process and the basics are delivered reliably and consistently. The relationship difference at the group/operations/team

level is driven from the supplier side, as the reality of relationship intention is evident through the commercial rough and tumble, competing pressures, posturing, and behaving opportunistically. On the other side of the dyad, at this level, customers highlight cognitive dissonance in messaging and the style of communication. This appears to track across from the organisational level and could be linked to the intention, not reflecting reality when communicated from leadership to operations level. If suppliers need to improve the relationship at the inter-group level, they need to translate the relationship intentions into clear ways of working across both sides that reflect the intentions moving into reality. This supported and built on the work of Janowicz and Noorderhaven (2006), who proposed the conceptualisation of trust at organisational level as a behavioural action-orientated intent. This intent needed clear and consistent messaging delivered in a style that both sides agree on as the optimum – i.e. face-to-face, formal review, informal review, email, text, and WhatsApp group. Hammervol and Toften (2013) discussed the importance and requirement for strategic level information exchange in communication, while Johnson and Grayson (2005) argued the experience could alter depending on frequency of contact developed through interactions in the relationship. This thesis demonstrates the importance of effective communication and contact between both sides and at all levels.

The opposite is evident at an organisational level as suppliers indicate the areas not working for them manifested as the personal, emotional and affective nature of the relationship. Affective dissonance focused around short- termism and commitment (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Customers point to a higher number of antecedents, diluting trust and holding back relationship development. The contradictory nature of messaging and style of the communication delivery was a cause of both cognitive and affective dissonance. This thesis also highlighted how conflict and vested interest are managed in the relationship. Clark (2010) posited that trust as a state exists beyond the collective of individuals, that it has robustness to live beyond relational ups and downs, and that new starters appear to become embedded in the organisations, culture, signs, stories and rituals

If customers need to improve the relationship at the organisational level, a more cognitive and multi-level approach needs to be put in place to avert a negative spiral (Ghosal and Moran, 1996; Elangoval and Shapiro, 1998). This goes hand in hand with suppliers' need for clear consistent messaging around a vision and intention for the relationship, which needs to be communicated in a style and format that is agreed by and works for both sides. This necessitates establishing a mechanism that manages and deals with conflict in the relationship, ensuring both sides are aligned around the delivery of the overall relationship goals, vision and objective, which negates the impact and manages the tactical commercial relational rough and tumble

At the organisational level, a positive influence on the relationship at both supplier and customer levels is reflected through a framework of relational intent around positive mutual change and demonstration of the opportunity the relationship should positively deliver. This was confirmed in the research partner feedback session(s) where the organisation level relationship reflected a need for clarity of vision/direction and a signalling of relationship intentions, which is commensurate with the B2B trust definition stated in this thesis – i.e.. the intention to make oneself vulnerable (Currall and Judge, 2005) on the expectation of mutual benefit (Nikolova et al., 2015) over time (Anderson and Weitz,, 1990); in effect, the signalling of relationship intent and demonstration of the opportunity. These could be seen as signals from each side that it is okay to take the risk and make oneself vulnerable due to the level of commitment and mutual benefit of the offer, making that leap of faith (Mollering, 2002).

At the organisational level, between customer – supplier/supplier – customer is an intentional conceptualisation, activated and actioned as it moves from intention to reality; moving from intentional trust to tangible trust as an action conceptualisation in either affective or cognitive form. This highlights the dynamic nature of trust as it moves from being an intention into a reality or active trust (Giddens, 1994), triggered through antecedents that make it manifest in the relationship. Up until that time, it remains in stasis in purely intentional form or as intangible trust.

The intentions established at organisational level translate into actions, activated in both sides of the dyad at all levels. Structural organisation theory provides the method to turn intentional trust into actual trust through formal rule and norms laid down through artefacts and informal norms through the embedded memories in organisational agents (Fleetwood, 2018). This stance also links with Clark's (2010) thinking that trust passes into a collective entity over a period of time, and lives beyond the collective of the individuals. It also goes hand in hand with resource-based theory, providing ability, credibility and interdependence as the method to build trust through the activation of the relational intention into relational reality.

5.12. Trust across levels and between the B2B relational dyad

This thesis spanned all levels of the organisation and between the dyad – i.e. organisation level on both sides, team/operations level on both sides and interpersonal on both sides. The analysis of the findings highlighted trust building through cognitive and affective antecedents, but found a change of emphasis at the organisational, inter-operations and interpersonal levels.

5.12.1. Organisational level

These are explored by level with Table 33 focused from the organisational level-perspective. This starts initially between the dyad, then internally organisation to operations/team, and then on the organisational level between dyad to group/team level. An internal perspective from organisation to interpersonal level is included and lastly the organisational level between dyad to interpersonal level is provided.

Table 33: Organisational Level			
Level	Context	Antecedents	Key Drivers
Organisation	Org between Org	Clarity, vision, credibility, trust framework, intention and signalling relational intent	1. Commitment to the relational intent

	Context	Antecedents	Key Drivers
	Org to Ops ↕	Discipline, clarity of message, level of commitment, consistency, benefits	2. Strength of the relational intent, is the mutual benefit worth the actualisation?
	Org between Ops ↔	Clarity, credibility, confidence, environment/culture to collaborate, benefits	3. Clarity of the communication
	Org to Interpersonal ↕	Commitment, environment / culture to collaborate	4. Internal discipline to make it happen at the lower levels.
	Org between interpersonal ↔	Benevolence, vision, communication and demonstrated commitment	

5.12.2. Inter-team/operations level

The second table, Table 34, shares the team, operations level perspective. This starts initially , between the dyad at this level, then internally group/team to organisation, and then on the operations/team level between dyad to organisational level. An internal perspective from interpersonal to operations/team level is included and lastly from interpersonal level between dyad to operations team level is provided.

Table 34: Team, operations level			
Level	Context	Antecedents	Key Drivers
Team / operations level	Operations - Between - Operations ↔	Shared understanding and belief in the opportunity that working together could deliver.	1. Working together / co-creation. 2. Ability (the caps and comps) to

		Each side knowing their stuff through demonstrated capability and competency. Joint commitment, passion and attitude - emotional buy-in. Training and development to improve relational ability.	actualise the organisational level intent. 3. Credibility of both sides in relation to integrity, reliability, doing the basics right, supported by reliable systems and processes.
	Ops to Org	Feedback loop on actualising the relationship intention and development areas; cultural alignment, values, attitudes and behaviours for co-creation and joint working.	
	Ops between Org	The ability and credibility to work together effectively. Realisation of mutual commercial benefit. Reluctance to use coercive or opportunistic behaviour.	
	Ops - to– Interpersonal	Demonstrated interdependent working. Reinforced relationship commitment.	
	Ops between interpersonal	Benevolence Joint working / interdependence. Reinforcing relationship commitment.	

5.12.3. Interpersonal level

The third table, Table 35, focuses from the interpersonal level perspective. This starts from between the dyad, then moves internally from interpersonal to operations/team and then on to interpersonal to organisational level. A perspective from between the dyad is provided from the interpersonal to operations/team level and lastly from interpersonal level to organisational level is provided.

Table 35: Interpersonal level			
Level	Context	Antecedents	Key Drivers
Interpersonal	Interpersonal – between-interpersonal ⟷	Ability in terms of caps and comps to deliver on the relational intent. Knowledge. Joint working and interdependence, both formally and informally (unofficial network) to deliver mutual commercial benefit. Developing a relational enhancing way of working.	1. Shared commitment, positive attitude to relational joint working. 2. Both sides know their stuff. 3. Seeing the relational effect from the trust intention, acting as a reinforcing loop that its working. 4. Lack of opportunistic/ coercive behaviour or transactional attitude. 5. Reduction in politics and egos in play.
	Interpersonal – to – Ops ↕	Actions and joint working that develop increased co-operation and joint working. Reinforcing loop that relationship trust is working. The effect is as expected from the intention and group/team attempts at making it a reality.	

	Interpersonal – to – organisation	Demonstrated joint working delivering mutual commercial benefit. Reinforcing organisation level trust and relationship intentions.	
	Interpersonal between Ops	Openness to work collaboratively in pursuit of mutual commercial benefit.	
	Interpersonal between org	Demonstration of emotional investment in the relationship. Joint working resulting in the delivery of mutual commercial benefit.	

5.12.4. Discussion into how the organisation demonstrates and activates trust in the relationship between both sides and its strategic importance in trust development.

As established in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.3.) research has been attempted into trust at organisational level and context (Zaheer, 1995; Ashnai, 2014). In all instances, extant research attempted to extrapolate single point contact into an organisational context, as argued by Blois (1999), this has the propensity to bias the findings as one person's view does not an organisational construct make! Conceptually there are few attempts to tackle the question of what it means for an organisation to trust (Janowicz and Noorderhaven, 2006b). Currall and Inkpen (2002) posited that in essence it is the *gestalt* or the sum of all the individual parts that transcends the people element. However, this thesis conducted research at the appropriate level to that being analysed avoiding misspecification. The paucity of research and misspecification and misapplication of literature in this area means

this thesis offers a unique perspective in identifying B2B relationships as strategically driven from an organisational level through:

Signalling relationship intentions, commitment levels, establishing the mutual commercial benefit, relational vision/charter and a relationship framework to realise the relationship objectives, which provided both sides with the strategic framework in which to work and trust developed. It also allowed the identification of actions, attitudes, behaviours and activities counter to relationship development which could be construed as opportunistic and/or coercive behaviours requiring corrective action before their effect became detrimental to overall relational trust. Leadership and team/group attitude and strength of commitment were key in overcoming interpersonal reticence when working jointly to activate the relational intent.

Moving beyond a one-off transactional occurrence and into a repeatable process starts to develop a virtuous cycle. The joint plan/agreement was a key metric and an enforcement that trust-based activities were delivering the mutual benefits expected. Meetings between both sides at all levels and positive relationship performance were found to be the reinforcing loop. If this proves efficient and effective then the loop became virtuous; intention (+ability + credibility) + interdependence + time = mutual benefit, the mutual benefit matched intentions, which unlocked greater investment into ability, credibility and interdependence, delivering greater levels of mutual benefit.

This provides the insights and addresses the answer to question 5 posed in this thesis which is developed and covered in the next section. The question is restated and then the answers that draws on literature and the thesis findings are developed.

5.13. Answering research question 5

5. What is the effect of these factors on B2B customer performance?

In answering research question 5, what is evident is that relationship expansion is driven through both cognitive and affective trust activity operating in consonance between both sides, and has the potential to deliver the expected mutual value benefits.

As the relationship expands, more actors from either side become involved and the level of interaction increases, depth of the relationship and penetration of both sides increases. Systems, processes and ways of working evolve, along with joint planning and enhanced interdependence. With the introduction of more actors (Dowell, 2015) and cognitive stuff comes an inherent risk; the cognitive stuff (Fleetwood, 2018) reduced inter-relational flexibility, stifling mutual value creation, leading to benefit stagnation or reduction. Additional actors may not share the same level of emotional attachment and cultural understanding as the incumbents, resulting in dissonance of action in the relationship, and the introduction of a reductionist element. It is therefore important to ensure the relationship remains agile, through constantly seeking co-creation/co-development and ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness. It is also essential that new actors to the relationship are inducted into the culture, the organisation's 'back story' and share the same values to allow the development of consonance congruence. In answering research question 5, the manifestation/dilution of mutual value benefit at interpersonal level was also a key theme. Both sides of the relationship were looking for the effect from their interaction. Due to the staff nature of the roles, it was unlikely they would receive direct mutual value benefit in terms of remuneration. Instead they cited feeling valued, doing the right thing, relationship commitment, positive attitudes, joint working, and shared KPIs, as the mutual value emanating from the effect of positive trust relationships.

Mutual benefit is a key driver of B2B trust between organisations, at all levels and, when applied as evinced in the research, it becomes a flywheel of relationship and trust development. Unfortunately, the opposite was also evinced, when one side of the leadership team/organisation lacked clarity and unity when messaging the intentions of the relationship, failing to effectively translate the intention into the reality expected. This introduced an early

stage of dissonance and mistrust causing the flywheel to operate in the opposite direction, undermining and diluting relational trust. The burden was found to fall on the operations/team level to make sense of the organisational-level intention and translate it into trust building. On the other hand if it failed to match the level of commitment, attitude or passion, this left the relationship unbalanced and ultimately impacted detrimentally on the mutual benefit outcomes the relationship delivered.

Another key element/antecedent at organisation level which demonstrated strategic intent, took the form of organisation-level joint initiatives either formal and/or informal, and whole relationship events, i.e. joint workshops, joint business/relationship planning, innovation days. Once again, these were evidenced in a formal state and informally in the relationships and provided the opportunity for the development of affective trust in the early stages as Akrout (2017) discussed in the formative stage of cognitive trust, as developed by Dowell (2015). When the relationship was established the environment was created for relationship expansion in depth and breadth, induction of new actors and validation of the relationship effectiveness and re-enforced trust through familiarity.

5.14. Chapter summary

In this chapter, the findings were discussed in relation to the literature (Chapter 2) and the thesis research questions. B2B trust demonstrates and evidences trust as an asymmetrical construct between relational dyads, however not to the detriment of the overall relational performance. The mediating role of cognitive and affective trust has a reductionist effect on the relationship when in dissonance and an expansionist effect when in consonance.

The findings evidenced cognitive and affective dissonance occurring when the relational intentions failed and continued to fail to meet the expectations, engagement and experience both sides set out in their relational intention with each other. This thesis also found and evidenced cognitive and affective consonance occurring when the relational intention

consistently matched /exceeded the expectation engagement and experience levels both sides set out in their relational intentions.

Evidence in this thesis demonstrates the dynamic potential to move trust positively or negatively in a B2B relationship. The supporting themes of relational intention, relational ability, relational credibility, relational interdependence and mutual relational benefit were identified as having the potential to develop trust when operating in consonance and reduce trust when in dissonance. The supporting themes in the model operate through the linking themes of relational communication and relational commitment. The way the intention is communicated and interpreted between levels of the organisation and cross-dyad operates as the conduit and link to trust building, allowing the intention to be effectively communicated and briefed both inside the organisation and across dyad between levels (Doney and Cannon, 1999). When undertaken effectively, it can ameliorate the relationship, developing consonance, confirmation and reinforcement to trust building. The relational commitment demonstrated at each supporting theme in the model also has the capacity to build trust if positive and consistent in nature and at all levels.

Trust was also evidenced as a different construct at each level of the organisational dyad, with organisational-level trust being principally driven through relational intent. Team/operations level driven by the realisation of the relational intent through the ability, credibility and way they work together. At interpersonal level, trust is driven through the way both sides work together, and the effect of mutual relational benefit the relationship generates.

This thesis spanned all levels of the organisational dyad organisation/leadership level, team/operations level and interpersonal level. A change of emphasis occurred at each of the levels researched, which has a bearing on trust development and/or dilution in the relational dyad as seen in Table 36.

Table 36: Trust across levels and key drivers

Level	Key Drivers	Relational trust building
Organisation /leadership	1. Commitment to the relational intent. 2. Strength of the relational intent, is the mutual benefit worth the actualisation? 3. Clarity of the communication. 4. Internal discipline to make it happen at the lower levels.	Intention
Team/ Operations	1. Working together/co-creation 2. Ability (the caps and comps) to actualise the org level intent. 3. Credibility of both sides in relation to integrity, reliability, doing the basics right, supported by reliable systems and processes.	Reality = (ability + credibility + interdependence)
Interpersonal	1. Shared commitment, positive attitude to relational joint working. 2. Both sides know their stuff. 3. Seeing the relational effect from the trust intention, acting as a reinforcing loop that its working. 4. Lack of opportunistic/coercive behaviour or transactional attitude. 5. Reduction in politics and egos in play.	Effect = time + mutual relational benefit

This thesis demonstrates and evidences B2B relationships as being strategically driven from an organisational level through relationship intention and the establishment of mutual relational benefits. A virtuous loop is evident and identified: Intention (+ability +credibility +interdependence/time = mutual relational benefit. If this proves efficient and effective, then it has the potential to operate as a virtuous flywheel of relational trust development. Conversely, if the equation is out of balance, it has the potential to introduce dissonance and mistrust into the relationship. The thesis evidenced the need for both communication and commitment as supporting links enabling the model to operate effectively, which could be viewed in the context of the oil for the smooth running of the trust model.

Lastly in the chapter, the thesis addresses where trust resides in B2B relationships between both sides and levels. At organisational level, trust resides in the moral bonds that have achieved a cultural quality, which in turn become lasting tradition (Sztompka, 2016). Furthermore, this thesis evidenced formal and informal norms; in this context, the norms are considered as kind of rules, socio-structural stuff, located in artefacts and socio-cognitive stuff found in the relationship agents/actors cognitive systems as memories.

Chapter 6: Conclusions, theoretical contributions and implications

This chapter discusses the conclusions, the theoretical, methodological, practical research contributions and managerial/academic implications of this thesis. The limitations of the research are explained with suggestions for future research bringing the study to a close.

This thesis demonstrated trust can be strategic in nature at organisational level between both sides of the relational dyad and has proactive application potential through the deployment of a B2B trust model.

This thesis is predicated on a qualitative research process that used and applied the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). At every stage of the research process, respondents (through semi-structured interviews, feed-back workshops and focus group) were asked to focus on:

 a) Their specific relationship – i.e. Interpersonal – interpersonal or inter-organisation – inter-organisation dependent on the level of the respondent.

b) Their relationship with the other levels. Critical incidents were sought and evidenced through relationship examples to bring to life and validate the incident explored.

6.1. Conclusion

This thesis set out to address and question the strategic nature of trust in B2B relationships at an organisational level. Is trust dynamic and could it be proactively applied for mutual relational benefit? Using qualitative research in semi-structured interviews at multiple levels of the relationship dyad, this thesis established that trust resides at an organisational level as an action/intention conceptualisation. It is strategic and intangible in nature, until activated, as both sides then turn the intention into a reality.

The boundary spanners from both sides play a significant role in the mitigation of vulnerability as intention moves from intangible trust to tangible trust, enabling more of a small step rather than a leap of faith (Mollering,, 2002). Trust activation from an intangible to tangible state is based on the ability, credibility of both sides of the relational dyad to realise the relational intent and how they work together to deliver the mutual relational benefit. If virtuous, repetition is highly likely and time enters the equation/model.

Trust between both sides, and at all levels, was subject to the expansionist effects of cognitive/affective antecedents on trust development. If in consonance, the antecedents have a positive, expansionist effect on relationship trust development and mutual benefit creation. If in dissonance, they have a negative and reductionist effect. This reductionist/expansionist propensity of the model is enabled/disabled through the levels of commitment and communication between both sides, internally and across levels of the organisational relationship dyad. This thesis adds to academic research methodology through the unique approach to B2B trust research and multi-level application.

This thesis provides the framework and model for trust development in B2B relationships. It demonstrates the strategic nature of trust at the organisational level and its intentional trust conceptualisation. B2B trust deterioration occurs when affective and cognitive antecedents are in dissonance in the relationship. B2B trust development occurs when affective and cognitive trust antecedents are in consonance in the relationship. They have a reductionist or expansionist effect on trust building between both sides depending on how they are applied. This supports the dynamic nature of trust and the ability to apply them proactively to develop trust and the B2B relationship.

In the next sections the theoretical, methodological and practical contributions are considered. First, the theoretical contributions are considered.

6.2. Theoretical contributions

This thesis provides evidence of a theoretical contribution through the distinction between the levels of the relationship on the horizontal and vertical axes:

a) Inter-organisation being concerned and focused on relational intentions. These can be strategic in nature, i.e. based on mutual commercial benefits over the medium- to long-term, or tactical in nature, i.e. process/system improvement.

b) Inter-operations/team, concerned with interpreting the intentions, validating them and making them happen. The previous findings from Saunders (2016) around interpretation/misinterpretation and sense-making of a leadership so out of touch with workplace realities, as to constitute a separate entity, were not supported through this study. However, the findings point to this as a potential key area for dissonance to occur.

c) At an interpersonal level, seeing the effect either negatively or positively of intention validation and mutual commercial benefit flowing through the relationship.

The evidence demonstrates the development of a reinforcing virtuous circle of trust if the intentions at leadership level can be enacted, and the beneficial effects experienced in the relationship between both sides, motivating the dyad to continue the experience. This demonstrated that inter-organisational-level trust has the potential to positively affect inter-team and interpersonal trust building. Both interpersonal and inter-team trust positively effect joint working, ways of working, actions, behaviours and mutual value creation.

Conflicting *attitudes, actions, messaging, behaviours* and *a lack of commitment* cause dissonance between both sides on a cognitive and affective trust level. However, they also have the ability to build the relationship, if consonance is evidenced through *consistency, ability, reliability, expertise, commitment, passion, positive attitudes* and *joint business planning.*

Overall, this thesis supports and evinces the role of trust as a key concept for relationship development or dilution, so influencing B2B relationships at multiple levels is supported. This confirms the findings of previous studies, which show the effect of trust on relationship outcomes, i.e. strategic information sharing, cooperative behaviour and relationship benefit (Hammervol and Toften, 2013; Ashnai, 2014; Dowell, 2015), and develops further by showing the role of dissonance (cognitive/affective) and consonance (cognitive/affective) on relationship trust development and its mediating affect.

The strategic nature of relationship development through the relationship intention is evident as a vision and mutual value opportunity. This leads to positive mutual change outcomes that motivate the relationship at an organisational level. The role of commitment in this instance has a secondary/supporting role aligned with mutual value, relational intent and understanding each other. The role of commitment in relational development and trust building was found to be counter to the work of Morgan and Hunt (1994) Palmatier et al. (2007a), and Ashnai (2014) who found commitment as having a central role in determining relationship outcomes. This is an organisation level-specific finding from this study that adds to and builds on organisational-level trust-building.

The distinctions between cognitive and affective trust were confirmed, in line with previous studies, (Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017) by showing and discussing their different impacts, roles and outcome constructs in B2B relationships. However, this thesis goes further by exploring cognitive and affective trust as the foundational elements of B2B relationships and how it affects performance negatively through dissonance and positively through consonance. This develops and contributes to B2B relationship theory in trust development, through the demonstration of the expansionist effect of affective and cognitive antecedents when applied in consonance and the reductionist effect of affective and cognitive antecedents when applied in dissonance.

The relationship establishes intention as the initial B2B relational trust trigger at

organisational level. It operates between both sides, setting out intangible trust expectation

'vulnerability' and the engagement required to turn the intangible trust into tangible trust. This

is the first stage in the model presented in Figure 14. Relational intentions can be attributed

to a new relationship or to the continuation of an established relationship.
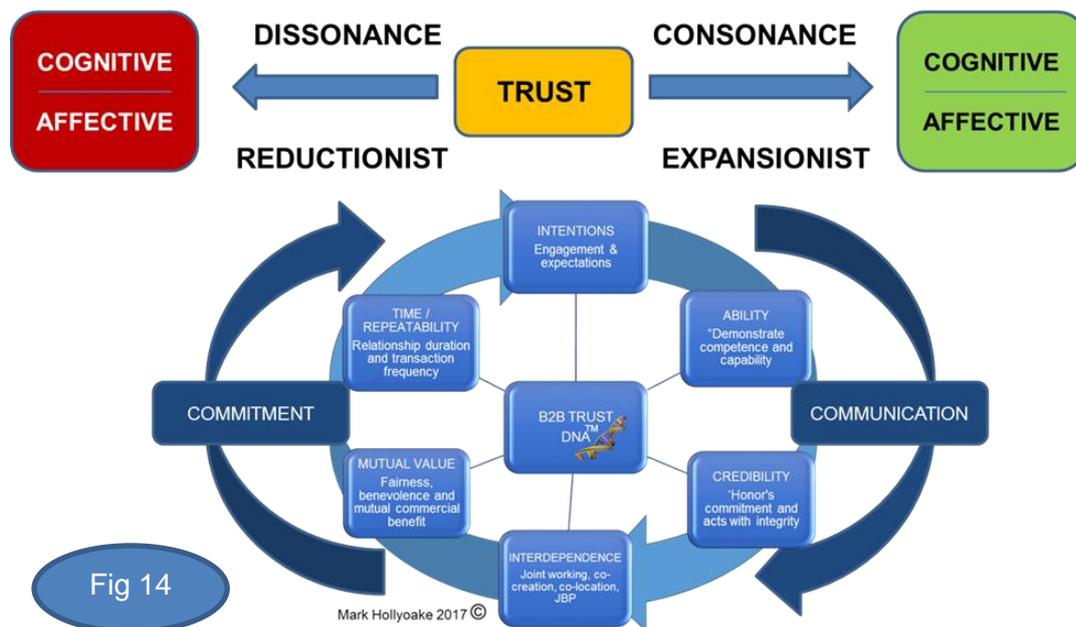
Fig 14: Expansionist effect through consonance or reductionist effect through dissonance

When operating in an interlinked nature, The six elements depicted in Figure 14 contain the

potential to positively build relational trust through an expansionist effect or to negatively

dilute trust through a reductionist approach. Ashnai (2014) posited a relationship framework

of attitude-behaviour-outcome in business relationships. This thesis goes further in

establishing intention – ability/credibility – interdependence and mutual benefit as a relational

framework for business relationships. Furthermore, the role of relational intention has a

strategic mediating effect at inter-organisational level. Anderson and Weitz (1992) contended

that a business partner may undertake an action that demonstrates good faith and binds the

channel members to the relationship, affecting the perception of the other party. In this case, Anderson and Weitz (1992) discussed the actualisation of a relational intention that moves from intangible to tangible (Mollering, 2002). However, in a later work, reference is made to relationship intention: "*Businesses send signals that they intend to work together with channel members over the long run*". "*These signals help build the level of mutual trust in a dyad*" (Anderson and Weitz, 1989, pp. 314,315). Relational intention was also found to have a mediating effect at the inter-group level in framing the joint working, co-creation and ways of working to turn the intention into reality. At interpersonal level, the relationship intention operates on an affective level reflecting the attitude, commitment and expected effect (mutual value) from interpersonal interaction between the dyad.

The thesis demonstrates that inter-organisation, inter-team/operations and interpersonal trust are three distinct constructs through showing how they interact between the dyad at the three levels. Doney and Cannon (1997), Fang et al. (2008), Jiang et al. (2011) and Ashnai (2014) have also researched and explored multi-level trust, providing evidence for discriminant validity between inter-organisational and interpersonal aspects of trust. This thesis establishes the third level of inter-team/operations.

At the initial stage of the relationship, the intention enacted has the potential to create dissonance if the intention enacted falls short of the expectations established at the intangible stage. The intention shortfall could be on a cognitive or affective level or a combination of both (Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017). This thesis established the potential for dissonance occurring at the team/operations and interpersonal level between the dyad, as one side of the dyad failed to live up to the intentions established at organisational strategic level.

The methodological contributions from this thesis are considered in the next section.

6.3. Methodological contributions

This thesis confirmed the research methodology, approaches, and their relevance suggested in the literature, regarding implementing procedures that improve focus groups, critical incident techniques and the transition into second-cycle coding (Flanagan, 1954; Harwood et al., 2014; Salander, 2016). The thesis makes a methodological contribution to B2B research through the use of three methods in triangulation and the development of a bridging process enabling the transition from first-cycle to second-cycle coding and informing the thematic analysis.

In this thesis an interrelation – inter-dyad approach to B2B research is developed that links, the B2B definition posited from the first cycle and bridging process that ameliorates the move into second cycle and theory development. The thematic analysis described in Chapter 4 identified the key themes that came together in relation to trust building between dyads and at multi levels.

The paucity of trust research at B2B organisational level makes linkage to previous studies difficult. Where it does exist, the methodology is prone to misspecification – i.e. Ashnai (2014) discussed the role of relational outcomes which supported the previous study of Fang (2008), yet used single point informants at interpersonal level, and extrapolated the findings to organisational level. The evidence in this thesis points to relational intent and mutual value opportunity identification as the precursors to relational investments or relational commitment. The link of mutual value opportunity to relational investments follows business logic making a methodological contribution as a business case is often required prior to making an investment. This in turn questions the level of attribution (Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014) for the findings as relationship-specific investments are highlighted as being present at the inter-team and interpersonal levels.

The bridging process (Appendices 19, 19.1 and 19.2) validated the findings through interactive research partner workshops. In these sessions, the findings were presented to both sides of the relational dyad and used for relationship development action planning. This approach forms an addition to qualitative B2B trust research methodology, where the method deployed is the critical incident technique through semi-structured interviews. Using the research, partner feedback workshop provides a vital link and step in the process from first-cycle to second-cycle stages, as this can be a difficult transitioning stage in the qualitative research process, with little structure or process for trust researchers (Cresswell, 2013; Salander, 2016; Saunders, 2016). The study at the second-cycle stage built on the bridging process to explore and develop the emergent theory of dissonance and consonance, influenced through both cognitive and affective trust triggers, as indicated and contained in Appendices 13 and 16, providing the detail for the bridging process outputs contained in Appendix 20.

Previously, scholars have attempted to understand and conceptualise inter-organisational and interpersonal aspects of trust (Blois, 1999; Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014). It has been particularly emphasised in the literature that research into trust in a B2B context between two parties is prone to misspecification and extrapolation of a single point of reference (Nooteboom et al., 1997; Rao and Schmidt, 1998; Currell and Inkpen, 2002; Ashnai, 2014; Graebner, Lumineau and Kamal, 2018, in press). Furthermore, the emphasis has been on attempting to identify the antecedents of trust building and/or its dilution (Mayer and Davis, 1995; Zaheer at al., 1998; Mollering, 2002; Ashnai, 2014; Dowell, 2015; Akrout, 2017;). Through the use of multi-level research across both sides of the relationship dyad and multiple research partners, this thesis addresses these gaps in B2B trust research methodology. It also contributes an understanding of how trust can be proactively developed (intention, ability, credibility, interdependence, mutual value benefit), the roles of cognitive and affective trust, and where these reside at organisation, group/team and interpersonal levels.

Therefore, this thesis extends our understanding of different aspects of trust by applying a research methodology that negates misspecification, making a methodological contribution to B2B research through the use of three methods in triangulation. Furthermore, the qualitative research approach is enhanced through the introduction of a bridging process between first- and second-cycle coding, independently validating, informing and contributing to theory development. This adds to the limited number of studies that have attempted to do so (Zaheer et al., 1998; Currell and Inkpen, 2002; Fang, 2008; Ashnai, 2014; Dowell, 2015; Nikolova, 2015; Stevens et al., 2015; Saunders, 2016; Akrout,, 2017).

6.4. Managerial Implications

This thesis makes a practical contribution to the body of literature and theory in B2B trust between two organisations in a relational context in the following areas:

1. It differentiates from previous studies investigating the importance of commitment in the development of trust in business to business organisational relationships (Morgan and Hunt ,1994; Mouzaz et al.2007; Ashnai 2014). As this thesis contributes to an understanding through highlighting the importance of relationship intentions, as opposed to commitment at an organisational level, it builds on intentionality in the trust building process (Doney & Cannon 1997) as the strategic mediating effect cross dyad through the relationship intentions both sides have towards the relationship. Therefore, managers need to be clear about the relational intentions they set in terms of customer or supplier expectations and the organisation's ability to meet them. Managers need to ensure relationship measures reflect the true role of commitment in trust development. This has implications on the use of net promoter score (NPS) and customer relationship quality (CRQ) in B2B relational contexts. Additionally, the thesis highlights both commitment and communication as important linking antecedents of B2B relational trust at operations/team and interpersonal level, as intention moves from intangible to tangible action between both sides of the relationship. This offers managers the potential to track and measure implementation at these levels through the

commitment and communication being undertaken between the dyad and within the organisations.

2. Social exchange theory assumes that the role of social interactions and interpersonal relationships are critical in exchanges such as business relationships, (Blau 1964; Emerson 1981). Both social and structural characteristics are considered as influential factors when examining business relationships, (Wilson 1995; Blois 1999; Ashnai 2014). This thesis confirms the proposition made by social exchange theory that emotions and feelings play a role in business relationships, which involve social exchanges (Thibaut and Kelley 1959; Ashnai 2014) as was evidenced in the role of affective trust expansionist/reductionist antecedents between both sides of the relational dyad. Relationship consonance occurring through cognitive, affective antecedents and/or combination has an expansionist effect on trust development. In this context, managers/leaders need to match resources for the optimum effect in the early relationship effective stage. Care needs to be taken that the relationship doesn't get stuck at this stage and smoothly transitions into the cognitive stage. Careful selection of the boundary spanners and commensurate development is required in order to effectively manage this transition. The resource based view, highlights implementation strategies that enable firms to gain competitive advantages, accessing and managing resources productively, and profitably (Wernerflet 1984; Barney 1986; Ashnai 2014). This thesis contributes to this perspective by developing the theory of dissonance and consonance that incorporates two different groups of characteristics affective/emotional & cognitive/rational. Which have a reductionist and/or expansionist effect on B2B relational trust development between both sides of a relational dyad, operating as a supporting link. It is therefore vital that managers/leaders regularly and objectively survey the relationship. Doing so, would determine the affective/cognitive balance and nature of trust development, enabling corrective action to be taken if required.

3. The relationship boundary spanners have a mitigating effect on the movement from relational intent (intangible) to relational action (tangible), reducing vulnerability and leap of

faith, which supports the earlier work of Naslund (2012 p.23), suggesting that: *"interpretation and expectation are largely based on cognition, while the leap of faith relies more on the affective aspects"*. The thesis uncovered the role of the boundary spanners and affective trust as having a positive impact on the move from intangible trust as organisational intention towards the activation and into tangible trust. An additional role of relationship trust developer needs to be considered for the boundary spanners and closely related relationship stakeholders. As they take on the responsibility for risk mitigation through relationship trust development. This would require systematic development of capability and competency in this relationship development for the boundary spanners and connected stakeholders. In essence, holding the hand of one side of the relational dyad as they make the step (rather than the leap of faith) (Mollering 2002) mitigate the risk and ameliorating the vulnerability.

4. The thesis identified trust residing at organisational level manifested through moral bonds (cultural), action and behavioural conceptualisation. Trust has been argued to pass into the collective entity over time, (Clark 2010) and is seen to live in a state beyond the collective individuals, confirming and supporting (Fleetwood 2018) conceptual structuration theory. It also posits an answer to the academic conundrum of where does trust reside in an organisation, which in turn contributes to social exchange theory (Szomptka P 2016) and supports the conceptualisation of an organisation's actions as a characteristic of trust (Stevens et al 2015). It also confirms the strategic importance of the leadership team (Legood et al 2016), in shaping organisational trust through the development and signalling of relationship intentions. The implications are significant for leaders as they have responsibility not only for the strategic intent, but also the development of the organisations moral bonds. These emanate from the organisational leadership's actions and behaviours, passing into organisational culture over time. At an operations, team and interpersonal level, the contribution builds on structuration theory. The implications for leaders in the creation of organisational trust, is ensuring the relational intent manifests in the artefacts at operations/interpersonal level, this is communicated effectively and then checked for

understanding, relevance and appropriateness at inter-operations and interpersonal levels. The ways of working, actions and behaviours are briefed effectively, trained, embedded and rewarded. Undertaken until they become organisational muscle memory, overwriting the historic ways of working. This thesis demonstrates trust residing at these levels as a manifestation of artefacts (relationship charter/mission/vision) standard norms (contracts, processes, systems and ways of working) and cognitive social stuff as the effective memories of the relationship agents.

5. The practical contribution to theory and literature of business to business customer management, marketing, partnerships, sales and purchasing is made by introducing a model of business to business relationship trust building. The model contributes by developing an: - intention-ability-credibility-interdependence-mutual value outcomes – time framework that works across all organisational levels and between dyads. In essence, this provides managers/leaders with a B2B relational trust development blueprint, the 'how to guide'. This starts and emanates from organisational level as strategic intent, turned into relationship reality at operations level and then into the effect seen through the creation of mutual value. It builds on the definition of B2B trust, and sheds light on how both sides of the relationship can work proactively to use trust to develop the relationship. It provides a sense check as the framework, if applied from an opportunistic/coercive behavioural perspective, has the potential to develop dissonance and a reductionist effect on the relationship. The application of the trust DNA model has a positive impact on trust development in a B2B relationship and can be proactively planned and applied. Additionally, the thesis bridges two perspectives into the study of business relationships (i.e. social exchange theory and resource-based view), as they both play a role in shaping this model/framework, particularly due to the emphasis on outcome(s) from the relationship in the form of mutual value outcomes and the role of ability and credibility antecedent resource allocation to achieve them. The application of the trust DNA model and its reductionist /expansionist potential impact on the relationship contributes

to the understanding of trust as being dynamic in nature through constant updating and/or recalibration of trust between both sides (Stevens et al 2017).

6.5. Research limitations

This section considers the limitations of the research uses these as a foundation to provide recommendations for further B2B trust research contained in section 6.6. This concludes with section 6.7 which covers the researcher's personal values in the form of a statement.

The research was conducted with organisations all of which operated the relationship researched in the United Kingdom. This means the findings of this thesis may not have validity in other regions or geographies. The regional variations in terms of business ethics and business culture would need to be considered.

The organisations researched all operate across a number of distribution channels, with the internet and online business being a key element. However, the online channel was not explicitly researched and therefore may need further consideration and/or exploration.

This thesis and research explored B2B trust across dyads and at three different organisational levels: inter-organisational, inter-team/operations and interpersonal. In total 37 people were interviewed. When matching respondents to organisational level, the research cohort at staff/interpersonal level would have benefited from additional respondents to balance with the organisational and inter-team/operations/managerial level.

The qualitative research reached saturation before the total number of respondents (37) were interviewed; however, it could have benefited from more respondents from the fast moving goods and financial sectors research partners. When broken down between the supplier/customer sides of the dyad, the number of respondents became somewhat diluted, and could have benefited from additional respondents from both sides.

The research focused on the private sector and one quasi-private/public sector organisation and thus may be subject to issues of generalisability beyond the sectors researched (i.e.

third sector, industrials/auto/manufacturing).This thesis is predicated on the research gathered from organisations representing the fast-moving consumer goods, grocery retail, healthcare distribution and retailing, pharmaceutical, utilities and outsourced services sectors. As such, it may not reflect the relational and trust dynamics in the third sector, public sector and other business sectors not covered in this thesis.

6.6. Areas for further research

1. Scholars focusing on researching B2B trust using a cross dyad by organisational-level methodology would benefit from building on this thesis to explore additional areas for further research: Extending the research to encompass other regions could offer a comparative analysis on the differences other regions offer when researching B2B relational trust. Exploring a specific market or country may also add richness to the current research and build on the findings.

2. The development of the research into the third sector would provide an interesting build on the findings. It could also allow comparative analysis by level and cross dyad. The public sector also holds significant opportunity as significant relationships exist between the public sector and business. Research into this sector could provide further insight into mutual value benefit from a not-for-profit relational perspective.

3. An interesting area for potential further research exploration, which surfaced during the initial research phase, is the use of trust in a zero sum game scenario. This could in some way be linked to calculative trust (Williamson, 1975; Lewicki and Bunker, 1985); however, it actually appears to go beyond this as it relates to relationships where failure is too great to contemplate. In this instance, the trust is based on an unknown or known fear of what the consequences could be if one side cannot trust the other.

6.7. Statement of personal values

The introduction of a qualitative methods approach that incorporates an interpretive and inductive element brings into play the researcher's actual values as they aim to draw out the insights within the analysis. To ensure the research is not overly influenced through the lens of the researcher, any findings, conclusion, recommendations and theories need to be made within the knowledge of the researcher's value sets they bring to the study represented as personal values of social equality and equitability, when supported through the mutuality of any upsides or downsides they may bring. These are grounded within a northern European culture and socialistic framework. My approach to relationship development is founded on: trust, interdependence and the sharing of the benefits from that relationship. I hold no particular religious beliefs. However, I have a foundation and upbringing in Wesleyan Reformism.

The Appendix and References to the thesis submitted to the University of Southampton in the Faculty of Business, Law & Art.

2019

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The Trust Dividend: The strategic implications of trust building in B2B client relationships and the way towards enhancing them to create mutual economic value.

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REFERENCES AND APPENDICES

Contents

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Appendix 1: The position between B2B and B2C

Table 2: **The position between B2B and B2C**		
Element	B2B	B2C
Rapport	Strong in relationship building and developing personal connections with customers.	Tends to be transactional, re-active and a one size fits all proposition.
Influencers	B2B Customer Management (CM) teams recognise the vital importance of engaging with the networks of stakeholders and influencers within their customers.	Many B2C companies still struggle to incorporate social structures and networks into their data hierarchies (even obvious groupings, such as households) and to recognise 'networked promoters' within their customer base.
Product Expertise	B2B often has technical specialists such as sales engineers, product specialists, technical support, etc. These people are integral to the sales process and who REALLY know their product, service or solution.	This is increasingly rare within B2C, where product specialists are more commonly deployed in after sales or after service situations. Exceptions to this can still be found within certain electrical goods, computer durables and suppliers that differentiate through the expertise of their staff. Consumers are often shielded or screened by generalist enquiry staff.
Resourcing	B2B can be seen to be better at directing its resources to high value customers through key account management teams.	A B2C 'one size fits all' approach is not uncommon within proposition and targeting.
Contract / Relationship Recovery	When a B2B company gets feedback of dissatisfaction or poor relationship quality, there is a time horizon to recover the relationship before the contract if re-tendered or agreements renewed.	'At risk' information is often fragmented and therefore deployed poorly in B2C because of silos in the organisation or because feedback is derived from anonymous research, preventing personal response.
Speed	B2B relationships often operate within a Service Level Agreements (SLA) framework or contract. These are often behind the expectation of customer side staff, who are used to much	B2C is increasingly 'instant' and real time. Corporate agility, speed of delivery, responsiveness, and listening are high on the agenda.

	quicker and better service in their personal lives (24/7 contact, SMS alerts, online chat, etc.)	
Empowerment	Most B2B companies lag behind B2C in managing permission and channel / media preferences and in recognising the importance on non-owned media (e.g. user forums, social media) and channels (e.g. aggregators	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is becoming CMR (customer managed relationships) in B2C
Social Engagement	While mass social media may not be pertinent to B2B, this does not mean it can be ignored. B2B needs to appreciate the importance of engaging in the media that customers use. These are increasingly social e.g. Linkedin, industry blogs, slide share, user forums.	Mass engagement is used by consumer brands through Facebook and Twitter. Contact centres often have an on-line assisted department, specifically managing real time social media interaction.
Social Influence	Companies could consider deeper engagement with CoIs, (e.g Linkedin groups) that either directly use or endorse their products. Asking questions and listening to customer answers is as important as giving answers to customer questions	The concept of 'communities of interest' (CoI) is well established within B2C.
Social Listening	An uncommon area for B2B, however a key area, using the techniques to track what is being said about the industry, market, sector and indeed their customers. This can be shared within account meetings with them, further deepening levels of trust and interdependence.	Increasingly a common feature within contact centres, customer service and assisted through more and more software tools. Social sentiment is now available in real time through a number of solutions and forms a metric for on-line assisted staff.
Source: Hollyoake & Lavers (2015) p.16-17		

Appendix 2: First cycle codes, definitions (167) & referencing frequency

	Code	Definition	Refs
1	**Acting Adversarial**	Where one side operates the relationship from a re-active, SLA and contractual perspective. Dispute, disagreement and conflict are the norm with high levels of protracted negotiations. High levels of dis-trust creep into the relationship as each side try and second best the other.	20
2	**Acting on first impressions**	The initial impression a person or organisation can create that encourages you to trust them for the get go!	16
3	**Adapting successfully**	On an inter-personal level, understanding yourself sufficiently (self-aware) to successfully adapt to the other person.	25
4	**Affiliating**	Where one or both organisations have an affiliation with a buying group, trade body, etc. This affiliation adds credibility to the organisation, through the prestige of belonging, access to a network, knowledge, expertise, information or buying/selling clout.	7
5	**Agility**	The ability and capability in the relationship to approach change in a rapid, agile and flexible way.	5
6	**Agreeing joint KPI's**	Developing a joint measurement framework for the relationship. SMART objectives are agreed as the development and reward framework and review framework established that monitors progress.	23
7	**Aligning the relationship**	Where all departments, divisions and key stakeholders are aligned. They understand what we are trying to do and the benefits that flow from its achievement.	47
8	**Annoyed**	The actions, attitudes and behaviours from one side of the dyad, dilute the potential for the relationship top deliver the mutual benefits identified.	7
9	**Averting Destruction**	Joint working, actions, attitudes and behaviours come together to solve a problem. This averts the problem and cements trust through the common goal of overcoming adversity.	3
10	**Balancing the Commercials**	Where the demands of the market & competition force tactical actions or activities that could be negative to the relationship and its ability to deliver mutual benefit.	95
11	**Behaving Coercively**	Actions, attitudes and behaviours that lever the position within the relationship for beneficial gain of one side over the other. The relationship is too big to walk away from, so accommodation is sought, and trust potentially eroded,	29
12	**Behaving Opportunistically**	Activities by either party that create the environment, thought, attitude or emotion of opportunism.	35

13	**Benefitting from Mutual Value**	The mutual value benefit outcome from a trust-based relationship.	219
14	**Be spoking Systems**	Working collaboratively to develop systems & processes that need the needs of both sides. They may be unique to a relationship and not replicable elsewhere. This demonstrates commitment and builds barriers to exit.	17
15	**Bringing People & Functions together**	Developing the relationship between both sides requires different actors and functions. As the portfolio develops and/or changes the dynamics of the relationship and number of actor's changes. They come together to work against common goals or relationship objectives	113
16	**Building Multi Layers**	The differing layers within the relationship between the two parties. This may be linked to the layers Sheppard and Sherman (1995) and Lewicki, R (1998)	136
17	**Building Trust**	Activities in the relationship designed to build trust between both parties either inter-personally or inter organisationally.	49
18	**Celebrating Success**	When joint working results in a positive outcome for both sides. Recognition of the joint efforts through celebration and congratulation of the success.	20
19	**Changing Outcomes**	The ability of both parties to maintain the level of the relationship irrespective of changes within the short to medium term dynamic of the relationship. The ability to flex and elasticity of trust to stretch accordingly.	136
20	**Clarity of Vision - Direction**	The organisation is clear where it wants to go and what that looks like. Articulates the vision and direction of travel to the customer in a relational context	184
21	**Co-Creating**	Where both sides are involved to creatively develop solutions to issues, challenges or opportunities.	44
22	**Collaborating**	Working together pro-actively and positively in the relationship.	102
23	**Co-Locating**	When an employee from one side of the relational dyad occupies a position or physical presence in the in the other. One party has a physical presence in the other party	29
24	**Commercial 'Rough Tumble'**	The arena where the buying team try and gain commercial advantage from the sales team. Often in transactional, short term form.	48
25	**Committing to the relationship**	Demonstrating commitment to the relationship through investment, share of business, intent, attitudes, behaviours, resources, etc.	184
26	**Communicating Internally**	Undertaking regular internal communication on the relationships achievements, issues, challenges and actions required.	37
27	**Communicating Regularly**	The exchange of information between both sides either verbally, digitally or written on a regular and timely basis. Ensures one side doesn't think the other is holding back	86

		information or hiding something.	
28	**Communicating style**	The way communication is undertaken within the relationship, the mediums used and the style of communication	138
29	**Competing Pressures**	Where the competition provide pressure on the relationship. Developing a competitive environment that can undermine it through the commercials, supply and service.	39
30	**Conflicting Actions**	When one side of the relationship agrees to do something that's mutually beneficial to both sides. Then proceeds to do something that favours their side over the other, without explanation or prior agreement.	83
31	**Conflicting Attitudes**	The attitude demonstrated to the relationship during the intention stage isn't matched through the reality and effect of the experience coming through from implementation level.	100
32	**Conflicting Behaviours**	Where the behaviours of the people are counter to the spirit of the relationship.	104
33	**Conflicting Needs**	The needs of the different elements within the relationship are mis-matched and in actual conflict with each other	46
34	**Consistency**	Deliver to the same expectations and standards time and again	58
35	**Reliability**	Doing what you say to the standard expected	27
36	**Contacting regularly**	The use of different mediums to develop and sustain a frequency of contact that's desirable to both parties.	129
37	**Contracting Trust**	The various uses of contracts in relation to trust, trust building and capturing relationship expectations. How contracts are used to mitigate risk.	35
38	**Contradicting**	This relates to dissonance between the levels. When the organisation indicates one thing, yet at inter-personal levels something else is going on.	116
39	**Conflicting Messages**	The intention communicated by the organisation is different from the reality of the experience. The effect of the experience causes dissonance between intention, reality and the ultimate effect undermining trust building.	165
40	**Creating a positive environment to change**	Avoiding relational inertia through the creation of an environment that encourages positive change. This can be in the form of co-creating, challenging the status quo, trying new things and doing things differently.	84
41	**Creating Credibility**	The reputation of the organisation and/or individual within the market, sector, specialism to be able to develop mutual value from the interaction and relationship.	112
42	**Creating Mistrust**	Actions, attitudes and behaviours undertaken that create mis trust or dis trust within the relationship. This can be between both parties or within one or other of the parties.	91
43	**Dealing with Conflict - Vested**	How the overall org to org leadership manage inter-personal or inter-group-division variance from the common goals and	80

	interests	mutual objectives. Prevention of coercion within the relationship at these levels.	
44	**Dealing with People I like**	Demonstrating an affective relationship, based on liking the people on an inter-personal level and being able to get on with them	12
45	**Defining Values**	The organisational or corporate values, mission and or vision. It's intentions towards being trusted or building a trust-based relationship / environment.	43
46	**Common Set of Values**	The values that exist within the relationship that one would find on both sides of the dyad	29
47	**integrity**	The values, qualities of being honest and having strong moral principles	46
48	**Organisational Culture**	the ideas, customs, attitudes, ways of working and social behaviour of an organisation	36
49	**Deflecting language to maintain personal trust**	Words used within business conversations to deflect from the personal onto the organisational. Aiming to maintain personal trust within the relationship, while delivering the bitter pill,	20
50	**degrees of transparency**	The level of openness between both sides at all levels, a willingness to share sensitive information and the level both sides are prepared to go to.	75
51	**Demonstrating the opportunity**	A critical incident within the relationship that demonstrates the art of the possible, through greater trust and collaboration in the relationship	169
52	**Destroying Value**	The outcomes from actions between both sides lead to an erosion of trust, however also to the benefits the combined relationship develop and produce for both sides.	26
53	**determined the targets**	The establishment of objectives and expectations for the relationship in terms of targets, set, agreed and monitored by both sides at all levels of the relational dyad	4
54	**Developing indispensability**	Working towards a level of interdependence where both parties are intertwined around mutual value development.	60
55	**Signalling Relationship Intentions**	Providing clarity on relational intention and intentions. How these are manifested and developed within the relationship to build trust.	263
56	**Developing organisational values**	Organisations working on developing trust as part of their organisational values. The elements they are considering and developing.	64
57	**Developing People**	Developing capability and competency within the people to develop relationships that build trust.	25
58	**Developing Products**	Working together in the relationship to develop new products or re-energize old products. Taking a collaborative approach to co-creating new opportunities	39
59	**Differing Levels**	Where trust is not in symmetry between both sides, one side	123

		has greater dependence or a level of trusting than the other.	
60	**Differing Stakeholders**	Managing different stakeholders within the relationship. This offers issues and challenges around the type of stakeholder, needs, attitudes and nature of the relationships.	115
61	**Doing the Right Thing**	Without controls or direction, the action taken is in the interest of the relationship and / or customer	54
62	**Earning Trust**	The intentions of an organisation, team or individual to build trust within the opposing party.	34
63	**Elasticity of Personal Trust**	The boundaries that personal trust can be stretched within a relationship before it snaps. This comes from both sides; the amount one party is prepared to put up with before trust is lots or dilutes.	5
64	**Emotional vs Rational-Cognitive**	Where the relationship operates on an emotional level based on personal relationships vs a more rational, cognitive and business based platform.	23
65	**Empowering Internal Stakeholders**	Supporting internal stakeholders within the relationship. Not undermining them or subverting them by going over their heads. Letting them claim the success and rewards from relationship development.	108
66	**Empowering the decision & relationship**	The sales person or customer manager is empowered by the organisation. They could weigh up the situation, sell and negotiate an outcome.	159
67	**Enforcing Trust**	Where the alternative option is mutually assured destruction or complete business failure. Both parties must trust each other as the consequences on both sides are equally as bad.	7
68	**Eroding Trust**	Behaviours, attitudes and actions that make the other party wary about their vulnerability within the relationship. Leads to actions, attitudes and behaviours to mitigate any perceived risk.	34
69	**Escalating issues & challenges**	When issues & challenges occur and the relationship the buyer to seller is unable to resolve. The buyer or seller escalate up the organisation to different levels as they pursue a resolution.	37
70	**Establishing Relationship boundary markers**	Where actions and or activities from one side or the other have the potential to negatively unbalance the relationship. These actions and or activities are 'called-out' and noted as potential relationship disruptors.	41
71	**Exchanging Knowledge**	Where both sides of the relationship share data, information and knowledge. This is used for mutual commercial benefit and insight development.	46
72	**Failing to keep promises**	When one side agrees to deliver or provide something that the other side is expecting or depending upon and it doesn't happen.	9
73	**Feeling let down or taken**	When one side of the dyad, undertake a course of action that isn't in the best interests of the other side.	47

	advantage of.		
74	**Feeling Valued**	Where one player is larger than the other, yet demonstrates the others value through, inclusion, listening and asking.	17
75	**Flexibility to react**	The ability and speed to react to customer demands, irrespective of the outcome.	86
76	**Flexing Contact levels**	Reacting to customer requests and or demands for information, decisions, answers, etc. Ability within the organisation for different levels to handle the customer irrespective of function and org level.	27
77	**Follow through on Promises**	Ensuring what is promised is what is delivered. Checking that experience met expectations.	50
78	**Gesturing Goodwill & Benevolence**	Actions are undertaken in the relationship that provide one side with the benefit of the doubt over the other. One side foregoes a position of value in pursuit of the greater good of the relationship.	33
79	**Getting the basics right**	Both sides delivering the basic requirements, the hygiene factors, on time, right, every time.	14
80	**Getting the basics wrong**	Where the supplier is unable to consistently and reliably undertake the relationship basics of; deliver in time on full, deliver to forecast, fulfil orders accurately, invoice correctly, price correctly, etc.	30
81	**Getting too close**	The relationship becomes too close and the value between both sides is eroded through stakeholder over familiarity.	6
82	**Having an exchange of truth**	Both parties are open, honest and direct in their communication	37
83	**Historic Actions**	Where negative or positive actions, activities have occurred previously in the relationship. This can be the current incumbents or from previous incidents with other players,	37
84	**Historical Personal Relationships**	Personal level relationships built up over several years through working and transacting business together.	75
85	**how they deliver that message**	The method and style messages are delivered between the relationship. This can have positive connotations, where messages are delivered in an open, honest and non-coercive way. They also have a negative connotation, when messages are delivered in a way that creates doubt, uncertainty or coercion into the relationship.	23
86	**Importance of Face to Face**	The requirement to meet the other party(s) on a personal face to face basis to get agreement or action required.	15
87	**Improving Customer Satisfaction**	The use of trust building activities has a direct impact and bearing on stakeholder / customer satisfaction.	13
88	**Increasing Engagement**	Actions, activities and intentions lead to increased levels of engagement between both sides. This may manifest itself in	37

		joint working, co-location, etc	
89	**Innovating**	Developing and building relationships that work together to innovate and create new value for the relationship.	24
90	**intellectually challenging**	When the relationship complexity or issue(s) requiring attention appear beyond the ability and capability of the other side to resolve.	4
91	**Internal Ambassador**	Having someone in the organisation that presents the views and interests of the other party. Is able to discuss and debate the others view point within internal meetings. Often referred to as the voice of the customer	9
92	**Intuitive Feeling**	When it is difficult to put into words or describe the feeling that something just isn't right.	6
93	**Investing**	Investment into the relationship to maintain and develop it	36
94	**Joint Business Planning**	Both sides of the relationship focus on a common goal, mission, vision for the relationship. A joint plan is developed aimed at mutually achieving the vision/mission. This is often linked to a mutual commercial benefit for the relationship emanating from the plan achievement.	41
95	**Joint Working**	Where two or more parties work together on a project, problem, opportunity and / or challenge for mutual commercial benefit. Both sides commit resources, IP and time into working together, the outcome is seen from both sides as 1+1=3	182
96	**Jointly Recruiting Resources**	Where both sides of the relationship are involved in the recruitment process for resources that will come in and work on or in the relationship.	2
97	**Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia**	The relationship and actors have become too comfortable or unable to unlock additional relational value. The relationship is in danger of stagnating or declining due to complacency, over dependence and or excessive trust	13
98	**Knowing who's responsible**	Having a clear understanding of who owns the customer from both sides of the dyad. Who has ultimate responsibility for managing the relationship and who contacts whom. How they manage the relationship and the level of decision making authority.	70
99	**Knowing your stuff**	Having the demonstrable capability and competency within the role & task one is undertaking	81
100	**Lacking Agility**	The relationship is unable to flex and adapt to the changes required within the relationship to realise the anticipated and-or planned mutual value	30
101	**Lacking Desire and passion**	Apparent lack of motivation or desire within the relationship to go the extra mile to make it happen.	11
102	**Leading & Modelling Trust Building**	Leadership and leadership actions, behaviours/ traits that build trust between both sides, developing the relationship. Leaders acting as role models for trust building. Through their actions demonstrating the required behaviours, attitudes and	57

		ways of working to build a trust-based culture and the benefits that accrues.	
103	**makes doing business easy**	The people contacts, processes, systems, decision making, and ways of working contribute to and facilitate an easy approach to doing business.	19
104	**makes it friendly and fun**	The attitude, behaviours and actions of the key contacts & stakeholders. The ability to conduct the rough and tumble of business within a positive environment.	7
105	**Making oneself vulnerable**	Being prepared to take a risk on the expectations of the benefits outweighing the intended or potential risks.	23
106	**Managing Expectations**	Where one side or the other set expectations on the relationships delivery. These may be seen as realistic and trust builders or un-realistic which may put pressure of the relationship to deliver and erode trust.	69
107	**Measuring**	Understanding the level of the relationship, the level of trust and / or mistrust. How this is determined.	46
108	**a good set of KPIs**	Key performance indicators linked to trust and relationship building activities. Including KPI's around mutual value / benefits	17
109	**Meeting Formally**	Structured meetings, often against a pre-agreed agenda, regularity and duration.	36
110	**Meeting Informally**	Unstructured and unplanned meetings, can be ad hoc in nature. Operating outside of the regular formalised contact structures.	35
111	**Motivating the Org Relationship**	The intentions of an organisation to develop a positive relationship with a chosen party/partner. The positive intentions have the potential to lead to trust building between both sides, if experienced in reality within the relationship and the effect delivered through outcomes of mutual commercial benefits	141
112	**Moving People Around**	At an inter-personal level, staff moving either within the organisation to other positions or moving on. Breaking established relationships and/or preventing the development of trust based inter-personal relationships beyond a superficial or shallow level.	14
113	**Mutual Dependency**	Both parties are inter-reliant on each other for value creation and / or value delivery. Often seen in the OEM sector, tier 1 & Tier 2 suppliers	13
114	**mutual respect**	The respect for one organisation is reciprocated in the intentions, attitudes and behaviours of the other organisation.	18
115	**One to One vs Organisation**	Where the relationship resides, at inter-personal 'one to one ' level, as opposed to a relationship with the whole organisation.	61
116	**open and honest**	Behaviours, attitudes, culture and values display a transparent approach. All communication is honest and	113

		truthful, despite the consequences.	
117	**Operating Open Book**	Where both sides of the relationship make available their costs, profit and margin expectations. Accounts are open for both sides of the relationship to view and audit as required.	1
118	**Organisational Ambiguity**	The customer or supplier's internal organisation is so complex and ambiguous. It is difficult to understand who to engage and how decision is made. How they face off externally to get things done.	48
119	**organisation-to-organisation**	Where the relationship resides at am organisation to organisation level.	67
120	**Over Dependent vs Interdependent**	Where an imbalance exists in the relationship between both sides vs real interdependence that drives mutual value and respect,	5
121	**Paid for promise**	When the product is in-tangible, the buyer is purchasing something that they cannot physically use, touch or access unless in need. It is only then that they experience the product or solution and have the opportunity to match it vs expectations.	3
122	**Penetrating all levels**	Positive relationships development at all levels of the organisation through engagement within key functional leaders and stakeholders	48
123	**People vs Organisation**	Looks at the development of the discussion between people as organisation or an organisation being more than the sum of the parts	99
124	**personal basis, rather than on a business basis**	Where the relationship is reliant on the personal nature of the interactions and more related to the personalities than a more rational business nature.	80
125	**Positive Attitude**	The attitude the supplier demonstrates to the customer in terms of being customer centric, customer focused and with the customers interests in mind.	129
126	**Positive Relationship**	The relationship between the individual from one side of the dyad to the other is positive	88
127	**Posturing**	The use of ego, veiled threats, coercive power or position to lever advantage, The reference to symbolism or past actions, achievements,	30
128	**Pro-active vs Re-active**	The pursuit of initiatives within the relationship and a positive attitude. Developing the business and relationship for mutual gain.	77
129	**Problem Solving**	Working together to overcome issues or challenges. Collaborating to find ways around relationship problems.	42
130	**Re-aligning the relationship**	Forces outside of both parties affect the mutual value potential. Handled in the right way the relationship can be re-aligned, trust maintained and value re-configured.	72
131	**Reciprocating**	When one side of the relationship follows through on an	27

		agreement as the other side delivered on a promise.	
132	**Relationship timing - med long**	The duration of the relationship, how long it's been in existence.	33
133	**Releasing Cost**	Improvement in operational efficiency and effectiveness leads to improvements in cost to serve and or cost release.	12
134	**Reliability of systems and processes**	The underlying systems and processes that enable the relationship to function smoothly.	87
135	**Reluctant Attitude**	People within the relationship demonstrate a negative or reluctance in attitude to their involvement. They appear to not want to be there or involved.	19
136	**Repairing Trust**	How a breakdown in trust is managed. What did the organisation, individua's do to fix it and how long did it take?	11
137	**Reporting Regularly**	Reports are exchanged between both sides on a regular basis. This allows robust information flow and sharing. The reports form the basis for insight development and actions. This adds dependability and reliability into the relationship	10
138	**Setting Common Goals**	Within the relationship setting common goals between both sides. These could be around distribution, share, value, volume, swapping people, etc. However, they are mutually agreed, accepted, reported and celebrated.	36
139	**Shared Agenda**	Both sides are working to common goals, ideals and objectives in the relationship. This is developed together through a shared agenda that forms the red thread through the relationship.	22
140	**Sharing Information**	Both sides share information to generate relationship enhancing insights and mutual benefits.	92
141	**simplification of the organisation**	Transparent and easy to understand organisational structure, lines of reporting and responsibility.	25
142	**Smack in the face**	A metaphorical refence to an action from one side of the relationship to the other.	1
143	**Socialising in the relationship**	Where both sides meet informally over a meal, drinks, an event, etc. The informality of the relationship allows the personal and human side of the relationship to develop.	22
144	**Stabilising the relationship**	Where the actions, processes, systems and ways of working iron out extremes of response and reaction.	8
145	**Starting to develop the relationship**	The early stages of relationship development and how it develops in this embryonic period.	45
146	**starting to erode trust**	Behaviours, attitudes, actions, processes and systems that start to erode trust within the relationship between two parties. This can be at the one to one and organisational level.	13
147	**Staying Relevant**	As the relationship landscape changes, your portfolio might	15

		not carry the same level of importance as before. It's important to retain relevance within the relationship through value creation, cost release, innovation, insight, etc. Ways in which you can continue to add value as the environment shifts.	
148	**Strategic vs Transactional**	The focus of one side of the dyad is short term and transactional. While the other side is looking for a longer term and strategic approach to relationship development. Hence a level of imbalance between both sides.	113
149	**Structuring the Relationship**	Regular reporting against agreed KPI's, formalising the interaction between both parties.	56
150	**The strength of their conviction**	Where the level of commitment translates into the delivery of what was intended, stated and expected.	20
151	**The whole-body language,**	Where the individuals in the relationship display through their behaviour and body language trust building intent / confirmation.	1
152	**they trust that we'll be upfront and honest**	Where one sides demonstrates honesty and intent to the relationship ahead of any engagement.	42
153	**they trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery**	Reliability and consistency in delivery and demonstrated ability to deliver on expectations.	54
154	**they trust that we're going to forecast the product and protect it**	Reliability of supply and credibility in forecast accuracy.	24
155	**they trust that we've got the supply chain**	Where the ability and demonstrated credibility in supply chain mean one side can rely on the other to deliver.	38
156	**Transacting Business**	The level and amount of business undertaken between the two parties, within the relationship.	37
157	**Transactional vs Strategic**	Activities and actions in the relationship are short term focused. They may be counter to the strategic focus of the relationship and or mutual commercial benefit.	31
158	**Trust as Threat**	Using and leveraging trust as a control or overt threat within the relationship at any level.	3
159	**trust between both parties**	The level of trust that exists between both sides to deliver mutual value for both sides.	22
160	**Trust vs Distrust**	The balance between trusting someone for some things, yet not for others. It doesn't stop trust existing in totality	9
161	**trusting relationship**	Where the propensity in the relationship is to trust the other side without fear of opportunistic behaviour.	11

162	**Understanding each other**	The depth of understanding of the other party's needs, wants, business drivers, ethics, values, culture and challenges. Translating this understanding into insight of mutual commercial benefit	206
163	**Understanding the Culture**	How members of the organisation get to understand and work out the culture. Adapt their way of working to suit the organisational norm.	50
164	**Understanding the Others reality**	Being able to understand the other sides, needs, wants, challenges and issues. With this insight develop solutions and mutual value.	118
165	**Volatility**	Where the market is trading & price driven. The relationship tends to be more transactional and relational.	11
166	**what they say**	When language is used with a hidden meaning behind it that undermines the feeling of being vulnerable.	18
167	**Working in Partnership**	The level of working between both sides has achieved a level that it is openly seen as a partnership.	101

Appendix 3. Bridging coding to second cycle themes

Table: 43: Bridging coding to second cycle themes

Bridging Process	Second Cycle
Signalling Relational intention Demonstrating the opportunity	Relational intention
Creating a positive environment to change Understanding each other Knowing your stuff	Ability
Understanding the others reality Reliability of systems and process Regular contact	Credibility
Mutual Commercial benefit Demonstrating the opportunity	Mutual Benefit
Joint working Commitment to the relationship Collaborating Multi level contact	Interdependence
Conflicting value, beliefs and commitment Dealing with conflict and vested interests Consistency (Lack of) Commitment to the relationship (negative) Clarity of vision Reliability of systems and processes	Cognitive Dissonance
Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours Flex to react Empowerment Knowing your stuff	Affective Dissonance
Communication Style Regular contact	Communication
Collaborating Commitment to the relationship Multi level contact	Commitment

Regular contact Joint working	
Positive attitude Creating a positive environment to change Empowerment Flex to react Understanding the others reality	Affective Consonance
Joint working Collaborating Understanding each other Clarity of vision Consistency Regular contact Measurement framework Mutual commercial benefit	Cognitive Consonance
Table: 43: Bridging coding to second cycle themes	

Appendix 4: The initial codes, bridging codes/emergent themes and final; core, supporting and linking themes

Code	Code/ emergent themes	Theme	
Table: 18: The initial codes, bridging codes/emergent themes and final; core, supporting and linking themes			
a) Acting adversarial, b)Commercial 'rough&tumble', c)Competing pressures, d)Conflicting actions, e) Conflicting needs, f)Contradicting, g) Creating mistrust, h) Destroying value, i) Differing levels, j) Eroding trust, k) Establishing relationship boundary markers, l) Failing to keep promises, m) getting the basics wrong, n) Historic actions, o) Intellectually challenging, p) Lacking agility, q) Organisational ambiguity, r) Starting to erode trust, s) Strategic vs transactional, t) Trust as threat, u) Volatility, v)	1.Conflicting values, 2. Conflicting beliefs, 3. conflicting commitment, 4. Dealing with conflict and vested interests. 5. consistency (lack of), 6. Commitment to the relationship (negative), 7.Clarity of vision (lack of), 8. Reliability of systems and processes (lack of & suitability)	Cognitive Dissonance	Core
a) Annoyed, b) Behaving coercively, c) Behaving opportunistically, d) Conflicting attitudes, e) Conflicting behaviours, f) Conflicting messages, g) Creating mistrust, h) Destroying value, i) Elasticity of personal trust,j) Eroding trust, k) Establishing relationship boundary markers, l) Failing to keep promises, m) Feeling let down or taken advantage of, n) Getting too close o) How they deliver that message, p) Intuitive feeling, q) Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia, r) Lacking desire and passion, s) One to One vs Organisation, t) Over dependent vs interdependent, u) Posturing, v) Reluctant attitude, w) Smack in the face, x) Starting to erode trust, y) Trust as threat, z) Trust vs Distrust, a1) What they say	1.Conflciting messaging, 2. conflicting attitudes, 3. conflicting behaviours, 4. flexibility to react, 5. Lack of empowerment, 6. Not knowing your stuff.	Affective Dissonance	Core
a) Building trust, b)Clarity of vision-direction, c)Co-creating, d)Collaborating, e)Co-location, f)Committing to the relationship, g)Consistency, h) Defining values, i) Common set of values, j)Developing indispensability, k) Developing organisational values, l) Developing products, m) Doing the right thing,	1.Joint working, 2. collaborating, 3. Understanding each other, 4. Clarity of vision,	Cognitive Consonance	Core

n) earning trust, o) Enforcing trust, p) Getting the basics right, q) Improving customer satisfaction, r) Innovating, s) Jointly recruiting resources, t) Leading and modelling trust building, u) Makes doing business easy, v) Making oneself vulnerable, w) Manging expectations, x) Motivating the organisational relationship, y) Organisation to Organisation, z) Problem solving, a1) Realigning the relationship, a2) Reciprocating, a3) Relationship timing -med/long, a4) Repairing trust, a5) Stabilising the relationship, a6) Starting to develop the relationship, a7) Staying relevant, a8) Structuring the relationship, a9) Transacting business, a10) Transactional vs strategic, a11) trusting relationship, a12) Working in partnership	5. Consistency, 6. Regular contact, 7. Measurement framework, 8.Mutual commercial benefit.		
a) Celebrating success, b) Changing outcomes, c) Collaborating, d) Dealing with people I like, e) Integrity, f) Developing people, g) Doing the right thing, h) Earning trust, i) Emotional vs rational – cognitive j) Empowering the decision & relationship, k) Enforcing trust, l) Feeling valued, m) Gesturing goodwill & benevolence, n) Historical personal relationships, o) Internal ambassador, p) Leading and modelling trust building, q) makes doing business easy, r) Makes it friendly and fun, s) Moving people around, t) People vs organisation, u) Personal basis rather than business, v) Positive relationship, w) Pro-active vs Re-active, x) Repairing trust, y) Starting to develop the relationship, z) The whole-body language, a1) Trust vs distrust, a2) Understanding the culture, a3)	1.Postive attitude, 2.Creating a positive environment to change, 3.Empowerment, 4.Flex to react, 5.Understanding the others reality.	Affective Consonance	Core
a) Acting on first impressions, , b) Clarity of vision and direction, c) Contracting trust, d) Dealing with conflict – vested interests, e) Defining values, f) Common set of values, h) Demonstrating the opportunity, i) Signalling relationship intentions, j) Developing organisational values, k) earning trust, l)) Gesturing goodwill & benevolence, m) Increasing engagement, n) Investing, o) Knowing whose responsible, p) Leading and modelling trust building, q) Making oneself	1.Signalling relational intention, 2.Demonstrating the opportunity	Relational Intention	Support

vulnerable, r) Managing expectations, s) Motivating the organisational relationship, t) Setting common goals, u) Shared agenda, v) Starting to develop the relationship, w) Staying relevant, x) The whole-body language, y) trust that we'll be upfront and honest, z) Trusting relationship, a1)			
a) Adapting successfully, b) Agility, c) changing outcomes, d) Deflecting language to maintain personal trust, e) Developing people, f) Empowering internal stakeholders, g) Flexibility to react, h) Knowing your stuff, i) Positive relationship, j) Starting to develop the relationship, k) Understanding each other, l) Understanding the others reality, m)	1.Creating a positive environment to change, 2.Understanding each other, 3.Knowing your stuff	Relational Ability	Support
a) Affiliating, b) Reliability, c) Creating credibility, d) Developing products, e) Differing stakeholders, f) Doing the right thing, g) Exchanging knowledge, h) Flexing contact levels, i) Follow through on promises, j) Getting the basics right, k) Historical personal relationships, l) improving customer satisfaction, m) Leading and modelling trust building, n) Makes doing business easy, o) Mutual respect, p) Open and honest, q) Operating open book, r) Paid for promise, s) Reliability of systems and processes, t) Sharing information, u) Starting to develop the relationship, v) The whole body language, w) Trust we're going to deliver when we say, x) Trust we can forecast the product and protect it for delivery, y) Trust we have a reliable and workable supply chain, z)	1.Understanding the others reality, 2.Reliability of systems and process, 3.Regular contact.	Relational Credibility	Support
a) Averting Destruction, b) bespoking systems, c) Bringing people & function together, d) Co-creating, e) Collaborating, f) Co-locating, g) Creating a positive environment to change, h) Dealing with people I like, i) Organisational culture, j) Degrees of transparency, k) Developing indispensability, l) Differing stakeholders, m) Escalating issues and challenges, n) Exchanging knowledge, o) Having an exchange of the truth, p) Increasing engagement, q) Innovating, r) Joint business planning, s) Joint working, t) Jointly recruiting resources, u) Mutual dependency, v) Penetrating all levels, w) Problem solving, x) Realigning the relationship, y) Simplification of	1.Joint working, 2.Commitment to the relationship, 3.Collaborating, 4.Multi-level contact	Relational Interdependence	Support

the organisation, z) Socialising in the relationship, a1) Working in partnership			
a) Agreeing joint KPI's, b) Balancing the commercials, c) benefiting from mutual value, d) Demonstrating the opportunity, e) Determined the targets, f) Feeling valued, g) Improving customer satisfaction, h) Measuring, i) A good set of KPI's, j) Releasing cost, k) Setting common goals, l) Sharing information, m) Staying relevant n) Structuring the relationship, o) Trust between both parties, p) Understanding the others reality, q)	1.Mutual commercial benefit, 2. Demonstrating the opportunity	Relational Mutual Benefit	Support
a) Aligning the relationship, b) Building multi-layers, c) Committing to the relationship, d) Setting common goals, e) The strength of their conviction, f) Degrees of transparency, g) Developing organisational values, h) empowering internal stakeholders, i) exchanging knowledge, j) Having an exchange of truth, k) Increasing engagement, l) Investing, m) trusting relationship	1.Collaborating, 2.Commitmnet to the relationship, 3.Multi-level contact, 4.Regular contact, 5.Joint working.	Relational Commitment	Linking
a) Communicating internally, b) communicating regularly, c) communicating style, d) Contacting regularly, e) How they deliver that message, f) Importance of face to face, g) Meeting formally, h) Meeting informally, i) Reporting regularly, j) Sharing information, k) The whole body language, l) What they say,	1.Communication style, 2.Regular contact	Relational Communication	Linking

Appendix 5: Semi structured research protocol developed and deployed with each fieldwork interview.

The research ethics, guidelines, protocols and procedures from the UoS under which the research was undertaken and signed the agreement prior to commencing the interview.

A thumb nail portrait of themselves, the role they did and tenure with the organisation. This was used to put the respondent at ease and get them talking.

The first area of question focuses on; what they think/feel is working at a personal level in the relationship. Can they bring this to life with any examples, cases or incidents that unpack it further.

The second area of questioning focused on; what they think/feel isn't working at a personal level in the relationship. Can they bring this to life with any examples, cases or incidents that unpack it further.

The third area of questioning ask the respondents to focus on the relationship between the two organisations at an organisational level. What they think/feel is working really well at an organisational level between the two organisations. Can they bring this to life with any examples, cases or incidents that unpack it further.

The fourth area continues to focus at an organisational level, questioning respondents on what they feel/think isn't working at an organisational level between the two organisations. Can they point to examples, cases or incidents that unpack it further and bring it to life.

Lastly each respondent is asked to provide a message back to the relationship; what would that message be. At the conclusion of the interview the respondent is asked if they had anything, they thought we would cover that remains unsaid, or 'niggling in the back of their minds'. This is captured and the interview concluded.

Appendix 6: Cognitive dissonance at inter-organisational level

Table 19: Cognitive dissonance at inter-organisational level	
Supplier	Buyer
The intention in the form of the vision for the relationship, joint plan and mutual values objectives are undermined through coercive actions at lower levels of the relationship. In certain instances, the org level agreement fails to happen or runs counter to thinking at group and/or interpersonal level	The intention in the form of strategy, joint plan and mutual benefits agreed at org level, fail to deliver the results or effect at lower levels of the relationship. An agreement at org level runs counter to the actions, objectives and thinking of the customer management team at group / interpersonal level.
This in manifested in; • Contradicting: "H*e was going to write out to all the insurers to explain his decision as to why, and he told me he was going to do that, he never did it. So, again, credibility-wise, he damaged himself"*. Respondent: Al.1.1.1. • Communicating style; - *"Just it's a very derogatory language that is used"* Respondent: A.1.1.1. • Conflicting needs; *I'll tell you what doesn't work between our two organisations, and that's the mismatch and alignment of our business drivers"* Respondent: A.1.1.1 • Dealing with Conflict – vested interest; "I*n those first phases, it would have been quite easy not to confront the individual category issues and let individual sales directors, category directors plough their own furrow and then try to recover, so straight away it was when something like that was happening, "No, we can't do that"*	This is manifested in; • Conflicting messages; "*The guys that have come from M traditionally see it as a generic company, the guys that are in power see it as a branded company and they haven't yet worked out what it actually is"* Respondent: P.1.1.1 • Communicating style; "*And when you do challenge it and you get silence, generally speaking that says something as well. I mean, silence is a wonderful tool. When you're negotiating, silence is a killer"* Respondent: P.1.1.1 • Dealing with Conflict – vested interests; "*Probably managing that is the biggest thing, and getting people to step out of the emotion of the day. Sometimes it just does need them to sleep on it or leave it for a week and then we'll, "Okay, do you still think the same?" And that's from both sides"* . Repsondent: Mo.1.1.1. • Contradicting; "*SAA have different drivers and directions of travel. 80% vol*

because this is part of the bigger picture and you need to play your own part". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

- Knowing your stuff;" *There is no harm in not knowing the answer to a question, as long as you say I'll find that and get back to you, and you do".* Respondent: Al.1.1.1.

- Conflicting actions; "*Then we went through the whole pain of a three to four month period of going through this, and then they went, 'No, we're not going to do it'.* Respondent: Al.1.1.1.

- Lacking agility;" *We're a private sector organisation challenged with quarterly results, you know, half year targets. They … we say they work on glacial speeds. So … so, their governance is so unwieldy and so difficult to get through, it can take years to get things approved so if you're trying to do agile digital transformation they're just not aligned".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.

- Behaving Coercively: "*So, a category director and a retailer making a threat against the business that you're in around some of your range, it is about that sharing and getting people on side with the bigger picture, not their own individual bit".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

- Commercial 'rough & tumble'; "*And trying to find ways to negotiate and do deals, basically. And it was something that I thoroughly enjoyed, and, just clicked with".* Respondent: Al.1.1.1.

- Organisational ambiguity; "*But if you were new, thinking, 'Right, where are the touchpoints here?' You've got a Managing Director for P distribution, a*

of activity is us, yet we only get 25% voting rights within the group. It's a challenging balance". Respondent: S.1.1.1.

Conflicting actions; *"The first one was highly charged and adversarial
The second one was better. However the day after the meeting A slapped an early warning notice on us. It made me smile as it was a total disconnect and juxtaposition".* Respondent: S.1.1.1.

- Knowing your stuff; "*Building up caps and comps in the team; around vendor management".* Respondent: S.1.1.3.

- Balancing the commercials" *We are throwing a lot of work at Atos; don't seem to be balancing this through more resources coming into support the relationship".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

- Reliability of systems and processes: *"It kind of basically says, "Look, trust the system. You want 10 of product x, and 5 paracetamol..." and it will go across your choices that you've made, and say, "Where is it cheapest?" and then it'll fire that order across to that supplier/wholesaler/short-liner...".*Respondent P.1.3.1.

- Conflicting needs: "*So it can be tiresome at times in trying to get everybody to stay on-track with, "Here's what we're trying to do and why we're trying to do it". And that's from both sides because some of the things you just have to say, "That is just part of the day to day trading; you've just got to get over that and see".* Respondent : Mo.1.1.1

Managing Director for N, a Commercial Director for P. You've got a CEO of the business, you've got a Managing Director for R. Then you've got an OTC Procurement Head". Respondent: M.1.1.1

- Competing pressure; "*So, it meant that it always felt when you were talking to him that he was rushing round with not enough time in the day. So, then, trying to pin him down and have, like I say, a review meeting, was very difficult. And when you did, it almost felt like they were rushed because he had other things that he needed to do. So, my relationship with him in the first two years was, I would say, quite transactional". Respondent: AI.1.1.1.*

- Reliability of systems and processes; "C*ommercial can be one of the main blockers for agility and getting things – and in delivery terms, you know, they are so slow to process things and it does slow down the delivery, and it causes great frustrations". Respondent: A.1.1.1.*

- Organisational ambiguity; "*That lack of integration at the back-end of this business means that although it's a much smaller business than the other two main competitors, it's probably equally if not more difficult to navigate". Respondent: P.1.1.2.*

- Destroying value;" *Delivery tardiness: see the intent , hear the reality – don't see the effect". Respondent: S.1.1.3.*

- Getting the basics wrong; "*But it's that kind of thing, you know, people want that but then they see, "Well, hang on, you can't get my mobile phone reception right," so it's kind of, it just undermines you a little bit in terms of trying to do some little things that we do". Respondent: S.1.1.1.*

- Commercial 'rough& tumble'; "*Although there had been discussion I felt that there was a reason to escalate it to just to say, "Look, these are the facts, you need to look very closely at this, and if you don't want to look closely at it that's okay, but I understand we have options and we will probably have to recommend to the client that we need to go somewhere else". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.*

- Consistency;" N*ot sure we have a clear way of working with A". Respondent: S.1.1.4.*

Appendix 7: Cognitive dissonance at inter-team/operations level

Table 20: Cognitive dissonance at inter-team/operations level	
Supplier	Buyer
The actions and messaging from the buying side indicate for either opportunistic or coercive activity which negatively impacts the expected mutual benefits and the ability to affect change "changed outcomes" in the relationships. The level of trust between both sides appears at odds to the org level and out of balance (not at the same level) between the two in the dyad.	The leadership intention does not carry sufficient weight to counter the beliefs in the relationships that run counter to making it happen at the ops/management level. The buying side see little evidence of a change in the suppliers ops/management to turn the expected intentions into reality. They fail to deliver on what was believed &/or expected.
This is manifested in; • Commercial 'Rough & Tumble': "*We'd made some changes and they wouldn't sign off the contract amendment which meant that we weren't getting paid for the work we were doing on application support, so we downed tools on application support and it caused the – I mean, it took – it was a ballsy thing to do, it really, really was*". Respondent: A.1.2.5. • Contracting trust; "H*istorically we've been drawn back and said, "Well, this is what it says in the contract, this is what's funded in the contract, this is the only thing that you can do in the contract," even if it's wrong what it says in the contract, we've got to be able to do what's in the contract*". Respondent: A.1.2.7. • Competing pressures; "*Having grown up conversations: put the commercial to*	This is manifested in; • Conflicting messages; "*we've had a lot of positive responses from other people in the market who have said, "Yeah, look, we want to write this. It's a good-size premium" – you know, you're talking pushing up towards £50,000, so it's a good-size premium, and we've had a lot of people come back to us saying, "Yeah, look, we're interested in this, we want to quote on it*". Respondent: LR.1.2.1. • Communicating style; "*There's a lack of transparency of the leadership team; who are they, where have they come from and who do we talk to*". Respondent: S.1.2.2. • Contradicting; "*Unrealistic expectations about the contract, delivery potential. It needed to be more of a relationship of equals*". Respondent: S.1.2.1.

one side, let's do the right thing, then bring them back in to the equation". Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Conflicting needs: "*The central team that manage the four PEs from a contractual assurance perspective still see us as delivering to the governance that was preconceived when the contract initially won. So, there's a bit of a dichotomy there*". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Contradicting; *"So, I think there are … there are people within ISO who see it – are starting to see a brave new world, and there are people who only know a way of working which is the way they've worked for the last 20 years"*. Respondent: A.1.2.6.

- Conflicting actions; "W*e'll agree to that price and there's been occasions where they're not at that point, they still then don't buy it from us, and, you know, you think oh okay what else can we do here? What's the reasoning?"*. Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Communicating style; "W*e're trying to increase the frequency of meetings to the point where once a week or once a fortnight as a very worst case"*. Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Organisational ambiguity; *"Commercial stream (act as and really are procurement) is separate from delivery stream"*. Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Lacking agility; *"It took 9 months worth of conversations and processes to upgrade from windows 7 to 10 – governance prevents agile working"*. Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions; "*So, there's definitely something there about formalising and the lack of formality is jeopardising our relationships"*. Respondents: S.1.2.4.

- Reliability of systems and processes; "*Proposal generation & review process can take 30 days, sign off can take 2-3 months and then takes A 30 days to actions"*. Respondent: S.1.2.1.

- Balancing the commercials; "*We assumed the relationship would roll along much the same as it has under CSC, that cost relationship didn't happen as A are far more contractual"*. Respondent: S.1.2.2.

- Knowing your stuff; "*We tend to find a much more difficult relationship with people who've come to S from A's other customer bases. So, this is people who've been working for A on other accounts for a long time and have just been wheeled onto the S account and of course they want to do things the A way because they just don't – they've never worked for S, they're not necessarily new to A but they're certainly new to S"*. Respondent: S..1.2.3.

- Competing pressures; *"A couple of A initiates were naive on the 'Art of the possible' with S. A expectations were unrealistic; actually there was naivety on both sides"*. Respondent: S.1.2.2.

- Dealing with conflict – vested interests; "*You can't expect anybody to run a project on a favour-by-favour basis, so there comes a time when you*

- Destroying value: "*Okay, we're at a position where we haven't got sign off and we thought we would have and we did flag that we thought this was a risk, it hasn't been addressed, so fine, if we're not going to get sign off, however, these are the commercial consequences*". Respondent: A.1.2.2.

- Intellectually challenging*; "P is, I suppose, intellectually challenging, if you like, because H will come at everything from a position of intellectual understanding of d d's and the market, and all of this*". Respondent: M.1.1.1.

- Behaving coercively; *"I think that's a maturity thing that needs to be happen. They … their used to a customer/supplier relationship rather than a partner relationship*". Respondent: A.1.2.6.

- Balancing the commercials; *"Understand the problem and then we iterate different solutions and eventually think, "Oh, that would work," and then you can then put a proof of value together, a simple business case*". Respondent: A.1.2.6.

- *just can't achieve things using interpersonal relationships and then you have to take a step back and you have to go through the horrendous cycle of trying to get things moving the proper way*". Respondents: S.1.2.3.

- Organisational ambiguity;" *They have a new MD who I don't really know much about to be honest but I would – from what I hear, he's a very different character to his predecessor*". Respondent: P.1.2.3.

- Getting the basics wrong; "*The share point upgrade. It's currently facing an 11 month delay*". Respondents: S.1.3.1.

- Consistency; "*Since he moved on – he got promoted and moved to their London office – the relationship, on that part of the business, hasn't been the same. We don't get the pro-active responses. So we can send a risk into them, and you know, it falls into one of these black holes of never hearing from somebody, and we don't get the response – and when we do get responses, it's often actually a, "This is not one for us"*". Respondent: LR1.2.1

- Behaving coercively; "*This year we had one where I think M just completely missed what we would think so they came in and they had a new strategy with S and their inhaler range of products and I think he'd had conversations with other – some of our competitors which had just gone Okay,it became quite heated and debateable from the outside really and I think we had a three hour meeting. It went on for four hours and we didn't get off that*

	agenda point". Respondent: P.1.2.3.
	• Commercial 'rough & tumble'; "*So we gave notice on it a couple of months ago but through no fault of Mylan's really; it was something else that's going on within the organisation that caused that to end".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.
	• Destroying value; "*We seem to re-invent the wheel and lose the base knowledge, example; the vid conf room survey, pricing and installation done once and then repeated again for exactly the same room size. We may not get the same prices and it can fluctuate quite widely. Transparency of fixed and variable costs, we have a lack of consistency".* Respondent: S.1.2.2.

Appendix 8: Cognitive dissonance at interpersonal level

Table 21: Cognitive dissonance at interpersonal level	
Suppliers	Customers / Buyers
A conflict of needs with the rough and tumble of the commercials and posturing (egos). Messages delivered and communicated in a confrontational way, often at odds with the overall relationship. The greatest impact on the relationship comes from the interactions with their opposite number as opposed to other levels. The cognitive dissonance focuses on 'ways of working, getting things done; the ability and credibility of the other side, with the outcome seen as destroying value, failing to keep promises and a transactional approach to the relationship.	The customer / buyer interpersonal relationship appears far more orientated on relational efficiency and their opposite numbers ability to deliver. Do they have sufficient knowledge and consistency? Cognitive dissonance is evident through conflicting messages; saying one thing and then doing another, and conflicting actions; agreeing to a course of activity and then implementing something different or with different outcomes. Once again, the way of working, seeing the effect at this level is evident through; getting the basics wrong and a transactional approach
Manifested in; Conflicting needs; *"It's difficult because I think for me it's the way that the Sellafield organisation, well, the IT organisation is constructed. They've constructed themselves as a bit of an insourcing model, however they outsource their IT, so this is back to the man marking piece". Respondent: A.1.2.7.* Commercial 'rough & tumble'*; It may be they're sitting on a volume of stock, it may be that they've not been able to let's say switched their other supplier off quick enough. So, they may be tied into a longer period, or that cynic might say they were just testing the water to see if they could get a better price from us anyway, (laughs)".*	Manifested in; Knowing your stuff; "*We were initially told we were getting SME's on SharePoint (an ability issue) which wasn't the case*". Respondent: S.1.3.1. The reliability of systems and processes; "*So lately they've changed their internal system, so we've not been able to place orders for two weeks*" Respondent: P.1.2.3. Competing pressures; "*Good PM's tend to be over worked – access can be an issue*". Respondent: S.1.3.1. Commercial 'rough & tumble'; "*A lot of what we do is about market information – it's about*

Respondent: M.1.2.3.

Posturing; *"He'll make a joke, "Yes, but you didn't do that thing for me three months ago," and you're thinking, "God, are we still talking about that?" And it is slightly in jest, but I think, sometimes, you can tell those that cling on to it, and get a bit bitter about it all"*. Respondent: A.1.2.1.

Communicating style; *"I think the difficulty is we as an A team are really close, so we know what everyone's doing in terms of the lead management team, so myself, C, P, H, A, and obviously C managing that together, we're quite a close knit"*. Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Knowing your stuff; "*But really, on the whole, it just all got dropped on us and it was a case of the people that were already doing the generics suddenly had the brands, so there wasn't really a lot from the M side (laughter) coming over on the branded side. It was just us taking it forward and making it part of what we already do"*. Respondent: M.1.2.2.

Behaving opportunistically; *"And actually it came up quite recently that B then decided that he wasn't happy with him disposing of the goods. It would be a case of… I should have brought this up earlier actually, it would be a case of M, sort of, paying for their disposal"*. Respondent; M.1.3.1.

Competing pressures; "W*hat I found very, very odd about S is that within their own team the service people very rarely talk to the infrastructure people who very – architects – who very rarely talk to the programme delivery people and whatever and they're not just – they're not joined up as a result"*. Respondent: A.1.2.6.

Conflicting actions; "T*hen they've continued to*

molecules(?) *going short, getting ahead of the game, getting stocks in your depots to supply your customers before the market becomes ridiculously short, and your customers are paying way above tariff"*. Respondent; P.1.3.1.

Consistency: "*Once the sale team moved on we are faced with & handed off to operations who we didn't know. It was literally a case of here one day gone tomorrow. It is important to have continuity of people"*. Respondent: S.1.2.2.

Conflicting actions; "*So Product X might be locked down at their end, because they need to have a conversation with us on price, because the market price has moved. Now, Product X is a product we might have had with them for five years, and there's never been an issue, but pick the phone up and have a conversation, and let's not us go out of stock because you haven't had that conversation and it's locked down"*. Respondent: P.1.3.1.

Dealing with conflict – vested interest; "*The fallout from this is we have started to man mark and we are reluctant to say to A, "Ok you PM it". I think we are scared of them changing things and losing control as changes need to go through Q36, site change regulation"*. Respondent: S.1.2.2.

Organisational ambiguity:*" I think M have had their own challenges in terms of their integration between the organisations"*. Respondent: P.1.2.3.

Getting the basics wrong;" *Right that's out of stock" and I speak to B and she tells me it's in stock and then checks and tells me it's actually gone out of stock which – they're sorting it out with this new system that they've*

buy from us, or try to buy from us so, they say, "Oh, well we can buy some stock at a cheaper price but not all of it that we need, so we'll buy a bit from you as well." So it's kind of wanting their cake and eat it if you like. So, sorry that did seem quite detailed and convoluted but it's an example of the dynamics of the relationship if you like". Respondent: M.1.2.3.

Organisational ambiguity; "I think the size of the organisation that they've got is an issue. And they're still recruiting in". Respondent: A.1.2.7.

Lacking agility: "Seem to be increasing people, yet outsourcing and getting us to do more. Recruiting into the department rather than addressing none or under-performance, internal efficiency and effectiveness". Respondent: A.1.3.1.

Destroying value; "I think what reacts negatively on the relationship is S don't particularly own up to their failures and tend to be accusational of A". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

Failing to keep promises; "And we already said to them as part of our proposal, you know, we are going to sort of raise a risk on this as well to say you need to accept this proposal now and we need to get going now because working backwards we need to do this now if we're ever going to meet the timeline. Well, unfortunately that's already slipped by 12 months almost". Respondent: A.1.2.4.

Transacting business; "Ticket chasing & processing tickets – some people pursue this with more rigour than others, almost a pre-occupation". Respondent: A.1.3.1.

got and saying, "In July it'll be fixed, in July it'll be fixed" but this has been going on for about six months now". Respondent: P.1.2.3.

Transactional vs strategic: I think a lot of it actually is, it's putting the onus and the workload – because of staff reductions in numbers – what you're saying is, "Actually, we want the brokers to do all the work for us". Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

Conflicting messages; "Very win-lose and we felt like we would lose from that and voiced our opinions on why we'd feel that would become a win for them and a lose for us and the impact that would have on us and our business". Respondent: P.1.2.3.

Appendix 9: Affective dissonance at inter-organisational level

Table 22: Affective dissonance at inter-organisational level	
Suppliers	Buyers /Customers
(The core elements (antecedents) suppliers at org level indicated as dissonant from the customers in the shape of; commitment to the relationship and contradiction in the relationship. The use of commitment in this context had a negative connation as it fails to live up to the intentions signalled, vision developed and opportunity identified, this gives rise to the contradiction in the relationship at this level. Furthermore, the overly personalised basis to the relationship, as opposed to a corporate one. This also comes out through the emotional vs rational, with acts of opportunism and adversarial actions and coercive behaviours.) The commitment intended is not that enacted in the relationship, seen through conflicting attitudes in the various stakeholders. The relationship operating through 'gate keepers, as opposed to a multi point / multi level contact. The behaviours between both sides changes, lacks consistency or predictability from that agreed/expected. The relationship is prone to emotional rather than rational behaviour and transactional, adversarial actions based on short termism.	(Customers at org level point to a lack of internal alignment in the suppliers as they approach the relationship. Initially flagged as conflicting messages and the way the messages are delivered. The lack of alignment in the supplier further accentuated through; conflicting attitudes, behaviours and actions. The personal rather than corporate nature of the relationship and coming across reluctant attitudes is also seen as affective elements. All combined they produced a; "feeling of being let down or taken advantage of".) The customer experiencing deteriorating attitudes and behaviours at odds from that initially or regularly expected. A reluctance to the relationship through the attitudes of the suppliers leadership team. Politics and ego's of the key contact (s) coming into play in the relationship, leaving the customer/buyer side leadership feeling let down or taken advantage of.

This is manifested in;

- Commitment to the relationship; *"What you're not doing is coming to us and saying, 'Look, you are one of our strategic partners, we do want to increase the range. What we would like to do is for you to target 200 lines within our proposition'. What they come to us with is, 'Well, there's an opportunity,' and then it's for us to come to them all the time and say, 'Well, can we have this?' 'Well, you can have that, if your price is cheap". Respondent: M.1.1.1.*

- Conflicting behaviours; *"Then often it's some of the behaviours that other people demonstrate in the business that like throw a total curve ball or cause issues. (Laughter) We just agreed all of this, and then whilst G and B were sitting in a meeting to discuss rebates with them, everybody was smiling, everyone was happy, and then exactly the same time they were trying to take about six months' worth of stock out of our warehouse". Respondent: M.1.1.1..*

- Contradicting: *"Because of the size and complexity, where it didn't work so well was individual category directors in retailers wanting to take individual decisions for the benefit of their own individual category but to the detriment of our business if you like where we kept having to bring people back and say, "Well look, you can't just do that because it's part of a bigger plan and you need to see the holistic implication of your decision". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.*

- Personal basis, rather than

This is manifested in;

- Conflicting messages: *"The first one was highly charged and adversarial. The second one was better. However, the day after the meeting A slapped an early warning notice on us. It made me smile as it was a total disconnect and juxtaposition".* Respondent: S.1.1.1.

- Style of communication; *"B*ecause part of it is how you front face your customer, your supplier, etc., is that they have a challenge in terms of people with ability to front face and how you actually front face an organisation, which is very challenging because it's not like you're coming to one point. You've mentioned already we've got doctors, P. We've got N. We've got hospitals. How you actually front face an organisation like us which is different to the other two big guys that you may well have sat down with". Respondent: P.1.1.1.*

- Conflicting attitudes; *"Unfortunately, we thought we would have a direct relationship , however SAA want back in, yet only for a year. So, this leaves the contract still with SAA , yet us trying to forge a direct relationship". Respondent: S.1.1.3.*

- Contradiction; *"Delivery tardiness: see the intent , hear the reality – don't see the effect". Respondent: S.1.1.1.*

- Conflicting actions; *"Years of adversarial approach, hasn't really worked. We need to do something different". Respondent: S.1.1.4.*

- Conflicting behaviours; *"H*owever, if

corporate; *"I think from a personalities perspective, I think, generally speaking, the relationships are all pretty good throughout the whole business. I think on the Phoenix side of the business, or side of the relationship, they do have a couple of quite quirky characters".* Respondent: M.1.1.1.

- Style of communication; "I*t's a very derogatory language that is used".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.

- Behaving opportunistically; "*If somebody is winning all of the time or somebody is winning one time or the other, that's not about building trust, that's just about short term tactical opportunities you're being opportunistic about taking".* Respondent: Be.1.1.1.

- Conflicting attitudes; "*I'll tell you what doesn't work between our two organisations, and that's the mismatch and alignment of our business drivers".* Respondent: A.1.1.1

- Acting Adversarial; *Well, do you think you could raise your PO order this side of the month, or that?" they … some of them think that's, you know, heresy, you shouldn't ask a supplier, you know, a customer that, that you're a supplier. Get back in your box. So, there isn't an equal appreciation of our drivers".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.

- Transacting Business; "H*ey were really open because the businesses collectively had, as I said, been skirmishing around and having an adversarial, confrontational, buyer/seller relationship and no one winning; no one really winning, somebody winning one*

you then looked at the stakeholders that also deal with X they don't and they deal with them in a very transactional way. And so managing all those different people to get what they want out of it is the difficulty and that can change depending on the pressure that they're under at different points in time".* Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.

- Personal basis, rather than corporate; "*It's not working with the insurer and then you strike it lucky and you get some momentum and it takes you up there and then maybe strategy and personnel will change again and you kind of come down here and you've got to work to get it up there, (laughing), and you know that's kind of the nature of the beast".* Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

- Reluctant attitude; "I*f the guy who's delivering it hasn't got the conviction that actually he wants to do it, it doesn't help either".* Respondent: P.1.1.1

- Posturing; "*You can't have your name on the door, so what did somebody do? Put it on the notice board inside his office. Which just about says it all".* Respondent: P.1.1.1.

- Consistency; "N*ot sure we have a clear way of working with A*". Respondent: S.1.1.4.

- Feeling let down or taken advantage of: "*The share point upgrade. It's currently facing an 11 month delay".* Respondent: S.1.1.3.

month or one year and somebody winning another and it was flipping and flopping". Respondent: Be.1.1.1. • Emotional vs rational-cognitive: *"I guess on kind of other levels, you occasionally get, you know, some direct kind of emotional behaviour, if you like. So, you get a fair amount of that from B T, one of the buyers there, you get a fair amount of that from D. H McV from P is part of that group as well". Respondent: M.1.1.1.* • Failing to keep promises; "*I think maybe, you know, with good intentions on some projects and maybe they're not so good at, you know, standing by their word, maybe they overpromise and maybe under deliver". Respondent: M.1.1.2.*	

Appendix 10: Affective dissonance at inter-team/operations level

Table 23: Affective dissonance at inter-team/operations level	
Suppliers	Buyers
Suppliers at a group / operational level indicate affective triggers that undermine the coming together of both sides to operationalise the relationship intentions. At this level the suppliers ops, team, groups are making themselves vulnerable and reference the most often to opportunistic behaviour from the customers team at this level and posturing / ego's / politics, stretching personal trust in the team. Lack of consistency through contradictory actions and a lack of desire and passion for the other side. The research also surfaced both; reluctant and conflicting attitudes. This points to an intention at org level failing to travel effectively or with sufficient weight / importance to the customer team required to operationalise it with the supplier. The use of language emerged through the research as a mechanism to deliver bad news while maintaining the relationship between level. In essence the language operated as a deflection to maintain the relationship already established; "nothing personal, but". The feeling of getting too close and overdependent and feeling let down or taken advantage of , if coercive / opportunistic & / or adversarial action surfaced while trying to make things	Group/operational level in the customers highlighted through the research affective dissonance in the messaging from the supplier and the way the messages are communicated. As both sides operationalise the relationship, conflicting behaviours, attitudes and actions were referenced leading to an internal feeling of being let down or taken advantage of. Surprisingly, customer at this level also agreed that coercive behaviour and reluctant behaviour impacted the relationship. Once again this points to a lack of emotional and attitudinal buy-in / adoption of the relationship intent developed at organisational level. It also indicates a level of inconsistency &/or discipline in the group /ops at this level introducing dissonance into the operationalisation of the relationship and mis trust. The customer ops, group management indication a level of politics, posturing and moving people around as having an impact at this level undermining continuity and trust.

happen.

This is manifested in;

- Behaving opportunistically; *"To go and do that and it just – as I say, it just left a really bad taste on Friday and I had my boss who was pissed off, you know? Very pissed off".* Respondent: M.1.2.1.

- Contracting trust; "*I mean, this is kind of, it comes back to a little bit more of non-intangible relationships, it's more, "Are you delivering to your contract?".* Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Posturing; *""Well, I think that's absolutely rubbish," although he might use words a bit more colourful than that. "Your systems are rubbish. I don't agree with that. Bloomin' red tape everywhere. Bit corporate organisation." He'll have a moan, and I'll say, "N, what do you want me to do about it?" And he'll say, "Nothing, I know it's 'No', but I just wanted to raise it." He does go above my head sometimes, but he'll always come back to me and say, "Look, I have raised it to…" and by above my head, I mean, he'll go in at the top".* Respondent: Al.1.2.1.

- Contradicting; "*Setting un-realistic expectations. A good example is the surface pros that were left over from another project. A exec agreed to develop, based on an expectation of use for meeting minutes, etc. It got out of control – lack of management of the project, questions around expectations and technology led. There was a distinct*

This is manifested in;

- Conflicting messages; "*The only response we got from A was an email saying, "No, this is outside of our appetite, it's a no-quote from us," and I just feel, sometimes, when you're getting what should be – well, what are – A's main competitors, so you're getting your Xs, your Y's – companies like that, and companies that we wouldn't consider in the same bracket as A either saying they want to quote on it, then we feel that either they're not understanding the risk properly, or they're not wanting to understand the risk properly".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- Style of communication; "T*hey'll send an email to one person, and expect that email will be passed onto ten others".* Respondent: P.1.3.1.

- Conflicting behaviours; "T*hey were funding that, they'd got to a point and gone, "Right, that works for us, so we're going to pull back and just stay where we are" would be my understanding of their strategy".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.

- Contradicting; "*Unrealistic expectations about the contract, delivery potential. It needed to be more of a relationship of equals".* Respondent: S.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions; "*The contract laid out what was required from a compliance perspective. Sales seem ok, yet operations appear to push the boundaries and sometimes get caught out. This introduces a constant tension*

lack of up-front communication and why are we doing this". Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions; "And it was all written in the old language. So, I think there are … there are people within ISO who see it – are starting to see a brave new world, and there are people who only know a way of working which is the way they've worked for the last 20 years". Respondent: A.1.2.6.

- Lacking desire and passion; T*here's very much a political landscape that we have to meander around to drawn out their failures and get them to understand where their failures have been, and for them to do something about them".* Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Reluctant attitude; "*They'll then take it to demand sentencing, and it gets reviewed and they then decide what they're going to do about it and it might be that they ignore it, they mitigate it, or whatever, or accept that there's a problem and do nothing with it, or more likely it'll then get given to us, so we're seeing more or less the supplier really rather than a sort of partner in that set of things, because for me I'd rather A went and understood the problem, or at least engaged at that point".* Respondent: A.1.2.3.

- Conflicting attitude; "*It gets strained when potentially one side of the partnership tries one on with the other side and it occasionally happens because buyers will want their edge, buyers want to buy at the cheapest point in the market and, as a sales organisation, we want to obviously*

within the relationship. E M (A security) would go crazy and the non-contract people try and work outside of the system". Respondent: S.1.2.2.

- Conflicting attitudes; "*It's about an appetite, it's about wanting to write business, and it's about finding ways to do business, rather than finding ways not to do business".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- Personal basis, rather than on a business; "*Informally A will help me out in this area if I need it. This is purely relationship based and takes more time".* Respondent: S.1.2.2.

- Feeling let down or taken advantage of; "*We're going to put some terms on it, and we'll come back to you," and I think that was the disappointing thing there – but yes, if we felt that actually it was one for A, and it was one we wanted to place there, then there would be… They're not necessarily strict procedures or systems, they're just how we feel about something".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- How they deliver that message; *"It was a few months ago when we had that meeting, it was just quite surprising that we probably weren't asked, weren't consulted really before that. They were consulting with us after the decision was made".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.

- Posturing; "*At that time when this launched, they didn't, so they couldn't detail the doctors, but, you know, they do go around and say, "Well, this is a new product that's launched, blah, blah, blah. We can give you the information*

maximise on any opportunity and sometimes those coming together don't always work". Respondent: M.1.2.1.

- Style of communication; "W*hereas with E, if I get a call, and E's not happy with something, I know it's something really has gone wrong, or they really need a favour from us". Respondent: A.1.2.1.*

- How they deliver the message; "T*he buyer was then saying, "Oh," you know, we use the term, it is unfortunate, oh B's thrown his toys out of the pram, you know, kind of thing, you know, which Beth has to deal with face to face sometimes as well as via email and yes. So, it's like oh Ben's playing up kind of thing (laughs) and he does get quite vocal about, "Oh you've let us down," and all of this and there is an argument to say, yes sometimes we do supply a buyers, it's a bit of a frustration, we can't always have 100% stock in all the time like any organisation you have your problems and yes, they don't seem to be that forgiving on those". Respondent: M.1.2.3.*

- Conflicting behaviours; "*They gave us some really good feedback, but it wasn't the feedback we wanted, because they said, actually, our presentation was one of the weakest and actually, they didn't feel like, rather embarrassingly, our director had added much. In fact, he'd actually been quite boring in what he was saying, which obviously, we've not passed on to him, because I don't know how well that would go down". Respondent: AI.1.2.1.*

about it". So can M, but you just think that's, kind of, a bit of a smack in the face really, when they go around doing things like that, especially when we can help them out. We've got R, 527 shops, that can switch into a molecule. The usage is quite good on it. So, it is a bit annoying". Respondent: P.1.2.2.

• Emotional vs rational; "S*ometimes you can't have those and you have to get through … because the greater good, you know, and I always think if you're professional and your heart's in the right place and you're sensitive and empathetic to people but you've still go to address these issues*". Respondent: A.1.2.6. • Failing to keep promises; "T*he operational acceptance piece, I updated a template once, all the project managers are supposed to work through it and yet they don't work through it because there's no governance about what they do, or not good enough. And that really frustrates me because it comes back – it upsets the customer and they find out that that's not been done, it comes back and it bites us and no – you know, it could just be put right, literally*". Respondent: A.1.2.4. • Feeling let down or taken advantage of; "*We went through all the work and for it not to go anywhere felt a bit disheartening. I mean, we got our SME director out to see them, D M, who, to say his diary is jam packed would be an understatement*". Respondent: AI.1.2.1.	

Appendix 11: Affective dissonance at interpersonal level

Table 24: Affective dissonance at interpersonal level	
Supplier	Buyer / Customer
When trying to develop the relationship the key trigger suppliers highlighted at an inter-personal level was a reluctant attitude from their opposite number and a degree of posturing /ego /politics in the relationship. The way communication happened and style of that communication, with opportunistic behaviour that created mistrust. They also indicated a lack of consistency through conflicting actions and attitudes towards the relationship, coupled to a lack of desire or passion to make it work. Failing to keep promises, led to a feeling of being let down or taken advantage of. The personal basis and affective nature also came to the ore with a feeling that the customer was getting too close, over dependent and operating on a personal basis rather than corporately. They used deflecting language to deliver bad news, while trying to maintain an affective personal relationship.	Customers at the inter-personal level point to an overly personal relationship, rather than on a business basis as undermining the relationship. This is coupled with a lack of consistency, conflicting actions and an inability to deal with conflict from vested interests in the relationship. Conflicting behaviours and attitudes at this level led to a feeling of being let down or taken advantage of. The ambiguity of the organisation when trying to go beyond the inter-personal contact and conflicting messages also undermining and eroding trust at this level in the relationship.
Manifested in; • Reluctant attitude; "*Setting un-realistic expectations. A good example is the surface pros that were left over from another project. A exec agreed to develop, based on an expectation of*	Manifested in; • Personal basis, rather than on a business basis; "*They have a new MD who I don't really know much about to be honest but I would – from what I hear, he's a very different character to*

use for meeting minutes, etc. It got out of control – lack of management of the project, questions around expectations and technology led. There was a distinct lack of up-front communication and why are we doing this". Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Posturing; *"I don't like getting involved in all of the S politics and there are excuses not to do things and they overdramatise things as well".* Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Eroding trust; "*Economic with the truth yes so, they say, "Yes T's price is £4," but then that was three months ago. The landscape's changed since then".* Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Style of communication; *"It's … email should be used as a confirmation not as a lobbed instruction into the ether, you know, there are no subtleties and nuances in email and people interpret what they think you've written".* Respondent: A.1.2.2.

- Behaving opportunistically; *"I think that's lost a lot of loyalty as well because they're just looking at price now whereas before it was a lot more about consistency of supply".* Respondent: M.1.2.2.

- Conflicting actions; "*And there's a lot of man marking going on across the board and I think this comes back to the lack of trust as well".* Respondent: A.1.2.7.

- Lacking desire or passion; T*here's very much a political landscape that we have to meander around to drawn out their failures and get them to understand where their failures have*

- Consistency; "*Since he moved on – he got promoted and moved to their London office – the relationship, on that part of the business, hasn't been the same. We don't get the pro-active responses. So we can send a risk into them, and you know, it falls into one of these black holes of never hearing from somebody, and we don't get the response – and when we do get responses, it's often actually a, "This is not one for us".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- Conflicting actions; "*The share point upgrade. It's currently facing an 11 month delay. We were initially told we were getting SME's on SharePoint (an ability issue) which wasn't the case"* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

- Dealing with conflicting, from vested interests; *"Good PM's tend to be over worked – access can be an issue".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

- Conflicting behaviours; "T*hen they've continued to buy from us, or try to buy from us so, they say, "Oh, well we can buy some stock at a cheaper price but not all of it that we need, so we'll buy a bit from you as well." So it's kind of wanting their cake and eat it if you like. So, sorry that did seem quite detailed and convoluted but it's an example of the dynamics of the relationship if you like".* Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Conflicting attitudes; "*Maybe the programme's view is that it's my job to do that, I don't know, but how I would do that I'm not entirely sure. We're very good at capturing learning, we're not so*

his predecessor". Respondent: P.1.2.3.

been, and for them to do something about them". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

- Creating mistrust; "*from a wholesale point of view, just suddenly having this product taken away from them, so it's negative. So it was a very difficult meeting and it was very much split down the middle*". Respondent: M.1.2.3.

- Conflicting attitudes; *Not really sure what the strategy is and what they really want to do*". Respondent: A.1.3.1.

- Failing to keep promises; "*On top of this promised modernisation within 6 months, which would constitute the biggest change programme since 1998, as it hadn't changed much before then*"? Respondent: A.1.3.1.

- Getting to close; "*You can be overfamiliar in a professional way, you know, not checking what's going on, you know, assuming too many things*". Respondent: M.1.1.2.

- Feeling let down or taken advantage of; "*Setting un-realistic expectations. A good example is the surface pros that were left over from another project. Atos exec agreed to develop, based on an expectation of use for meeting minutes, etc. It got out of control – lack of management of the project, questions around expectations and technology led. There was a distinct lack of up-front communication and why are we doing this*". Respondent: A.1.2.1.

- Contradicting; "*We then found out, post meeting, that that wasn't all the orders that had been placed; there was another six months' worth of stock they're trying to take on this product and*

good at disseminating it". Respondent: S.1.3.2.

- Feeling let down or taken advantage of; "*We're going to put some terms on it, and we'll come back to you,*" and I think that was the disappointing thing there – but yes, if we felt that actually it was one for A, and it was one we wanted to place there, then there would be… They're not necessarily strict procedures or systems, they're just how we feel about something". Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

- Conflicting messages; "*corporately speaking, we almost don't have a relationship; it is almost broken down*". Respondent: S.1.2.3.

it's quite a commercially sensitive one at the moment because of some of the activities we're up to and I think it – I was disappointed and I was frustrated because we sat in that meeting and face to face and eye to eye, he'd asked for the stock and we approved it and went, "Yes, not a problem" to find out actually that they'd been running these orders in to customer services and it felt like we(?) were trying one on, so that didn't go down well and because of the sensitivity of it, there was a lot of internal questions and people were unhappy internally". Respondent: M.1.2.1.

- Personal basis rather than corporate; *Oh dear! I don't know really. I think because I'm so focused with who I deal with, I don't… I've never really looked at P as a whole as a company. I'm sure they must be doing things and updating things, sort of, lots of times, but I don't really, sort of, get to hear about those sort of things". Respondent: M.1.3.1.*

- Deflecting language to maintain the personal relationship; *"It resulted in delays to starting Phase 2, about three months, and it's resulted in additional costs. So, in that respect it hasn't worked well, but what I would say is we've been able to talk about that and manage* the consequences of that without acrimony". Respondent: A.1.2.2.

Appendix 12: Data audit trail

This section reports the treatment of qualitative data by applying the thematic analysis process outlined in the methodology and an audit trail. The purpose of the qualitative interviews was to use critical incident technique (Flanaghan 1954) to surface themes, triggers, antecedent's and incidents that lead to trust building and/or trust dilution in the relational dyad. This was applied in pursuit of answers to the following questions that emerged from the B2B literature on trust;

The research questions are comprised of an initial principle question, which gives rise to four sub-questions;

2. *To what extent is B2B trust at an organisational level strategic, perceived and*

   intentional in nature, does it differ at operations/team and inter-personal levels?

   (Currall 2002; Janowicz & Noorderhaven 2006b)

Trust between organisation is a multi-level phenomenon (Zaheer et al 1998). Inter-organisational level trust operates directly and seen as a predictor of exchange performance, however the link to inter-personal trust suggested both / multiple levels played a role(Zaheer, et al 1998). Currall and Inkpen (2002) argue that organisations could be viewed as trusting, if trust is conceptualised as an action rather than an expectation. This study tries to understand how the impact of action and / or intention could effect the relationship at other levels and relationship outcomes. This naturally leads to the first sub-question;

3. *How does B2B trust at an organisational level have an impact on the actors in the*

   relationship? (Zaheer, et al 1998; McEvily & Zaheer, 2006: Clark et al 2010)

This goes someway to addressing the suggestion Zaheer et al (1998) surfaced of an apparent link between inter-firm and inter-personal roles that both levels of trust played. The nature of organisation / firm level trust and how that manifest on the actors in the relationship could have implication on the realisation of the intention and turning the intention into a trusting based reality (Giddens 1994). This could give rise to a model that links organisation level intention to relationship actor impact.

3. How do the behaviours of trust at an individual level impact through B2B trust antecedents (Kumar, 2012) (Kumar et al. 1995)

4. How do these antecedents affect the behaviour attitudes and actions of individuals within these B2B relationship? (Schoorman et al. 2007)and (Zaheer 2006)

 5. What is the effect of these factors on B2B customer performance?

The interviewing process was preceded with a focus group comprising 8 senior level executives from Multiple industry sectors. The researcher facilitated the focus group which covered 2 hours, facilitation focused the group initially on an organisational level, then on an operational/team and finally an inter-personal level. Notes were taken during the focus group and the entire event recording and transcribed. The notes were used to validate the transcript and vice a versa, with one also being the fall back (plan b) for the other.
All of the interviews took place face to face, in person at the interviewees place of work. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours, with an average length of 44.81 minutes. Overall saturation was achieved around thirty two/three interviews, with no additional codes emerging from the interviews/interviewees and their interview transcriptions other than validation of the codes developed and captured through the preceding interviews. Despite this a further four interviews were undertaken to ensure the saturation effect had been fully achieved.

The following infographic details the overall process; codes developed and key antecedents / themes emerging at each stage.

Thesis Research Process
Data Audit Trail

Signalling Relational intent
Communication (style)
Commitment to the relationship (both positive and negative)
Mutual commercial benefit
Collaborating
Positive attitude
Creating a positive environment to change
Demonstrating the opportunity
Understanding the others reality
Understanding each other
Joint working
Multi level contact
Regular contact
Measurement framework

Focus Group — **First Cycle** — **Bridging Process** — **Second Cycle**

(25 codes) (167 codes)

Dissonance (Cog/Affect)
Consonance (Cog/Affect)

Relational Intention
Ability
Credibility
Mutual Benefit
Interdependence

Communication
Commitment

THEMES

CORE

SUPPORTING

LINKING

Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours
Conflicting values, beliefs and commitment
Contradicting
Consistency (Lack of)
Dealing with conflict and vested interests
Clarity of vision
Knowing your stuff
Communication style
Reliability of systems and processes
Empowerment
Flex to react

Focus Group

This formed the pilot output for the qualitative research theming and coding. The focus group represented an inductive way of gathering information on trust in a B2B context. The initial codes were aimed at capturing the attributes of the participants. The focus group codes and themes formed the foundation and framework for participants coding and development across an inter-organisational, inter-team and interpersonal level. From this focus group 26 codes were developed and these formed the foundation and the 'look first / initial guide' to the interview transcripts. It was used as a lens to help examine the vignettes from the initial interviews.

The focus group coding resulted in the foundations for onward coding development

26 codes with 270 references from the focus group transcript.

In the codes emerged two key themes; Conflicting (Dissonance) and Relationship signalling/Intentions

Level	Code	Emergent Theme
Inter-organisational	Mis-aligned ~ intention to reality	Conflicting (Dissonance)
	Altering their Values	
	Conflicting requests / actions	

	Indispensable contracts (too big to fail)	Relationship signalling/intentions
	Intentions	
	Rational	
	Emotional	
	Common Purpose	
	Common Agenda	
	Role Models	
	Organisational Leadership	
	Symbolism	
	Gestures	
Interpersonal	Conflicting messages	Conflicting (Dissonance)
	Conflicting language	
	Challenging when trust being broken or tested	
	Elasticity (where does it snap and what are the consequences)	
	Ability to fix	
	Consistency	
	Indispensable relationships (too important to fail)	Relationship signalling/intentions
	Common agenda	
	Common purpose	
	Long term relationships	
	Doing the right thing	
	Reliability	
	Mutual dependency	

The focus group was re-referenced based on the first cycle codes to establish the core codes emanating from the focus group inductive information gathering. 24 codes were developed at this early stage as an enabling platform for first cycle coding. The 24 codes also mapped effectively to the emergent themes from the focus group.

Name	Sources	Refere	Focus Group
Behaving Opportunistically	14	35	2
Benefitting from Mutual Value	34	219	3
Building Multi Layers	29	136	22
Communicating style	36	138	4
Consistency	21	58	15
Reliability	19	27	1
Contracting Trust	11	35	19
Contradicting	23	116	29
Creating Mistrust	24	91	17
Defining Values	19	43	14
Developing indispensibility	9	60	42
Developing organisational values	16	64	37
integrity	23	46	3
Organisational Culture	15	36	4
Earning Trust	19	34	4
Elasticity of Personal Trust	2	5	4
Enforcing Trust	3	7	5
Measuring	16	46	5
Motivating the Org Relationship	30	141	9
One to One vs Organisation	25	61	10
Re-aligning the relationship	27	72	11
Repairing Trust	7	11	3
starting to erode trust	7	13	4
Trust as Threat	1	3	3

Code	Focus Group Refs	Emergent theory
Building Multi Layers	22	Relationship signalling/intentions
Consistency	15	Relationship signalling/intentions
Contracting Trust	19	Relationship signalling/intentions
Contradicting	29	Dissonance
Creating Mistrust	17	Dissonance
Defining Values	14	Relationship signalling/intentions
Developing indispensability	42	Relationship signalling/intentions
Developing organisational values	37	Relationship signalling/intentions
Motivating the Org Relationship	6	Relationship signalling/intentions

Re-aligning the relationship	11	Dissonance

First Cycle

Face to face interviews were conducted with 37 individuals. They were taken from three levels of the organisation; Leadership / organisation level – inter-organisational, Team / operation – inter-team/operations and personal /staff level – interpersonal. The number of respondents by level are detailed in table 10

Table 10: The number of respondents by level			
Level of respondent	Number of respondents		
	Supplying / Selling organisation	Buying / customer organisation	Total
Leadership / organisational level	5	8	13
Team/Group/ Operations level	11	8	19
Personal / staff level	2	3	5
Total	18	19	37

Each interview was conducted using a semi structured questioning approach; Introduction, putting the interviewee at ease, organisational focus on what's working and what's not in the relationship from an organisational perspective, what's working and what's not from a team/group /operations perspective and lastly what's working and what's not from a personal perspective bringing each to life with critical incidents. The interviews were recorded digitally, transcribed, checked for accuracy against the recording and loaded into the Nvivo software programme.

Using the Nvivo programme each transcript was coded initially using the foundation codes from the focus group and then additional codes as they emerged. Each transcript was coded

to allow the level and sides of the relationship to be identified however not the organisation or actual respondent. Prior to saturation the data corpus coded identified 165 codes. Each code was developed to provide a description and definition. This is contained in appendix (2) with the number of times each code was referenced in the total data corpus.

First cycle codes into bridging process themes

Bridging Process

Interactive feedback workshops were taken with research partners.

Workshop 1 contained 31 people (contained additional actors from both sides of the relationship, as not all participants could be released from their work duties/commitments)

Workshop 2 contained 14 people (contained additional actors from both sides of the relationship, as not all participants could be released from their work duties/commitments)

The workshops covered both sides of the relationship and multiple levels. The feedback presentations explored; what was working and what was not in the relationships researched at each level. An interactive element to each workshop split the participants into groups to validate the findings and identify workstreams to rectify the antecedents surfaced as diluting trust and relational effectiveness. This process identified common codes from both sides and levels. These in turn informed emergent theory into the second cycle, when exploring the key antecedents (14) that build trust (expansionist effect) and the key antecedents (11) that dilute trust (reductionist effect)

Second Cycle

This study at the bridging phase between first cycle coding and into the second cycle stage found common groupings and themes emerging.

The bridging process provided an objective validation to the first cycle coding and the insights generated from the first cycle stage of the research. It provided directional input into the second cycle stage with the following areas emerging;

Code grouping coupled with referenced frequency in the bridging process provided initial insight into the impact of dissonance in the relationship through;

- Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours

- Conflicting values, beliefs and commitment

- Contradicting

- Consistency (Lack of)

The key area to emerge as the promoter of relational trust between the dyads, especially at organisational level is signalling relational intent, this was identified at the early stages of the focus group and has carried through the entire research process and data corpus . A positive agent of relational trust development, however one of the potential route causes of dissonance manifested at all levels in slightly different ways, once again this was identified at the early focus group stage and has carried through the entire research data corpus. This manifestation occurs when the intention (as yet intangible trust in nature) moves to activation and becomes tangible trust in the relationship.

This was deployed as the process for moving from first to second cycle, consistent with Saldana, J. (2016). This builds on relational intent and correlates to the definition posited in chapter (2) of the thesis; ability, credibility, interdependence and mutual value benefit. These were identified in the bridging process as being inter-related; working in consonance and having an expansionist effect and working in dissonance and having a reductionist effect. The bridging process and interactive workshops established the models effectiveness across all levels, however determined strategically through intention at leadership level.

Bridging Process	Second Cycle
Signalling Relational intention Demonstrating the opportunity	Relational intention
Creating a positive environment to change Understanding each other Knowing your stuff	Ability
Understanding the others reality Reliability of systems and process Regular contact	Credibility
Mutual Commercial benefit Demonstrating the opportunity	Mutual Benefit
Joint working Commitment to the relationship Collaborating Multi level contact	Interdependence
Conflicting value, beliefs and commitment Dealing with conflict and vested interests Consistency (Lack of) Commitment to the relationship (negative) Clarity of vision Reliability of systems and processes	Cognitive Dissonance
Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours Flex to react Empowerment Knowing your stuff	Affective Dissonance
Communication Style Regular contact	Communication
Collaborating Commitment to the relationship (positive) Multi level contact Regular contact Joint working	Commitment
Positive attitude Creating a positive environment to change Empowerment	Affective Consonance

Flex to react Understanding the others reality	
Joint working Collaborating Understanding each other Clarity of vision Consistency Regular contact Measurement framework Mutual commercial benefit	Cognitive Consonance

Second cycle emergent theory

Theme	Definition
Relational intention	Providing clarity on relational intention and intentions. How these are manifested and developed within the relationship to build trust.
Ability	Having the demonstrable capability and competency within the role & task(s) being undertaken.
Credibility	The reputation, integrity, values and ethics of the organisation and/or team/group and/or individual within the market, sector, specialism to be able to develop mutual value from the interaction and relationship.
Mutual Benefit	The mutual value benefit outcome from a trust-based relationship.
Interdependence	Working towards a level of interdependence where both parties are intertwined around mutual value development.
Cognitive Dissonance	The rational elements of the relationship between both sides at one or more levels are misaligned, despite the actions of one side or a level of the relationship to bring them back into alignment.
Affective Dissonance	The emotional elements of the relationship between both sides at one or more levels are misaligned, despite the actions of one side or a level of the relationship to bring them back into alignment.
Cognitive Consonance	The rational elements of the relationship between both sides at one or more levels are aligned and their actions are delivering mutual relationship benefit..

Affective Consonance	The emotional elements of the relationship between both sides at one or more levels are aligned and their actions are delivering mutual relationship benefit..
Communication	The exchange of information between both sides either verbally, digitally or written on a regular and timely basis. The way communication is undertaken within the relationship, the mediums used and the style of communication
Commitment	Demonstrating commitment to the relationship through investment, share of business, intent, attitudes, behaviours, resources, etc.

Lastly the date was explored at the second cycle to establish linkages in the emergent theory. The bridging process highlighted the: intention, reality, effect and its impact on trust reduction and expansion between both sides to develop the following;

			Expansionist	Reductionist
Org Level	Intention	Signalling Relationship intent (I)	I +	I +
Ops, group, team level	Reality	Ability (A) Credibility (C) Interdependence (JW)	(A+C+JW) +	(A-C-JW) +
Personal level	Effect	Mutual Value Benefit (M) Time (T)	M+T	M-T
			= Trust expansion	= Trust reduction

Org Level	Group Level	Inter-personal level
1. Signalling Relationship Intentions	1. Joint Working	1. Committing to the relationship
2. Demonstrating the opportunity	2. Benefitting from Mutual Value	2. Communicating style
3. Clarity of Vision - Direction	3. Understanding each other	3. Benefitting from Mutual Value
4. Understanding each other	4. Motivating the Org Relationship	4. Joint Working
5. Benefitting from Mutual Value	5. Contacting regularly	5. Empowering the decision & relationship
6. Committing to the relationship	6. Empowering the decision & relationship	6. Communicating Regularly
7. Understanding the Others reality	7. Communicating style	7. Understanding each other
8. Empowering the decision & relationship	8. People vs Organisation	8. Empowering Internal Stakeholders
9. Motivating the Org Relationship	9. Positive Attitude	9. Flexibility to react
10. Positive Attitude	10. Changing Outcomes	10. Creating Credibility
11. Changing Outcomes	11. Contradicting	11. Knowing your stuff
12. Joint Working	12. Differing Stakeholders	12. Understanding the Others reality
13. Communicating style	13. Reliability of systems and processes	13. Clarity of Vision - Direction
14. Contacting regularily	14. Committing to the relationship	14. Bringing People & Functions together
15. Creating a positive environment to change	15. Bringing People & Functions together	15. Signalling Relationship Intentions
16. Collaborating	16. Degrees of transparency	16. Positive Relationship
17. Empowering Internal	17. Open and honest	
	18. Signalling Relationship	

Stakeholders	Intentions	17. Collaborating
18. Strategic vs Transactional	19. Differing Levels	18. Contacting regularly
19. Sharing Information	20. Building Multi Layers	19. Differing Levels
20. Bringing People & Functions together	21. Working in Partnership	20. Positive Attitude
21. Creating Credibility	22. Empowering Internal Stakeholders	21. Differing Stakeholders
22. Managing Expectations	23. Positive Relationship	22. Reliability of systems and processes
23. Positive Relationship	24. Knowing who's responsible	23. Open and honest
24. Follow through on Promises	25. Flexibility to react	24. Building Multi Layers
25. Leading & Modelling Trust Building	26. Balancing the Commercials	25. Sharing Information
26. Differing Stakeholders	27. Historical Personal Relationships	26. Motivating the Org Relationship
27. Working in Partnership	28. Co-Creating	27. People vs Organisation
28. Degrees of transparency	29. Creating Credibility	28. Knowing who's responsible
29. Doing the Right Thing	30. Strategic vs Transactional	29. Changing Outcomes
30. Differing Levels	31. Organisation-to-organisation	30. Doing the Right Thing
31. Communicating regularly	32. Problem Solving	31. Communicating Internally
32. Knowing who is responsible	33. Collaborating	32. Re-aligning the relationship
33. Pro-active vs Re-active	34. Sharing Information	33. Joint Business Planning
34. Knowing your stuff	35. Pro-active vs Re-active	34. They trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery
35. Building Multi Layers	36. Knowing your stuff	35. Co-Creating
36. Re-aligning the relationship	37. Understanding the Others reality	36. Follow through on Promises
37. Flexibility to react		

38. Open and honest	38. Re-aligning the relationship	37. Consistency
39. Balancing the Commercials	39. Clarity of Vision - Direction	38. Developing Products
40. Aligning the relationship	40. Creating a positive environment to change	39. Demonstrating the opportunity
41. Understanding the Culture	41. Doing the Right Thing	40. Investing
42. Relationship timing – med, long	42. Communicating Regularly	41. They trust that we've got the supply chain
43. People vs Organisation	43. Starting to develop the relationship	42. Mutual respect
44. Reliability of systems and processes	44. Structuring the Relationship	43. Creating a positive environment to change
45. Organisation-to-organisation	45. Escalating issues & challenges	44. Starting to develop the relationship
46. Historical Personal Relationships	46. One to One vs Organisation	45. Escalating issues & challenges
47. Establishing Relationship boundary markers	47. Joint Business Planning	46. Exchanging Knowledge
48. Meeting Formally	48. Measuring	47. Managing Expectations
49. Starting to develop the relationship	49. Follow through on Promises	48. Aligning the relationship
50. Setting Common Goals	50. Establishing Relationship boundary markers	49. Reliability
51. One to One vs Organisation	51. Organisational Culture	50. Gesturing Goodwill & Benevolence
52. Reciprocating	52. Earning Trust	51. Socialising in the relationship
53. The strength of their conviction	53. Consistency	52. They trust that we're going to forecast the product and protect it
54. Joint Business Planning	54. Increasing Engagement	53. Strategic vs Transactional
55. Organisational Culture	55. Historic Actions	54. Organisation-to-

56. Common Set of Values

57. They trust that we'll be upfront and honest

58. Gesturing Goodwill & Benevolence

59. Exchanging Knowledge

60. Meeting Informally

61. Integrity

62. They trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery

63. Co-Creating

64. Earning Trust

65. Structuring the Relationship

66. Defining Values

67. Innovating

68. Developing organisational values

69. Communicating Internally

70. Escalating issues & challenges

71. Building Trust

72. How they deliver that message

73. Deflecting language to maintain personal trust

74. Having an exchange of

56. Leading & Modelling Trust Building

57. Exchanging Knowledge

58. Meeting Informally

59. Co-Locating

60. Developing Products

61. Dealing with People I like

62. Demonstrating the opportunity

63. Managing Expectations

64. Aligning the relationship

65. They trust that we'll be upfront and honest

66. Developing organisational values

67. Building Trust

68. Agreeing joint KPI's

69. Reliability

70. Meeting Formally

71. Integrity

72. They trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery

73. Developing People

74. Penetrating all levels

a good set of KPIs

organisation

55. Problem Solving

56. One to One vs Organisation

57. Establishing Relationship boundary markers

58. Historic Actions

59. Leading & Modelling Trust Building

60. They trust that we'll be upfront and honest

61. Integrity

62. Developing People

63. Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia

64. Degrees of transparency

65. Working in Partnership

66. Pro-active vs Re-active

67. Feeling let down or taken advantage of.

68. Measuring

69. Meeting Informally

70. Co-Locating

71. Building Trust

72. Penetrating all levels

73. Setting Common Goals

74. Common Set of Values

truth 75. Consistency 76. Co-Locating		75. Flexing Contact levels 76. Releasing Cost 77. Feeling Valued 78. Relationship timing - med_long 79. Trust between both parties 80. Shared Agenda 81. Makes doing business easy 82. Understanding the Culture 83. The strength of their conviction 84. Repairing Trust

Appendix 14: What suppliers say isn't working to develop trust and the relationship by level

The data corpus was analysed using a decile analysis based on the number of times a code was referenced in the transcripts. The ranked list was analysed for codes that offered a negative trust connotation. From the total of 165 codes a sample of 99 were interrogated from each level and the following emerged;

Org Level	Operations Level	Interpersonal level
1.Commitment to the relationship (also a +)	1..Behaving opportunistically	1.Reluctant attitude
2.Conflicting behaviours	2.Keeping an effective level vs relationship inertia	2.Conflicting needs
3.Contradicting	3.Commercial 'rough & tumble'	3.Commercial rough & tumble
4.Personal Bias (also a +)	4.Contracting trust	4.Posturing
5.Communicating Style(also a +)	Competing pressures	5.Eroding trust
6.Creating Mistrust	6.Elasticity of personal trust	6. Communicating style
7.Conflicting needs	7.Posturing	7.Knowing your stuff
8.Dealing with Conflict and vested interests	8.Conflicting needs	8.Behaving opportunistically
9.Behaving Opportunistically	9.Contradicting	9.Competing pressures
10.Conflicting attitudes	10.Conflicting actions	10.Conflicting actions
11.Knowing your stuff (also a +)	11. Eroding trust	11. Averting destruction
12. Conflicting actions	12. Averting destruction	12. Lacking desire & passion
13. Acting adversarial	13. Lacking desire & passion	13. Creating miss trust
14. Lacking agility	14. Creating mis-trust	14. Conflicting attitudes
15. Transacting business	15. Reluctant attitude	15. Organisational ambiguity
16. Emotional vs relational	16. Conflicting attitudes	16. Lacking agility
	17. Communicating style (also a +)	17. Destroying value
		18. Over dependent vs inter-

(cognitive) (also a +) 17. Behaving coercively 18. Commercial rough & tumble 19. Organisational ambiguity 20. Transactional vs strategic 21. Failing to keep promises 22. Conflicting pressures 23. Reliability of systems and processes.	18. Organisational ambiguity 19. Lacking agility 20. Destroying value 21. How they deliver the message 22. Moving people around 23. Over-dependent vs Inter-dependent 24. Deflecting language 25. Conflicting behaviours 26. Intellectually challenging 27. Behaving coercively 28. Balancing the commercials 29. Emotional vs Rational 30. Failing to keep promises 31. Getting too close 32. Feeling let down or taken advantage of 33. Transacting business	dependent 19. Intellectually challenging 20. Behaving coercively 21. Failing to keep promises 22. Getting too close 23. Feeling let down 24. Transacting business 25. Transactional vs Strategic 26. Contradicting 27. Personal basis, rather than corporate 28. How they deliver the message 29. Deflecting language
23 codes from a potential of 99	33 codes from a potential of 99	29 codes from a potential of 99

Appendix 15: What customers/buyers, say isn't working to develop trust and the relationship by level.

Org Level	Operations Level	Inter-personal level
1.Conflicting messages	**1.Conflicting messages**	1.Knowing your stuff (also a +)
2.Communication style (also a +)	**2.Communication style (also a +)**	2.Reliability of systems and processes
3.Dealing with conflict and vested interests	3.Conflicting behaviours	3.Competing pressures
4.Conflicting attitudes	4.Contradicting	4.Commercial rough and tumble
5.Contradicting	5.Conflicting actions	5.Personal basis, rather than a corporate one
6.Conflicting actions	6.Reliability of systems and processes	6.Consistency
7.Conflicting behaviours	7.Conflicting attitudes	7.Conflicting actions
8.Creating miss- trust	8.Personal basis, rather than on a corporate one.	8.Dealing with conflict – vested interests
9.Knowing your stuff	9.Balancing the commercials	9.Conflicting behaviours
10.Balancing the commercials	10.Knowing your stuff	10.Conflicting attitudes
11. Personal rather than on a corporate basis	11. Feeling let down or taken advantage of	11. Feeling let down, taken advantage of
12. Reliability of systems and processes	12. Competing pressures	12. Organisational ambiguity
13. Conflicting needs	13. Dealing with conflict - vested interests	13. Getting the basics wrong
14. Eroding trust	14. Organisational ambiguity	14. Transactional vs strategic
15. Organisational ambiguity	15. Getting the basics wrong	15. Volatility
16. Destroying value	16. Consistency	16. Conflicting messages
17. Transactional vs Strategic	17. Behaving coercively	
18. Getting the basics wrong	18. Commercial rough and tumble	

19. Reluctant attitude 20. Commercial rough and tumble 21. How they deliver the message 22. Posturing 23. Competing pressures 24. Consistency 25. Felling let down or taken advantage of 26. Lacking agility	19. How they deliver the message 20. Starting to erode trust 21. Destroying value 22. Reluctant attitude 23. Moving people around 24. Transacting business	
26 codes from a potential of 99	24 codes from a potential of 99	16 codes from a potential of 99

Appendix 16: What suppliers say is working to develop trust and the relationship by level

Org Level	Operations Level	Interpersonal level
1. Signalling Relationship Intentions;	1. Developing Products;	1. Signalling Relationship Intentions;
2. Clarity of Vision – Direction;	2. Understanding each other;	2. Organisational Culture;
3. Demonstrating the opportunity;	3. Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia	3. Communicating Internally
4. Benefitting from Mutual Value;	4. Commercial 'Rough&Tumble'	4. Positive Attitude
5. Strategic vs Transactional;	5. Determined the targets	5. Common Set of Values
6. Understanding each other;	6. Changing Outcomes	6. They trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery
7. Committing to the relationship;	7. Escalating issues & challenges	7. They trust that we've got the supply chain
8. Changing Outcomes;	8. Organisational Culture	8. Developing Products
9. Motivating the Org Relationship;	9. Bringing People & Functions together	9. Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia
10. Differing Levels;	10. Celebrating Success	10. Determined the targets
11. Differing Stakeholders;	11. Working in Partnership	11. Escalating issues & challenges
12. Empowering the decision & relationship;	12. Elasticity of Personal Trust	12. Co-Creating
13. Building Multi Layers;	13. Creating a positive environment to change	13. Re-aligning the relationship
14. Positive Attitude;	14. Co-Creating	14. Positive Relationship
15. Creating Credibility;	15. Understanding the Others reality	15. Pro-active vs Re-active
16. Joint Working;	16. Communicating Internally	16. They trust that we're going to forecast the product and protect it
17. Bringing People & Functions together	17. Bespoking Systems	

18. Contacting regularly	18. Re-aligning the relationship	17. Acting on first impressions
19. Working in Partnership	19. Gesturing Goodwill & Benevolence	18. Benefitting from Mutual Value
20. Balancing the Commercials	20. Strategic vs Transactional	19. Understanding each other
21. Empowering Internal Stakeholders	21. Positive Attitude	20. Changing Outcomes
22. People vs Organisation	22. Common Set of Values	21. Earning Trust
23. Historical Personal Relationships	23. Mutual respect	22. Celebrating Success
24. Communicating style	24. Signalling Relationship Intentions	23. Elasticity of Personal Trust
25. Positive Relationship	25. Meeting Formally	24. Understanding the Others reality
26. Understanding the Others reality	26. Improving Customer Satisfaction	25. Gesturing Goodwill & Benevolence
27. Understanding the Culture	27. Structuring the Relationship	26. Communicating style
28. Sharing Information	28. Communicating style	27. Understanding the Culture
29. Communicating Regularly	29. Building Multi Layers	28. Flexing Contact levels
30. Organisation-to-organisation	30. Contacting regularly	29. Joint Working
31. Structuring the Relationship	31. Paid for promise	30. Leading & Modelling Trust Building
32. Leading & Modelling Trust Building	32. They trust that we'll be upfront and honest	31. Collaborating
33. Degrees of transparency	33. Creating Credibility	32. Making oneself vulnerable
34. Open and honest	34. Positive Relationship	33. Knowing your stuff
35. Managing Expectations	35. They trust that we're going to deliver when we say we're going to delivery	34. Setting Common Goals
36. Creating a positive environment to change	36. Meeting Informally	35. Creating a positive environment to change
37. They trust that we're going	37. How they deliver that	

to deliver when we say we're going to delivery

38. Building Trust

39. Follow through on Promises

40. Historic Actions

41. Penetrating all levels

42. Relationship timing - med_long

43. Exchanging Knowledge

44. Simplification of the organisation

45. Knowing your stuff

46. Setting Common Goals

47. Re-aligning the relationship

48. Pro-active vs Re-active

49. Collaborating

50. Transacting Business

51. Aligning the relationship

52. Developing Products

53. Co-Creating

54. Doing the Right Thing

55. Integrity

56. Measuring

57. Failing to keep promises

58. Defining Values

message

38. Relationship timing - med_long

39. Pro-active vs Re-active

40. Co-Locating

41. Moving People Around

42. Deflecting language to maintain personal trust

43. Understanding the Culture

44. They trust that we've got the supply chain

45. Committing to the relationship

46. Problem Solving

47. Flexing Contact levels

48. Feeling Valued

49. Makes it friendly and fun

50. Doing the Right Thing

51. Reciprocating

52. Joint Working

53. Exchanging Knowledge

54. Integrity

55. Measuring

56. Agreeing joint KPI's

57. Getting the basics right

58. Balancing the

36. Bespoking Systems

37. Strategic vs Transactional

38. Mutual respect

39. Meeting Formally

40. Improving Customer Satisfaction

41. Structuring the Relationship

42. Building Multi Layers

43. Creating Credibility

44. Feeling Valued

45. Makes it friendly and fun

46. Exchanging Knowledge

47. Getting the basics right

48. Building Trust

49. Starting to develop the relationship

50 A good set of KPIs

51. Releasing Cost

52. Historic Actions

53. Differing Stakeholders

54. Degrees of transparency

55. Flexibility to react

56. Developing indispensability

57. Open and honest

59. Keeping an effective level vs relational inertia

60. Starting to develop the relationship

61. Socialising in the relationship

62. Joint Business Planning

63. Organisational Culture

64. Earning Trust

65. Meeting Informally

66. They trust that we've got the supply chain

67. Having an exchange of truth

68. Mutual Dependency

69. Investing

70. Increasing Engagement

71. Reliability of systems and processes

72. Adapting successfully

73. Knowing who's responsible

74. One to One vs Organisation

75. Developing organisational values

76. Bespoking Systems

77. Moving People Around

Commercials

59. Leading & Modelling Trust Building

60. Building Trust

61. Internal Ambassador

62. Emotional vs Rational-Cognitive

63. Failing to keep promises

64. Starting to develop the relationship

65. Getting too close

66. Feeling let down or taken advantage of.

67. A good set of KPIs

68. Importance of Face to Face

69. Dealing with People I like

70. Follow through on Promises

71. Collaborating

72. Transacting Business

73. Defining Values

74. Having an exchange of truth

75. Mutual Dependency

58. Reliability

59. Consistency

60. One to One vs Organisation

61. Bringing People & Functions together

62. Working in Partnership

63. Personal basis, rather than on a business basis

64. Contacting regularly

65. Paid for promise

66. They trust that we'll be upfront and honest

67. Meeting Informally

68. Relationship timing - med_long

69. Co-Locating

76. Shared Agenda		

Appendix 17: Customer / buyer; The top ten referenced negative elements to relational trust building. (including interview vignettes).

Each level was ranked and the top ten codes extracted to undertake initial analysis, sense checking and insight development; the following is the initial insights from the Customer Side of the dyad. The codes include a vignette from a respondent from the level and side of the dyad indicated in the table, this provides support and further validation to the code identified.

Table 30: The negative elements to relational trust building-customer/buyer		
Inter-Org Level (-)'s	Inter-Team/Ops (-)'s	Interpersonal (-)'s
1.Conflicting messages; "The first meeting was highly charged and adversarial. The second one was better. However the day after the meeting A slapped an early warning notice on us. It made me smile as it was a total disconnect and juxtaposition".(S.1.1.4) 2.Communication style (also represented as a rel +); "that strength of the conviction about what that looks like. And when you do challenge it and you get silence, generally speaking that says something as well. I mean, silence is a wonderful tool. When you're negotiating, silence is a killer. But when	1.Conflicting messages; "We seem to re-invent the wheel and lose the base knowledge, example; the vid conf room survey, pricing and installation done once and then repeated again for exactly the same room size. We may not get the same prices and it can fluctuate quite widely. Transparency of fixed and variable costs, we have a lack of consistency. (S.1.2.2.) 2.Communication style (also a +); "the way it came across is it was – the meeting was a, "We're telling you what we're doing	1.Knowing your stuff (also represented as a rel+); "We were initially told we were getting SME's on SharePoint (an ability issue) which wasn't the case. Trust was broken – the PM kept asking to see the evidence and the relationship became adversarial. Constant referral back to the contract". (S.1.3.1.) 2. Reliability of systems and processes; "But I can only speak on behalf of the generic team within here, and I think, you know, when you've got a line, and you've got a relationship with somebody,

you're expecting something back, not when you're challenging somebody deliberately to put them down, but actually asking a question and you struggle with an answer, that says you actually don't know what you're talking about sometimes and what you're reading off is a crib sheet".(P.1.1.1.)

3.Dealing with conflict and vested interests; "You should challenge us if you see us doing something that you don't think is right, but we are still going to challenge you on things". Probably managing that is the biggest thing, and getting people to step out of the emotion of the day. Sometimes it just does need them to sleep on it or leave it for a week and then we'll, "Okay, do you still think the same?" And that's from both sides".(Mo.1.1.)

4.Conflicting attitudes; "it's been a pretty poor relationship on that ground. They don't understand why we're asking for what we're doing, so … it's just been

with S". (P.1.2.3.)

3.Conflicting behaviours; "I think in the first meeting it was going to be a positive impact, whereas now it would be a negative impact, but with the decision being made, what can you do?.(P.1.2.3.)

4.Contradicting; "I call them a "pharmaceutical company"; they're calling themselves a "healthcare provider". (P.1.2.3.)

5.Conflicting actions; "The fallout from this is we have started to man mark and we are reluctant to say to A, "Ok you PM it". I think we are scared of them changing things and losing control as changes need to go through Q36, site change regulation. It also emanates from us being cautious to relinquish control, due to IT touching so many parts of the organisation". (S.1.2.2.)

6.Reliability of systems and processes;

"So, for the last three and a half weeks, I've just been saying quite clearly, "Give

sometimes you'd expect – certainly to be on a par with the rest of the market, and not be hearing things second-hand, or to see your stocks being depleted before you're aware that there's an issue".(P.1.3.1.)

3.Competing pressures;

"it may just be – I don't know – a commercial decision, as is made in big companies, where the price just doesn't work, and we're not selling it any more at that price, and that's totally understandable. I wouldn't say that that would ring true for every product". (P.1.3.1.)

4.Commercial rough and tumble;

"we had some strong reservations about, which resulted in a meeting which was normally quite positive and quite jovial in the sense of trying to explain to them why their strategy with that product really wouldn't work for us and would probably work against us really. So, it became quite heated and debateable from the outside really and I think we had a

transactional. It hasn't been that quality discussion."(S.1.2.)

5.Contradicting; "I'll go to a presentation at how their launching into, you know, the higher risk liability field and, you know, how they really want to be seen as this player, but actually that's great, but if down at local level they don't feel empowered to do that they're out of their comfort zone and they don't get, and they don't become, it doesn't move into that comfort zone because that's not what they're used to doing and suddenly to make them like high risk liability and they're a little bit afraid of that and what if they get it wrong and have a multi-million pound loss and then what's the boss over there going to say, well why are you writing that business and they say, "Well you told me I wanted to write high," you know, that kind of thing and I do, you know, that did happen, that did happen a few years ago, where they weren't able to deliver that, certainly

me the process; give me the process, the timescales and the accountability of each step". I still have no process and I don't know – and I'm saying, "Okay, you now have two things to do for me, you need to give me the first(?) things and tell me why it's taken three and a half weeks to get the process?" So, there's definitely something here and we're still trying to unpick it around why we seem to have a lack of – I don't know what we want to badge it as, maybe there's some unprofessionalism in there, maybe there's – too informal in there, maybe there's a legacy, a history, of lack of intent". (S.1.2.4.)

7.Conflicting attitudes;

"Since he moved on – he got promoted and moved to their London office – the relationship, on that part of the business, hasn't been the same. We don't get the pro-active responses. So we can send a risk into them, and you know, it falls into one of these black holes of never hearing from

three hour meeting. It went on for four hours and we didn't get off that agenda point". (P.1.2.3.)

5.Personal basis, rather than a corporate one;

"It doesn't physically descend to shouting but metaphorically-speaking (both laugh) there's quite a lot of shouting and shoving and pushing goes on, but as I say, that has to be divorced from the personal relationships that I have. So, if I have a particular problem, there are a number of people within A that I can send an email to and I can get action, as a result of having those personal relationships".(S.1.2.3.)

6.Consistency;

"Once the sale team moved on we are faced with & handed off to operations who we didn't know. It was literally a case of here one day gone tomorrow. It is important to have continuity of people". (S.1.2.2.)

7.Conflicting actions;

"The contract laid out what

not for us, you know, maybe they were able to do it at other offices around the country but they weren't able to do it for us and that didn't really work".(LR.1.1.)

6.Conflicting actions; "some people are absolutely doing the right thing for their position, but it could be almost 100% the wrong thing for the Group".(P.1.1.2.)

7.Conflicting behaviours; "I think A felt – I think you've got – the issue with A is clearly we've actually out – we've outsourced, in fact people here don't like that word, but you know, outsourced a lot of our IT service provision. A feel we've outsourced it and we're trying to do it ourselves as well".(S.1.1.1)

8.Creating miss- trust; "A slight concern is the potential for A to try and re-coup the loses from the initial contract".(S.1.1.3.)

9.Knowing your stuff; "How's she supposed to deliver a branded message? She's an out-and-out generic girl?

somebody, and we don't get the response – and when we do get responses, it's often actually a, "This is not one for us". So it's sort of going back to the old way of underwriting, is probably the feeling that – yeah, certainly the feeling I get, and the feeling, probably, that the other guys in the team do as well".(LR.1.2.)

8.Personal basis, rather than on a corporate one;

"You've already gone beyond that, so then we have to go out to the market and try and find more. They've had different people there at top level over the years, some better than others. Sometimes, I think when they go to organised…what shall we call them? Annual conferences, abroad maybe, they haven't conducted themselves in the manner you'd, perhaps, sometimes think you should".(P.1.2.2.)

9.Balancing the commercials;

"Why stretch P over more

was required from a compliance perspective. Sales seem ok, yet operations appear to push the boundaries and sometimes get caught out. This introduces a constant tension within the relationship. E M (A security) would go crazy and the non-contract people try and work outside of the system". (S.1.2.2.)

8.Dealing with conflict – vested interests; "Now, not all of the people in the team have those relationships too. So, in essence, there's a two-track relationship going on; the – what you might call the official contractual relationship just doesn't really move at all. It is very, very difficult with that relationship and much of the delivery is now done at the informal level using people's personal contacts to get work done on the QT".(S.1.2.3.)

9.Conflicting behaviours;

"I think in the first meeting it was going to be a positive

Struggles with it even more than J does. (Laughs) For me, the test for J is going to be the level of support he gets from his line management. If he doesn't get it, I don't know really what he's going to do". (P.1.1.1.)

10.Balancing the commercials; "The re-set to broaden out the capability within A, we need to see the extra resources and the acid test will be seeing the value".(S.1.1.3.)

projects? That makes us uncomfortable. Not at a working level, but back to that organisational bit again, it's the … why can't you get access to another resource? Why do you need to reuse existing ones and stretch them"?(S.1.2.3)

10.Knowing your stuff;

"Being more integrated behind the scenes "the towers". It's easy to expose the gaps".(S.1.2.1.)

impact, whereas now it would be a negative impact, but with the decision being made, what can you do"?(P.1.2.3.)

10.Conflicting attitudes;

"It's about an appetite, it's about wanting to write business, and it's about finding ways to do business, rather than finding ways not to do business".(LR1.2.)

Appendix 18: Supplier; The top ten referenced negative elements to relational trust building (including interview vignettes)

Each level was ranked and the top ten codes extracted to undertake initial analysis, sense checking and insight development; the following is the initial insights from the supplier side of the dyad. The codes include a vignette from a respondent from the level and side of the dyad indicated in the table, this provides support and further validation to the code identified.

Table 31; The negative elements to relational trust building-supplier		
Inter-Org Level (-)'s	Inter-Team/Ops (-)'s	Inter-Personal (-)'s
1.Commitment to the relationship (also represented as a rel +) "So, it meant that it always felt when you were talking to him that he was rushing round with not enough time in the day. So, then, trying to pin him down and have, like I say, a review meeting, was very difficult. And when you did, it almost felt like they were rushed because he had other things that he needed to do. So, my relationship with him in the first two years was, I would say, quite transactional".(AL.1.1) 2.Conflicting behaviours; even though we'd built this together target, there was a lot of individual category	1..Behaving opportunistically; "Well, that's right and they hadn't really been straight in the meeting about exactly what they'd ordered and we didn't have transparency of that at the time. So, it seemed to us at the time, that was a fair amount of stock and went, "Okay that's fine, not a problem", to realise, "Well hang on a moment, that's more than that, it's – you've actually ordered six months' worth of stock" so it went down a bit like a lead balloon really, when I came out to find what had been going on. I felt almost a bit stupid really that someone would do that and I suppose that then got on my goat a bit, so I then	1.Reluctant attitude: "one of the big issues that we have is risk aversion. So, when we get quotations from A, the quotations are heavily biased in favour of averting any risk to A. The risk is always placed on S, so it's S's responsibility to do X, Y, Z; never A's responsibility". (S.1.2.3.) 2.Conflicting needs: "while Sellafield do it, they do it very much in an engineering context" (A.1.2.5.) 3.Commercial rough & tumble: "not even service, sort of, underwriting favours, you know. We've had requests for, "We need you to keep the price the same, but I want to earn an extra five points'

skirmishes going on, a lot of requests for more margin or, "We're being fleeced" and all that stuff, so still very, very tactical as opposed to seeing the bigger holistic, strategic picture". (BE.1.1.)

3.Contradicting;

"Then often it's some of the behaviours that other people demonstrate in the business that like throw a total curve ball or cause issues. (Laughter) We just agreed all of this, and then whilst G and B were sitting in a meeting to discuss rebates with them, everybody was smiling, everyone was happy, and then exactly the same time they were trying to take about six months' worth of stock out of our warehouse". (M.1.1.1.)

4.Personal Bias (also represented as a rel +)

"And the previous Business Developer that looked after them, lived relatively close to them, and also loved mountain biking. So, they would, outside of work, often go away, play football together, and actually do a

did call D and say, "Look, I'm really, really disappointed with what's gone on here because it's made me look a prat within my own business and yes, it leaves a bad taste in my mouth" (M.1.2.)

2.Keeping an effective level vs relationship inertia;

"It appears (Y) are developing the role of assurance / command and control". (A.1.3.1.)

3.Commercial 'rough & tumble';

"brings its own devils, because all of a sudden, the broker, then, wants this much service compared to what they did before. Or, not even service, sort of, underwriting favours, you know. We've had requests for, "We need you to keep the price the same, but I want to earn an extra five points' commission." Well, we don't have that in our rate. "Well, come on, we supported you on X, Y, Z". (AL.1.2.)

4.Contracting trust;

commission." Well, we don't have that in our rate. "Well, come on, we supported you on X, Y, Z". (Al.1.2.1.)

4.Posturing: "there are agendas being played out here because the CSITS team cast the net so wide, dive into levels of minutiae that arguably that you could say to me as Service Director, "Why the heck do you need to know about that or get involved in it?" because it is just – it's below the weeds". (A.1.2.5.)

5.Eroding trust: "the initial contact about this was very negative from the P point of view". (M.1.2.2.)

6.Communicating style: "whereas with Eamonn, if I get a call, and Eamonn's not happy with something, I know it's something really has gone wrong, or they really need a favour from us". (Al.1.2.1.)

7.Knowing your stuff: "he was quite surprised at that because he had very much a supplier relationship that says, "Well, I'll tell you what

lot of mountain biking. So, there was an element of a personal relationship, as well as a business relationship. My female BD, now, is a fantastically capable, if not more so capable, than the last, but doesn't have those similar personal interest to C. Which, ultimately, whether you like it or not, in the real world, does have an impact on your ability to relate and build those relationships".(AL.1.1.)

5.Communicating Style(also represented as a rel +)

"Sometimes I feel if things maybe go into a bit of a black hole".(M.1.1.2.)

6.Creating Mistrust;

"I'll tell you what doesn't work between our two organisations, and that's the mismatch and alignment of our business drivers. We're a private sector organisation challenged with quarterly results, you know, half year targets. They … we say they work on glacial speeds. So … so, their governance is so unwieldy and so

"historically we've been drawn back and said, "Well, this is what it says in the contract, this is what's funded in the contract, this is the only thing that you can do in the contract," even if it's wrong what it says in the contract, we've got to be able to do what's in the contract". (A.1.2.7.)

5.Competing pressures;

"Commercial stream (act as and really are procurement) is separate from delivery stream. This makes life harder as it adds time, complexity and process. For example; Set up programme team – create unnecessary governance to enable inclusion of the PE's – sign off levels within IT are quite low, so needs to go into the system. This can take 6 months and stymies progress and the relationship. It took 9 months worth of conversations and proceses to upgrade from windows 7 to 10 – governance prevents agile working".(A.1.2.1.)

6. Elasticity of personal

to do and you go away and do it". And I'm saying, "Well, no, don't just tell us, let's work together on what the requirement is". We've got a hell of a lot of expertise in the organisation that we can bring in and his first comment was, "Well, will the contract allow that?" (A.1.2.7.)

8.Behaving opportunistically: "I think that's lost a lot of loyalty as well because they're just looking at price now whereas before it was a lot more about consistency of supply".(M.1.2.2)

9.Competing pressures:" "what I found very, very odd about Sellafield is that within their own team the service people very rarely talk to the infrastructure people who very – architects – who very rarely talk to the programme delivery people and whatever and they're not just – they're not joined up as a result". (A.1.2.6.)

10.Conflicting actions; "So, it seemed to us at the time, that was a fair amount of

difficult to get through, it can take years to get things approved". (A.1.1.1)

7.Conflicting needs;

"And in their business – they've got different business needs, so whilst it all sounded a good idea, it didn't work out very well to have them tied into that relationship at that point in time".(A.1.1.1.)

8.Dealing with Conflict and vested interests;

"Loads in the first six months; we were served notice on at least three categories that literally within a couple of weeks of us agreeing the plan, one of the category directors in the retailer served notice on an own label area to the sales director in the business and each of the three big – and there's lots more but each of the key areas where collectively at the top to top level we'd agreed that we should strategically align, we collectively resolved those three areas but there were areas where again were less important to both businesses

trust;

I don't ever play by the rules. I – no, that's wrong. I do play by the rules but I know when to stretch them a bit".(A.1.1.1.)

7.Posturing;

"So, B the buyer was then saying, "Oh," you know, we use the term, it is unfortunate, oh B's thrown his toys out of the pram, you know, kind of thing, you know, which Beth has to deal with face to face sometimes as well as via email and yes. So, it's like oh B's playing up kind of thing (laughs) and he does get quite vocal about, "Oh you've let us down," and all of this and there is an argument to say, yes sometimes we do supply a buyers, it's a bit of a frustration, we can't always have 100% stock in all the time like any organisation you have your problems and yes, they don't seem to be that forgiving on those". (M.1.2.3.)

8.Conflicting needs;

"The central team that

stock and went, "Okay that's fine, not a problem", to realise, "Well hang on a moment, that's more than that, it's – you've actually ordered six months' worth of stock" so it went down a bit like a lead balloon really, when I came out to find what had been going on". (M.1.2.2.)

that you just allowed the decision to run its natural course". (BE.1.1.)

9. Behaving Opportunistically;

"Well, I think what I was saying earlier about some of that kind of trading behaviour, because it comes across as do you honestly think we don't know what you're doing? It does, it just makes you feel a little bit like they're taking the piss, really". (M.1.1.1.)

10. Conflicting attitudes;

"And the people leading that discussion are commercial only. They come from procurement. They don't – they came to meet with us to get an idea or whatever and they didn't bring any IT or delivery people with them. They just brought the commercial leads. When – so, you're not actually asking what the business needs, you're driving it all from a contract and a … financial perspective. You're missing a dimension by just looking at it in that – but that's how they do

manage the four PEs from a contractual assurance perspective still see us as delivering to the governance that was preconceived when the contract initially won. So, there's a bit of a dichotomy there. Do I focus my attentions to T to the detriment of the central team because we know our direction of travel is with S, our strategic intent is with S, or do I spread myself to both"? (A.1.2.5.)

9. Contradicting;

"the initial contact about this was very negative from the P point of view. The difficulty is, from the business development team point of view, it's positive; they're suddenly getting access to this great product and it's fantastic, but from a wholesale point of view, just suddenly having this product taken away from them, so it's negative. So it was a very difficult meeting and it was very much split down the middle". (M.1.2.2.)

10. Conflicting actions;

"But I think again that's

everything". (A.1.1.1.)	where the – I don't think that's quite in place just yet. I mean we've seen a few occasions where, you know, we've had direction from J but R's almost sort of vetoed it in a way and again, yeah, it's, yeah, I mean obviously, you know, if C was to put something in place and I didn't agree with it, I'd talk to him about it and try and understand what the background was. And I'd make my concerns, I'd air my concerns, and then we'd agree the way forward because, you know? But it doesn't seem to work quite the same way! For them with R and J at the moment, you know, it's more, you know? "No, no, we'll do it like this." "But J said you'll do …" "No, no, no." (A.1.2.3.)	

Appenidx 19: Moving from first cycle to second cycle coding:- building the bridge

Prior to moving to second cycle coding the following insights have been developed and verified from the first cycle coded data corpus.In this section the move from first cycle to second cycle coding is explored and discussed. In parallel and as an output of analysis at this level; three research partner feedback sessions were under taken. This enabled two distinct interventions at this stage;

1. Analysis of a discrete relationship from within the data corpus looking at both sides of the relationship. Once again reflecting what's working and what's not. This allowed a cross relationship analysis and insight generation.

2. Undertaking a feedback session/workshop, including both buyer and seller representatives (often the same people that participated in the actual interviews) The sharing of the analysis, and insights in interactive workshop format providing the forum and opportunity to objectively reflect on the analysis and insight generated. The workshop format with research partners provided further third party validation of the first cycle coding. It also provided directional input into the accuracy and impartiality of the analysis , insights and findings.

What customers say they need to develop trust and the relationship (+)	
Organisational Level	Intent, vision, understanding and positive mutual change.
Group / Team	Activation and working together for mutual value
Inter-personal	Ways of working both; affective and cognitive to deliver value benefits
What suppliers say they need to develop trust and the relationship (+)	
Organisational Level	Signalling and demonstrating the mutual opportunity and intent to the relationship. The understanding of each other at a strategic level. Commitment that motivates the relationship at this level.
Group / Team	Understanding each other, within an organisational culture that brings people and functions together through partnership working. Celebrating the success of positive 'changed outcome' determined through relationship targets

Inter-personal	Signalling relationship intentions through positive attitude and relationships supported through their trust in our ability to deliver. An organisational culture and common set of values ensures the relationship benefits from a pro-active approach and mutual value.
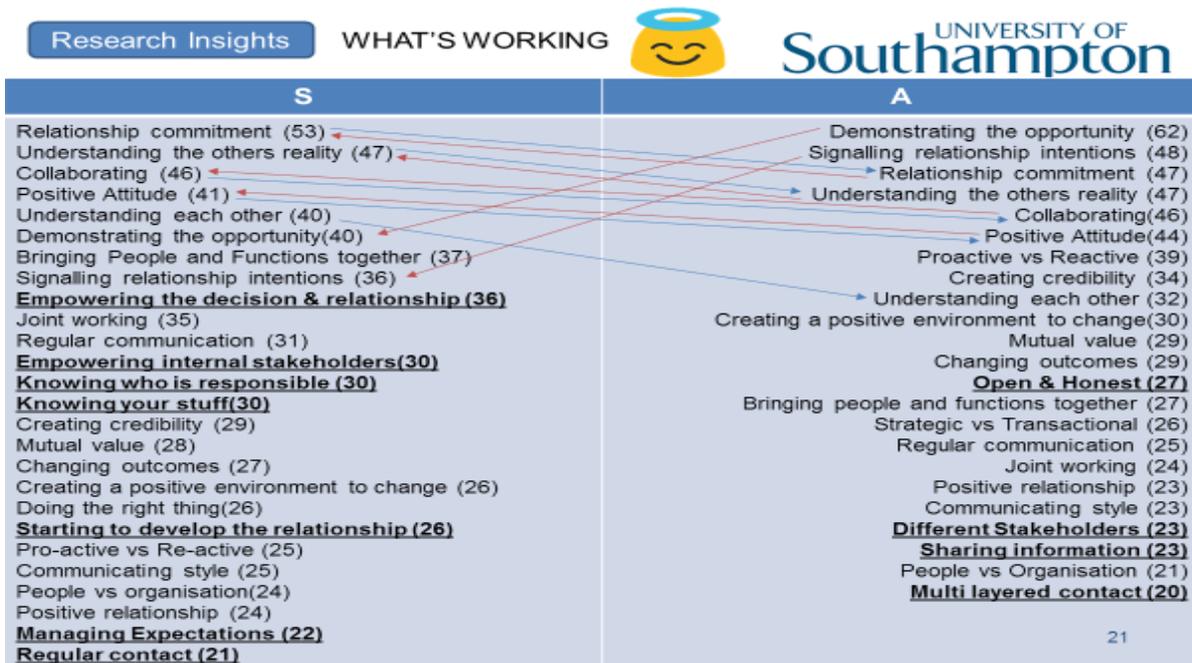
Two key research partner's data analysed based on first cycle level. The following charts highlight the research specific insights generated. These focused around; what's working and what's not between both sides of the relationship. This provided an opportunity through research partner cross dyad feedback to validate the first cycle coding.

This was undertaken at this phase of the research are presented with narrative to explore and explain the insights generated. The slide focuses on the overall critical incidents that are working positively in the relationship between both sides. The first cycle codes have been ranked by frequency which can be seen in the brackets next to each code. In this case the S = the customer side of the relationship and the A = the supplier side.

The first cycle codes that have been highlighted indicate a first cycle code referenced on one side of the dyad, however not on the other i.e. Empowering the decision and relationship on the customer side and open and honest on the supplier side.

The first indications of; intention, opportunity and commitment. The cognitive and affective nature of the codes i.e. Affective – Positive attitude, understanding each other, understanding each other's reality and cognitive – demonstrating the opportunity, collaborating and relational intent.
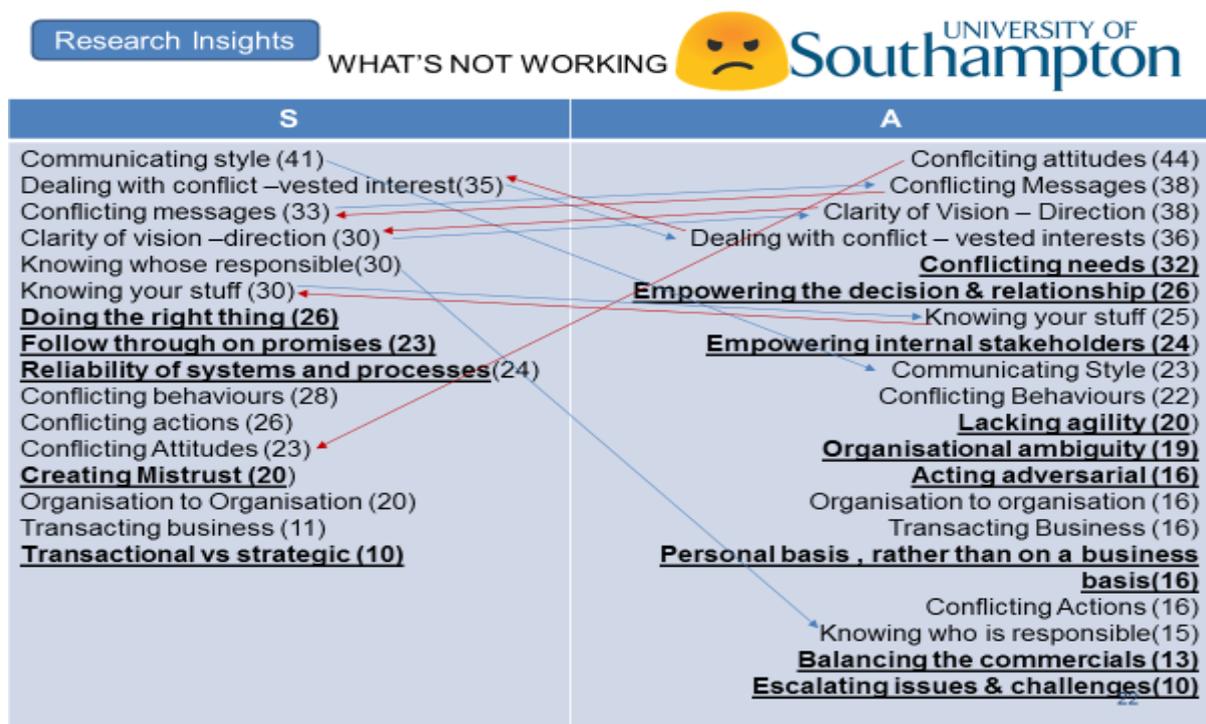
The above slide focuses on the overall critical incidents that aren't working in the relationship between both sides. The first cycle codes have been ranked by frequency which can be

seen in the brackets next to each code. In this case the S = the customer side of the relationship and the A = the supplier side. The first cycle codes that have been highlighted indicate a first cycle code referenced on one side of the dyad, however not on the other i.e. Doing the right thing on the customer side and conflicting needs on the supplier side.

The first indications of; dissonance and communication starting to surface on both a cognitive and affective nature.
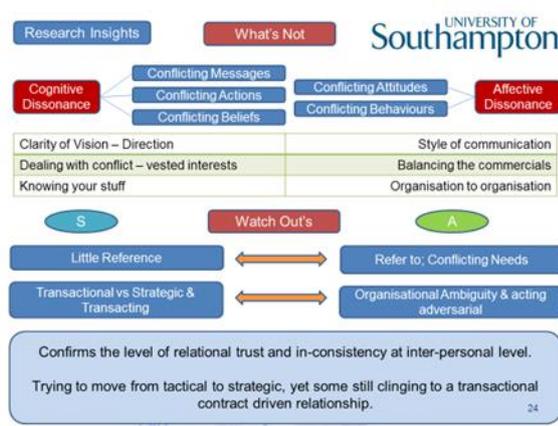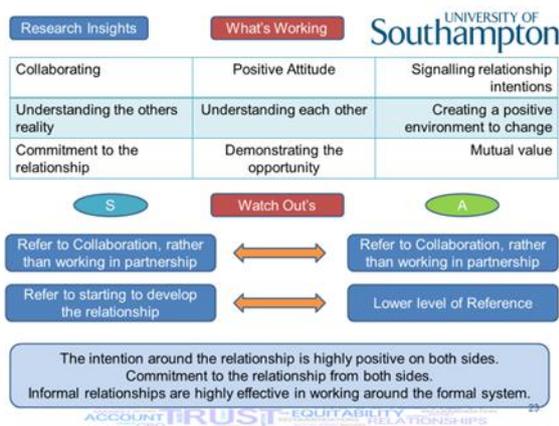
Appendix 19.2. Research partner two; the actual slides from the research partner feedback workshops

The actual slides used from the second of the two research partner feedback workshops undertaken at this phase of the research is presented with narrative to explore and explain the insights generated. The slide focuses on the overall critical incidents that are working positively in the relationship between both sides. The first cycle codes have been ranked by frequency which can be seen in the brackets next to each code. In this case the P = the customer side of the relationship and the M = the supplier side.
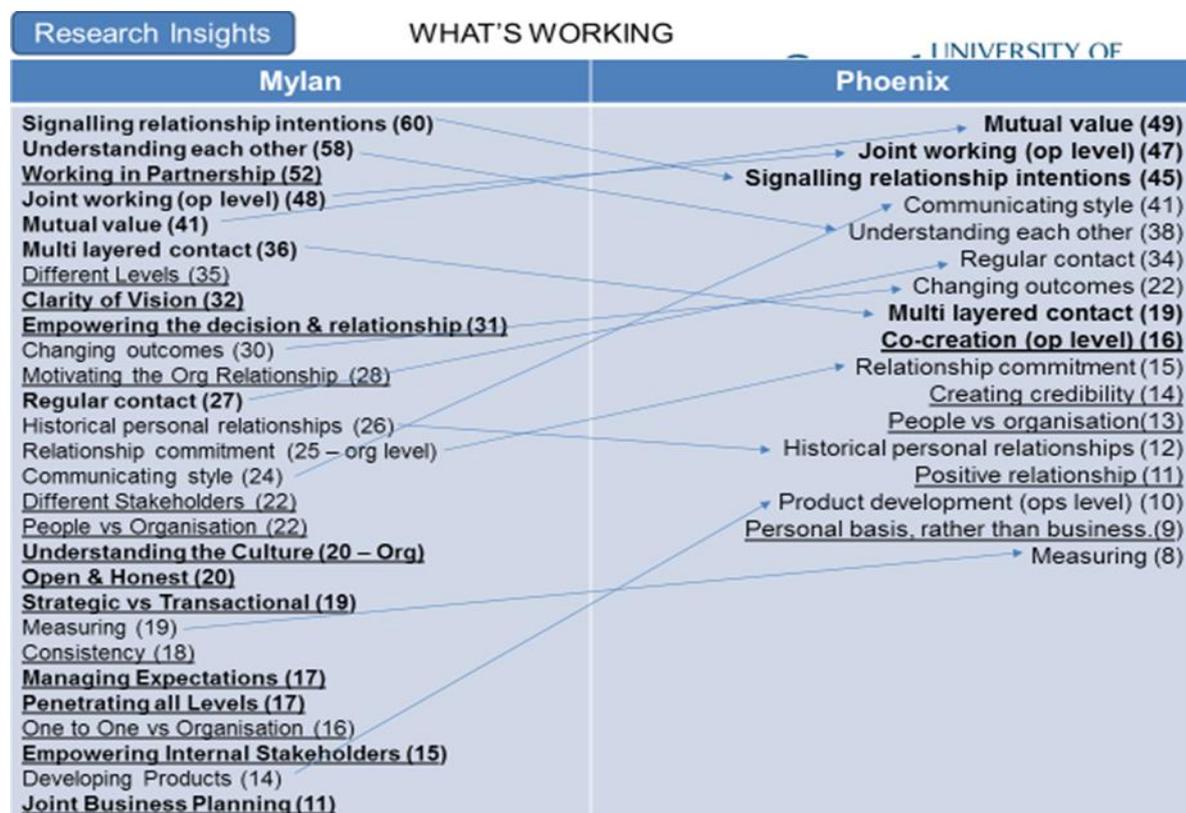
The first cycle codes that have been highlighted and underlined indicate a first cycle code referenced on one side of the dyad, however not on the other i.e. Co-creation (op level) on the customer side and Working in partnership on the supplier side.

The first indications of; intention, mutual opportunity, joint working (ops level) and communication. The cognitive and affective nature of the codes i.e. Affective – understanding each other, regular contact and cognitive – demonstrating the opportunity, multi-level contact, joint working and relational intent.

Mylan	Phoenix
Conflicting Messages (40)	Communicating style (41)
Clarity of Vision – Direction (32)	**Conflicting messages (33)**
Contradicting (28)	**Generic vs Branded**
Conflicting Behaviours (28)	**Clarity of vision –direction (28)**
Flexibility to react (28 –ops level)	Balancing the commercials (24)
Reliability of systems & processes (28 – ops-personal levels)	Flexibility to react (22)
	Reliability of systems and processes (20)
Communicating Style (24)	**Conflicting behaviours (15)**
Creating Mistrust (22)	**Conflicting actions (14)**
Behaving Opportunistically (21)	Re-aligning the relationship (11)
Consistency (18)	Feeling let down or taken advantage of (9)
Re-aligning the relationship (14)	Posturing (9)
Conflicting Actions (12)	Consistency (8)
Emotional vs Rational Cognitive (11)	Getting the basics wrong (7)
Posturing (7)	Organisational ambiguity (6)
Knowing your stuff (8 –ops level)	What they actually say.(6)
Behaving Coercively (7)	

The above slide focuses on the overall critical incidents that aren't working in the relationship between both sides. The first cycle codes have been ranked by frequency which can be seen in the brackets next to each code. In this case the P = the customer side of the relationship and the M = the supplier side. The first cycle codes that have been highlighted and underlined indicate a first cycle code referenced on one side of the dyad, however not on the other i.e. Balancing the commercials, feeling let down or taken advantage of on the customer side and contradicting, creating mistrust, behaving opportunistically on the supplier side.

The first indications of; dissonance through conflicting messages, contradicting, consistency (in this context refers to a lack of) and the style of communication starting to surface the effects of both cognitive and affective in the relationship.

Left slide:

Research Insights	What's Working	UNIVERSITY OF Southampton
Mutual Value Creation	Joint Working	Signalling from both sides positive relationship intentions
Understanding each other	Multi layered Contact	Historic Personal Relationships
Commitment to the relationship	Regular Contact	Measurement Framework

Watch Out's

M		P
No Reference to Co-creation	⟷	Refer to Co-creation
Refer to Working in Partnership	⟷	No Reference to Working in Partnership

The relationship is currently in an affective stage, based on affective trust. Recent initiatives have demonstrated a cognitive trust based approach which proved effective, yet not without challenge.

Right slide:

Research Insights		What's Not	UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Conflicting Messages
Cognitive Dissonance — Conflicting Actions — Conflicting Beliefs
Conflicting Attitudes — Conflicting Behaviours — Affective Dissonance

Clarity of Vision – Direction	Style of communication
	Balancing the commercials
Branded vs Generic	Flex to react
	Empowerment
	Reliability of systems and processes

Watch Out's

M		P
No Reference	⟷	Refer to; Organisational ambiguity Feeling let down
Refer to Opportunistic & Coercive Behaviour	⟷	No Reference
Refer to Emotional vs Rational	⟷	No Reference

Confirms the emotional / affective position of Phoenix. Trying to move from tactical to strategic. Mylan feeling this development/change as they move more cognitive and strategic.

The bridging process provided an objective validation to the first cycle coding and the insights generated from the first cycle stage of the research. It provided directional input into the second cycle stage with the following areas emerging;

Code grouping coupled with referenced frequency in the bridging process provided initial insight into the impact of dissonance in the relationship through;

- Conflicting messaging, attitudes, behaviours

- Conflicting values, beliefs and commitment

- Contradicting

- Dealing with conflict and vested interests
- Clarity of vision
- Knowing your stuff
- Communication style
- Reliability of systems and processes
- Empowerment

- Flex to react

The key area to emerge as the promoter of relational trust between the dyads, especially at organisational level is signalling relational intent. A positive agent of relational trust development, however one of the potential route causes of dissonance manifested at all levels in slightly different ways. This manifestation occurs when the intention (as yet intangible trust in nature) moves to activation and becomes tangible trust in the relationship. The threshold or leap of faith (Mollering 2002) has been traversed and both sides feel the effect positively or negatively, from trusting each other to deliver on the intent. This is a

strategic trust pivot point in the relationship, as a failure to make the intention a reality to the expectations of either side starts to sow the seeds of dissonance in the dyad. Communication of the intentions and their performance progress up and down and between the relational dyad is important in the both style and frequency.

- Signalling Relational intent

- Communication (style)

- Commitment to the relationship (both positive and negative)

- Mutual commercial benefit
- Collaborating
- Positive attitude
- Creating a positive environment to change
- Demonstrating the opportunity
- Understanding the others reality
- Understanding each other
- Joint working
- Multi level contact
- Regular contact
- Measurement framework

The emergence of codes grouping around dissonance (cognitive and affective) influencing the relationship positively or negatively is a key theory to take into the second cycle. The additional emerging theory where codes group is the interaction of; intention, relational ability, credibility, interdependence and mutual value benefit / creation.

Appendix 20: Inter-organisational level the most important factors to each side of the relationship at this level. (based on times refenced with supporting vignettes)

Table 25: Inter-organisational level the most important to each side (based on times refenced)	
Customer/Buyer	Supplier
Inter-Org Level (+)'s	Inter-Org Level (+)'s
1. Signalling Relationship Intent; "*We are trying to re-set the relationship making it more collaborative*". (S.1.1.3.) 2. Demonstrating the opportunity;"*That kind of one event, that seemed to demonstrate to them that there was this opportunity to write good stuff with us and that it wasn't just a treading water arrangement and that just seems to have been built on and escalated. I think there were, there were probably two events I think in the same year*". (L.1.1.) 3. Clarity of vision – direction; "*And it was really clear in that three year deal structured as to, "Okay, so what do we expect our turnover with them to be at the end of year one, two, and three? And what will the cost prices associated with that, what will the quality be, what will the service be?" And we worked up a – it wasn't detailed in terms of documents and documents, it wasn't a full contract but in three or four pages it really succinctly got to the point of, "Okay, what is it that we're both going to do from both our sides?" And I suppose we developed a reputation for delivering to them*".(Mo.1.1.1) 4. Understanding each other; "*You buy into the other strategy because you're never going to win it unless you're in it. If you want to influence it, it's*	1.Signalling Relationship Intentions: "*Look, look what we can do," and I've said it openly people, senior people in (x), that for me personally to see some of this going forward after five years of, you know, banging a drum about what they need to do, it's refreshing and very positive. And that, in turn, translates, I hope, through me eventually to a team around me who will be equally motivated to keep the fight going*". (A.1.1.1) 2.Clarity of vision – direction: "*So, there was clear sharing of targets right through the piece and there was a common goal in the early stages*". (BE.1.1.) 3.Demonstrating the opportunity."*That was shown fantastically well when we had our last review meeting, which was about a month ago, where I started to try and poke and prod around C's ambitions for his business and what his plans were". (AL.1.1.) 4.Benefiting from mutual value; "*It's about using relationships to positive effect*". (A.1.1.1) 5.Strategic vs Transactional; "*Sitting down with that broker and talking around, 'Okay, so how's the business doing? How you were going to plan, in terms of the' – that will be*

no use trying to do it from outside the walls, is it" .(P.1.1.1)

5. Benefiting from mutual value; "*They demonstrated, you know, rather than just standing up saying, "Hey, we're A, we've got a 20,000 offices and 50,000 people or whatever," they actually just stood up and said, "Look, hi, we're A," pretty quickly, but then moved into, "Look, this is the kind of innovation we're doing with other people, this is what we're doing," and showed it to us, "and these are suppliers we work with, here's Siemens, here's SAP, and look, they can do this and they can do that," and they did a demonstration. That was a great way to do it".* (S.1.1.1)

6. Commitment to the relationship; "*We are starting to develop a more collaborative relationship even within the current contract constraints. Agreement to move out of SAA and re-set the contract with A for another three years . Even within the contact extention we see potential to re-set the relationship*". (S.1.1.3.)

7. Empowering the decision and relationship*;" I think what did happen also was that on the back of these couple of wins the person who was kind of driving the sales relationship at A they did, you know, they did introduce people into the office, they do come into the office. We're quite an open organisation as far as, you know, our insurer partners, we do allow them to come in and, you know, just talk relatively freely on the shop floor, for want of a better word, you know, we quite encourage that. We encourage those relationships to be built and formed, in quite an informal way*".(LR.1.1.1)

8. Understand the others reality; "*Unfortunately, we thought we would have a direct relationship , however SAA want back in, yet only for a year.*

more where I fit in, alongside my Branch Manager, to have those high-level strategic conversations*".(AL.1.1.)*

6.Understanding each other; "*When it comes to some of the business interaction, they have differing views on many things, as is fair. But also, you know, in a real partnership, a true partnership, you can say, 'No,' on both sides and everybody just moves on without it being an issue*".(M.1.1.1.)

7.Commitment to the relationship; "*We held a Business Innovation and Technology day at P where we brought together X, the Y IT organisation, G's IT organisation, and the transformation programme – the S's business transformation programme – so we weren't just talking to the IT people, we were talking to the business leads*". (A.1.1.1)

8.Changing outcomes;; *"It's like a double-edged sword. It's good for us as a business, and we were driven towards doing it. It's good for them because they now do have this reduced distribution that is going to support them with future launches and other stuff, as well as the portfolio now. But they have, also, seen an impact from a fiscal perspective".* (M.1.1.1)

9.Differing levels; "*We agreed a mechanism of targeting individual categories, so six businesses, probably about 18 different categories within those six businesses and we agreed that we'd manage it at a board level and review it on a regular basis with individual trading directors on a category level, individual sales directors and category directors within our business and then quarterly review it at an exec level".* (BE.1.1.)

So, this leaves the contract still with SAA , yet us trying to forge a direct relationship".(S.1.1.3)

9. Motivating the organisational relationship; *"It's all about identifying and solving issues together and we absolutely prioritise the most important issues rather than brush the important issues under the carpet, and deal with the ones that are easy to deal with, which is a tendency, (laughing) in a lot of leadership teams that was our tendency before that"*.(LR.1.1.)

10. Positive Attitude; *"We are starting to develop a more collaborative relationship even within the current contract constraints* "Respondent S.1.1.3.

11. Changing outcomes; *"It grew exponentially our Indian meals business with what we'd put in place, and I can't remember the exact number but eventually we got to a meal business with them worth about £60 Million and it started out about £15 Million"*.(Mo.1.1)

12. Joint working; *"involved one of the guys who places business and manages a client relationship, you know, working closely with them"*. Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

13. Communication Style; *"We tend to have one about every three… I wouldn't say it's a formalised one like we've got to have every three months or once a quarter"*. Respondent: P.1.1.1.

14. Contacting regularly; *"We meet formally, informally and frequently"*. Respondent: S.1.1.4.

15. Creating a positive environment to change*: "I think there's been a change of management and personnel over there, which has had an impact, probably one individual in ... one individual at this level, but actually, a few other individuals then at the lower down level"*. Respondent: LR.1.1.1.

10.Motivation the org level relationship; *"This was a cohesive story, this is how we're going to take you on your journey to transform you and to support your business transformation, this is what we can do from a digital perspective to enable you to transform and accelerate decommissioning"*. (A.1.1.1)

11.Differing Stakeholders; *"I guess on kind of other levels, you occasionally get, you know, some direct kind of emotional behaviour, if you like. So, you get a fair amount of that from B T, one of the buyers there, you get a fair amount of that from D. H McV from X is part of that group as well"*.(M.1.1.1)

12.Empowering the decision & relationship; *"S have brought in some new blood, e.g. G, who is a … he's a challenging individual, he's a very bright guy, but it's refreshing. He has a lot to offer in terms of stirring things up and G's brought in a new Service Director who is very refreshing, faces off to P H, and ceding a few of these positive forward thinking individuals is helping to break through the barrier that was the Y team"*. (A.1.1.1.)

13.Building Multi Layers; *"But, I actually see my Business Developer taking care more of the transactional part of the relationship. So, linking in with the team leader of the account execs and the handlers, bringing the underwriters in to see them. When it then comes to the quarterly review meetings, she will be heavily involved in preparing the data, the MI, for those meetings"*. (AL.1.1.)

14.Positive Attitude; *"I communicated out to ours and we all came together and said, "Look, the aspiration is that we'll grow to*

	£100 million in this particular year and we'll start the basis of a much more strategic relationship and build more trust in to each other's businesses".(BE.1.1)

15.Creating Credibility; "*You could hear – you could feel the recognition for what we were trying to do and we'd brought in partners like Siemens and SAP into the room as well, and the positive energy and momentum that was gathered through that one day, it was just, it was really – it was a pleasure to be part of*".(A.1.1.1)

16.Joint Working; "*Actually sitting down and talking about how could we move things forward even further*". (AL.1.1.) |
| So What!

The key findings;

1. Intent / vision understanding

2. Positive mutual change | So What!

The key findings;

1. Establishing the mutual opportunity as a relational intention.

2. Strategic approach based on an understanding of each other, demonstrating relationship commitment.

3. Increased penetration, leading to changed outcomes that motivate the relationship at an organisational level. |

Appendix 21: Inter-team/operations level antecedents based on times referenced

Table 26: Inter-team/ops level antecedents based on times referenced	
CUSTOMER / BUYER	SUPPLIER
Inter-Team/operations (+)'s	Inter-Team/operations (+)'s
1. Joint working; "*Good collaboration between us to put in new desk tops. We worked this out between service ops and A to make it happen*". (S.1.2.2.) 2. Benefiting from mutual value; "*It's a mixture of the different selling arms. So, you know, Nk, PSUK, R, and then, obviously, from M's side, the people there. They, obviously, don't go around selling it into pharmacy. That was our, kind of, job, but, obviously, they'll do advertising, make awareness*". (P.1.2.2.) 3. Understanding each other; "*They know and understand L R, and what we want, how we work, and what we're looking for, and that goes an awful long way as well, if they understand our needs, and what we want from the relationship, then that makes our job a lot easier*".(LR.1.2.) 4. Motivating the organisational relationship; "*We did recognise this achievement at our monthly meeting as a success. Our meetings are now at a level where we bring cake, etc*". (S.1.2.1.) 5. Contacting regularly; "*I don't know, probably about three, four times a year. Beth, I see every month. This year, we've already been down to their premises for a meeting down there. So, you get to meet the people sitting at their desks and, you know, we've had a walk round and chatted to everybody*".(P.1.2.2) 6. Empowering the decision and relationship; "*It's not just all channelled through B, there's her bosses, her line managers or people – other*	1.Developing Products; "*Product launch really that went so well that we supported them almost exclusively on to certain areas and we made a really, really good job of it as a team really*". (M.1.2.) 2.Understanding each other; "*If we hadn't managed to get C out of his office, into a nice restaurant, and get him a bit more relaxed with us, get to hear about his kids, get him to feel like, "I know these people, I trust them, I want to share my business goals with them," we might not be having those kinds of conversations*". (AL.1.2.) 3.Keeping an affective level vs relational inertia; "*I think with P, what I generally feel is because the relationship is there, they do look to buy across our whole portfolio; they certainly don't cherry pick with M, so again that drives that relationship and business partnership really*".(M.1.2.) 4. Commercial 'Rough & Tumble: 5.Determined the targets; "*It culminated in a series of meetings that initially determined the targets of the individual categories and the individual businesses*".(BE.1.1.) 6.Changing outcomes; "*And I think the business is also pulling at them saying, "Come on," you know, "we need this stuff too. If we had this we could accelerate this," for example, and you know, if … and there is*

account managers who if B's not there, we can work with and it has come with some challenges".(P.1.2.3)

7. Communicating style; "*It was something we were able to do, on the whole, over the phone. I think we did have one of their underwriters come in here at one point, just to sit down and go through everything, and see what they needed to do; but on the whole, we were able to do it via email, and just an awful lot of phone calls, and certainly a lot of phone calls as it approached the deadline".(LR.1.2.)*

8. People vs Organisation; "*Personal relationships work really well on a personal level and the historic ones work really well". Respondent: S.1.2.2.*

9. Positive Attitude; "*The relationship started to grow around what we could and could not do".(S.1.2.2.)*

10. Changing outcomes; "*They have been to being a bit more, shall we say, ethical, because, obviously, they're going to be dealing with ethicals, which is, you know, all the flu vaccines. We're doing a programme with them on that for this year for the flu". Respondent: P.1.2.2.*

11. Differing stakeholders:. "So, B has asked all the stakeholders, "We need a meeting", and we've got everybody together".(P.1.2.2.)

12. Reliability of systems and processes; "*We changed the PM and tech resources its now ok, however fingers were burnt and when the next one comes along I will be more sceptical an cautious getting SME's and ensuring A are doing what they say". Respondent: S.1.3.1.*

13. Bringing people and functions together; "*The relationship with the application management*

that sort of thing. So again, you know, this move to Windows 7 was seen as a – and rightly so – a major, major win. It was seen as a major win by (Y), and certainly a major win by ourselves". (A.1.2.3.)

7.Escalating issues and challenges; *"Let's construct some process around what we do, escalation seems to own and run the agenda, rather than joint planning".(A.1.2.1.)*

8.Organisational culture; "*This has brought them quite close together because R now has to deal a lot more with J and B, and D's involved in both sides of the camps so in a lot of ways". (M.1.2.2)*

9.Earning trust;"*Yes the commercials need to work but actually the relationship needs to be there that we can trust them, that they want to support us".(M.1.2.)*

10.Bringing people and functions together; "*You feel about how we engage and what we deliver and how we deliver it because I want to make it the best it can be,*" but also, you know, the recognition that it's legitimate for me to challenge them on their behaviours and say to them, "Actually you're not doing this particularly well".(A.1.2.2)

11.Celebrating success; "*We took the opportunity to take C and T out for a lunch, because we'd pushed them over the £2 million account mark with that case, so again, it opened a door, and it, sort of, pushes them into a different bracket or broker with us. All of a sudden, this broker's a £2 million account, and actually, I don't think we'd ever had that type of meeting with C and T before". (A.1.2.1)*

12. Working in partnership; "*So, it's a*

team has been borne out through issue resolution". (S.1.2.1)

14. Commitment to the relationship; "*I think that just showed the support that we had from A, and certainly the Fleet team, and the understanding of the difficulties that we had with getting all of the information they needed in the format that they needed, and they understood that, and accepted what we were able to get, and worked with that".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

15. Degrees of transparency; "*It's not, like, a big issue, because nothing's really a big issue, because we talk about it. If we've got a problem, we try and solve it. There's no point leaving things, because they just rear their ugly heads further down the line. So, it's better just to deal with it".* Respondent: P.1.2.2.

16. Open and Honest; "O*pen and honest about things".* Respondent: P.1.2.1.

partnership in respect that they will always give us the first shot, you know, the first refusal if you like. Well, we'd like to think".Respondent: M.1.2.3.

13. Elasticity of personal trust: "*I don't ever play by the rules. I – no, that's wrong. I do play by the rules but I know when to stretch them a bit".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.

14. Creating a positive environment to change: "It*'s more around the business transformation that Atos can bring and so some of the business consultancy that we can bring".* Respondent: A.1.2.6.

15. Co-creating; "*The Cyber project was a good example of collaborative working; we worked as a project team, with a S team, A service team and the security team".* Respondent: A.1.2.1.

16. Understanding the others reality; ""*Who do I need to convince?" And especially when you – the organisational structure is not clear as to how decisions are made and who to sell to. And it's not just individuals, you know, you never sell just to an individual, you're selling to a number of people, but you then say, you know, "Where's the compelling event and who are the different stakeholders around different decisions that need to be made?" We can't do it to them".* Respondent: A.1.2.6.

So What!	So What!
The key findings;	The key findings;
1. Activation	1. The development of products through the combined relationship (co-creation) and an
2. Working together for mutual value	

	understanding of each other. 2. Clear targets and process to escalate issues and challenges in the relationship. 3. Organisational culture that earns trust and brings people together, with an ability to celebrate success.

Appendix 22: Interpersonal level antecedents based on times referenced

Table 27: Interpersonal level antecedents based on times referenced	
CUSTOMER / BUYER	SUPPLIER
Interpersonal (+)'s	Interpersonal (+)'s
1. Commitment to the relationship; "*The contact point is working really well and felt great about the support I received*".(S1.3.1)	1.Signalling relationship intentions; "*We're working really closely with them, and they said, "Right, we know nothing about innovation and an innovation suite, but A, you must do this sort of stuff?" And they've engaged us at the business transformation layer, not just going, "Give me a room and put some flashy screens on and say –*".Respondent; A.1.2.7.
2. Communicating style; "*Can we do something on this product to drive some sales? It's more those sort of conversations*". (P.1.3.1.)	
3. Benefiting from mutual value; "*A manage the data centre; they made a mistake indicting we were getting close to overloading the centre, potentially causing overheating. We took a joint practical and pragmatic approach to understand the problem and determine why we weren't on maximum. We sat down and looked at eth problem bringing together practical and theoretical – it helped that I knew the A data centre manager really well for a number of years. We worked it out between us and now have a process in place to manage it going forward*". (S.1.2.2.)	2.Organisational culture; "*The culture is mellower as previous and could be a sign of management maturity*".(A.1.3.1.)
	3.Communicating internally; "*Them knowing what we want to be famous for and how we want to work with them and having that communication and exposing them to that I think really does change the way that they think about who we are and what we area and how we do it*".(A.1.2.7)
4. Joint working; "*What always comes to mind is, probably the best product launch we've done, which was Sirdupla. We worked closely, we pre-planned; we were probably their main contract with that product. All parts of the P business, it worked for; whether it be my side which is predominantly about price, whether it be the R's side, which is about supply – the same with, probably, N and P. Every part of the company, including me – and that one definitely has worked for me – and they've supported us on It*".(P.1.3.1)	4.Positive attitude; "*We are seeing a positive relationship with the account team and a willingness to work together*".(A.1.3.1.)
	5.Common set of values; "*I would like to think that P see us as an upfront company and the people in it are straight-talking. You know, that's the feedback I get from them. We just tell them as it is*". (M.1.2.2)
5. Empowering the decision/ relationship; "*We are in a much better place now and a stronger*	6.They trust we are going to deliver; "*Because they've often said to us that they're willing to stay with us because they know that*

relationship. The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate & worked with the team to develop. It felt as if we had achieved a base line and this is what we expect going forward. This is not a one off process, it's recognition of a sustainable process, and we both now have tool sets that are available to improve how project s is managed. Moved out of spread sheet land. The process is agreed and sustained as it's a core system and underpins other systems".(S.1.2.1.)

6. Communicating regularly; "*Bringing the team round the table, getting to know each other, so weekly progress meetings, everybody round the table, even if that means 20 people sat round a table, so be it, it's all about people getting to know one another and giving them the opportunity to – and we've come out of the meeting, have a chat with the guys*".(S.1. 3.1.)

7. Balancing the commercials; "*If we need to do a little bit of support on a product, or if we just need a good supply – V is another one: it's really short at the moment. M are probably one of the few companies with it. Looking after us great, and working with us on the price*". (P.1.3.1.)

8. Empowering internal stakeholders; "*We always felt that the relationship we had with that underwriter was, "How can we get this business on the books?". (*LR.1.2.)

9. Understanding each other; "*That's not just on B's level. That is on, sort of, J's level and higher up. So, the whole organisation, they do, you know, listen and we do negotiate various things with them*".(P.1.2.2.)

10. Understanding the others reality; "*I've always had a very successful relationship with the supply*

our service is actually, you know, is quite good".(M.1.3.1.)

7.They trust that we have the supply chain; "*She would have had a lot to do with making sure that they're not going to go out of stock of lines that we obviously provide them*".(M.1.3.1.)

8.Developing products; "*I think with P, what I generally feel is because the relationship is there, they do look to buy across our whole portfolio; they certainly don't cherry pick with M, so again that drives that relationship and business partnership really*".(M.1.2.)

9.Keeping an affective level vs relational inertia; "*It appears (Y) are developing the role of assurance / command and control*". (A.1.3.1.)

10.Determined the targets; "*So, it went from £70 to £140 in a three year period with £100 million as the first year target. What was actually achieved in the first year wasn't £100 million, so we missed the target, we came in at £98 million but from £70 million to £90 million was a huge delivery and it was also done on the basis that these are the areas that make us more money and make you more money*". (BE.1.1.)

11. Escalating issues and challenges; "*Let's construct some process around what we do, escalation seems to own and run the agenda, rather than joint planning*". Respondent A.1.2.1.

12. Co-creating; "*He wanted that piece of work to be equally as much his piece of work as it was my piece of work*". Respondent: A.1.2.5.

chain and I think, as I say, rapport, respect, a bit of trust, put the effort in, the relationship builds and then you've got that flexibility that you need with each other. And it's given and take. You know, some – I like to see myself very much 50/50. I will equally stick up for the supply chain as I will for S". (S.1.3.2.)

11. Flexibility to react; "*So the underwriter that was there previously had been very pro-active when we sent business into him. He would pick up the phone as soon as he got something, and said either, "Yes, this one I want to work with you on, what do you need me to do, etc? Let's get it over the line,".* Respondent: LR.1.2.1.

12. Creating credibility; "*However the unforeseen benefits; additional capability developed within the business, development opportunities for the team, compliance, increased people and capability within S".* Respondent; S.1.2.1.

13. Clarity of vision – direction; "*This worked as between us we recognised project pressure early into the project to get it done".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

14. Bringing people and functions together; "*They got all of us together as a group and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up".* Respondent: P.1.2.3.

15. Signalling relationship intentions; *We also got a genuine share point expert. The tech resource is also in on the relationship, he has gained credibility and the team now trust the advice".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.

16. Positive relationship: "*Within this remains one constant you need to have good relationships to*

13. Re-aligning the relationship; "*We demonstrated that we could really bring him a solution that was going to solve his problem, then and there. It's only human nature. If you've got someone that's giving you all the promises, why are you going to go back and get loads of work, chase down everyone else, if you've got the solution in front of you"?.* Resondent: AI.1.2.1

14. Positive relationship; "*Open relationships, not holding back and an element of trust and integrity".* Respondent; A.1.2.1.

15. Proactive vs reactive; "*One project with PSUK when I launched the inhaler that worked very, very well and on the back of that we did some telesales, some promotional work as a project with PSUK. The project worked well, the outcome wasn't what we wanted but as a project it worked well".* Respondent; M.1.1.2.

16. They trust that we are going to forecast the product and make sure its delivered; "T*hey trust that we're going to forecast the product and protect it".* Respondent; M.1.2.2.

get things done". Respondent: S.1.2.2.

17. Collaborating; "*I think we do a really good job of it, but it's all about open and honest communications. So, nobody's right, nobody's wrong, we've got a situation, let's talk it through, and let's deal with it. As a win/win for everybody". Respondent: S.1.3.1.*

18. Contact regularly; "*We do get together. We have, you know, team meetings, business meetings, and then maybe go for something to eat, occasionally, or a drink or whatever". Respondent: P.1.3.1.*

19. Differing levels; "*As I say, we just felt we did have, fully, the support of the whole team there, including senior staff within the L branch". Respondent; LR.1.2.1.*

20. Positive attitudes: "*The new PM we were given is good at customer management and project recovery, they can put the point across without being confrontational". Respondent S.1.3.1.*

21. Differing stakeholders; "*They brought a new molecule to market, which is S, and we started off really well, in that we got all stakeholders involved". Respondent P.1.2.2.*

22. Reliability of systems and processes; "*So, I think its different, different perhaps; I don't know, I am assuming a little bit here about what happened previously, but we are seeing a different view now in terms of – as to what happens in the relationships now that we've had in the past". Respondent: S.1.2.4.*

	So What!
	The key findings;
So What!	1. Signalling intentions in the relationship
The key findings;	

1. Ways of working (cog & affect) 2. Working together for mutual value	through; a positive attitude, common set of value and organisational culture. 2. The basics are in place to support relationship development. 3. Developing products (co-creation), preventing relational inertia and determined targets that set expectations and plot progress.

Appendix 23: Relational intention by level

Table 28: Relational intention		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"We are trying to re-set the relationship making it more collaborative". S.1.1.3.* *"This is a new bit of business to which I'm attacking, I have hunger for this but I want to win it, if I'm going to win it I need somebody to help me win it," and they're kind of, different conversations but they're empowered really to place it in what is best for the customer, and within our placing strategy, and our placing strategy is generally, "Look, these are your number one markets, these are your number five markets". (LR.1.1.)* *"We started talking to them about, "What else can we do? Can you do Chinese food as well?" because we had got our Chinese food supplied elsewhere but, "What can you do in Chinese food?" And then we started talking to them about other types of meals that we could get into". (Mo.1.1.1)*	*"Look, look what we can do," and I've said it openly people, senior people in S, that for me personally to see some of this going forward after five years of, you know, banging a drum about what they need to do, it's refreshing and very positive". Respondent: A.1.1.1.* *So, we stuck a stake in the ground and said, "Collectively we'll get to £100 million". (Be.1.1).* *"I think there's been two things that have changed that, within the last year. A year ago we won a £1/2 million client with this broker, which, obviously, had a real positive influence on the size of the account". (AI.1.1.1.)*
Team / Operations	*"So the underwriter that was there previously had been very pro-active when we sent business into him. He would pick up the phone as soon as he got something, and said either, "Yes, this one I want to work with you on, what do you need me to do, etc? Let's get it over the line,". (LR1.2.1)* *"They got all of us together as a group*	*"I think we've, then, had to prove ourselves to them, because as a brokerage, they've got a lot of strong insurer relationships". (AI.1.2.1.)* *"It was just bringing the right people to the table at the right time, you know? I remember it very clearly". (M.1.2.2.)* *"Understand the problem and then we iterate different solutions and*

	and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up". (P.1.2.3.) "Now, we are absolutely meaning business and want to get it) done here, so that is , that's the message, is that should be taken the right way because that's what I've said to them". (S.1.2.4.) "So, because it's coming from us, and we have a good relationship, they are prepared to say, "Okay, let's see what this is, and let's look into it – let's pick up the phone and have a conversation. On the face of it, it doesn't look like one that we're going to want to do, but let's investigate it a bit further, and see, is there anything we're missing out on – we're not seeing – that the broker can explain to us".(LR.1.2.1)	eventually think, "Oh, that would work," and then you can then put a proof of value together, a simple business case". (A.1.2.6.)
Personal	"Probably [name6] our side, and [name4] at their side. [Name4], who's no longer there, and [name7] as well. But it did – it worked. It was probably the most successful launch we've done; certainly in my opinion, I can't think of a better one that we've done – that has worked, that we've all communicated on; and it's worked for all parts for the business, not just one specific part". (P.1.3.1.) "But yeah, I've always had a very successful relationship with the supply chain and I think, as I say, rapport, respect, a bit of trust, put the effort in,	"Since G J has come, he is the catalyst in the relationship. The approach has fundamentally changed, last year much greater project & programme work". (A.1.3.1.) "Now more closer, more face to face, having open and honest conversations has started to build that different mindset of how we're going to work and to a certain extent the trust. they're absolutely driving a dedicated relationship". (A.1.2.7.) "The Blackberry project is a good example of what's working. We are

	the relationship builds and then you've got that flexibility that you need with each other". (S.1.3.2.)	starting to engage and deploy the roll-out of new smart phones and use champions/super-user". (A.1.3.1.)

Appendix 24: Relational ability by level

Table 29: Relational ability		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"If I looked at revenue from, let's call it the Speciality product. We'd have to say pretty much for the P Group it's zero. And when you look at pipelines of organisations like M, you know, we would be particularly interested of course because, you know, it's going to be new for them, new for us. What does the proposition need to look like to make sure that that comes through the channel? Well, that's probably not going to be standard wholesale. I would argue that, for us, there's potentially an opportunity there".* Respondent: P.1.1.2. *"I think, they train the people superbly. I think they're absolutely dedicated to that professionalism in making sure that their staff are as good as they possibly can be, and they also help us to try and make our staff as good as they possibly can be as well".Respondent: LR.1.1.1.* *"We have to have partner days and a partner day will be where everybody who is a stakeholder in our business and everybody who is a stakeholder in their business gets together for a full day to talk about how can we make things work better, looking at what's really working well, and what's not working quite so well, and how do we improve it". Respondent: Mo.1.1.1*	*"To be successful at that, you have to be very self-aware, and there's a lot of work that goes into becoming successfully adaptive. It's such an important concept if you want to be successful in this industry. I sometimes laugh and call this role – you have to be an, almost, little bit like a chameleon, being able to change your colours to fit in with who you're dealing with". Respondent: A.1.1.1* *"There is no harm in not knowing the answer to a question, as long as you say I'll find that and get back to you, and you do". Respondent: Al 1.1.1.* *"It's about both businesses being fully clear on what the potential is and how you can delight your shoppers and consumers and mutually benefit from it". Respondent: Be.1.1.1*

Team / Operations	"The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The Atos app team really had to step up to the plate & worked with the team to develop". Respondent: S.1.2.1. "As a group, yeah, they're quite supportive of the broker network. They have a number of very good products that we are able to comfortably sell to our clients, so they are always – what shall I say? They are always looking at their policies, and their policy wordings, and making sure that they are, you know, as much as can be, market-leading. Respondent: LR.1.2.1. "The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The A app team really had to step up to the plate & worked with the team to develop". Respondent:S.1.2.1.	"I know that sounds very old school in this day and age, but to get that initial – and I don't think it needs to be permanent, but to get that initial relationship and that initial trust, the way that they work they want touchy feely, they want face to face, they want to – and we need to build that relationship that way first and then that makes the phone calls a hell of a lot easier as it goes on". Respondent: A.1.2.7. "They were the experts. They were the people who knew how to bring the product to market. Respondent: M.1.2.2. "Me and J have talked around the fact that we need to do less man marking, working together as a team, which in theory we should be able to do double the amount of work". Respondent: A.1.2.7.
Personal	"My experience of A is they are very, very customer focused and professional. I've been in situations in meetings with A and S round the table and S have really laid into A and give them a hard time and the guys sit there and remain professional at all times". Respondent: S.1.3.2. "You know, you've got to respect that you're dealing with somebody who is competent, somebody who knows their subject matter expert", Respondent: S.1.3.2. "So, even without the strong interpersonal relationships that we've	"I mean if, you know, X deliver to their customer and we deliver to IX. Well, if we can help X deliver to their customer faster and … get it right first time, surely their customer's going to be better satisfied, X will then get better plaudits within the business". Respondent: A.1.2.3. "Obviously, they're the top-up orders for this blackout, so I've contacted E, I worked really closely with them just to make sure that we can get them out for their next standard delivery; all by the skin of our teeth, it did actually get… they all got delivered, sort of,

got, they are a company that we would be watching and looking to actively engage with, because the value of that business is increasing as time goes on" Respondent: P.1.2.3.	*just before the blackout period, but it was all communicating. So, as soon as I got the information from E, it was all, sort of, emailed across and making them satisfied that we were in control of it, if you see what I mean"? Respondent: M.1.3.1.*
	"J led them, because we didn't understand the dynamics of how this was going to go and I was quite fascinated to see that actually it was P coming to us, to present to us, "We can do this for you and if you pick us to be one of your partners, we can do this, this, this…" "We have these systems." Respondent: M.1.2.2.

Appendix 25: Relational credibility by level

Table 30: Relational credibility		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*Extending for three years provides A with the opportunity to recover from the legacy" Respondent: S.1.1.3.* *"Commercial or Trading Support role was internal-facing so it was, "How can I get better systems, develop our people better, have better structures and processes in place to enable our buyers to do a better job in how they deal with other people?" Respondent: Mo.1.1.1* *"If we're brutally honest, a S presentation at the point that they were about to launch when we first went through it, and I know we keep talking about this, but it's comfortably the best. They actually had a clear vision what they wanted to do, where they wanted to go, what market share they wanted, how they wanted to position their brand". Respondent: P.1.1.1.*	*"Within the industry A are now seen to be – they've ramped up their progress over the last couple of years, Thierry's led us through some big growth and we are champions of digital transformation, so it's – the two have coincided, you know, perfect timing, and the picture looks rosy for us" Respondent: A.1.1.1.* *"You know what? You want me to be completely honest? We do the basics properly, and we do them well. So, when you talk about disciplines, metrics, understanding what needs to be delivered, we get those basics right, which then allows you, once you've got those right, to start thinking about the bigger pieces" Respondent: Al.1.1.1.* *"There was a real benefit of bringing all the businesses together rather than having one; it built trust and credibility with every retailer". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.*
Team / Operations	*"We're in this together, I'm physically here with you, we're sharing the ownership of this thing and we're proactively looking to help us do what we need to do", so that journey to go from that point A to point B and still going through it and it has been a long – it's been pretty much the full seven or eight months that I've been here for now*	*"Another improvement that we did was … again, it cost nothing, you know, this is the beauty, if it costs nothing it's great, then they got a new application portfolio manager in so we met him at one of the monthly meetings and I just said to him, "So, why don't you come and spend a day with us in the office and meet the people who, you know,*

	journey that I've been doing it now". *Respondent: S.1.2.4.*	*our subject matter experts for your applications …" Respondent: A.1.2.4.*
	"If you could expand why you got to that decision and demonstrate that there's some references or its leading edge or there's a real reason why you feel that's a fit for S, it's not because we're checking up on you, it's because we've got an intelligent client role and we want that assurance that it's the right thing for us". Respondent: S.1.1.2.	*"We've got a benchmark but if it goes below that benchmark, we have to go through the whole process and that's the problem we've got and why it takes so long to get anything turned round". Respondent: M.1.2.2.*
		"It's the best launch they have ever done.". Respondent: M.1.2.2
	"The biggest perspective, you know, they are a global brand that we are comfortable that people will know, and feel comfortable with as an insurer. So if you're telling somebody, "Right, I want to place your business with A," then they're going to be comfortable. That's a name they know, they recognise, and feel comfortable having their business with". Respondent: LR.1.2.1.	
Personal	*"The new PM we were given is good at customer management and project recovery, they can put the point across without being confrontational". Respondent: S.1.3.1.*	*"Being located in the office means you become a focal point for all Atos services, the 'go to person'. I have put a protocol in place to get people to phone the help desk as its quicker than going through me and e mail service". Respondent A.1.3.1*
	"A bit of leniency because they can't deliver stock but still, if they can't sort this issue out now, when the system is up and running then, I don't want to be in a position where I'm moving a lot of business away from them, given the relationship". Respondent: P.1.2.3.	*." They're going to be going onto EDI if they're ordering which is fantastic because it's the system that works with our system that basically they'll put through their orders and it's automatically uploaded". Respondent: M.1.3.1.*
	"Lead by example, you know, so that encourages everybody else to just be open and honest with each other". Respondent : S.1.3.2.	*"Well, I'll tell you what to do and you go away and do it". And I'm saying,*

		"Well, no, don't just tell us, let's work together on what the requirement is". We've got a hell of a lot of expertise in the organisation that we can bring in and his first comment was, "Well, will the contract allow that?" Respondent : A.1.2.7.

Appendix 26: Relational interdependence by level

Table 31: Relational interdependence

Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"Look, this area isn't working for us; are we in agreement it's not working? It's a £5 Million business however we're still aiming to get to that same level of sale with you at the year end. Here are some of the things we think we could maybe look at with you, have you got any ideas?" And so they might lose in one area but might gain in another".* Respondent: Mo.1.1.1. *"Co-developed the strategy for continual improvement".* Respondent: S.1.1.3 *"Equally the same kinds of things on launches of products on cooked meats or others; we would support them on launches and give them a bit more room to develop".* Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.	*"All I know is that they – in June, they were really … oh, awestruck by what we were talking about, and since then we have been working with them to establish an innovation suite which is to drive out the thought leadership. It's … the fact that it has technology in it is not its purpose. It is not a showcase for technology. It is using technology in a clean white space to stimulate thought changes, innovation, different ways of looking at processes, that sort of thing, so we're trying to get that set up and the fact that's been welcomed – so, there's lots of … there's lots of indicators of change going on".* Respondent: A.1.1.1 *"Actually sitting down and talking about how could we move things forward even further".* Respondent: AI.1.1.1. *"G, who's the CIO, was visibly proud of what his suppliers were demonstrating, and that reflected well on his organisation. But his organisation have historically been beaten by the business for being non-performers".* Respondent: A.1.1.1.
Team / Operations	*"How well two companies could work together, joint work".* Respondent: P.1.2.1. *"We had a big success on that, and that*	*"It was just another little relationship we built with someone that had previously been quite hard to get to, and I appreciate it was off the back of an opportunity, but it involved me*

	was all commercial, non-motor business, and we had a lot of success there doing business with them that we'd never done previously". Respondent: LR1.2.1. "The development of the database on recognition and quality of material is a good example. The Atos app team really had to step up to the plate & worked with the team to develop". Respondent: S.1.2.1.	getting involved, it got the underwriters involved, it even got our claims team involved, so we had quite a three-pronged attempt at it, really". Respondent: AI.1.2.1.. "He wanted that piece of work to be equally as much his piece of work as it was my piece of work". Respondent: A.1.2.5. "For me it's the partnership. I think that word on its own is what I want to do, that's what I want to get to, so it kind of – open your arms for the partnership relationship and let's do this together, let's to work against each other. Let's work as one team". Respondent: A.1.2.7.
Personal	"The only thing I can think of that's probably relevant to us is, we're trying to do some work with them at the moment on rationalising the shipper sizes, and the palette sizes, and EDI ordering that takes out the human intervention and the errors". Respondent: P.1.3.1. "Innovation days are good stuff and they appear to be making more of an effort". Respondent: S.1.3.1. "I feel as if they operate a 'your pain is our pain". Respondent: S.1.3.1.	"Neither of us have got a clue what's going on basically, but you know what, we know each other well, we can work this out." Respondent: M.1.2.1. "The Cyber project was a good example of collaborative working; we worked as a project team, with a S team, A service team and the security team". Respondent: A.1.2.1. "It's what can we do together. And that's about being brave as well". Respondent: A.1.2.6.

Appendix 27: Relational mutual benefit by level

Table 32: Relational mutual benefit		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"we said that we would continue that development and to ensure that we didn't get any rogue buyers who might be taking our overall partnership off-track, because we very much saw them as being a partner of ours; then we'd have this over-arching deal that would sit across all of our business". Respondent: Mo.1.1.1.* *"Okay, well as you have done that I commit to you that you have every opportunity in winning that business," and then we delivered on that commitment and, you know, and that says it all really". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.*	*"Now, it feels like we've switched to a position where we know that we can help each other, and we're adding more value to each other. Still a lot more that we can do, but, in terms of the value piece switching, I don't think it's switched, I think it's enhanced both sides". Respondent: Al.1.1.1.* *"There was mutual respect from both businesses in terms of the role that we played in the market and that we could play within their business and how we could help them grow". Respondent: Be.1.1.1.*
Team / Operations	*"It felt as if we had achieved a base line and this is what we expect going forward. This is not a one off process, it's recognition of a sustainable process, and we both now have tool sets that are available to improve how project s is managed. Moved out of spread sheet land. The process is agreed and sustained as it's a core system and underpins other systems". Respondent: S.1.2.1.* *"They got all of us together as a group and said, "We've got this opportunity which might be of interest to all of you" and we managed to have a really good*	*"Them knowing what we want to be famous for and how we want to work with them and having that communication and exposing them to that I think really does change the way that they think about who we are and what we area and how we do it". Respondent: A.1.2.7.* *"So, we chose two partners, P and A and not to sell to anybody else otherwise all we'd be doing is helping driving the price down in the market". Respondent: M.1.2.3.*

	initial kick-off meeting where everyone was able to have that opportunity to talk around the table and meet up". Respondent: P.1.2.3.	
Personal	*"Proud, yeah. Proud, yeah. Because we were performing as well, we were outperforming other projects around us and we were excelling – now, as it happens, we've hit some issues and now we've sort of – so, we were like well ahead of the project schedule. Well ahead". Respondent: S.1.3.2.* *"You know, I don't expect people to sell to us at the cheapest price because, you know, we have a good relationship; it's got to work for both parties, hasn't it"? Respondent: P.1.3.1.*	*"I think now, we're in a position where we've got that dialogue, that openness between us, we should be able to pick up some of the things that we've perhaps lost sight of in previous years gone past". Respondent: AI.1.2.1.* *"We're also going to launch a generic version of S and obviously we want P to be part of that and to be one of our key partners on that product as well". Respondent: M.1.2.2.*

Appendix 28: Relational communication by level

Table 33: Relational communication		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"It's a very interesting mix of talent in there. As I say, I've always felt that people in there have got the knowledge, but I've never felt they've had the application, the desire"*. Respondent: P.1.1.1 *"Are we always clear enough as an organisation in terms of who to engage with so that they can put the right people, structure in place, so engage with us, if you see what I mean"*. Respondent: S.1.1.1. *"Taking some of my team to go down and getting them to see that that's the right way to do it because particularly as we generationally move into a place where social media and text and email is just the norm is… just text them, "Yeah, but you've developed a rapport with your friends first of all before you get to the point of, "I can just text them", and now you suddenly think that you can do that with a supplier and you're wondering why you're not getting what you want"*. Respondent: Mo.1.1.1	*"This was a cohesive story, this is how we're going to take you on your journey to transform you and to support your business transformation, this is what we can do from a digital perspective to enable you to transform and accelerate decommissioning"*. Respondent: A.1.1.1.) *"In the early phases and the key thing around that was the communication, so bringing people along the journey, talking to them holistically about what we were trying to achieve"*. Respondent: Be 1.1.1. *"I actually see my Business Developer taking care more of the transactional part of the relationship. So, linking in with the team leader of the account execs and the handlers, bringing the underwriters in to see them. When it then comes to the quarterly review meetings, she will be heavily involved in preparing the data, the MI, for those meetings"*. Respondent: Al.1.1.1
Team / Operations	*"Sometimes I think – you know, it's one of these things, everybody's busy, and the easy thing is to fire off an email and not appreciate how that email is being received at the other end; and you know, sometimes picking up a phone and having a conversation is so much*	*"If I get a call, and E's not happy with something, I know it's something really has gone wrong, or they really need a favour from us"*. Respondent Al.1.2. *"It is a formal weekly meeting and … and that's minimum. So, we have a*

	better than just delivering bad news via an email". Respondent : LR.1.2.. *"Some people are absolutely doing the right thing for their position, but it could be almost 100% the wrong thing for the Group". Respondent: P.1.1.2* *"It was something we were able to do, on the whole, over the phone. I think we did have one of their underwriters come in here at one point, just to sit down and go through everything, and see what they needed to do; but on the whole, we were able to do it via email, and just an awful lot of phone calls, and certainly a lot of phone calls as it approached the deadline". Respondent: LR1.2.*	*number of monthly and quarterly forums as well". Respondent: A.1.2.2.* *"But now more closer, more face to face, having open and honest conversations has started to build that different mindset of how we're going to work and to a certain extent the trust". Respondent: A.1.2.7*
Personal	*"They'll send an email to one person, and expect that that email will be passed onto ten others". Respondent: P.1.3.1.* *"I think you've got to take the time to build the relationship and for me, you've got to put the effort into doing that, you've got to – and that involves face to face". Respondent : S.1.3.2.*	*"Think after all the f-ing and blinding they've given me, generally it's, "Look G, we'll go out and we'll have a beer, it's fine, it's not a personal thing, this is purely business". Respondent: M.1.2.* *"If they've got an order that they are expecting and it doesn't come through, obviously, communication is key and just to let them know". Respondent: M.1.3.1.*

Appendix 29: Relational commitment by level

Table 34: Relational commitment:		
Level	Customer	Supplier
Organisational	*"I think delivering on … delivering on a … I'm kind of looking for another word, to promise really, because you don't want to necessarily make promises but … a commitment, a commitment". Respondent: LR.1.1.1.* *"So, I mean, as I say, I think there's a recognition that we need to change and we need to work more closely together within A, and I think team are, you know, starting to do that". Respondent: S.1.1.1*	*"Oh, awestruck by what we were talking about, and since then we have been working with them to establish an innovation suite which is to drive out the thought leadership. It's … the fact that it has technology in it is not its purpose. It is not a showcase for technology. It is using technology in a clean white space to stimulate thought changes, innovation, different ways of looking at processes, that sort of thing, so we're trying to get that set up and the fact that's been welcomed – so, there's lots of … there's lots of indicators of change going on". Respondent: A.1.1.1* *"One project with P when I launched the inhaler that worked very, very well and on the back of that we did some telesales, some promotional work as a project with P. The project worked well, the outcome wasn't what we wanted but as a project it worked well." Respondent: M.1.1.2.*
Team / Operations	*"I think that just showed the support that we had from A, and certainly the Fleet team, and the understanding of the difficulties that we had with getting all of the information they needed in the format that they needed, and they*	*"They're absolutely driving a dedicated relationship". Respondent: A.1.2.7.* *"It's what can we do together. And that's about being brave as well".*

	understood that, and accepted what we were able to get, and worked with that". Respondent: LR.1.2.1. *"We're in this together, I'm physically here with you, we're sharing the ownership of this thing and we're proactively looking to help us do what we need to do", so that journey to go from that point A to point B and still going through it and it has been a long – it's been pretty much the full seven or eight months that I've been here for now journey that I've been doing it now".* Respondent: S.1.2.4.	*Respondent : A.1.2.6.*
Personal	*"Demonstrates that putting that time and effort in and having that open and – and committing to that open and honest relationship paid off".* Respondent: S.1.3.2.. *"Feel as if they operate a 'your pain is our pain".* Respondent: S.1.3.1.	*"We really do want to work with them; be patient because it's – that's the only bad part about being a global business, it's like trying to turn a big ship, it just takes a long time to…"* Respondent: M.1.2.1 *"We are seeing a positive relationship with the account team and a willingness to work together".* Respondent: A.1.3.1.