Appreciating the Mandate of the Education Team in
BC Government’s Risk Management Branch

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Leadership

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December, 2015

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Abstract

From a heuristic standpoint, this study sought to determine “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” Using action research from an appreciative inquiry stance, I worked to understand the changes that were affecting the Education Team within the Risk Management Branch (RMB) and how these related to its core mandate and roles. Four methods were used in this research which included a client survey to 85 clients with 12 questions regarding their knowledge of risk management and the value of the services provided, Team interviews, two consultant and executive world cafés and a risk assessment. During the interviews and cafés, four questions were used sequentially to ascertain the participant’s thoughts, feelings, values, and wants. These were followed up with a “make it happen” café (Rowe, Agger-Gupta, Harris & Graf, 2013) wherein the participants were shown the findings and draft recommendations from which some additional feedback was garnered. Much data was derived from this research providing recommendations to the Sponsor being the Executive Director of RMB assisting her in moving the Education Team and Branch forward including: (a) providing a better understanding of the mandate and roles, (b) seeking a new leadership approach, (c) responding to a need for new human capital, (d) encouraging more collaboration, (e) implementing Leaner processes, and (f) providing additional educational opportunities.
Acknowledgements

My journey into the academic world was fruitful and life changing but this could not have happened without the support of my family, friends, instructors, committee, Supervisor, Sponsor, colleagues, inquiry team, and cohort. I would like to first acknowledge my wife, Wendy, without whose encouragement and understanding this journey would not have occurred. To my children, Tia and Jaelyn, you gave me strength when this undertaking felt daunting. I did this for you and I hope you learned from my strength and perseverance. When the weight and balance of life and university felt like it was too much, I only had to rely on or think of my family and the journey then had meaning. To my friends who understood when I consumed myself in homework and our social time was sacrificed, thank you.

To my Sponsor, Linda Irvine, who supported my quest for higher education and gave me the opportunities within the Risk Management Branch to complete this inquiry. Without my colleagues who agreed to participate, this study would have not been a success. I greatly appreciated all of your time and openness.

I would like to say a special thank you to the instructors of all of my courses and my Supervisor for your time and scholarly rigor. Your feedback and guidance will always be valued. Without this guidance, this thesis would not have been completed. To my cohort, your support was superlative. Lastly, I owe a great deal of gratitude to my inquiry team (Dawn, Kimberley, Cindy, Todd, Karen, Gaynor, Nancy, Wendy) whose support made this undertaking manageable. Your professionalism and assistance will always be remembered with much gratitude.

In all, this study was made possible by everyone involved and for this I will always be grateful.
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Chapter One: Focus and Framing

The British Columbia Government’s Risk Management Branch (RMB) is responsible for the management of risks which the government and its funded agencies are subject to that may arise from their assets, programs and operations. Within RMB there are multiple ministry funded self-insurance programs which include the Schools Protection Program and the University, College and Institute Protection Program. These programs are administered by one department, the Education Team within RMB.

During the past two years the Team was subjected to multiple constraints and/or changes causing leadership to request a review of their mandate including systems and processes. The purpose of the review was to establish what changes within the group, if any, would be required to best align it with a continuously evolving environment, and subsequent to this, make recommendations that might make any such transformations fluid. As a fresh face and having a new lens in the Education Team, my role in this endeavour was to undertake the review which I accomplished utilizing action research methodologies through an appreciative inquiry stance.

The intent of this project was to identify the change goals needed and the steps necessary for the organization to complete these goals. Specifically, the goals of this inquiry were to:

- identify the context and understanding of the mandate at all levels;
- determine which environmental constraints and/or changes were affecting the Education Team;
- ascertain the effects of these constraints and/or changes on the systems and processes; and
- determine what positive outcomes that arise from the inquiry might be implemented.
To conclude the degree of change required in the structure of the Education Team, if any, permitting better alignment to their mandate in a continuously evolving environment, I needed to reflect on the overarching question throughout this paper: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? This stemmed from the Sponsor’s and Team Director’s desire for change. Additional data was ascertained through the use of the sub questions:

1. What are the systems and processes (the environment - internal and external) that have changed in the past two years supporting the Education Team’s growth?

2. How might the Education Team implement Lean Principles in a way to encourage support and success?

3. What aspirations do the Education Team Members have for succession planning, leadership and budgets?

4. Where do leadership and its members envision the Team in one to five years?

**Significance of the Inquiry**

This inquiry and any issues that might be derived from this study mattered to the organization for several reasons. Firstly, assurance the Education Team met its mandate internally to government and externally to its clients. Secondly, to ensure the Team’s morale and organizational construct worked effectively and aligned with other teams within RMB. The benefits to the BC Government were to ensure that the teams within RMB were meeting the high standards and key service requirements of the ministry funded Schools, Universities, Colleges and Health (SUCH) sector. Another was the hope of an established work-life balance for the Education Team and RMB wherein Team members saw meaning in what they did at work and in
their personal lives. Internal to RMB, the Team would be respected by the other high performing teams within RMB. Externally, key stakeholders would see value in services that the Education Team, and potentially RMB, provides.

By not ensuring the Education Team was meeting its mandate, there were several risks to the Team, RMB and its external key stakeholders. From a reputation perspective, the Team may not have been seen as a value to its SUCH sector clients, funding Ministries or internally to RMB with other high performing teams with competing interests. Financially, the services provided may not have assisted its external clients with peace of mind with the self-insurance programs, assistance to clients in reducing losses and subsequent costs from the risk management advice provided. Value for money may not have been realized, potentially making the funding ministries question the significance of the services or programs.

**Organizational Context**

Housed within the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Risk Management Branch and Government Security Office (RMB) under its mandate had “four major roles: central risk management agency within government, risk management advisor/consultant, risk management program development and delivery, and claims and litigation management” (Province of BC, 2014c, para. 2).

RMB assisted its clients, being the Government Ministries and SUCH sector (public schools (K to 12), British Columbia (BC) universities (except Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria), colleges and health (six British Columbia Health Authorities and other health related entities)), against risks that they were exposed to. This included their operations including first party sites and third party risks (examples: student, patient or public). The Branch
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had approximately forty staff that assisted in managing multiple ministry funded ministry self-insurance programs. Within the RMB, the Education Department was one of eight departments (as outlined in Appendix A). Within the Education Department, the programs most relevant to this research were the School Protection Program (SPP) and Universities Colleges and Institute Protection Program (UCIPP) which are managed by the Education Team. Pulling from RMB’s mandate, the Education Team’s roles pertinent to this study were “risk management advisor/consultant” services and “risk management program development and delivery” (Province of BC, 2014c, para. 2).

For ease in viewing the relationships of the Departments and Teams, attached are Appendix A – RMB’s Organization Chart and Appendix B – Education Team Internal and External Key Stakeholder Chart. Finally, another key role of RMB was to facilitate indemnity approvals for government or its funded agencies under the Financial Administration Act (FAA). The departments within RMB were skillfully designed to meet its client’s needs in the management of operational risks. The departments were interconnected as a whole similar to how many commercial insurers underwrite the risks of many different businesses or corporations. The consultants worked within RMB in advisory roles similar to those of insurance brokers. The Executive Director sat at the helm of RMB to ensure the branch’s mandates were met. Her role was also a primary link to senior executive of government who governed the branch, to some degree, similar to how boards of directors work in the private or not for profit sectors.

From a systems perspective, the departments within RMB worked independent of each other with differing clients and these departments could, at times, become siloed. The
underwriting and claims departments, however, brought a degree of connectedness to some of the departments as their clients spanned the SUCH sector.

As a branch, the social systems within were similar to many offices with each department having daily workings with colleagues. There were several professional groups who gravitated to each other including risk management consultants, claims, accounting and central services staff. Within the claims department there were also lawyers who commonly worked and socialized together. In all of these groups, including some relationships with external clients, there were also personal relationships that had developed.

**Systems Analysis of the Inquiry**

**Internal Education Team Key Stakeholders and Systems.**

The Education Team (see Appendix A & B) included a Director who handled the team’s human capital needs and daily business aspects, had some personal clients and managed the three consultants. There were two Senior Risk Management Consultants whose clients were separated by number, size and/or complexity dependent on their needs. Senior Consultant roles included providing clients’ coverage advice and facilitation of client indemnities under the FAA, Their roles also consisted of reviewing contracts from a risk management perspective, looking at insurance language backing the indemnities, determining if limitations of liability existed, and other such risk advice from client related activities. When I came onto the Education Team, they had just taken on the role of assisting one of their clients with the Team’s first major Public Private Partnership (P3) project in which I had a background.

The two senior positions became vacant and permission was granted to fill them as they were deemed critical hires. I filled one of these positions coming from the Health Team. The
Director had been covering for one of the other Senior Consultants whose position was filled by a new member requiring several years of training. The Team also had one Junior Consultant whose task was similar in some aspects to the Senior Consultants but on much less complex risks. The Consultants as a whole would likely be, in accordance with Conner (1992), the targets of change from this study but the Team Director would also likely have to undertake some changes. All are depicted in Appendix A.

The Director has confirmed there had been a substantial increase in the public schools and post-secondary institution’s needs over the last few years and the Team had been struggling to manage. Any previous attempts to add an additional consultant position had been rejected by MoF senior management due to severe budget constraints caused by substantial cuts in tax revenues forcing the Team to take on more with less even though government was aware of the risks around this approach.

Within RMB, the Education Team was heavily reliant on the Executive Director of RMB. In her role, she provided leadership, client indemnity approvals under the FAA, and navigated the labyrinth of external senior Ministry executive who deal with the Premier’s office, including Ministers who were elected officials. The Executive Director of RMB agreed to be the Sponsor of this research project and, according to Conner (1992), was a change agent along with the Team Director.

The Team Director and some of the Consultants, following Conner’s (1992) definition, were advocates of the study hoping to look at the Education Team structure from a new lens. There would likely be some resistance to change from other Consultants as they may be rooted in
old patterns. Senge (2006) addresses this when discussing the importance of understanding constituents’ mental models within an organization.

The Team also relied heavily on RMB’s Claims Department which were, from an external perspective, viewed as part of the Education Team but in reality they were more independent. The Claims Department handled claims for the Education and Health teams in addition to claims arising from other RMB programs. These included the Optional Property Program, the Midwives Program, and the Master Insurance Program. Another team that the Education Team was reliant upon was RMB’s Central Services Department as they assisted with administrative duties, website maintenance, administration of claims notifications and forwarding client electronic requests. Lastly, the Team was also dependent on RMB’s Underwriting and Analysis department who were the authors and keepers of the client coverage agreements and responsible for ensuring the RMB Programs were actuarially sound. This aligned with the Province’s AAA credit rating which was deemed critical to MoF.

Besides the Claims Department, other RMB teams that the Education Team shared expertise with within RMB were the Health and Core Government and Crowns (CGC) teams. CGC’s clients were the British Columbia Ministries and crown corporations. Both of these teams were high functioning and known by their clients and Ministries for great service having worked on a multitude of large complex projects, including for example, many P3s and BC’s 2010 Winter Olympics.

RMB was housed within the MoF and the Ministry had an essential role as an employer but, more critically, they had a fiduciary responsibility to the BC taxpayers as controllers of the public purse. The MoF also provided oversight of the self-insurance pools managed by RMB
which were protected by legislation. The Ministry was also required to follow other ministry directives or programs to cut costs. This included Shared Services BC’s Leading Workplace Strategies (LWS) wherein government staff were moved out of leased premises and placed into smaller open concept office environments. And, where applicable, staff worked from home. RMB was subject to this mandate which added yet another change to the multitude the Branch was going through.

Within RMB there were multiple information management (IT) systems permitting the branch to facilitate its daily business activities (examples: government processes, payroll, human capital needs, etcetera) and which the staff or branch were as a whole reliant on to manage their client activities or electronic claim files. There were also software platforms permitting BC Government staff access to work from home. The software and hardware was supplied and/or monitored by the BC Government’s IT personnel at RMB whose two staff were housed within. The BC government also acknowledged the value of its staff’s families within its systems with work-life balance initiatives and other forms of support programs.

RMB’s servers and software permitted the Education Team client’s to submit incidents or claims into RMB’s websites located at: http://www.bcspp.org/ and http://www.bcucipp.org/. These websites were populated and managed with the support of RMB’s central services department. This system also permitted clients to view their own claims reports generated from the two self-insurance Programs.

Outside of RMB and not within the scope of this study, there were influences at the political level that affected the governance of all ministries as a whole. Within RMB, this arena was dealt with where required by the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study. This
governance implemented mandates for those in power wherein they may alter government programs. These typically would not affect the core programs; however, these persons could have influenced the working environment of the government staff heuristically.

**External Education Team Key Stakeholders and Systems.**

The Education Team had four external key stakeholders (Appendix B). Firstly, the sixty BC public school districts; Secondly, the twenty-five postsecondary/technical institutions (except Simon Fraser University and University of Victoria); Thirdly, the Ministry of Education; and Lastly, the Ministry of Advanced Education. Both Ministries funded the self-insurance Programs (SPP and UCIPP) housed within RMB. RMB, in accordance with its mandate, provides the public schools and postsecondary/technical institutions self-insurance through SPP and UCIPP. These Programs were risk financing mechanisms used to mitigate its covered entities from perils that may arise from their operations. These types of risk transfer mechanisms were used by large organizations or groups to smooth out the uncertainties of these perils and provide peace of mind to those who utilized them. These programs were in place for over 25 years and successfully assisted the public schools and postsecondary/technical institutions to undertake their mandates, which included educating children (where parents often played a critical role as guardians and taxpayers) as well as adult learners. These entities also had risks that arose out of facility operations including the public entering/using their property wherein many of these risks were covered under RMB’s Programs. Other benefits derived by the clients were Consultant advisory services from RMB wherefrom they were able to mitigate their operational risks.
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Systems Summary

“Systems thinking - Seeing the whole rather than the parts and understanding how elements are interrelated and interdependent” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014, p. xxi).

From the diagrams provided in Figure 1 and Appendix B, it is clear that there was interconnectedness amongst all the parties wherein parents as taxpayers need the education system and the education system needs parents to fulfil its mandates. This included education programs, funding through taxes, and the betterment of society as a whole with the children filling the needs of society’s future professionals, entrepreneurs, tradespeople, industry workers, educators, philosophers and scholars, etcetera. Governance, leadership and fiduciary responsibility were provided by the Ministries through their mandates, processes and programs. The Education Team housed within RMB played a critical role in assisting the Ministries, public schools and the postsecondary/technical institutions, facilitating their directives.

Figure 1. Interconnectedness of Risk Management Branch and Key Stakeholders
Aven and Renn (2009) argued that the definitions of risk in the social sciences were:

firstly, situations or events wherein human value (including, themselves) was of concern and where outcomes were unknown; and secondly, consequences of events were uncertain with regard to activities that humans value. These definitions, I contend, differed from the standard definition of risk. The definition of “risk” pulled as a comparative from the RMB’s website states risk is “the effect of uncertainty on objectives” (Province of British Columbia, 2014c). This had a negative connotation but the BC Government’s (2012) Risk Management Guide for BC Public Sector went on to ask “What other uncertainties might exist that could have an impact (positive or negative) on my goals and objectives” (p. 2). The context of these definitions appeared analogous and the latter question aligned with the appreciative inquiry stance that was undertaken in this study.

Risks from an organizational perspective were abundant and have been separated, according to the BC Government’s (2002) Risk Dictionary, into “outcome risks” or the “program or project will not achieve the intended outcome” and realize “unintended consequence risks.” This being that “while the outcome is achieved, the ministry policy, program or project has unintended consequences” (p. 2, 4). Of relevance to my main question “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate of continuous improvement?” a risk that needs to be addressed is whether the “Program, Client or Service Delivery[’s]…successful implementation of the policy, program or project does not meet the objective it set out to obtain” (p. 3)? These were explored in this study through an appreciative inquiry stance.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

The intent of this literature review was to provide evidence from scholars to support the lead inquiry question “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” This literature review discussed the relevance of organizational mandates, the impacts of organizational change, and collaboration (internal and external) in relation to the Education Team and/or RMB. My review provided evidence that there were consistencies with respect to the subject matter and former research supporting the purpose for this study.

Organizational Mandates

Mandates are defined by Business Dictionary (WebFinance Inc., 2014) as a “written authorization and/or command by a person, group, or organization (the 'mandator') to another (the 'mandatary') to take a certain course of action.”

The British Columbia (BC) government, as with other publicly led organizations, implemented mandates as directives or policies to staff on how they should perform their roles. Mandates may ascend from the need to enforce action or monitor performance but may also arise from government’s fiduciary responsibility to protect the public purse. Mandates have a need and perceived value to keep order no different than laws enacted to protect society at large. The misuse or misunderstanding of mandates may have outcomes within an organization with unintended consequences.

In my review of mandates and to back this study further, I reviewed leadership in power, the value of communication and understanding need for change, as well as the opportunities gained or missed.
Leadership and Power.

As a public sector organization with approximately 30,000 employees, mandates have played an important role in the BC Government’s control over its fiduciary and service responsibilities as a whole. This was evident in November 2014 after I searched “mandates” within the government’s intranet which derived 3090 examples of ‘mandates providing direction.’ As aforementioned, RMB under its mandate “has four major roles: central risk management agency within government, risk management advisor/consultant, risk management program development and delivery, and claims and litigation management” (Province of British Columbia, 2014c, para. 2). The Education Team’s mandate, and subject for this study, was narrowed to two areas of RMB’s mandate being “risk management advisor/consultant” services and “risk management program development and delivery.”

The process of risk management advisory services was proactive in nature, providing advice to the Team’s clients through multiple means including highlighting risks in areas such as contracts, operations, emergency management, etcetera. The Education Team supported program development and delivery to its clients through the delivery of its core programs: Schools Protection Program (SPP) and Universities Colleges Institute Protection Program (UCIPP). RMB’s mandate came via funding and, to some degree, directives from the three Ministries (Finance, Education and Advanced Education). There were interdependencies amongst these parties for the greater good; however, a degree of separation was required to ensure severability of interests, prevent conflicts, and ensure transparency. Because of this, RMB was housed within the MoF. Relevant to the relationships, Senge (2006) discussed two facets to seeing systems,
“seeing patterns of interdependency and seeing into the future” (p. 343), both of which were needed by the Ministries to work together effectively.

In any public organization, including the BC Government, proper leadership and power through the use of mandates was crucial to successful operations and programs. Whilst debate was ongoing in the scholarly community for a definition of leadership, I was drawn to Northouse (2012) who stated “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 5). To limit any argument in this highly contested area, this will be the definition that will be used in this study.

In any organizational context, power plays a part being a source of influence. In government and private industry alike, various forms of power influence followers and these make a difference in the success or failure of programs or operations. Northouse (2012) discussed five bases of power being: 1. Referent Power where followers can identify and appreciate the leader; 2. Expert Power which is based on the follower’s perceptions of the leader’s competence; 3. Legitimate Power or having formal authority; 4. Reward Power where leaders have the capacity to offer rewards to followers; and 5. Coercive Power in which the leader has the power to punish followers. Having personally experienced all of these sources of power as a follower and leader, it is my opinion that all these forms have a time and place, and a good leader knows when to apply them effectively. Northouse (2012) also indicated that there are varying theories on leadership including trait theories wherein some have innate abilities to lead. He went on to dismiss these findings, indicating this lens was restrictive and concluded that leadership can be learned, with which I agree.
As an employer and being heuristic in its solutions to manage its human capital, the BC Government promoted diversity as a mandate stating “Our workforce needs to be as diverse as British Columbians we serve to better understand the people we work for” (Province of British Columbia, 2014b, para. 1). Bolman and Deal (2013) affirmed this with their human resources lens emphasizing the value in “understanding people – their strengths and foibles, reason and emotion, desires and fears” (p. 17).

**Value of communication and understanding the need for change.**

As noted in the definition, mandates were implemented with the intent that a person, group, or organization will take a course of action. How these directives were communicated and understanding that change was needed is critical to a mandate’s success or failure throughout its lifecycle. Fernandez and Rainey (2006) affirmed this indicating “Two aspects of a course of action that appear crucial for organizational change in the public sector include the clarity or degree of specificity of the strategy and the extent to which the strategy rests on sound causal theory” (p. 170). Fernandez and Rainey (2006) discussed how change would be based on sound theories which assist in eliminating capricious or contradictory directives that might undermine efforts when implementing a change. Kouzes and Posner (2012) contended the same need for communication and understanding mandates by asserting, “to enlist others, you have to help them see and feel how their own interests and aspirations are aligned with the vision” (p. 139, emphasis in original) and add, for successful lasting relationships, there must be reciprocity.

The aforementioned provided evidence that for a mandate to be successful it must have buy-in from these key stakeholders or risk inefficiencies or potential failure. In contrast, Stringer (2014) discussed the importance of communication and conditions required for success
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(examples: understanding, truth, sincerity, appropriateness) denoting “Institutional and bureaucratic arenas, because of the nature of their organization and operation, provide many examples in which these conditions are not met” (p. 26).

**Opportunities gained or missed.**

There were benefits derived from mandates and RMB and its covered agencies exemplified this with professionally managed self-insurance programs protecting billions of dollars’ worth of education and health care related entity assets and operations. This realized approximate savings of one billion dollars for the BC government since inception (Province of British Columbia, 2014a). Trelstad and Katz (2011) affirmed these benefits indicating, “the government has the power to fund and administer massively scaled programs that serve a common purpose, correct for a market failure, or respond to a public need” (p. 45).

Not all government bodies experienced benefits from their mandates. Cavalluzzo and Ittner (2004) indicated they found “relatively little evidence that the perceived benefits from recent mandated performance measurement initiatives in the US government increase with greater measurement and accountability” (p. 1, emphasis in original). Closer to home, one of BC’s mandates that failed was BC’s Fast Ferries Project where afterwards the Office of the Auditor General recommended “that the Province commit to putting the principles and practices of good governance in place for its Crown corporations - including, specifically, allowing Crown corporation boards to function effectively within their mandates” (Province of British Columbia, 2000, sec. IV Governance).

The examples of organizational mandates, the impacts of organizational change, and collaboration (internal and external) indicated that the management of mandates is fundamental
to successful projects and programs. With these mandates put into effect, the next section discusses impacts of organizational change that arise out of the same.

Impacts of Organizational Change

It was prudent that leaders within RMB be aware of the impacts of organizational change that may affect constituents and the causes that trigger such events. Good leaders understand such impacts come in multiple forms, can be immediately evident or manifest over long periods of time, are commonly humanistic in nature, and can be disruptive or cause inefficiencies within the organization if not dealt with.

Causes of organizational change are numerous; therefore, it would be prudent for all leaders to understand relating impacts to its constituents caused from change. These impacts could be physiological and/or psychological. Because of this, value would be derived in looking forward and preplanning for such human impacts as naturally occurring events including the evolution of the workforce, changing economies, or recognizing and adjusting for organizational efficiencies within systems are constant.

As I looked at the impacts of organizational change further, I considered the physiological and psychological effects on staff, budget cutbacks and succession planning relating to industry alignment (public or private), and the introduction of Lean concepts.

Physiological and psychological effects on staff.

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future” (John F. Kennedy, 1963, para. 19).

As with all organizations, RMB readily experienced change and how well its human capital managed this was paramount to the Branch’s ability to move forward and operate
effectively. Change can have a multitude of forms, but most evident at RMB were changes in senior leadership, a move to an open workplace office environment, the loss of staff to retirements, and strict budget constraints. Inalhan’s (2009) research in this area discussed a multitude of costs related to resistance to change including absenteeism, reductions in productivity, low morale which may be long term, increase of errors, loss of experienced staff and potentially efforts to prevent the adjustment.

Inalhan (2009) determined “there were several recognizable patterned reactions (emotions) from employees towards the change in their physical environment. Denial, anger, bargaining and acceptance are the emotional stages employees go through in order to cope with change” (p. 26). Inalhan (2009) also indicated the value of communication with respect to readiness for change. Lastly, he discussed the importance of understanding an employee’s bond to the workplace and to lead effectively, one must understand the varying feelings a person goes through when dealing with a change.

Marks’ (2007) research also attested that the mismanagement of change events can have negative impacts on the organization and goes on to further discuss the importance of recognizing the bonds constituents have developed in their workplace and the importance of the reestablishment of the attachments to assist in moving forward. Marks (2007) went on to indicate the need to assist those in the change process with breaking from the old and accepting the new and the importance of understanding their emotion and intellect. By doing this, Marks (2007) alluded to four elements used in facilitating the acclimation to organizational transition: firstly, use empathy through leadership acknowledgement of things being difficult; secondly, be engaged and create an environment of understanding and support; thirdly, create energy by
generating excitement relating to the new realities; and lastly, use enforcement by strengthening new perceptions, expectations and behaviors to assist those in coping with a different work environment.

Bönigk and Steffgen (2013) attested “Organizational change is a particularly emotional event for those being confronted with it” (p. 1) and the importance of recognizing these emotions, more specifically the emotions of anger and humour. By recognizing resistance to change and understanding these emotions, this would assist the organization in realizing the benefits of change.

From the aforementioned, the literature supported that leaders within RMB must recognize the physiological and psychological effects arising out of change before benefits could be realized. Due to the extent of change that the Education Team had been subjected to over this period, I hoped to explore through my research what occurred within RMB with respect to these changes and determine if there were any learnings realized going forward.

**Budget cutbacks and succession planning relating to industry alignment (public or private).**

The BC Government’s succession planning strategy of not hiring within in an environment of economic restraint was prudent financially to aid in balancing its budget with substantively less tax revenues. Since the 2008 economic crisis, the government mandated severe budget cuts which included downsizing and hiring freezes. D’Avignon (2013) quoted Bill Bennett, Minister Responsible for Core Review, who avowed “the core review will try to improve and reform government, not just downsize it further.” These cutbacks were implemented at a critical time, as the baby boomers would be nearing retirement and leaving
Government with a wealth of knowledge. This made me reflect on Yukl’s (2013) writings where he indicated “systems dynamics involve complex relationships, multiple causes and outcomes, delayed effects, and cyclical causality” and “sometimes actions that appear to offer quick relief may actually make things worse in the long run” (p. 82). From this, I asked myself, what were the risks of doing more with less in RMB’s environment and could these strategies put the Government at risk?

My research included the Education Team who consisted of four members, two of who were new critical hires replacing two senior staff. One of these senior staff members retired and the other took on a different role in the Branch. I was one of those critical hires having moved up in position title and salary after being in the same position for seven years because of the hiring freeze. I also wanted to expand my research to other consultants within the Branch who had seen what was branded as the “domino effect” in the Branch to seek out their thoughts, feelings and concerns.

This “domino effect” effect was caused by a small number of senior staff who left. This in turn created a cascading effect of vacancies from others in the Branch moving positions to fill the gaps, all of which were deemed as critical hires. One of the critical positions that required filling was that of the former Executive Director, who started the branch and left a legacy that would be difficult fill. The Sponsor of this study was the successful candidate taking the reins in this challenging endeavour.

Most new critical hires were from movement within the Branch whilst others came from other Government branches or from the private insurance industry which RMB aligned with
closely. This was interesting as I got to examine what the private insurance industry was doing as a comparative to RMB.

It was commonly known within the Branch that those who had left took a great deal of valuable knowledge with them, some of which would never be replaced. Within the organization, it was known that no new human capital was added to the Branch since 2008. In fact, some positions were never filled and were either downgraded or eventually removed from the organizational chart leaving the Branch to do more with less from the mandated cutbacks with a growing client base.

In times of such economic restraint with issues around succession planning looming, leaders in Government needed to use effective communication to establish the need for the continuous constraints being placed on its workforce. If not, the human systems in place would have made assumptions from the perceived information which in turn could potentially have negative effects. During the seven years that followed the 2008 economic crisis, the reply to the burden put on the Branch’s workforce was “our hands are tied.” What was evident during that time was an absence of the senior executive who implemented the ongoing mandated cutbacks. All the while, they continued to implement more and more cost saving measures that affected staff such as Leading Workplace Strategies (LWS).

LWS had consultants with their own offices in 2014 move to an open office environment with many staff working remotely from home, all for cost savings measures. From my experience, this transition took many Branch members a period of time to acclimate to as a whole.
For further cost savings, travel approval was taken away for such things as meetings with or education of RMB’s clients, educating its consultants directly, or to going to conferences. Alternative methods of delivery were explored such as video conferencing but in the end, direct human contact was considered best by most if not all the consultants. Some benefits were introduced such as computer texting, voice calls from computer-to-computer, and permitting others to see and/or work on documents right on desktops.

Other measures implemented were the removal of consultant flex days given for time worked in lieu. This had been in place for many years, then one day senior executives simply stated that these were never granted in the first place, thus any such days were removed. Junior staff continued to receive these days under their collective agreement which caused some tension. This mandate was implemented years ago but still upset consultants when discussed years later.

As senior executive prudently worked to contain the budgets and maintain the Government’s AAA credit rating, the Branch’s morale was low, trust was questioned, and assumptions arose with respect to what was going to be cut next adding to the workloads. Choi and Ruona (2011) affirm “individuals make assumptions about change processes, evaluate them, find meaning in them, and develop feelings about them” (p. 49). Without the lens of senior executive leaders attending lower level leadership and/or consultant meetings, this started to foster an environment of distrust and frustration. According to Choi and Ruona (2011), a collaborative inquiry process alleviates frustration by permitting “organizations [to] change and act through their members, and successful change will persist over the long term only when individuals alter their on-the-job behaviors” (p. 49). Yukl (2013) avowed “leadership
development is more likely to be successful when top executives have a systems perspective that takes into account related responsibilities and strategic decisions such as…succession planning” (p. 398).

With respect to succession planning and the potential for knowledge loss, the BC Government appeared to prioritize the management of budgets and its AAA credit rating over the need to replace human capital. This approach could put Government at risk of developing gaps in knowledge from the exodus of its professional staff for retirement or seeking other opportunities.

What was also known at the time was the Canadian private insurance industry, in respect to succession planning and to avert the potential for knowledge loss, was taking proactive steps to alleviate this risk (Loreto, 2012). Economic conditions were known to be cyclical and played a part in organizational succession planning (Adie & Thomas, 1987; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010). Cut backs happened during times of economic restraint but human resource professionals and organizations should have effective succession plans in place, especially with the glut of baby boomers nearing retirement. Pynes (2004) and Reeves (2010) indicated that this is where governments had historically been lacking. By not addressing succession planning, this could put governments at risk of losing valuable human capital and knowledge (Loreto, 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010). To thwart such risks, succession planning should be included in strategic plans, mentoring programs, training, promoting current staff, recruitment, and allocation of funds (Loreto, 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010).

The literature backed the importance of having succession plans in place with no evident controversies (Loreto, 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010). Yukl (2013) affirmed the value of retaining specialists, stating “human capital is more important when the organization is heavily
dependent on people who have unique talents, require extensive training, and would be difficult to replace if they left” (p. 278). RMB was very dependent on its highly specialized professionals and subject to the risk of losing key staff and knowledge if not addressed. Such professional staff could become disgruntled or retire early, yet others may depart altogether potentially leaving minimal numbers and experience (Loreto, 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010). This could affect RMB’s very complex programs which the SUCH sector and public derived direct or indirect benefits from.

**Introduction of Lean concepts.**

Whilst there are definitive differences between Lean (improved process flow) and Six Sigma (reduced process variation), or combinations of the two (Ferrin, Miller & Muthler, 2005), the intent of this study was not to delve into differentiating these concepts but to look at what industry had done with them as a whole. The BC Government focus was on utilizing the Lean Six Sigma methodology and tools, and the use of consultant Green or Black Belts.

Efficiencies are key factors to the success of any organization, including government organizations. Zhou (2012) attested “Lean as a business strategy is used to improve quality and service, eliminate waste, reduce time and costs, and enhance overall organizational effectiveness” (p. 1). When discussing lean concepts in government organizations, Janssen and Estevez (2013) avowed governments around the world “are looking for ways to reduce costs while at the same time to stimulate innovation” (p. 1). They labelled this as lean government (l-Government). “l-Government is about doing more with less and is about the changing role of government in responding to complex political, managerial, and democratic challenges” (p. 1).

The BC Government (2015a) advocated for Lean wherein they stated:
Lean process improvement is an approach that can support ministries to improve customer service while also building internal capacity through the elimination of unnecessary rules, processes, activities and non-essential steps. Building a culture of Lean thinking requires deliberate and sustained leadership and frequent communication across the entire organization. Focusing on developing a Lean culture - which is the primary difference between this and other business process reengineering approaches - will guide a more consistent, long-term and coordinated approach to process improvement across the entire organization (Para. 1-2).

In an effort to promote this cause, the BC Government also developed a Lean BC Office. In a bold move of innovation, RMB was started by the former Executive Director in 1986. This consisted as a small group of professionals which grew over time to a branch of nearly 50 in 2007 when I started. From my experience working at RMB, we implemented a new management system and a multitude of programs, processes and practices through mandates given by Risk Management Executive (RMEX). Most of these worked well, whilst with others the human element caused them to falter. In my time, Lean had been discussed and efficiencies were commonly considered but no formal Lean review had been completed.

Janssen and Estevez (2013) affirmed “To make 1-Government possible, a set of enablers is needed. Two main enablers include: technological platforms (platforms) and capabilities to orchestrate a complex network of collaborative entities” (p. 4). They also stated “Lean government requires a change in the way public sector works to ensure that more can be done with less” (p. 6).
Whilst benefits of Lean were indicated by Janssen and Estevez (2013), their “underlying premise [was] that societal problems can only be solved in collaboration with the society” (p. 7). This was difficult from RMB’s perspective as they did not deal directly with “society” as their clients were core government and crown corporations and the SUCH sector. If these groups could be identified as “society,” this might be viable. This context would have to be considered further.

Much research was done on Lean indicating favourable outcomes (Janssen & Estevez, 2013; Olesen, Powell, Hvolby, & Fraser, 2015; Radnor & Johnston, 2013; Staats, Brunner, & Upton, 2011; Warner, Walsh, Horvath, Walsh, Herrick, Prentiss, & Powell, 2013; Zhou, 2012). Other researchers determined Lean principles did not fulfil as hoped in the services industry as it did in the manufacturing industry where it was hailed (Radnor, Holweg & Waring, 2012). This led me to believe that overall Lean principles demonstrated value where change was required.

From a Lean consultant perspective, Voehl, Harrington, Mignosa, and Charron (2013) defined a Black Belt as “individuals who have had advanced training with specific emphasis on statistical applications and problem-solving approaches. These individuals are highly competent to serve as on-site consultants and trainers for application of Six Sigma methodologies” (p. 17). In my research I hoped to ascertain if RMB could benefit from such expertise.

From the previously discussed mandates, I looked at the physiological and psychological effects on staff, budget cutbacks and succession planning relating to industry alignment (public or private), and the introduction of Lean concepts. These indicated mandates were needed within government but effects of such mandates need to be considered not just for their economic benefits, but also the effects and potential risks of not considering human factors. Physiological
and psychological effects on staff could be evidenced in potential absenteeism, reduced productivity, and low morale. Budget cutbacks may appear to be a short term fix but in the long run unintended consequences may occur that may negate this if leaders do not convey their legitimacy. Succession planning if not managed could cause increased stress from constituents being overworked and loss of knowledge may be realized. Lean principles appeared to show cost savings benefits but these would not, from my perspective, be the answer for the larger picture issues facing government organizations. The literature backed my experiences and thoughts as well as added some new perspectives.

**Organizational Collaboration (internal and external)**

The benefits derived from group efforts has received much discussion and research by Scholars (Burke, Lake, & Paine, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Senge, 2006; Yukl, 2013). Within any large organization, silos can occur at the parent or subsidiary companies and/or within government or their subsequent ministries down to their branches. Whilst silos could have benefits for specialization and competition, collaboration may have value where the benefits can include group think to expand ideas, learnings from same, efficiencies though such things as non-duplication of efforts and a sense of pride being involved with a bigger picture or project.

To gain further knowledge into the collaboration, I turned my attention to the benefits derived from collaboration, knowledge sharing and learning, and internal and external collaboration (benefits and drawbacks).

**Benefits derived from collaboration.**

Kouzes and Posner (2012) pulled from Merriam-Webster’s (2001) Collegiate Dictionary wherefrom they defined collaborate as “to work jointly with others or together esp. in an
To begin this process, Kouzes and Posner (2012) attested “exemplary leaders understand that to create a climate of collaboration, they must determine what the group needs in order to do their work, and build the team around common purpose and mutual respect” (p. 218). They stated further that “world-class performance isn’t possible unless there’s a strong sense of shared creation and shared responsibility” (p. 218). Lastly, they affirmed “collaboration is a critical competency for achieving and sustaining high performance” (p. 218).

Weisbord (2012), when discussing the value of stakeholder engagement in a professional environment, avowed “creating dialogue across all boundaries is a healthy response to open societies, no matter what happens after” (p 276). Working in an environment of complex risks, RMB had, from my experience, utilized this philosophy on many occasions with plethora of consultant voices and opinions in the room. Having taken this approach, it often resulted in much discourse followed by the best decision in the end. I have heard it stated on multiple occasions that RMB looked at risks from all sides. This typically required a great deal of consultation and viewing things from different lenses which often occurred in or across department settings. This was not to say differing opinions did not occur, but the benefits of the collaborative process outweighed such differences as long as respect and understanding was given on all sides.

Externally, RMB had many interorganizational collaborative working relationships with their clients or when working on large complex projects. Often much work and understanding
was required during such interrelationships before true collaboration and trust could evolve and derive benefit. These relationships commonly evolved over several years. One example would be the many Private Public Partnership (P3) projects in which RMB worked closely with multiple parties in order to assist them with their indemnity and insurance requirements. I became aware of these interrelationships from working on five P3 projects including one during my time on the Education Team.

Majchrzak, Jarvenpaa, and Bagherzadeh (2014) when discussing the benefits of interorganizational collaborations (IOCs), affirmed “successful cases had positive multicharacteristic loops, parallel multisource changes, and multiple loops. This suggests that more successful cases are those with more recursions, signifying [Interorganizational Collaboration] IOCs that have developed more ways to accommodate change iteratively” (p. 19). They also found that “the more complex dynamic patterns are associated with successful outcomes” (p. 1). Majchrzak et al. (2014) also observed differences when they attested “our review indicates that IOCs are exceedingly unstable. We found instability to be present in a variety of situations” (p. 2). And, “while partners may be unlikely to intentionally harm other partners within an IOC, partner interests may not coincide” (p. 12).

In their article “Interorganizational Collaboration for Regional Sustainability What Happens When Organizational Representatives Come Together?” Sharma and Kearins (2011) acclaimed:

Through collaborating, members can develop a better understanding of the economic, social, and environmental issues affecting their region’s sustainability and challenging their organizations’ legitimacy. By sharing experiences and expectations of sustainable
development, members can also develop better relationships and respond to various pressures for sustainable development (p. 168).

Sharma and Kearins (2011) also discussed concerns relating to the collaborative process when they indicated “the ideological foundations of sustainable development philosophy can make such collaboration an extremely tense and political process” (p. 168).

**Knowledge sharing and learning.**

Collaboration can develop an atmosphere of sharing and learning. Senge (2006) affirmed this when drawing from Werner Heisenberg’s (n.d.) writings wherein he indicated, “the IQ of the Team can, potentially, be much greater than the IQ of the Individuals” (p. 222). RMB from my experience always valued team learning, be it in an internal or external environment. Since starting at the branch, there have been many collaborative teams and team building experiences that have helped to broaden the breadth of consultant’s knowledge. Being that RMB’s clients are exposed to a multitude of complex risks, consultants had to continuously work or draw from expertise in many different areas to understand these risks. Examples: contracts, legal, construction, equipment, hazardous materials, medical, financial, operational, reputational, etcetera. From such team learning environments, RMB realized professional benefits.

When discussing the value of team learning, Senge (2006) avowed “we know that teams can learn…where the intelligence of the team exceeds the intelligence of the individuals…where teams develop extraordinary capacities for coordinated action” (p. 9). He continued by stating, “when teams are truly learning…individual members are growing more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise” (p. 9). Lastly, he proclaimed that “team learning is vital because teams, not
individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. This is where the rubber meets the road; unless teams can learn, the organization cannot learn” (p. 10).

Kouzes and Posner (2012) also advocated for collaborative learning when they proclaimed “When you strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence, they are more likely to give it their all and exceed their own expectations” (p. 22, emphasis in original).

Internal and external collaboration (benefits and drawbacks).

When discussing the understanding of interorganizational processes and the reasons for collaboration, Burke et al. (2009) indicated two paradoxes exist when this is considered which are vulnerabilities and controls. They continued by stating that “Organizations have to decide how much they will cede control to their partner” (p. 706). However, they affirmed “collaboration is valuable in and of itself, opening gateways to such activities as organizational learning and transformation” (p. 706).

Trust is a critical component of collaborative endeavours (Burke et al., 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Sharma and Kearins (2011) indicated “trust is a critical component of any collaboration” and “conflicts may also emerge if members distrust each other” (p. 173). There was bountiful literature on the benefits and trepidations of collaboration; however, I feel from my experiences of having worked both in silos and in team environments (internally and externally), and having witnessed struggles with control and trust amongst the stakeholders, the benefits outweigh the arguments against.

In summary, the literature identified there were benefits derived from collaboration which included partnerships, knowledge sharing and learning, and internal and external group efforts.
There were also drawbacks such as the balance of control and trust. From the information gather from the researchers before me, collaboration demonstrated value as long as respect, relationship building and trust could be garnered amongst the parties.

**Summary of the Literature**

This chapter reviewed the relevance of organizational mandates, the impacts of organizational change, and collaboration (internal and external) in relation to the Education Team and/or RMB.

Organizational mandates appeared relevant in assisting government, including the BC Government, in implementing policies on how staff should perform their roles, enforce action, track performance and assist in monitoring fiduciary responsibility. To better understand mandates, I reviewed leadership in power, the value of communication and understanding the need for change, as well as the opportunities gained or missed. In this respect, the literature indicated that mandates can be fundamental to the success of government projects and programs.

When looking at the impacts of organizational change I considered the physiological and psychological effects on staff, budget cutbacks and succession planning relating to industry alignment (public or private), and the introduction of Lean concepts. Because causes of organizational change are plentiful, the literature indicated it would be advantageous for all leaders to understand the impacts to its constituents caused by change. These impacts may occur over time with potentially unintended consequences if not dealt with. Because of this, there would be benefits to preplanning for such human impacts being that continuously occurring events such as the evolution of the workforce, change in economies, or recognizing and adjusting for organizational efficiencies within systems are constant.
Lastly, I researched collaboration in relation to the Education Team and/or RMB. To gain further insight, I looked at the benefits derived from collaboration, knowledge sharing and learning, and the benefits and drawbacks of internal and external collaboration. Within large organizations such as government, silos can occur which may show some benefits such as specialization. Collaboration, however, can demonstrate benefits including group think, learnings from same, efficiencies derived though non-duplication, and a sense of pride being part of a bigger picture. Bestowing trust and the degree of control ceded in such an environment is critical.

Each section on organizational mandates, the impacts of organizational change, and collaboration (internal and external) indicated the positivisms and negativisms with respect to human interactions and effects on organizational systems. The aforesaid research and some experiences that I realized as an organization member assisted me in developing my research question, How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?
Chapter Three: Inquiry Approach and Methodology

Chapter three outlines the Action Research (AR) approach and methodology that I used to undertake this study project on the Education Team within the BC Government’s Risk Management Branch (RMB). Stringer (2014) stated AR is a “flexible and practical set of procedures that are systematic, cyclical, solutions oriented, and participatory, providing the means to devise sustainable improvements in practice” (p. 5). He went on to affirm this approach can be broad brushed across many fields of research including publicly run organizations. This would include the BC Government wherein the Education Team operates and is the subject of this research.

Inquiry Approach

The basis of this study came from the following lead question: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Additional data was ascertained through the use of the sub questions:

1. What are the systems and processes (the environment - internal and external) that have changed in the past two years supporting the Education Team’s growth?

2. How might the Education Team implement Lean Principles in a way to encourage support and success?

3. What aspirations do the Education Team Members have for succession planning, leadership and budgets?

4. Where do leadership and its members envision the Team in one to five years?

The Sponsor and the Director of the Education Team requested that I undertake this analysis to ascertain the Team dynamics wherein I accepted a new position. Using AR, from the
stance of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), the goal of this study was to observe the construct of the Education Team, the systems in place, how it aligned with the lead question, reflections on victories and future capabilities, all while being supported by social sciences literature.

“Appreciative Inquiry is the study of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p. 1). At the heart of Whitney and Trosten’s AI 4D model, which was drawn from the Global Excellence in Management Initiative (Busche, 2012), is Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p. 6) as depicted in Figure 2 based on Whitney and Trosten-Bloom’s model. My hope was to get through the Discovery, Dream and ultimately reach the Design phase during this study.

The hope was that AI would assist in strengthening the inquiry process by “hav[ing] organizational members and stakeholders act as both interviewers and interviewees, that is, to fully engage all affected parties in the act of inquiry itself” (Bushe, nd, p. 3). Bushe went on to affirm AI can assist in discovering the power of possibility by looking through the effects of positive feelings on the change processes instead of using problems as a way to understand societal and work related issues. The rationale for the AR methodology, I believed, best aligned with my research approach that could assist in the analysis demonstrating a need for interconnectedness within the Education Team and its related environment.
This chapter outlines the participants, methods and tools used to collect the data, how the analysis of the research materials were undertaken and, where possible, behaviours observed. This assisted in undertaking a qualitative and quantitative analysis on how the Team was dealing with the multitude of changes over the past two years and in making recommendations going forward. I provide further specifics of this methodology in the Study Conduct section as well as discusses any ethical concerns arising from the inquiry.

Action Research with an AI stance and the aforementioned questions assisted in drawing out the rich data needed to complete this study. To do this, I was both a participant and observer.

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Coghlan and Brannick (2014) confirmed this AR approach stating, “inquiry from the inside involves researchers as natives and actors, immersed in local situations generating contextually embedded knowledge which emerges from experience” (p. 4).

The quantitative analysis was gathered by incorporating a survey targeted at the Education Team’s 85 clients using five-point Likert-type scale questions. The qualitative analysis was then undertaken through the use of one-on-one interviews with the Education Team members and by conducting two world cafés. This included extending an invitation to two retired colleagues having a wealth of historically significant knowledge. Lastly, a risk assessment was planned using a risk register template to draw out potential risks and opportunities. To gather more qualitative data, a comment section within the surveys was used. These methods permitted the completion of primary descriptive statistics for this study.

A “make-it-happen” café occurred after data analysis and helped to bring meaning to the data collection and analysis, and better informed the recommendation section of this research.

**Project Participants**

To ascertain the required data for this study from the lead questions and sub-questions, I utilized both internal and external stakeholders. To get a clear picture of the intended participants, reference Appendix A: Risk Management Branch Organization Chart and Appendix B: Education Team Internal and External Key Stakeholder Chart. Within the Risk Management Branch, the Executive Director and Sponsor is at the highest point in the organizational hierarchy which was valuable for this study as she provided authorization for BC Government data, contact lists and the signing off of this project. She also had power over RMB and the Education Team.
In addition to this, there were six core departments who offered risk management advisor/consultant and risk management program development and delivery services in accordance with RMB’s mandate and roles which was the focus of this research. These include the Education Team, Health Team, Underwriting & Analysis Team, Government Security Team, Core Government & Crowns Team and the Claims Team. At the head of these departments were six Directors and above them the Executive Director who are all part of the Risk Management Executive (RMEX).

The Directors supervise the consultants or examiners within their respective teams/departments. This totaled seven executives and approximately 25 consultants in advisory roles (including myself) and each was asked to participate in this study conduct via invitation to the world café sessions. The world cafés were divided into two sessions, with the RMEX in one and consultants in another.

To further the inquiry, I asked approximately 15 RMB participants to be involved in a risk assessment which, from experience, makes these more manageable.

Additional invitees that were asked to participate in this study to gather valued data were two former Education Team senior consultants who recently left the Team, one who retired and another who took a different position in the branch. The retiree whom the author replaced did work as an Acting Director on occasion; however, she no longer had affiliation with the BC Government or the Education Team so there were no longer power over concerns.

A third invitation was sent to the former Executive Director who was the pioneer of RMB and the person responsible for putting the mandate and roles in place over 25 years ago. Even though he had no official power over, he would still have perceived influence being that he
continued to consult with senior executive within the BC Government. Due to this, he was asked to participate at the RMEX level.

Because I worked within the Education Team as a senior consultant and acted as the Team Director in the Director’s absence, add that the Sponsor approved and requested the study, there would be power over or perceived power over the other team members. Due to this fact, I was not able to participate in the risk assessment, first round world café, or interview the other consultants within the Team. I was able to facilitate the RMEX world café.

After the data analysis, all participants in both world cafés and risk assessment were later invited to the “make-it-happen” café wherein I provided a summary of the data analysis and answered questions. This session also assisted in informing the final recommendations for this inquiry. Despite the fact that there were power over concerns in the room, the benefits derived from this voluntary sessions superseded any power over concerns.

In addition to the aforementioned and fitting within the risk management advisor/consultant and risk management program development and delivery services provided by RMB, external Education Team clients were consulted. These clients were risk leads at the 60 public school districts in BC and similar positions within the 25 postsecondary institutions. All were asked to partake in this inquiry through an anonymous survey. These participants were all self-insured by RMB’s SPP and UCIPP programs to who the Education Team provided advisory services.

External stakeholders not included in this study were clients of the Heath, Core Government & Crown, Government Security Teams, Claims or Underwriting & Analysis Teams.
However, being that this study was for the Executive Director of RMB, a future inquiry may be undertaken beyond this study.

The aforementioned participants were the only ones involved being that they either offer professional advice in accordance with RMB’s mandate and roles or receive professional advice from the Education Team directly. All remaining staff within RMB or its other client groups were not asked to partake as I felt that these core participants would sufficiently offer the rich data needed to answer the lead question and sub-questions, and make the inquiry manageable.

**Inquiry Team.**

As in most projects, there are others needed to support the researcher. In my quest to obtain the data needed to complete this inquiry, or even a shoulder to lean on, I needed a team to support me. These individuals were invaluable and often had specialized skills that were needed to assist in the design and building of this undertaking. Snow (2012) supported this asserting, “through collaboration, virtually any complex problem is potentially solvable as relevant knowledge and skill sets, as well as other resources, can be marshaled and focused on the problem at hand” (p. 1).

For this journey, the team I needed to complete this undertaking included three facilitators, two who are outside the branch and none having power over the participants. They assisted me in holding interviews, conducting the risk assessment and facilitating the consultant world café. Three team members worked for the BC Government and agreed to take on this role. The fourth team member was a competent facilitator whom I had known for years through Toastmasters and as a professional adult instructor who worked outside of government.
A transcriptionist was needed to put all the interview recordings onto Word documents and to de-identify the interviewees. I had known this person for two years, worked outside of RMB, and had no knowledge of or affiliation with those being interviewed. One scribe, who worked within the branch in the central services department having no power over relationships with the participants, was utilized to ensure that data was documented. I also had the support of family who were able to lend a hand in the administrative duties which were critical for the success of this activity. The team members were asked to sign an Inquiry Team Member Letter of Agreement (Appendix C). The Sponsor was also be asked to sign a Letter of Agreement (Appendix D).

Inquiry Methods

This section of the thesis discusses the inquiry methods used to undertake the study. There were four forms of inquiry methods used to obtain the data needed to complete my research. These included a survey, one-to-one interviews, two world cafés, and a risk assessment. Following this, a “make-it-happen” café was held to present the findings to the participants, which on its own was not a method.

Data Collection Methods.

For awareness, the study was mentioned to the branch executive in an RMEX meeting by the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study. My research was voluntary and all information was contained in the invitations and research information letter.

Surveys.

An invitation and link to an online survey, including consent (Appendix E), was sent via email to the Education Team’s 85 clients permitting the collection of quantitative data using the
Likert-type scale. The survey (Appendix F) identified who I was, the data being sought, and indicated that participation was voluntary and anonymous. For those who undertook the survey, 12 questions around the RMB mandate and roles, knowledge of risk or the branch’s related services were asked. Whilst much has been written on this common tool for data collection and its gaps (Boone & Boone, 2012; Joubert, Inceoglu, Bartram, Dowdeswell, & Lin, 2015; Wakita, Ueshima, & Noguchi, 2012), this form of data sufficed as it was intended to draw out high level knowledge or awareness from the participants and then permit comments. Through their participation, the survey would still provide rich data.

**Interviews.**

Invitations (Appendix G) to attend interviews were sent to three of the Education Team members within RMB which included the Director being in his role for over ten years, a Senior Consultant with less than six months experience and a Junior Consultant having been in her position for seven years. I also invited two former Education Team Senior Consultants to participate in the interviews with the expectation that they would expand the data and potentially bring more validity to the findings. Both consultants left the Team in September 2014, one to retirement and the other took a different position in the Branch. Each participant would be interviewed in a neutral environment outside of RMB and be provided with a consent form (Appendix H) and asked four questions from an Appreciative Inquiry stance (Appendix I).

All interviews were undertaken through the use of neutral third party facilitator who had no power over relationship with any of the interviewees. The interviews were held in a comfortable neutral environment outside of RMB’s office that I prearranged with the hope that the interviewees would be more open. The interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy and
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expression with the intent to provide rich data relating to the lead and sub-questions asked in this study. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) attested to the value of interviews stating “through conversations we get to know other people, learn about their experiences, feelings, attitudes, and the world they live in” (p. xvii). They went on to state an interview goes “beyond the spontaneously exchange of views in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful question and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge” (p. 3).

**World Café.**

A “Boardroom C Café” (or world café) was undertaken by inviting the approximately 25 consultants and six executive (RMEX) to deduce what these participants understood about RMB’s mandate and roles. It was hoped this would also provide individual thoughts of the participants relating to the changes that occurred in the branch over the last two years.

Boardroom C had meaning to those within RMB being that it was the coffee shop of choice of most of the branch members and, over time, it was dubbed with the name being the third unofficial boardroom.

To eliminate any power over issues, the consultants were invited to attend a Boardroom C Café which was held with permission in the new large boardroom within RMB’s new office. There were five tables in the first round set up sitting each department separately, with one table factoring for the two smaller departments, and one facilitator. Boardroom C had the ambiance of a café with coffee or tea and a variety of treats (Figure 3). For data gathering purposes, each table was covered with paper to write on and different coloured markers.
The participants were invited to participate (Appendix J), asked to sign a consent form (Appendix K) when they entered the room, and the facilitators lead the session with pre-rehearsed instructions. The questions (Appendix L) were placed on the table and each department was encouraged to write openly what their answers were. Each table was asked to work through the questions in order, with the potential to distinguish if there were differing opinions and thoughts on the mandate, roles and processes of the branch, across the different departments. The facilitator gathered the signed consent forms, reiterated the intent of the research, restated that participation was voluntary, and monitored the room. The timeline was set at one hour and the incentive to participate was the coffee or tea, treats and permission to attend during work hours which I attained from the Executive Director and Sponsor.

The next day, the same exercise occurred with the RMEX group (Appendix M, Appendix K, and Appendix N). I anticipated generating rich data using this approach, with respect to the overarching inquiry question. Brown and Isaacs (2005) affirmed this approach indicating:
The Café process has been used in many different cultures, among many different age groups, for many different purposes, and in many different types of communities and organizations. It doesn’t matter who the people are - the process works. It works because people can work well together, can be creative and caring and insightful when they’re actively engaged in meaningful conversation around questions that count (p. ix).

**Risk Assessment.**

Whilst not a common method used by researchers, a risk assessment has validity in data collection being used on many projects including the 2010 Winter Olympics, all Public Private Partnership projects and other large and small projects in the BC Government. CSA/ISO 31000 - 10 was a standard for the BC Government, it consisted of seven elements and was scalable as depicted in Figure 4, the Risk Management Process (Canadian Standards Association CAN/CSA-ISO 31000-10, 2015).

All risk assessments start with a blank risk register (Appendix O) and are populated amongst the group as a whole. This approach has been proven useful on many projects or undertakings and followed the BC Government professional Enterprise Risk Management philosophy and CAN/CSA ISO 31000-10 standards for: Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines. The Government of Canada (2014) has this in their library affirming “The guidance contained in the implementa guide emphasizes integration of risk management into key organizational processes. It is intended to be applicable across disciplines to help harmonize risk management practices within an organization” (para. 8).
The risk assessment was led by a branch expert who had agreed to take on this role and had no power over any of the others in the inquiry. The intent of the risk assessment process and document was to identify the risks that the Education Team or Branch had been exposed to or those they might be exposed to. Those invited to take part in the risk assessment were the four Education Team consultants (less the researcher) including the two who had recently left the Team, five department directors at the branch and the Executive Director. Also included were four other team consultants and the recently retired Executive Director (total of 15). The intent of this process and document was to determine the risks associated with the multitude of changes that the Education Team or Branch were exposed to in the previous two years. This would add to the data and questions asked in the research. This process, which included establishing a context

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statement and identifying risks the Education Team or Branch were exposed to and mitigating factors, was well known to RMB. Being subject matter experts, this method and language was understood by those in the room.

From discussions, this process had not been completed within the Education Team in the past and it was believed, from my professional experience, that this would provide an opportunity for those in the room to learn from this exercise in a common language. It was also hoped these learnings might be utilized by the branch as a whole. With multiple levels of management and consultants at the table, the intent was one of identifying, understanding and mitigating the risks. Therefore, any perceived power over issues, if present, would be minimal versus the benefits gained. This session was by invitation (Appendix P) and by voluntary consent (Appendix Q).

Within the Risk Management Guide for BC Public Sector published by RMB it stated, “when examining the risks associated with achieving the goals and objectives of government, it is often prudent to ask, ‘How does existing legislation, regulations and current ministry/agency policies and practices guide how we do business?’” (Province of British Columbia, 2012, p. 2). This question could have relevance to the lead question and this inquiry which would need to be derived from this study.

**Make-It-Happen Café.**

Group settings are ideal for making things happen being that everyone can participate and contribute to the future growth. Kouzes and Posner (2012) affirmed that “in the best organizations, everyone, regardless of title or position, is encouraged to act like a leader” (p. 14).
Once the data from the four previously stated methods was analyzed a third world café or “make-it-happen” café followed to present the finding to the participants. On its own, this was not a method. This session was facilitated by me as identified in the invitation (Appendix R). The intent of this café was to bring meaning to the data collection and analysis, provide the draft recommendations, and answer any questions. All participants were asked to sign a consent form (Appendix S) prior to the café. Comments and questions were audio recorded with the intent to better help inform the recommendations.

For this café, I invited many who had been included in the previous sessions, including those with power over others, as I felt the benefits derived from this café and the fact that it was voluntary outweighed any potential harm to the participants. Participants were advised that any data they provide could not be withdrawn nor could their attendance be anonymous due the fact they were in a group setting.

**Study Conduct**

I conducted this study using Action Research methodology with an Appreciative Inquiry stance. The methods being used were surveys, interviews, world cafés and a risk assessment.

Client participants for the survey were recruited using an invitation letter (Appendix E) and online survey (Appendix F) using a master email list that RMB had for its 60 School District and 25 postsecondary institution clients. Permission to use this list of contacts was granted by RMB’s Executive Director and study Sponsor. This survey included 12 questions having relevance to the lead and sub-questions with an AI stance. These were written by me and approved by the Sponsor before being sent. After receiving a reference from a reputable researcher, I purchased a license to use Fluid Surveys as the survey tool. Prior to sending
invitations to the clients, I tested the sample questions on several non-related parties and examined the software delivery of the invitation and consent form, the data accuracy and analytics.

Participants for the five Education Team interviews were engaged through the use of an email from a third party facilitator. It included an invitation letter (Appendix G) noting the date time and location, the sample questions being used (Appendix I), and the consent form (Appendix H) indicated that the sessions would be recorded. The interviews were scheduled in a small comfortable meeting room in one of the BC Government offices outside of RMB for which I received permission. I ensured the rooms were comfortable, quiet and well lit prior to booking. I needed to secure security passes for the facilitator. Permission for doing this during office hours had been granted by the RMB’s Executive Director and study Sponsor. It was arranged that the facilitator would greet the participants and have them sign the consent forms, go over the process and verbalize that the sessions were voluntary and would be recorded.

After the interviews, the interviewees were advised on how their information would be protected, including that the facilitator would be keeping the consent forms secure. The recordings were kept on a recorder, password protected and sent to the transcriptionist without my involvement. The transcriptionist had no knowledge of the participants and sent the transcripts to me using pseudonyms (example Blue) for each to prevent bias or potential future coercion by me having direct or perceived power over some of the participants. Having such a small pool to choose from, it was possible I might be able to determine the identity of the participants based on their responses or phraseology, but this was addressed in the invitations and anticipated by the interviewees, all being current or recent Team members. Once transcribed,
de-identified copies of the interviews were delivered to me wherein I stored the data in a locked filing cabinet in my residence for analysis. The transcriptionist kept the original recordings in a locked cabinet.

The Boardroom C Café participants were enlisted by email with an invitation (Appendix J, Appendix M), consent form (Appendix K) and during the café, questions (Appendix L, Appendix N) were presented on what resembled a café menu. Round one with potentially 25 consultants from RMB’s six different departments was held within RMB’s large boardroom that I booked and set up with a team member (Figure 3). Permission for this was granted by RMB’s Executive Director and study Sponsor. The room’s ambiance resembled a café with five tables covered in paper, hot and cold drinks as well as fresh treats and fruit. The data collection tool was paper tablecloths with non-staining writing markers. I ensured a security pass for the facilitator. The facilitator ensured consent forms were signed, reaffirmed the session was voluntary and went over the questions on all the tables. I did not attend the café due to power over, but after the café I did debrief the facilitator. The facilitator kept the signed consent forms and was instructed to secure them in a locked cabinet. The time, date and place of the Boardroom C Café were written on the invitation and this was one hour before lunch on a work day. Being as this session was voluntary, the incentive was food, drinks and permission granted from the RMB’s Executive Director and study Sponsor for staff attendance. They could also opt out and continue working. The table covers with comments were stored in a locked filing cabinet. The consent forms were stored by the facilitator in a similar manner.
Boardroom C Café round two was the same as round one but only included RMEX participants due to power over concerns. It was in the same boardroom to accommodate ease in setup time.

With respect to the risk assessment, I arranged a smaller boardroom and booked it for three hours. After invitations (Appendix P) were sent out by the facilitator by email and consent forms (Appendix Q) were received, the group was asked to populate the template risk register (Appendix O). During the session, the participants were asked to identify the risks associated with the changes that the Education Team has undertaken in the last two years. By using this method, once the risks are identified, analysis could begin by the group.

The research findings, from the aforementioned methods and data analysis, could then be examined against the lead and sub-questions in an effort to demonstrate the validity of the research. The study findings were then presented to the branch during a “make-it-happen” café. I sent out invitations (Appendix R) and consent forms (Appendix S) indicating date, time and place and that the session would be recorded. I scheduled the café for one hour inviting all the invitees from the interviews, first and second round world cafés and risks assessment. By combining the groups, both RMEX and consultants, there would be power over concerns; however, the benefits outweighed any potential risk. I facilitated this session in the form of a presentation delineating the findings of the research and answering questions. In addition to the audio recording, a scribe was present to take notes from the session which assisted me with the recommendations to the Sponsor to facilitate growth of the Education Team, and potentially the Branch.
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At the end of the study, I scheduled a meeting with the Sponsor to discuss the outcomes of the recommendations at that point. These recommendations were vetted in relation to the lead inquiry questions, sub-questions and intended change.

Data Analysis

As noted, this project was undertaken through the use of a survey, interviews, risk assessment, and world cafés.

With permission granted from the Executive Director of RMB and Sponsor for this inquiry to ascertain quantitative data in relation to the lead question, a voluntary anonymous online survey was sent to the 60 Secretary Treasurers at the BC School Districts and 25 Post-secondary Risk Leads.

For those who undertook the survey, 12 questions were asked with respect to RMB’s mandate and roles using a five-point Likert-type scale where one of: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree could be selected (Appendix F). The purpose of this form of collection was to ascertain quantitative data permitting the completion of primary descriptive statistics. Questions related to the client’s knowledge of risk management, Education Team services, quality of Team services, understanding of Enterprise Risk Management, client culture around risk management and whether further education was required.

I analyzed the data from the School Districts and Post-secondary institutions. The built-in descriptive statistic features of the Fluid Surveys software also assisted in the analysis of the data. At the end of the survey, clients were permitted to offer comments which would be used as qualitative data.
The interviews were recoded and transcribed onto de-identified Word documents. There were four questions asked relating to the study lead question and sub-questions using an AI stance. The questions emphasized the “best of” or “growth” of the Education Team (Appendix I). This qualitative data was coded in a spreadsheet by determining if there were themes or key words. Using the AI stance the participant’s thoughts, feelings, values, and wants were put into categories.

The data gathered during the Boardroom C Cafés on paper table covers was analyzed and compared against the four questions provided, inquiry lead question and sub-questions. This qualitative data, as with the interviews, was coded in a spreadsheet by determining if there were common themes.

Once populated, the risk register (Appendix O) has a rated scale of 1 to 5 to determine the likelihood and consequence of the identified risk. The rating scores were rated low, medium, high or extreme. The group, as a whole, identified each risk and rated it. In addition to this, the group determined mitigations. Once completed, this rating did not require any further analysis and was incorporated into the final research findings.

To limit bias during the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data taken from the surveys, comments made in the surveys, risk register, interviews and world cafés, I had one of my team members assist in vetting data. Potential subjectivity and bias was addressed early in an attempt to remove such issues and ensure non-subjective and un-bias results.

Lacey and Luff (2001) stated “Qualitative research is particularly good at answering the ‘why’, ‘what’ or ‘how’ questions” (p. 5). They went on to indicate “characteristics of the data
may be described and explored by drawing graphs and charts, doing cross tabulations and calculating means and standard deviations” (p. 6). Lacey and Luff (2001) concluded the Analysis of qualitative data usually goes through some or all of the following stages (though the order may vary):

- Familiarisation with the data through review, reading, listening etc
- Transcription of tape recorded material
- Organisation and indexing of data for easy retrieval and identification
- Anonymising of sensitive data
- Coding (may be called indexing)
- Identification of themes
- Re-coding
- Development of provisional categories
- Exploration of relationships between categories
- Refinement of themes and categories
- Development of theory and incorporation of pre-existing knowledge
- Testing of theory against the data
- Report writing, including excerpts from original data if appropriate (eg quotes from interviews) (p. 6).

**Ethical Issues**

Stringer (2014), when discussing ethics, indicated researchers “need to take specific steps to ensure that participants come to no harm as a result of their participation in the research
During this study, I accounted for potential harms that the participants might be subjected to. Specifically, the areas of ethics that applied to research in accordance to Rowe and Agger-Gupta’s (2008) Ethical Risks & Dilemmas in Action Research included: (a) undue influence over participants through actual or perceived coercion, (b) researcher bias, (c) loss of confidentiality where participants discuss other participants after the Boardroom C Café, (d) sample size wherein participants may be identified due to the fact only a few are selected from personality traits or unique verbiage traits, (e) privacy legislation, that is Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act applying to government bodies in the event any personal information was stored on RMB’s local area network or a breach occurs, (f) conflict between the interests of two or more parties caused by inviting participants involved with the survey to assist in the research, (g) conflict over the intended versus the actual outcome of inquiry-based study when the Sponsor feels the data was not backing up the intended change.


“Respect for Persons recognizes the intrinsic value of human beings and the respect and consideration that they are due” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 6). This study addressed this by advocating for volunteerism and respecting the autonomy of all
participants and freedom to speak openly without remorse. All those involved were invited and free to participate or not. This was accomplished by providing consent forms to each participant with their invitation in advance of the survey or session. This was reiterated verbally by indicating each person’s attendance, statements, inclusion in any session was completely voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any time. There was no forced attendance or coercion permitted in this research. Each attendee had the freedom to speak without consequence. This was done through ensuring there were no power over scenarios that affected any person’s ability to speak openly. If there was, it was minimized.

Concern for Welfare “consists of the impact on individuals of factors such as their physical, mental and spiritual health, as well as their physical, economic and social circumstances” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 7). I addressed this in this research by including all Education Team members, all consultants within RMB and all our clients regardless of age, gender, race, economic position, physical ability or sexual orientation. Other ways I protected the participant’s welfare was by sending invitations to everyone via private email with a consent form indicting freedom to attend or not and questions for review before they attended. A final way that the volunteers were protected was the protection of information through the secured storage of lists, signed consent forms, audio recordings, and de-identifying transcriptions.

During the survey, group sessions such as the Boardroom C Café and risk assessment, the individuals had the ability to attend or not. The surveys were anonymous unless the invitee decided to offer their name and vocation. During the Boardroom C Cafés, those with power over were separated. These sessions were in RMB’s office but all consultants were invited so there
was no discrimination or segregation of individuals or groups that work under RMB’s mandates and roles. The sole intent of the risk assessment was to identify risks that the Education Team may be exposed to in providing its mandate and roles and to determine mitigations. The risk assessment included consultants and RMEX members; however, this was the standard process known to RMB members since the time I began working at RMB over eight years ago. The “make-it-happen” café included all invitees from the first and second world cafés. These sessions were voluntary and identified the involvement of all levels of management in the invitation to be transparent. Any power over concerns were made evident to those deciding to attend. The value of the data, with the options provided, justified the risk assessment and “make-it-happen” café sessions. Interviews were voluntary by anonymous invitation and they were held out of RMB’s office in a private comfortable room led by facilitators with no power over.

“Justice refers to the obligation to treat people fairly and equitably. Fairness entails treating all people with equal respect and concern” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 8). Other than positions of hierarchy with the potential for power over another addressed in this section, there are no vulnerable participants. Accommodations were made to treat everyone fairly and equitably. As noted earlier, all clients, consultants and executive that were invited to participate in the survey, Boardroom C Cafés, risk assessment, “make-it-happen” café or interview were all voluntary. Transparency also played a critical role to invitees including advising them of my role as a student researcher, the intent of the research noted in invitations and consent forms, as well as during any sessions. This was also done by protecting an individual’s rights to anonymity and respect for human rights and freedoms. To those in the
RMB sessions, it was noted that the Sponsor was the Executive Director and the extent of her involvement was always transparent.

The only known conflict of interest was that I was a member of the Education Team and in a senior role to a junior consultant and, when acting as the Director in the Director’s absence, I was in a position of power over the other senior consultant within the Team. Due to this, I would not be able to participate in the interviews, consultant Boardroom C Café or the risk assessment. There may had been a perceived conflict of interest with the Sponsor being the Executive Director in charge of RMB and requesting me to take on the study; however, this was mitigated through transparency in her role to those below her by allowing the freedom to speak openly. But because of the anticipated benefits of this study and recommendations, the Executive Director’s position in relation to the inquiry was considered an acceptable risk. There would also not be any direct monetary or positional change to anyone derived from this research.

**Project Deliverables**

What I had hoped to deliver to the Sponsor and organization was rich data backing any recommendations for change derived from this study. These deliverables would include this thesis with recommendations, offering to assist in the design and destiny of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) stance, and the hope that the Education Team received benefit. Other positivisms would include the potential for growth from further research conducted within RMB as a whole having been affected by similar changes in the past two years. It was also hoped the clients would receive benefit from being able to provide feedback on the Education Team’s services and the potential for future deliverables and education sessions.
Chapter Four: Inquiry Project Findings and Conclusions

Chapter four outlines the findings of my study into the Education Team within the BC Government’s Risk Management Branch’s (RMB) using action research (AR) with an appreciative inquiry (AI) stance. With respect to action research in your own organization, Coghlan and Brannick (2014) stated organizations are social constructs “created by human beings to serve their ends. They follow processes that are shaped and affected by human purposes, and they do not exist independently of human minds and actions” (p. 4). This quote resonated with me for its accuracy during the study and daily work, both occurring simultaneously and, at times, was the seed for much reflection. Using an AI standpoint, Bushe (2012) indicated “this [AI] change practice grounded in social constructionism promised a much higher level of engagement by system members” (p. 10). An appreciative approach was a beneficial choice for an environment where systems changes had created potential constraints limiting the growth of the Team and the Branch.

There were four methods used in this study including a survey, interviews, two world cafés and a risk assessment, each with different constituencies of the Branch. The basis of this study came from the following lead inquiry question: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Additional data was ascertained through the use of the sub questions:

1. What are the systems and processes (the environment - internal and external) that have changed in the past two years supporting the Education Team’s growth?

2. How might the Education Team implement Lean Principles in a way to encourage support and success?
3. What aspirations do the Education Team Members have for succession planning, leadership and budgets?

4. Where do leadership and its members envision the Team in one to five years?

Both the Sponsor and Director of the Education Team requested that I undertake this analysis to ascertain the current Team dynamic when I accepted a new position in 2014. Using AR, from the stance of AI, the goal of this study was to observe the construct of the Education Team, the systems in place, and how this aligned with the lead question. I also noted their reflections with respect to their victories and future aspirations. All this was supported by social sciences literature.

**Survey Data**

**Survey responses.**

The basis of surveys according to De Vaus (2013) is “a structured set of data obtained using reliable and valid instruments for quality samples” (p. xvii). Multiple reasons influenced my decision to use this method of research. Whilst, the Education Team dealt daily with its clients, those being 25 BC postsecondary institutions and 60 public school districts, there were gaps in the Teams’ understanding of their client’s knowledge. Specifically, the clients’ understanding of risk management, their interpretation of the Team’s mandate and roles, and how they valued our services as a whole. Secondly, it was known some clients rarely or never utilized the professional consulting services of the Education Team. What were the reasons for this? Thirdly, a survey had never been undertaken with the client groups within the Schools Protection Program (SPP) and University, College and Institute Protection Program (UCIPP) since its inception in 1987 (Province of British Columbia, 2015b, para. 1).
The survey presented quantitative data permitting the completion of primary descriptive statistics. For further qualitative data, comment sections were added for discussion. To accomplish this, 12 questions using a five-point Likert-type scale to represent values of “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree” were developed. These questions were finalized and vetted by the Sponsor (Appendix F). These questions focused on the client’s knowledge of risk, Education Team services, quality of Team services, understanding of Enterprise Risk Management, client culture around risk, and whether further education was required.

Permission was granted by the Executive Director of RMB and Sponsor to use the client contact list owned by RMB. Once approved by the RRU Research Ethics Board, the survey invitations with the Research Information Letter were emailed anonymously on April 19th, 2015 to 60 Secretary Treasurers or equivalent risk leads at the BC School Districts and 25 Post-secondary institution risk leads. The timing of this emailed invitation was critical to obtaining the highest volume of responses from these potential participants. Both Education Team members as well as one of my inquiry team members, a teacher in the private school system, indicated to me June and September are the busiest months for these clients. Because of this, there was urgency to have the survey sent out prior to June, 2015. The survey was open from Monday, April 20th, 2015 until Sunday, May 3rd, 2015 using Fluid Surveys. Three reminders were sent out during this time to all the potential participants, which was fruitful as the survey numbers went up after each prompting.

The participation rate in the anonymous survey was 25%, or 21 completions with a total of eight comments. In the comment sections, five participants referred to their organization and
three provided their own thoughts. The quantitative analysis of the 12 questions was concluded in a Survey Report provided below in individual tables. To expand on the data, my analysis and comments with respect to each question was completed and provided.

Table 1. *My organization understands the mandate and roles of the Education Team of the Risk Management Branch.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understands the mandate &amp; roles</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Responses 21

With the SPP and UCIPP programs being in place for 28 years, I expected the agree to strongly agree cumulative numbers to be higher than 71.4% with respect to their organizational knowledge of RMB’s mandate and roles. Three were neutral at 14.3% with the lower end combined showing 14.3% of those who participated disagreed or strongly disagreed on their understanding of the mandates. Whilst most understood the mandate and roles, this indicated there was room for further growth in this area with neutral, disagree and strongly disagree combined at 28.6%.

Table 2. *My organization understands the consultation services provided by the Education Team.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understands the services</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Responses 21

For those who understood the consultation services provided by the Education Team, I was somewhat surprised to see the combined numbers in the neutral, disagree and strongly disagree at 38.1%, considering the programs have been in place for 28 years. Those who agreed
and strongly agreed were at 69.1%, with a higher number of respondents only agreeing. The percent of participants in the neutral, disagree and strongly disagree categories indicated to me they had little to no knowledge of the services, showing a gap in their understanding of the Team’s roles. From this, I surmised participants needed more education in this area.

Table 3. *My organization values the level of consultation services provided by the Education Team.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values consultation services</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to those participants who valued the services provided by the Education Team, 71.5% agreed or strongly agreed, with a highest number of respondents only agreeing. Similar to question 2, I questioned why 28.6% of participants were neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed since the program has been in place for 28 years, and the Team does not serve any other clients. Since 28.6% of the respondents reported a neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree response to this question, it would be prudent to ascertain what these responses mean.

Table 4. *My organization has a strong understanding of Enterprise Risk Management.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization understands Enterprise Risk Management</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the question on organizational understanding of Enterprise Risk Management, only 57.1% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed, with the highest percentage only agreeing. Those who were neutral came in at 9.5% but 33.3% disagreed with no one strongly disagreeing.
With those neutral and disagreeing together, 42.8% indicated to me more client knowledge might be needed in this area.

Table 5. *My organization has a culture where risk management is embedded in our approach.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk management culture</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Responses 21

With respect to the question if their organization had a culture where risk management was embedded its approach, 66.6% agreed or strongly agreed. Those who were neutral came in at 14.3% whilst 19.0% disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. With 42.8% of respondents not having an understanding of Enterprise Risk Management (Table 4), this made me question the relevance of this question. It was encouraging that 66.6% participants had a culture of risk management but in my opinion greater knowledge would be needed before they could ingrain it in their culture. This could be an opportunity for the Education Team to provide assistance to its clients.

Table 6. *My organization has a strong understanding of approving indemnities to other parties in contracts including those under the Financial Administration Act.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational understanding of indemnity approvals</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Responses 21

When asked if participant organizations had a strong understanding of approving indemnities provided to other parties in contracts including those under the financial administration act, 61.9% indicated they agreed or strongly agreed. Participants who were
neutral came in at 19.0% whilst 19.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed. With neutral, disagree and strongly disagree added together, this indicated 38.1% of participants required assistance in understanding indemnities.

Table 7. My organization has a strong understanding of insurance provided under the School’s Protection Program (SPP) or the University College Institute Protection Program (UCIPP)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational understanding of insurance provided</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant responses to their understanding of insurance provided by SPP or UCIPP indicated 71.4% of those asked agreed or strongly agreed. Those who were neutral in their understanding stood at 14.3% with 14.3% who disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. With 28.6% of the clients neutral or disagreeing, this indicated additional training should be provided in understanding this insurance. These numbers did not surprise me as our clients come to the Education Team for this advice as we are subject matter experts.

Table 8. My organization has received sufficient education into operational or contract risk management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational education into operational and contract risk management</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Responses</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to whether participant organizations received enough education operational or contract risk management, only 33% agreed whilst 28.6% were neutral and 33.3% disagreed.
No participants strongly agreed or strongly disagreed. Combining those who were neutral to those who disagreed, 61.9% indicated additional training was required to some extent.

Table 9. *My organization appropriately handles operational and contract risk management.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handling of operational and contract risk management</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Responses | 21 |

From my query into whether a participant’s organization appropriately handled operational and contract risk management, the combination of agree and strongly agree totaled 66.7%. This appeared low to me considering there can be considerable client risks in these areas which may affect them financially or from a reputational standpoint as examples. I would have thought the agree to strongly agree percentage to be no less than 85% to 90%. With only 61.9% having agreed and only one participant strongly agreeing, this indicated strength but not total certainty. Participants who had a neutral view in this area were 28.6% with one, or 4.8%, disagreeing. No participants strongly disagreed which was favourable. From the data provided, it appeared to me there was room for more growth in participant understanding of operational and contract management.
Table 10. *My organization would value more education relating to risk management.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of more education for the organization</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked if participant’s organizations would value more education relating to risk management, 95.2% strongly agreed or agreed. Only 4.8% were neutral, representing one participant out of 20. This clearly demonstrated a client desire for additional training in the area of risk management.

Table 11. *I have a strong understanding of Enterprise Risk Management.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant understanding of Enterprise Risk Management</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td>![Chart]</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The participant’s own understanding or Enterprise Risk Management was 80.9% with 14.3% neutral and 4.8% who disagreed. No one strongly disagreed. This was substantially different than organizational understanding (Table 4) at only 57.1% who agreed or strongly agreed which indicated a gap and further work was needed to advance organizations in this area. My determination for the high percentage in the individuals understanding of Enterprise Risk Management was linked to them being risk leads for their organizations with a higher level of skills and by regular communication with the Education Team.
Table 12. *I would value more education relating to risk management.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of more education for the participant</th>
<th>Chart</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Responses: 21**

Participant’s own response to more education relating to risk management was 90.5%.

This was comparable to the desire for organizational training in this respect at 95.2%. Only 9.5% indicated they themselves disagreed for the need for more education.

**Survey correlations.**

To expand the statistical analysis, correlations were completed using the survey responses from the participants. When discussing statistical analysis, Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2013) affirmed “Each...hypothes[is] proposes some form of relationship between one or more factors of interest (independent variable) and an outcome (dependent) variable” (p. 2). They continued to state “The researcher’s task is to develop a statistical model that will accurately estimate the relationships among the variables” (p. 3). By using Pearson’s *r* Correlations, I hoped to see whether the participants had common concepts in mind when they answered the questions and whether different questions triggered a pattern of responses from participants.

The values calculated in Table 13 represent Pearson’s *r* Correlations, where the red bold correlations have been isolated since “*r* = +.70 or higher [represents a] Very strong positive relationship” and the blue bold represent *r* = “+.40 to +.69 [represents a] Strong positive relationship” (Pearson’s *r* Correlation, n.d.). Table 13 indicated very strong positive correlations between questions 1 and 2, 2 and 3, 3 and 8, and 4 and 7. These correlations with figures are discussed further below.
Table 13. *Pearson's r Correlations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>11</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0.332</td>
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From the above table, there was a correlation for $r = 0.769$ between questions 1 and 2 which is demonstrated in Figure 5 below that illustrates responses for the two questions by participant.

![1 vs 2](image)

*Figure 5. Correlations between questions 1 and 2 ($r = 0.769$)*
This correlation described that the clients’ understanding of the Education Team’s mandate and roles aligned somewhat with their knowledge of the Team’s consultation services. This level of correlation is reasonable because it indicated to me that the participants who understood and valued the purpose of the Education Team also understood one of these roles, our services. This also backs the summation above that there appears to be gaps in some of the participants’ understanding of these roles as many of those who rated question 1 low also rated question 2 low.

Figure 6 below shows the correlation of $r = 0.856$ between questions 2 pertaining to understanding the Education Team services and 3 where it addressed how the services were valued.
This indicated that clients who understood the services, valued the services at a similar level. This level of correlation backs my conclusions of questions 2 and 3, wherein a large percentage of participants understood and valued the services we provide. What I did not expect was that there would be such a large number of participants who neither understood nor valued the services, indicating attention was needed in this area. From experience, this backs the relationships I have developed with my clients as a member of the Education Team where some clients fully understand what we do and others do not. When comparing the two questions from our position as subject matter experts, it was understandable that our clients valued the professional services we provide more than they understood them. This is akin to other professional relationships such as lawyers and accountants.

Figure 7 shows a correlation of $r = 0.729$ between question 4 querying about the understanding of Enterprise Risk Management and 7 client knowledge of insurance provided under SPP and UCIPP.
4 vs 7

4 My organization has a strong understanding of Enterprise Risk Management.

7 My organization has a strong understanding of insurance provided under the School’s Protection Program (SPP) or the University College Institute Protection Program (UCIPP)?

Figure 7. Correlations between questions 4 and 7 ($r = 0.729$)

My view of this correlation indicated two things. This might have been coincidence or, The Education Team clients interpreted insurance and Enterprise Risk Management similarly. As a subject matter expert, I noted that there are distinct differences between these two areas. Specifically, “Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) describes the coordinated, ongoing application of risk management across all parts of an organization, and from the strategic through to the operational (service delivery) level” (Province of British Columbia, 2014d, para 1), which follows the ISO 31000 Risk Management standard and more an organizational culture. Insurance however is the “coverage by contract whereby one party undertakes to indemnify or guarantee another against loss by a specified contingency or peril” (Merriam-Webster Incorporated, 2015,
Figure 8 below illustrated a correlation of \( r = 0.734 \) between questions 3 querying level of understanding of the Education Team services and 8 asking if the organization received sufficient education into operational or contract risk management.

From this correlation, clients appeared to derive value from the services provided by the Education Team and the level of education received from same. The clients that valued the services felt they have received sufficient education from the Education Team while in contrast, those who did not value the services felt they did not receive enough education into operational and contract risk management. It is my opinion that these patterns align with the clients that
work with us and those who do not. Again, there is a gap in the knowledge of our clients and further education is required in this respect.

**Survey comments.**

From the comment sections and looking through a qualitative lens, the Education Team services were valued and more education would be appreciated by the Team’s clients with respect to the Team’s mandate and roles, risk management and insurance. This aligned with my summation to the queries, and questions 10 and 12. Individual perspectives comparative to organizational knowledge on the Education Team’s mandate and roles and risk management appeared different. One comment alluded to their organization viewing the Team’s mandate and roles as too rigid stating “most I suspect see them as a bureaucratic hurdle, one of several required to get contracts approved.” Another indicated “there is a lack of understanding or acceptance that compliance needs to be met at all times. I often hear ‘nothing will ever happen’. I just hope that nothing will ever happen”. This indicated a misunderstanding, or the antonym of understanding, of the roles and value added for Education Team services affirming more education is required.

**Interview and World Café Data**

Further to receiving the survey findings, I proceeded to send out invitations with the Research Information Letter to participants of the Education Team via a third party facilitator inviting them to partake in interviews where they would be asked four questions (Appendix G). Five invitations were emailed anonymously to current and recent Team members wherein two participants volunteered to take part. The interviews occurred May 6\(^{th}\) and May 7\(^{th}\), 2015 in a closed meeting room outside of the RMB which I arranged and permitted participant anonymity.
The participation rate in the end was 40% and slightly less than I hoped but, nonetheless, it was still enough from which to draw valued data.

As the interviewee numbers in total were known to be low from the outset, I, via a third party facilitator, proceeded to email 21 anonymous invitations with the Research Information Letter for a world café of peer consultants within RMB (Boardroom C Café) to expand the data set. The consultant café session happened on Monday May 11, 2015 at XXX, 3rd Floor at 11 am in Boardroom 303, which I set up the day before. During the world café, the same four questions asked in the interviews were presented to the participants. I was later advised nine consultants volunteered their time to take part in the café, giving a participation rate of 43%. This was a respectable showing which provided ample rich data to complete this study.

Factoring power over concerns, RMB’s executive, who led these teams and assisted in setting or enforcing the mandate and roles, also received invitations to a separate world café on May 12th, 2015. This café was set up and facilitated by me at the same address and meeting room giving me an opportunity to directly be part of the action research process. This strategically worked best for me, being that the same boardroom could be used and lessened the set up time for the sessions, which was considerable (Figure 3). Of the eight invitations with the Research Information Letter sent, five executives agreed to participate in the session, giving a good participation rate of 63%. During this session, the participants were again asked the same four questions from a department or branch perspective in an effort to expand the data set further.

These sessions occurred in tandem over a few weeks provided me with rich data to draw from. In accordance with my instructions to my team, the raw data was received as de-identified transcriptions including the recorded interviews with names coded as Yellow and Blue. The first
consultant world café raw data was received as rolled up scrolls with comments scribed on paper. The facilitator was advised after the session that the participant group inquired how these would be transcribed as I might recognize handwriting. Whilst not in the plan to analyze the data, I had an administrative team member, not having knowledge of any personal handwriting styles of the participants, transcribe the scrolls to protect anonymity. The raw data was received as a workable Word document with Group A, Group B and Group C, de-identified.

For consistency in undertaking the data analysis, I then requested the same team member transcribe the executive café session scroll in the same format.

I set to work analyzing and coding the data in an effort to pull out relevant themes. Saldaña (2012) stated “coding is a heuristic (from the Greek, meaning ‘to discover’) – an exploratory problem-solving technique without specific formulas or algorithms to follow” (p. 8). Saldaña (2012) also affirmed:

coding is a critical act. Rarely is the First Cycle of coding of data perfectly attempted. The Second Cycle (and possibly the third and fourth cycles and so on) of recording further manages, filters, highlights, and focuses the salient features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes, and concepts, grasping meaning, and/or building theory (p. 8).

I later determined how accurate these statements were, which is demonstrated below.

I concluded the most advantageous way to pull themes out of the data was: 1. Place each of the interviews and world café groups (Groups A, B and C plus executive) into a separate matrix (totaling 6), each consisting of a column of four questions and four fully transcribed responses. 2. Beside each column I added two additional columns titled First and Second Cycle
Codes. This permitted a mode to work across the data wherefrom I could filter down the participant’s discussions in stages, whilst holding true to each’s thoughts, feelings, values, and wants.

It was in the Second Cycle where I started to see commonalities and links to thoughts, feelings, values, and wants of the participants. To further filter down what was still a large amount of data, I started a Third Cycle and combined all the interview, café group and executive columns into a separate matrix. From this, I worked across each column, now condensed, and saw eight themes emerge. I then brought the prevalent thoughts, feelings, values, and wants that were echoed by the participants together.

The themes that I ascertained from the qualitative analyzes indicate that the participants: (a) took pride in helping others, (b) valued collaboration, (c) appreciated innovation, (d) appreciated knowledge sharing, (e) saw a need for more human capital, (f) identified a need for Lean processes, (g) wished for change, and (h) desired a higher profile. For more context, I discussed each theme in more detail below, and it was understood that at times there could be an overlap of attributes in different themes.
Pride.

What was evident from the analysis was the participant’s pride in helping others, which required being trusted, professionalism, being responsive to client needs, enabling others and providing advice. For consultants, this trait would rank high when services are provided to others. Participant Blue stated “I get pride from providing advice to our clients.” Participant Yellow indicated “most rewarding things...when the client has a program or project that they need some assistance with…” Group A during the world café avowed they were proud to assist a school district with “risk assessment facilitation for Nature K.” Group B bestowed they valued “working with external advisors as well as RMB staff.” Group C appreciated “when we are able to provide advice / support to clients where it is beneficial to them.” Group RMEX in their café affirmed they took pride in “respon[ding] to urgent circumstances.”

One needs only to reflect on those who have excelled in this area. With respect to consultants, Weisbord (2012) attests, “getting the right people together is probably 90 percent of 21st Century managing. What remains is helping them commit to valued purposes and tasks” (p. 323).

Figure 9. Pride in helping others.
Collaboration.

![Collaboration Diagram]

Figure 10. Valued collaboration.

The data analysis indicated collaboration was a valued by the participants in their discussions throughout each session. Upon review of the data, this was transparent from the participant’s thoughts, feelings, values, and wants with discussions such as valuing teamwork, sharing experiences, group participation, cross-pollination, professionalism and internal and external involvement. Much research has been done relating to the values around collaboration. Kouzes and Posner (2012) avowed “Leaders from all professions, from all economic sectors, and from around the globe continue to tell us, ‘You can’t do it alone’” (p. 218).

Participant Blue indicated during the research, “people work in silos.” Participant Yellow’s experience attested “people are working on what is pretty much the same issue and they are doing it in isolation.” Yellow, when asked what they hoped to see in three years stated “helping to inspire collaboration and sharing of resources.” During the world café, when discussing what could be done better, Group B indicated they would have a committee
“reviewing publications, responding to stakeholders, prioritizing publications, collaboration[ing] with other teams.” Group C stated it was important “when we pull together and compile shared skill/knowledge to complete a task/project or objective.” Group RMEX café indicated they would value “more client engagement.”

**Innovation.**

![Diagram of Appreciated Innovation](image)

*Figure 11. Appreciated innovation.*

Further probing into the data indicated the participants appreciated innovation. This was demonstrated from the conversations around creativity, resilience, ideas, positive approach and problem solving. Having an innovative approach was a trait the participants appreciated during the sessions when discussing their thoughts, feelings, values, and wants. Participant Yellow affirmed instead of recycling things from the past they would like to see the Education Team “creating new stuff.” Group RMEX during their world café indicated one of their aims was to “research ways to innovate.” During the risk assessment when discussing opportunities, the participants proclaimed an “opportunity to do things differently?” Innovation and creativity would be valued by external and internal stakeholders alike when dealing with approach to solutions, making strategic decisions and dealing with change. Chesbrough (2013) affirmed
“Everyone knows that innovation is a core business necessity. Companies that don’t innovate die. This is not news” (p. xiii).

Knowledge Sharing.

![Diagram of Appreciated knowledge sharing]

**Figure 12.** Appreciated knowledge sharing.

As I continued to pull from the data, the participants affirmed they appreciated knowledge sharing through cross-pollination, providing advice, educating others and educating self through publications. The value of knowledge sharing was evident amongst the participants. Participant Yellow indicated “one of the things that I think that we can do as an organization is be a little bit better about cross training people.” During the world café, Group B stated they would like to “Encourage interaction between teams with targeted education sessions, collaborative projects, development of skill sets, mentorship and cross pollination of ideas and approaches.” I witnessed evidence of this whilst facilitating the RMEX world café when they indicated they would like to “increase knowledge management.” Kouzes and Posner (2012) stated, “one way to demonstrate your competence is to share what you know and encourage
others to do the same. You can convey your insights and know-how, share lessons learned from experience, and connect team members to expertise” (p. 226).

**Human Capital.**

![Diagram showing need for more human capital](image)

*Figure 13. Need for more human capital*

One of the themes made evident by the participants was the need for more human capital. This was evidenced through the comments of a need for change, more money, amended budgets, staff not to be over worked, staff not to be upset, a change in leadership approach, less negative emotions, more leaner processes, need to provide consistent advice and for clients to have trust.

All the sessions that were undertaken (interviews, world cafés and risk assessment) recognized there was a need for new human capital. Participant Blue affirmed “we are constantly behind the eight ball.” Blue continued stating the consultants “were at breaking point they couldn't keep up...people in almost tears.” Participant Yellow indicated “our organization is inadequately resourced.” During the world café, Group C stated they would like to see “more resources and new staff coming up that we actually have time to train and develop.” Group B
wanted better “succession planning…” Group RMEX in their café avowed they would like to “have 1 person for client engagement (Field rep – marketing person – Like an ins. co).”

After reviewing the data, it was evident to me that participants were being over worked, understaffing was a primary concern to participants, and, how was this being managed? At the time of the research, RMB had many highly specialized staff. With participant comments of staff not to being over worked, staff not being upset, a change in leadership approach, less negative emotions, led to my query: What are the risks around upsetting such professionals? Yukl (2013) confirms the importance of retaining specialists stating “human capital is more important when the organization is heavily dependent on people who have unique talents, require extensive training, and would be difficult to replace if they left” (p. 278). During the risk assessment, the participants denoted a risk event was “Creat[ing] expectations for service that we can meet” with one of the risk causes being “taking on more than we have capacity to deliver” and the consequences of this as: (a) “not developing client potential”, (b) “providing inaccurate advice”, (c) “timeliness, quality”, (d) “[lack of] client confidence”, (e) “staff burnout, and (f) “low engagement.” This helped answer my question and affirmed something I had personally witnessed.
Lean processes.

Figure 14. Need for Lean processes.

With respect to discussions around Lean, the participants were favourable having indicated there was a need for Lean processes through their thoughts, feelings, values, and wants. To identify this they provided comments regarding interest in efficiencies, leaner IT, more standardized processes, embracing technology, streamlining, and more access to information. This supported the BC Government’s position on Lean wherein they stated “Lean process improvement is an approach that can support ministries to improve customer service while also building internal capacity through the elimination of unnecessary rules, processes, activities and non-essential steps” (Province of British Columbia, 2015a, para. 1).

With respect to Lean, participant Yellow stated “we take too long to do things, we don't have the chance to make good strategic decisions.” Participant Blue indicated they “got the other department involved to agree to have blanket certificates” and Group A during the world café stated one indemnity was “now on a blanket basis, yearly approval, saved central services time re-issuing individual approvals.” Group B affirmed “find efficiencies in processes to free-up time for critical thinking / analysis.” Group C bestowed in the café they “continue to work in an
environment where there are too many demands on your time. Forces ‘lean’ approach as you have to be efficient in order to keep up” and their “team is good at trying to embrace technology to streamline administrative functions.”

Participants in the RMEX world café affirmed Lean processes were accomplished by the branch through “single approval of indemn[ity] (blanket) for client basis,” “simplif[ied] certi[fi cate] processes” and “relook[ing] at our own internal processes and apply[ing] across teams.”

From a scholarly lens, Mann (2009) avowed when discussing Lean leadership that senior management’s “involvement includes establishing governance arrangements that cross divisional boundaries, supporting a thorough, long-term vision of the organization’s value-producing processes, and holding everyone accountable for meeting Lean commitments” (p 15).

**Change.**

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 15. Wish for change.*
When asked if the teams or branch was to come back in three years' time, what would be different, or what would their three wishes be? The participant themes indicated there was a wish for change. This was derived from comments such as: (a) have a new leadership approach, (b) to be more proactive, (c) have more opportunity, (d) more recognition, (e) less working in silos, (f) better processes, (g) more time to assist clients, (h) to maximize IT, (i) to have more trust, (j) more pride, (k) need new human capital, (l) more internal and external collaboration, and (m) have more education internally and externally.

Participant Blue attested “if there is an appetite for change and get everybody involved in that change I think that it could be done.” Participant Yellow affirmed “there is a huge opportunity,” and their future vision of the Education Team would be “seen as an asset in the sector and that is leading education and helping to inspire collaboration and sharing of resources amongst our clients.” During the world café, Group A indicated there was a need for a “strategic plan – road map to clear vision/mandate.” Group C indicated, “we should conduct research to assess our mandate.” During the RMEX world café they indicated the branch could “be proactive and not reactive,” “Be leaders,” and have “more client engagement.”

Change is multifaceted and, because the participants sought movement in this direction, it would be beneficial and provide room for growth. Burke et al. (2009) affirmed “the need for change becomes visible slowly, not as easily identified as with a catastrophic event, the change becoming visible when long standing practices become dysfunctional or technologically outdated” (p. 2).
Higher profile.

Figure 16. Higher profile.

The last question provided to the participants related to the mandate and roles asking how their team or branch could promote growth in the next five years. The facilitator of the consultant café indicated some were not clear on my query but the sessions as a whole provided a plethora of data on areas of growth. The main theme drawn from this data was that individuals and groups desired a higher profile. What the data signified through their thoughts, feelings, values, and wants for the future was the group’s desire for: (a) a higher level of professionalism, (b) more identity, (c) better access to information, (d) better succession planning, (e) more human capital, (f) more programs, (g) leaner processes, (h) continue to show value for money, (i) provide a
higher quality of service, (j) a new leadership approach, (k) an opportunity for growth, (l) better advisors, (m) more recognition, (n) a better utilization of technology, (o) more opportunities for education, (p) more internal and external collaboration, and (q) a better understanding of the branch’s mandate and roles.

After pursuing this area of the data carefully, what was evident to me was the participants hoped to see a higher profile of the branch holistically, with growth needed in most of the key areas of professional consultation. Participant Yellow stated “to promote more growth [the Education Team] has to be seen as more of a dynamic group than it has been perceived as in the past. The profile needs to get raised.” Participant Blue avowed that “the mandate of the department isn't that clear” and they would appreciate “a review on what [the Education Team] do[es] and the value attached to that.” During the world café, Group A hoped to “aid ministries / clients on RM framework.” Group B affirmed they saw growth through “constant review of policies and procedures in interest of improvement.” Group C indicated they would like to “find out from our clients what they find most helpful so that it can inform the work we do.” Participants in the RMEX world café avowed they would like to see an “end to end succession plan,” the organization “be less bureaucratic – more flexible,” to “expand our programs to more clients” and to “increase knowledge management.”

This led me to question how a vision to grow a higher profile could be attained. This drew me to Weisbord (2012), when discussing Professional Managers, drawn from Trist’s sociotechnical system, underscoring “the interaction of people (a social system) with tools and techniques (a technical system) results from choice, not chance” (p. 168). And, Kouzes and
Posner (2012), when discussing Recognize Contributions, affirmed you need two essentials: expect the best and personalize recognition. They denoted:

By putting these essentials into practice, you uplift people’s spirits and arouse their internal drive to strive. You stimulate their efforts to reach higher levels of performance and to aspire to be true to their visions and values of the organization. You help people to find the courage to do things that they have never done before (p. 275).

**Risk Assessment Data**

I added a risk assessment to identify risks that may have potentially occurred within the teams and branch over the past two years in an effort to pull out more valued data for my findings. Following the CSA/ISO 31000 -10 standards, Risk Management Guideline for the BC Public Sector stated in the Communicate and Consult section: “The consultative team approach means that the assessment of risks is proactive and inclusive and involves those who understand the risks and are best able to manage them” (Province of British Columbia, 2012, p. 8). This standard method was used within the RMB to attain data that may potentially affect a project or organizational operations. These are commonly negativisms, but the tool can also be used to identify positivisms.

Invitations with the Research Information Letter were sent out by a facilitator via email to protect participant anonymity. I booked the boardroom and the session occurred May 25, 2015 within RMB. From the 15 invitations sent out to prospective participants, the facilitator advised that eight attended the session allowing for a participation rate of 53%, which I felt was successful.
In an effort to provide direction for the discussions occurring during the risk assessment, the facilitator worked out a context paragraph to keep the group on track and place borders around the subject area. On sheet 4 of the Risk Register it states “The CONTEXT defines the scope and objectives of the risk management exercise.” The context paragraph written by the facilitator was drawn from the Research Information Letter and Proposal. The facilitator later sent me the context paper which I provide below.

The facilitator was a subject matter expert in this area. Prior to writing the context paragraph, the facilitator hoped I could provide input into the paragraph which, after discussions with the Supervisor, I had to deny as I could potentially lead the session or add bias into the dataset. The only request I asked of the facilitator was to include opportunities which followed the AI stance within the Action Research I was taking.

The aforementioned Risk Management Guideline for the BC Public Sector indicated the value of the risk management process stating:

The risk management process should be an integral part of management. It benefits existing business processes by clarifying goals and objectives, identifying what might stand in the way of their achievements, and identifying opportunities to exceed performance objectives, regardless of where in government it is applied (p. 8).

The context paragraph provided indicated:

The intent of this process and document is to determine the risks associated with the multitude of changes that the Education Team has been connected with in the past two years adding to the data and questions asked in the research. This process, which includes establishing a context statement and identifying risks the Education Team is exposed to
and mitigating factors, is well known to RMB, being subject matter experts, and is a form of common professional language understood by those in the room. . . What we need to do is get to a core scoped question e.g. given the context, what stands in the way of the Team meeting the branch objective of continuous learning?

Upon completing the risk assessment, the facilitator provided the Risk Register to me. This included a Likelihood and Consequence Descriptors for Risk Assessments matrix, Context Template and Risk Management Process: Overview, all attached as Appendix T. Drawn from the Risk Event section of the Risk Register, the risks that were determined to be affecting the teams or branch were: (a) create expectations for service that we can meet, (b) internal capacity to develop effective staff, (c) ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc., and (d) recognizing that the changing work force will be looking to RMB to provide support and advice. I then worked through the first risk to pull out the process and details, then I relied on the Risk Register for later comparatives.

With respect to the first risk “create expectations for service that we can meet,” the risk cause centered around: (a) managing resources and workloads, (b) taking on more than they could deliver, (c) marketing was increasing workloads, (d) staff were not fully trained, (e) new hires were still pending, (f) work was backlogged, (g) effective planning was desired, (h) clients needed to be provided with the same level of service, (i) the focus of the work shifted to 60% universities and 40% school districts, (j) good client service led to more work, and (k) there was an inability to travel.

The impacts identified from this were: (a) the inability to develop client potential, (b) provide inaccurate advice, (c) timeliness and quality, (d) client confidence, (e) staff burned out,
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

(f) low engagement, (g) cannot run a continuous marathon, (h) increase in claims, (i) set poor precedence, (j) hard to push back if you've provided advice previously, (k) credibility loss (branch and team), (l) became less relevant, (m) not responding in a timely manner could lose future work, (n) missed opportunity to share information, and (o) relationships with clients.

Mitigations in place during that time were: (a) completing blanket agreements with contractors who can provide services across client groups, (b) increased education to clients (conference, website, publications etc.), (c) developing individual client contacts, (d) efforts for branch to share information, (f) orientation plan for different teams, (g) bi-weekly meetings, and (h) one-on-ones to discuss workloads and how things were going.

The rating of this risk was determined by the participants being asked to rate the likelihood and then the consequence in two separate columns. These were on a scale of 1 to 5 with the criteria of both noted in the Likelihood and Consequence Descriptors for Risk Assessments matrix. The group rated the likelihood of this risk at 5 (stated as “It is expected to happen. Will certainly happen this fiscal year or during the three year period of the Service Plan”) and the consequence at 3 (stated as “Recovery from the event requires cooperation across departments. May generate media attention. Giving an overall rating of “high” to this risk.”). This gave the overall rating of the risk as “high” from as predetermined formula within the spreadsheet with an example below:

=IF(P6*Q6>=20,"EXTREME",IF(P6*Q6>=12,"HIGH",IF(P6*Q6>=6,"MEDIUM",IF(P6*Q6>=1,"LOW", IF(P6*Q6>=0, "UNRATED")))))

Following the same sequence, the following risks events were identified and rated in the Risk Register:
2. Internal capacity to develop effective staff with the likelihood rated at 4 and
   consequence rated at 3 with an overall rating at “high;”

3. Ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc.
   with the likelihood rated at 5 and consequence rated at 4 with an overall rating at
   “high;” and

4. Recognizing that the changing work force will be looking to RMB to provide support
   and advice – not rated.

Opportunities identified by the participants included: (a) identify new groups to target
useful information to leverage Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) committees to share
information, (b) provide training through Learning Centre curriculum, (c) be ready for
opportunity to present to Ministry Executive to re-define the mandate of the branch. i.e. Deputy
Minister (DM) change opportunity to do things differently?, (d) identify personal interests of
staff and enable them to pursue areas of interest, and (e) enable people to what they are really
good at.

Study Conclusions

The basis of this study came from the following lead question: How might the Education
Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? The study
findings using action research from an Appreciative Inquiry stance provided a plethora of rich
data. This would assist with recommendations that would be provided to the Sponsor and the
Education Team’s Director to help them move forward and grow. Due to the fact that the
Education Team was small with only four members, I reached out to the Team’s key
stakeholders, which in the end, was propitious.
Having undergone multiple changes over a two year period, the Education Team’s Director sought to inquire what the Team could do to move forward and promote growth. Being new to the Team, I agreed to take on this task that would assist me in fulfilling my Master’s degree. This journey had a plethora of learnings, a-ha moments, periods of difficulty when I witnessed processes that appeared to hinder the Team, and what-if moments. I also experienced difficulties doing research within a team and branch where I worked. Coghlan and Brannick (2014), when discussing action research, affirmed I was in quadrant 4 wherein the “researcher’s role involves being part of this collective reflection and learning and articulating what is happening. There is active participation by both the system and the individual” (p. 129). They went on to say “Quadrant 4 is clearly the most difficult and demanding in terms of scale, complexity, conceptual, analytic and practical knowledge and skill” (p. 129) which I agreed with in the end.

To undertake this study, I first identified what it was that directed the Education Team and concluded this was its mandate and roles. For the subject of this study, these were narrowed to providing “risk management advisor/consultant” services and “risk management program development and delivery” (Province of BC, 2014c, para. 2). From the study, I concluded the following areas that were prominent during the findings:

**What worked well.**

Using an Appreciative Inquiry stance, this assisted me to determine what worked well for the Education Team. From the survey: (a) 71.4% of the Education Team’s clients understood its mandates and roles, (b) 61.9% were knowledgeable about the Team’s consultative services, (c) 71.5% valued the Team’s services, (d) 66.6% of the clients had risk management embedded in
their culture, (e) 61.9% of the clients had a strong understanding of approving indemnities to other parties in contracts, (f) 71.4% of the clients had a strong understanding of insurance provided under the SPP or the UCIPP and (g) 66.7% of the client organizations appropriately handled operational and contract risk management. Individually, the participants indicated 80.9% of the clients understood Enterprise Risk Management. Participants indicated they would appreciate future growth in having additional education relating to risk management, rating these organizationally at 95.2% and individually at 90.5%. From an Enterprise Risk Management perspective, only 57.1% of organizations had a strong understanding, whilst 80.9% of the respondents had a strong understanding of this subject. From a positivism perspective, I saw this as a great opportunity for the Education Team to promote Enterprise Risk Management.

The questions asked during the interviews and two rounds of world cafés demonstrated eight positive themes. These included participants: (a) taking pride in helping others, (b) valuing collaboration, (c) appreciating innovation, (d) wanting knowledge sharing, (e) identifying a need for more human capital, (f) seeing a need for Lean processes, (g) wishing for change, and (h) desiring a higher profile.

The risk assessment also denoted opportunities identified by the participants that included: (a) identifying new groups to target useful information to leverage senior executive committees to share information, (b) providing training through Learning Centre curriculum, (c) be ready for opportunity to present to Ministry Executive to re-define the mandate of the branch (i.e. Deputy Minister change opportunity to do things differently?), (d) identifying personal interests of staff and enable them to pursue areas of interest, and (e) enabling people to do what they are really good at.
Risk Management Branch’s mandate and roles.

Being the subject of this study, the Education Team’s roles under its mandate were to provide “risk management advisor/consultant” services and “risk management program development and delivery.” In accordance with the survey, questions 1 and 2 had a strong positive correlation rate of $r = 0.769$ between client participants understanding of the Team’s mandate and roles as well as the consultant services indicating a good understanding of the two roles. However, after 28 years in these roles, this was lower than I expected. During the analysis, question 1 in the survey on the understanding of the roles backed my assumption with 28.6% of the participants either being neutral, disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Question 2, relating to the understanding of the services, had somewhat similar numbers at 38.1% after combining these responses. This led me to question what was causing these gaps as I felt the strongly agree and agree responses should be in the 90% to 95% range, being that these were the Team’s primary roles and our Team’s clients were narrowed to the education sector. Budget cutbacks, the need for more human capital, and having a large client base of 85 appeared to be obvious drivers indicated in the data.

During the interviews and consultant world café, it was also concluded that there was a gap in the understandings of the mandate and roles wherein more time should be allocated to education in this area. Participant Blue indicated the “mandate of the department isn’t that clear.” Group A in the world café stated, with respect to promoting growth in the next five years, that “clarity [is needed] around mandate / vision so that we know where the branch is going.”
Need for more human capital.

One of the more predominant discussions from the interviews and both world cafés concluded the need for more human capital and appropriate succession planning. The Risk Assessment addressed the risks associated with not planning human capital appropriately in “creat[ing] expectations for service that we can meet” wherein the risk cause centered around: (a) the inability to manage resources and workloads, (b) taking on more than teams could deliver, (c) increased workloads for marketing, (d) staff were not fully trained, (e) new hires were still pending, (f) work was backlogged, (g) effective planning was desired, (h) clients needed to be provided with the same level of service, (i) the focus of the work shifted to 60% universities and 40% school districts, (j) good client service led to more work, and (k) there was an inability to travel.

RMB is primarily dependent on highly specialized consultants. Yukl (2013) confirms the importance of retaining specialists stating “human capital is more important when the organization is heavily dependent on people who have unique talents, require extensive training, and would be difficult to replace if they left” (p. 278).

From my experience and in discussions with other departments within RMB, the majority of consultants hired at the RMB came from the insurance industry which is a specialized field. This is likely due to the fact that RMB closely mirrored that of an independent commercial insurance company, both from a broker/advisory and claims management perspective. Consultants within RMB somewhat resemble independent brokers who work in advisory roles. Once hired, however, RMB consultants go through several additional years of higher education to obtain greater levels of risk management experience.
Whilst I witnessed new hires within RMB throughout my eight years of employment in a consultant role, no new consultant positions or advancements were created after 2008. This was caused by the BC Government’s hiring freeze implemented by the political party in power during that time. This mandate arose out of the world economic crisis in 2008 wherein Government tax revenues were cut by billions of dollars and budget slashing was considered fiscally responsible.

These extreme budget cutbacks or controls continued until the date this Thesis was published. Some positions during that time were never filled once they were vacated, and other new hires or advancements were permitted only if a vacated role was considered critical. During this time, workloads increased, so noted by the participants in the interviews and consultant world cafés, potentially causing the risks identified in the risk assessment to come to fruition if changes were not made. Participants in the risk assessment indicated a risk of “creat[ing] expectations for service that we can meet” with the cause being “resourcing - needing to self-preserve in order to manage workloads” Participant Blue stated the Education Team “is one of the most under resourced teams in terms of the volume of work.” Group C indicated they would like to see “more resources and new staff coming up that we actually have time to train and develop.”

Whilst it was fiscally prudent to mandate cutbacks during strained economic times, it was not clear political leaders and government’s senior executive considered the risks that occurred to the organizational systems as a whole. The risks could be that staff might become disgruntled, retire early if they are eligible, or they may leave, potentially leaving minimal numbers and experience (Loreto 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010) to maintain some of RMB’s complex programs that society derived direct and/or indirect benefit from. Yukl (2013) wrote “Leadership
development is more likely to be successful when top executives have a systems perspective that takes into account related responsibilities and strategic decisions such as…succession planning” (p. 398). Participants discussions around a change in leadership approach was noted.

**Value of collaboration.**

Much has been written on the value of collaboration (Burke et al, 2009; Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Weisbord, 2012; Yukl, 2013). Specifically, Kouzes and Posner (2012) affirmed “Collaboration is a critical competency for achieving and sustaining high performance” (p. 218). During the research, the participants demonstrated how they valued collaboration through their dialogue around teamwork, sharing experiences, group participation, cross-pollination, professionalism, and internal and external involvement. This clearly demonstrated that more interconnectivity was desired within RMB, and with their key stakeholders. Participant discussions around the issues of working in silos were evident in the interviews and consultant world cafés and the desire to connect with others internally and externally. During the consultant world café, Group C denoted they wanted to “Collaborate more often so we have an opportunity to consider as a group how we might do things better and differently (with the goal of best fulfilling our roles and mandate).” During the risk assessment, participants indicated one of the opportunities would be “building capacity within client groups.”

Through the use of action research and working within the organization in two departments, I appreciated these study findings concluding more could be done in the areas of team connectivity. From experience, executive at RMB recognized the value of collaboration and cross-pollination through the formation of consultant working groups such as construction and Public Private Partnerships (P3s). This was backed by the branch’s use of tools such as
SharePoint sites created to support this approach and collect shared knowledge. Other collaborative approaches the branch used to promote connectivity were the formation of insurance and indemnity round tables wherein consultants shared experiences and ideas that would benefit all. Senge (2006) denoted “The IQ of the team can, potentially, be much greater than the IQ of the individuals” (p. 222).

What was evidenced from my experience was use of these working groups and tools were never fully utilized and attendance during the round tables diminished over time. Internal discussions over reasons for this commonly centered on workloads being too high or time constraints.

**More education.**

Pulling from the data and aligning with collaboration, the need for more education was evident in the surveys and word cafés. During the surveys, when asked if their organizations received enough education with respect to operational or contract risk management, the participant’s opinions were evenly split with 33% who agreed, 28.6% being neutral and 33.3% who disagreed. When asked if participant’s organizations would value more education relating to risk management, 95.2% were in favour. Survey participant’s own response in this respect was 90.5%.

During the world cafés, the participants confirmed their appreciation for knowledge sharing and indicated the need for more cross-pollination, providing advice, educating others and educating themselves. During the risk assessment, one of the risks identified was the “ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc.” The causes identified were the “inability to travel,” “no money” or the time allocation required.
The participant’s value for collaborative efforts aligned with the want for more education. Group 3 in the world café affirmed this by stating they wanted “more opportunities for continuing education related to job expectations / requirements.” Senge (2006) backed this when he wrote “through learning we re-create ourselves” (p.13). With respect to team learning he stated “the discipline of team learning, like any discipline, requires practice” (p. 221). When discussing personal mastery, he indicated this was achieved by constituents “becoming committed to their own lifelong learning” (p. 7).

From experience, education was supported in the Branch with flush budgets even during the economic restrictions. Executive indicated in the world café they promoted education and identified opportunities. However, what was also evident from experience was budget cutbacks restricted travel and workloads restricted the ability for participants to take the time to pursue education. For example, travel was restricted to some professional conferences where opportunities were missed in the exchange of professional knowledge because some locations could be perceived in the public eye as “resorts.” Permissions could be granted if it was agreed RMB staff would be presenting in front of a large audience as this derived value for money.

During the risk assessment, the participants identified a risk event as “internal capacity to develop effective staff” and the cause as a “reduction in professional development.” An additional risk event identified was an “ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc.” with the cause being an “inability to travel” and “time to travel or attend professional development opportunities.”
More Lean processes.

Whilst there was value identified by the participants in Leaner processes, I did not identify in the data that this approach would resolve the high workloads or cutbacks being experienced by RMB. However, Group C during the world café stated “growth as in higher level of functioning rather than increasing size or numbers of staff [is] more do-able.” This indicated to me that there could be avenues for working smarter or more efficiently.

There were multiple examples of Lean processes identified by the Education Team or the branch which included: (a) blanket indemnity approvals which required by clients under the Financial Administration Act, versus many individual approvals, (b) use of email versus hardcopies, versus printed copies, (c) electronic payment processes, versus printed cheques, and (d) issuances of blanket coverage certificates, versus many individual issuances. During the RMEX world café they stated the branch also “relook[s] at our own internal processes and appl[ies them] across teams.” Mann (2009), when discussing the Lean approach, indicated when leadership buys-in, which RMB leaders and the Province promotes as a whole, this “Transform[s] commitments to change into actual change, supporting and sustaining new behaviors and practices” (p. 16).

After concluding the analysis in respect to the Lean processes, I hoped more would be written on ideas to assist the Education Team and/or Branch going forward; however, it was evident to me the participants favoured the efficiencies and they wanted more. This was favourable as it indicated to me Lean approaches were embedded within the culture and RMB would accept change in this respect positively.
Future view of the Education Team or Risk Management Branch.

What was it that the participants want to see evolve in the next three to five years? The data clearly indicated a higher profile. How would this look? Participants during the interviews and world cafés indicated they desired: (a) desired a higher level of professionalism, (b) more identity, (c) improved access to information, (d) better succession planning, (e) more human capital, (f) more programs, (g) leaner processes, (h) continuing to show value for money, (i) providing higher quality of services, (j) a new leadership approach, (k) opportunity for growth, (l) to be better advisors, (m) more recognition, (n) better utilization of technology, (o) having more opportunities for education, (p) more internal and external collaboration, and (q) a better understanding of the branch’s mandate and roles.

What were the obstacles to obtain this higher level of recognition? Some identified in the risk assessment were: (a) “creating expectations for service that we can meet,” (b) the need for “internal capacity to develop effective staff,” (c) the “ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc,” and (d) “recognizing that the changing work force will be looking to RMB to provide support and advice.”

What were opportunities identified in RMB’s path to attain a higher level of recognition? The participants stated during the risk assessment: (a) “identify new groups to target useful information,” (b) “leveraging ADM committees to share information,” (c) “providing training through Learning Centre curriculum,” (d) “being ready for opportunity to present to Ministry Executive to re-define the mandate of the branch. i.e. DM change,” (e) “opportunities to do things differently,” (f) “identifying personal interests of staff and enable them to pursue areas of interest,” and (g) “enabling people to do what they are really good at.”
Scope and Limitations of the Inquiry

On reflection, there were not many factors that limited the application of the inquiry and, having completed four methods, there was bountiful data to support the study. The Sponsor permitted me the freedom needed to complete the study and did not interfere with the process. Some of the factors that could have improved data were, firstly, adding recordings to the cafés and risk assessment. This would have allowed me access to the conversations during these sessions and potentially better understand the meanings, tones and emotions during the discussions. By doing this, however, confidentiality could have been jeopardized. In addition, I had to make a decision where to draw the line on how much information was needed to make the data accumulation manageable, and still have ample quantitative and qualitative data to attain my Master’s degree.

Secondly, working within the organization as a researcher was problematic at times as being within Coghlan and Brannick’s (2014) quadrant 4 would attest. Whilst facilitators were used successfully, the sessions were out of my hands wherein additional data could have been gathered, not only from discussions, but also body language and how the participants were engaged, or to see their emotions. This being said, it is unlikely recordings and/or my participation could have occurred due to the power over concerns, allowance of anonymity, and the freedom the participants needed to speak openly.

Thirdly, with the Education Team being small and the participation rate in interviews at only 40% (two participants), this limited the data set which was at the core of the study. Plus, having only two of five participants agree to be interviewed, what did this represent?
Fourthly, it was not known until after the surveys were sent that the clients were in the middle of their budget year end. With many of the participants being in senior financial roles, which I heard about after the fact, this was a limiting factor in the surveys as some clients identified to me by phone or email. Still, a participation of 25% was considered ample for this study.

Lastly, whilst there were many areas of research looked at in this inquiry such as Lean, collaboration, and succession planning, it could be argued that each of these could have been looked at in more depth. However, for the purpose of this study, it was felt each of these areas was looked at sufficiently and their combination as a whole body of work provided the breadth to back my findings.

Being aware of the limitations for data within the Education Team to complete my study, I reached out to community and clients in the surveys, world cafés and risk assessment. The surveys were sent out in May factoring one of the client’s busiest months was June. The interviews and world cafés were then undertaken sequentially with the same four questions to receive the highest level of rich data. There were no known irregularities during these sessions with each session having gone as intended to conclude the study.
Chapter 5: Inquiry Implications

In this chapter I will discuss the recommendations stemming from the findings, as well as the organizational implications. Using action research (AR) with an appreciative inquiry (AI) stance much was determined from the findings that could assist the Sponsor, Education Team and RMB going forward. I will also expand on my conclusions from Chapter Four with some experiences being part of the organization, as well as back my discussions with literature from research undertaken by scholars before me. When discussing action research and its purpose, Stringer (2014) avowed “the purpose of inquiry is to find an appropriate solution for the particular dynamics at work in a local situation” (p. 6). Bushe (2012) in his research into Appreciative Inquiry concluded this stance “allow[s] for an ongoing generative conversation amongst practitioners and researchers” (p. 17).

The basis of this study came from the following lead inquiry question: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Additional data was ascertained through the use of the sub questions:

1. What are the systems and processes (the environment - internal and external) that have changed in the past two years supporting the Education Team’s growth?

2. How might the Education Team implement Lean Principles in a way to encourage support and success?

3. What aspirations do the Education Team Members have for succession planning, leadership and budgets?

4. Where do leadership and its members envision the Team in one to five years?
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

Study Recommendations

From a client survey, interviews with Education Team members, two separate world cafés with other consultants and executive, and a risk assessment, I was able to ascertain areas that required consideration for change by the Sponsor. The study findings and my conclusions led me to determine six draft recommendations that I took to my Sponsor to determine which where viable. These draft recommendations are depicted in Table 14.

Table 14: Recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>No.</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Provide a better understanding of the Education Team’s mandate and roles</td>
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</table>
| 2.  | Offer a new leadership approach  
|     | (a) Senior leaders should review and change their approach and budget allocations to these important programs and services.  
|     | (b) Propose Directors in the branch be moved to new teams for 3 months. |
| 3.  | Provide more human capital  
|     | (a) Create two new intermediate consultant positions to relieve current consultant heavy workloads  
|     | (b) Add a new position for a construction specialist that can work across all teams on major construction projects |
| 4.  | Afford more collaboration between internal and external stakeholders, including consultants being involved at the strategic levels |
| 5.  | Implement Leaner processes – train internal person or hire expert |
| 6.  | Additional internal and external educational opportunities - restrictions around education, including going to professional conferences, should be lifted in entirety as long as it is work related |

In an effort to bring strength to these recommendations and include community, on August 17, 2015, invitations to be part of the “make it happen” café with the Research
Information Letter were emailed to 27 participants. This included all the participants who received invitations to be part of the interviews, consultant world café, RMEX world café and the risk assessment. The goal of this “make it happen” café was to show the participants the study findings and draft recommendations, and to offer them the opportunity to provide their thoughts or ideas.

The “make it happen” café was held on August 21, 2015 in the large branch boardroom within RMB’s office. Of the 27 invitations sent, seven participants agreed to participate which demonstrated a 26% participation rate. This was a reasonable participation rate considering the session was voluntary, the branch was in summer holiday season, and many consultants and/or executive have the option to work from home under the government’s Leading Workplace Strategies initiative. From my observation there was a good mix of consultants and executive in the room which made for a fruitful session with good interaction, comments and feedback that helped to define the recommendations.

The “make it happen” café was scheduled for one hour. I began by outlining the request for the study by the Sponsor, the desire for change, the use of action research with an appreciative inquiry stance, my involvement, the ethical considerations, and the goal of the session, which was to encourage growth (that is, positivisms versus negativisms). During the café, I presented the many findings and took a fair amount of time for discussions and questions. In the end, the session concluded after one and a half hours and the consensus in the room was that the research was a success with the inquiry ending with applause. I mentioned this only because, as an action researcher, there were times that I questioned the methods and outcomes, and whether participants would perceive value in this undertaking. By bringing the Branch
together, I felt this should help the Education Team and potentially RMB as a whole. Stringer (2014) proclaimed in action research “Through working together, establishing an understanding of each other’s experience and perspective, we establish the basis for truly effective outcomes, with head, heart, and hand” (p. xxi).

The participant engagement was beneficial to me during the “make it happen” café to finalize the recommendations. Stringer (2014) affirmed when making decisions during action research “all stakeholders should know what is happening and have the opportunity to contribute to discussions about issues” (p. 202).

1. Provide a better understanding of the Education Team’s mandate and roles.

As mentioned previously in Chapter Four, prior to the commencement of this study, I sought out what the drivers were for the Education Team and determined its mandate and roles were “risk management advisor/consultant” services and “risk management program development and delivery” (Province of BC, 2014c, para. 2). When I began working in Education in the fall of 2014, it was not clear to me if there was a clear understanding of the mandate and roles. Coming from the Health Team in a similar role, was this my interpretation of the mandate and roles or the Team’s? I struggled with this a great deal in my first year and I likened it to a clash of two worlds. How could this be as both teams are in the same branch?

During my time on the Health Team, I worked in a complex environment with clients that were exposed to high risks daily. I worked with my health clients on similar contract, operational and construction risks. I also immersed myself in many large complex projects, including being the branch lead on four Private Public Partnerships (P3s) projects and headed multiple provincial procurement projects for professional construction services for RMB. Upon joining the
Education Team, my role appeared similar to the Health Team, being contract, operational and construction risks, plus I was assigned to be the branch lead for the Team’s first P3 project. What I realized was that while the roles were somewhat similar in complexity and process, the volume was substantially more due to several factors, including the number of clients (example, 85 in Education and 45 in Health). The number of staff differed as well being six in Health and four in Education. Tasks were somewhat similar except there appeared to be a greater volume, plus senior consultants were assigned to do junior level tasks such as issuing certificates of coverage.

Why the clash, the decent into my own experiences of the two Teams, and what did this have to do with the mandate and roles of this study for that matter? After a few months in Education, I realized as the researcher that I was working in two very different systems which was of relevance to this study. In Health, I spent a great deal of time with my clients often probing deeply into risks they were dealing with in an effort to best assist them. This level of detail was not evident in many of the calls that I was seeing in Education. Why? After discussions with the Education Team Director, he advised this was mostly due to volume and the ability to service our clients in a timely manner. What was evident was that I was spending too much time with clients on many calls, thus making me fall further and further behind. Did the clients not want a comprehensive service request or were they okay with a quick review or response without delving deeply into the risks? Was my role now more process than consulting? This left me to question: what were our mandate and roles?

After completing the study I found that several consultants indicated independently that they too needed more clarity around the mandate and roles thus backing my views. During the world café, Group A affirmed there was a need for a “strategic plan – road map to clear
vision/mandate.” They continued, indicating they wanted “clarity around mandate / vision so that we know where the branch is going.” Participant Blue stated “the mandate of the department isn't that clear” and they would appreciate “a review on what [the Education Team] do[es] and the value attached to that.”

Participant Yellow, during the Team interviews, struck a chord with me when avowing “when you are giving advice to people and you know that they are relying on it and you know that you are too busy and you haven't been able to do the quality of job that you would like to that starts to wear on you and eventually either you burn out or you don't burn out and you stop caring which is almost worse.” Yellow continued to state “Or I guess the worst part is we are going to be putting stuff through that if we had time to look at properly we wouldn't have put through and then something is going to go wrong.”

From the study findings and in relation to my experience, the recommendation was that there be clarity provided to the consultants with respect to RMB’s mandate and roles from RMEX. Pulling from my literature review in Chapter 2, this fit Northouse’s (2012) definition where leadership “influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 5).

How might this understanding come to light? Group B during the world café stated that the Branch should “collaborate more often so we have an opportunity to consider as a group how we might do things better and differently (with the goal of best fulfilling our roles and mandate).” They also indicated “we should conduct research to assess our mandate…what our clients want.” As a collective, the Education Team and the Branch as a whole would then better understand the mandate and roles. This may also assist in raising our clients’ understanding of the Team’s mandate and roles above 71.4%. One of the opportunities denoted by participants
during the risk assessment was the group could “be ready for opportunity to present to Ministry Executive to re-define the mandate of the branch. i.e. DM change.”

During the “make it happen” café, participants discussed the mandate and roles. One participant indicated that there should be an analysis done on the mandate and roles before they are distributed to the Branch. I asked, what does risk management look like? Is it a high level or comprehensive review? Another participant indicated there should be some structure around education, especially with the hiring of new staff from the advent of retirees in future. Other discussions in the café related to misunderstanding of the mandate and roles which could be related to teams working in silos. One participant indicated some of their own team members worked in silos. To break this down and promote a homogeneous view, they were doing some team building exercises and cross-training may be required. A participant weighed in that the Branch could do better at breaking down these silos and work more collaboratively.

Collaborative efforts were being undertaken but a balance and structure was needed.

Going back to the lead question of this study, “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” The recommendation was that RMEX set up branch meetings with the consultants to discuss and provide clarity around its mandate and roles wherein the Education Team and the Branch have a clear understanding. Once this is done, a base line would be set to permit consistency in client responses across the Branch, allow for better service quality, and increase client understanding and appreciation of the mandate and roles. Coghlan and Brannick (2014) when discussing the ability to grasp meaning stated, “insight is an act of understanding that grasps the intelligible
connections between things that previously have appeared disparate” (p. 23). Once the mandate and roles are clarified, they should be documented for prosperity.

2. A new leadership approach.

The participants in the interviews and consultant world cafés indicated they wanted to see a new leadership approach. This would be multifaceted in that it would require multiple levels of executive and senior executive to change the approach they are providing specifically to budgets. From my literature review, Adie & Thomas (1987) attested economic conditions were known to be cyclical which provided a historical perspective indicating these fluctuations should be accounted for.

After the 2008 world economic crisis, budgets were slashed due to severe tax revenue loss, which was prudent at the time. However, a risk grew from these cutbacks and succession planning was not being addressed. With the large number of baby boomers retiring or due to retire, leading to loss of knowledge, no new hires, and LWS, workloads would increase with less staff. The mandate to cut budgets has continued into 2015 and the effects of this were clearly evident in the data. The risk noted in my literature review indicating that by not addressing succession planning, governments could be put at risk of losing valuable human capital and knowledge (Loreto, 2012; Pynes, 2004; Reeves, 2010).

These senior leaders should reconsider these mandates and allocate additional funds to RMB’s budget to address high workloads and the need for new human capital. I was advised that RMB always comes through audit reviews demonstrating value for money derived from its programs. This was affirmed by Phil Grewar, founder and former Executive Director of RMB, winning the Legacy Premier’s Award in 2012 for “A conservative estimate of…$1 billion” since
1986 due mainly from the success of the self-insured risk programs (Province of British Columbia, 2012, para. 5).

With RMB’s Ministry funded programs self-insuring the schools, universities (except for Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria), colleges and health (including all 6 BC Health Authorities) (the “SUCH sector”) with cumulative assets nearing approximately $100 billion with branch staff numbering around 40, it is reasonable that the operational budgets align with RMB’s staffing and operational needs. RMB’s client base also grew in the last few years, including BC Ambulance and the University of British Columbia.

When researching private sector Canadian insurers with regard to staffing and succession planning, Loreto (2012) affirmed in his research for the Insurance Institute of Canada that “recruitment activity within the industry has increased noticeably. More recruitment has taken place despite the degree of economic turbulence in Canada since 2008” (p. 8). RMB following the government’s mandate to cut costs took what could be looked at as the opposite approach, cutting positions with a client base that continued to grow.

The risk assessment affirmed the risks of not addressing staffing by stating we “create expectations for service that we can meet” with the causes being “resourcing - needing to self-preserve in order to manage workloads,” “taking on more than we have capacity to deliver,” and a “backlog of work.” When discussing cutbacks and overworked staff, much has been written on the consequences across many sectors. These consequences include higher error rates, increased work related stress, lower productivity, increased absenteeism, low morale, improper work-life balance, burnout, fatigue (Osaro & Chima, 2014; Thunman, 2012; Solymosi, 2014).
The “make it happen” café brought further insight into this. With respect to the first recommendation relating to budgets, one participant agreed that the province took a reactionary view with the cutbacks. Participants also noted the costs of the programs were charged back to the clients.

**Senior leaders should review and change their approach and budget allocations to these important programs and services.**

From the findings, my first recommendation would be for RMB executive to raise these concerns to senior government officials who might only look at high level dollars versus the true value received from these programs. Increased budgets within RMB would assist in obtaining more staff to fill positions vacated but never filled, including adding more consultants, and support staff, as needed, to a growing client base with complex risks. This would also reduce the previously noted consequences of overloaded staff and promote a higher profile which the study findings indicated was needed. Kouzes and Posner (2012) when discussing challenging the process proclaimed, “every single personal-best leadership case involved a change from the status quo” (p. 19).

**Propose Directors in the branch be moved to new teams for 3 months.**

During the “make it happen” café we reviewed the draft recommendations to move Directors to other teams in RMB for learnings and a higher profile. One participant indicated the clients may not appreciate a new face at the Director level for a short period of time. I interjected, if clients were made aware of this initiative and it was temporary, they would not likely object. Clarity was sought and it was concluded this would be for Directors with teams in advisory roles only. There was favour in doing an exchange overall but not at that time with the
advent of new hires caused by recent retirees and the ripple effects of staff moving positions in
the branch. Consensus was it would be a good idea in the future.

This aided me with the recommendation with respect to a new leadership approach.
Because participants wanted a higher profile and to promote consistency in RMB’s mandate and
roles, the recommendation was that Directors in the branch move to other RMB teams for 3
months in an advisory capacity when the time permits. This will promote consistency in the
delivery of RMB’s mandate and roles and promote knowledge sharing in the branch. Senge
(2006) avowed, “building shared vision fosters a commitment to the long term” (p. 12). Barrett
and Cooperrider’s (1990) research into participants managers from a different inn viewing a four
star hotel in operation indicated in the data “managers were not merely articulating their
findings. They, in concert with one another, were creating new values and new possible ways of
seeing organizational life through the act of valuing” (p. 231).

3. Need for more human capital.

There was substantive evidence in the data that the Education Team and branch needed
new human capital. This was demonstrated with comments of a need for change, more money,
amended budgets, staff not being over worked, staff not being upset, a change in leadership
approach, less negative emotions, more leaner processes, a need to provide consistent advice and
for clients to have trust. Aforementioned participant quotes included Blue stating “we are
constantly behind the eight ball” and consultants “were at breaking point they couldn't keep
up...people in almost tears” Yellow indicated “our organization is inadequately resourced.”
Participants during the world cafés denoted they saw a need for more resources and RMEX
affirmed they wanted growth in the program areas of the branch and wished for a person for just client engagement.

Participant discussions about increased client demand, gaps in client and RMB’s understanding of the services and mandate and roles, and budget cutbacks since 2008 all led me to believe there was a change needed in the leadership approach as noted above. With respect to the Education Team, they had taken on a new large sophisticated client in the last few years, workloads have increased from other clients but there had been no increase in staffing. I worked on the Education Team seven years ago in a temporary assignment in the same capacity and there were discussions then about a need for more staff. Other departments in the branch have had more consultants with fewer clients, be it they were large and complex (example, all BC Ministries and crown corporations as well as six provincial Health Authorities).

With the Education Team’s client base at 85, of which many manage complex risk (examples being a P3 project, research, programs in foreign jurisdictions, law schools, collaborate in teaching hospital, etcetera), these clients require different levels of advisory services. In the last two years, the Education took on one large complex client and provided risk management, indemnity and insurance consulting services on a major P3 project. These included the University of British Columbia (UBC) as a new client with a $2.1 billion annual operating budget, 15,253 faculty and staff and a student base of 59,659 in 2014 (UBC, 2014, Para. 1). As well, the Emily Carr University of Art + Design’s undertook the first P3 in the Province in the education sector valued at approximately $134 million. (Emily Carr University of Art + Design, 2015, para. 1).
The Team’s clients operate multiple programs at varying levels of growth and risk, each requiring varying levels of advisory services. Client risks varied including those arising from their program offerings, the contracts they entered, working in multiple jurisdictions, regulations, property and infrastructure. Others occurred out of the conception, building design, procurement, construction, operation and decommissioning phases of their sites.

During the “make it happen” café when looking at the risk assessment data and discussing resources, one of the participants stated “you have to support the thing you’re trying to create” and we would be by “putting more resources towards it.” In the café, further discussions occurred when viewing the draft recommendations on the need for more human capital. One participant stated “if you have a mandate to provide a certain level of service, that certain level of service should be available to all 85 clients. And at the moment, it isn’t.” Additional conversations indicated the environment is now reactive versus proactive and some staff are extremely stressed. A participant indicated the Education Team’s “work has been going up approximately 15% per annum” but “a lot of Lean initiatives we have done have cut down on certificates.” And, more complex projects are being discussed in the education sector.

I was made aware that new hires are considered if there is criticality demonstrated. Clarity would need to be sought on this meaning. However, as the workloads of the Education Team continued to increase with client awareness, the addition of new sophisticated clients, the potential growth of existing clients, and the forecast of new client complex projects, the Education Team had demonstrated the need for additional consultants. Not addressing this could lead to the risks and consequences mentioned in the previous section and backed by the literature.
Create two new intermediate consultant positions to relieve current consultant heavy workloads.

From the above information, the first recommendation relating to more human capital is to create two new intermediate consultant positions to relieve current consultant heavy workloads. This is at a critical state from my own experiences and would permit a higher level of consulting services, more time to work on large complex projects, and more client recognition.

As the “make it happen” café continued, we then went on to my next draft recommendation to introduce a new specialist position relating to construction as it is such a complex field. During this discussion the first comment was that such a specialist would likely be headhunted. My response was this was a risk of anyone who hires specialists, but is still warranted.

After the café and in further reflection, if this were to occur, this could be a feather in RMB’s cap as others requiring this specialty would recognize RMB as an industry leader who promotes this expertise. Yukl (2013) denotes when discussing the use of expert power “when an agent clearly has much more relevant expertise than target persons, the effects of the expert power will be automatic” (p. 200).

RMB as a whole is directly involved with many large complex construction projects which are highly specialized and the branch has staff representation on most, if not all, of these projects. These consultants are highly specialized subject matter experts but they deal with these projects off the side of their desks as their regular workloads continue. Going back to my literature review, Yukl (2013) affirmed “human capital is more important when the organization
is heavily dependent on people who have unique talents, require extensive training, and would be difficult to replace if they left” (p. 278).

*Add a new position for a construction specialist that can work across all teams on major construction projects.*

From the information provided and pulling from prior discussions with other construction experts within RMB prior to the study, my second recommendation relating to the need for more human capital is for RMB to add one construction risk management specialist. Work on major projects was added to consultant’s daily workload and this additional staff member would allow consultants extra time to focus on other duties. This person could work across all teams on major construction projects (examples P3s or other high valued provincial construction projects) and lead the construction working group writing indemnity, insurance and contract security supplementary conditions.

This person would also be a liaison for the branch working with Partnerships BC, the client project manager who leads such projects, the client senior executives, and the private insurance industry. The benefits would be more involvement in large complex construction projects, assisting with construction, operational (daily workings around such projects), and with strategic leaders on their risks. This would also benefit the branch consultants by lessening their workloads as they cannot always devote all the time they hope to on such projects. It would also assist RMB to attain a higher level of client recognition.

4. **More collaboration between internal and external stakeholders.**

Participants indicated clearly during the interviews, world cafés and risk assessment about the value and want for more internal and external collaboration. This was demonstrated
with comments such as valuing teamwork, sharing experiences, group participation, cross-pollination, and professionalism which included internal and external involvement. Collaboration can promote knowledge sharing, sense of community, more client involvement, trust and a higher profile. Included in the findings were participant discussions about teams working in silos.

RMB does promote collaboration to some degree with round table meetings and working groups as examples. When insurance and indemnity round tables occurred, discussions would take place in confidence regarding insurance coverage, exclusions, claims, legal cases, onerous indemnity language and the like. During the RMB working group meetings, consultants, with executive when invited, discussed current and past construction and P3 projects in a confidential environment. The conversations that arose during these meetings are experiences, insurance coverages, and contract language. Co-authoring of construction contract indemnity, insurance, and bonding supplementary conditions were also worked on during the construction working group meetings. It was agreed in the branch that no one department or person owned or was responsible for these collaborative meetings and the chair, where applicable, rotated.

I have been involved with many of these collaborative meetings over the years; however, due to heavy workloads, I have had to decline attendance to most of these meeting since joining the Education Team. Comments about waning group participation did come up in past meetings and the main reason for this by consensus was a lack of time due to workloads.

In the last two years, RMB consultants and executive had also been involved with collaborative meetings with Partnerships BC who is an external stakeholder.
In the past year, senior leadership also encouraged staff to attend a MoF Provincial Treasury (PT) daylong meeting wherein all branches attended to present on what they did within the division. Attendees then broke out into smaller groups to discuss how we could work together and share information better. Senior leaders spoke about some of the business successes and concerns they were dealing with. Whilst this was an organizational research project without factoring ethics, two of the objectives pulled from the daylong session were, “build a sense of community within PT and model trusting and respectful practices” and “enhance client relationships and client community outreach” (Province of BC, 2015b, pages 3-6). This confirmed even more the desire for community and collaboration. As I reflected on this session, I felt it was very beneficial from the learnings derived. The ability to share our thoughts, meet colleagues, discuss business, as well as achieve a better understanding of the systems and constraints in place at multiple levels, was appreciated by those I spoke with.

During the “make it happen” café, I presented the draft recommendation regarding the need for more collaboration. One participant queried into what collaboration meant at the strategic level? I responded this could be during projects. Strategically it was felt this would be across divisions. The group acknowledged collaboration was occurring to some level already but more could be implemented.

From the information gathered, the recommendation was that RMEX promote ideas for more collaboration (internal and external) at upcoming branch meetings to get ideas going forward. This should also include consultants being involved at the strategic levels on government projects or initiatives cross-divisionally, as an example. Collaboration at all levels
promotes growth, knowledge sharing, and assists in raising the branch or Education Team’s profile. When discussing Collaborative Networks, Agranoff (2006) proclaimed:

An internal look at networks indicates that although they are largely self-organizing, they require structuring that reflects their knowledge-seeking orientation. They need to be managed like organizations but in collaborative, non-hierarchical ways. Although most public management networks lack formal power to make policy and program adjustments, they do make a difference in other ways. In particular, they add value through their knowledge-enhancement functions, which, in the long run, bring beneficial outcomes to the participating managers and professionals, the partner agencies, the collaborative process, and to short- and long-term policy and program solutions (p. 63).

5. Implement Leaner processes.

Participants saw value in leaner processes during the study. The BC Government promoted Lean principles as proclaimed in Chapter Four. Lean promotes efficiencies and should be embedded in RMB’s culture. This approach can assist in bureaucratic systems but from my perspective should not be used as the primary tool in reducing workloads. Much has been written on Lean principles the benefits derived from same. It can be incorporated in many, if not all, commercial and government entities.

From my literature review, Voehl et al. (2013) indicated Black Belts in Lean had advanced training and were highly skilled consultants that could benefit RMB. And, Janssen and Estevez (2013) confirmed that governments around the world “are looking for ways to reduce costs while at the same time to stimulate innovation” (p. 1).
During the “make it happen” café where I presented the draft recommendations to implement Leaner processes, one participant’s idea was to bring in an external consultant with a new lens. My thought in this regard was that it was a great idea, but the drawback was this person would have to be trained in the RMB systems wherein someone internal would not. Discussions indicated an internal consultant was required to devote up to 50% of their work load to this role and it was expected outside branches could draw from this expert. It was also indicated there were such experts within the MoF to draw from.

From the aforementioned, the recommendation was that one person at RMB be trained at the black belt level or bring in an outside consultant to work across teams within the branch to assist them to become leaner. This would take a large percentage of someone’s time internal to RMB so reallocation of staff would be required if this direction was taken. Or bring in a specialist from outside the branch but this may require training this individual into the workings of RMB’s systems. Either way, this approach would likely see some or many benefits to the branch as a whole.

6. Additional internal and external educational opportunities.

Both RMB participants and the Education Team clients clearly indicated they would value more educational opportunities. This aligned with knowledge sharing and collaboration. Increased knowledge benefits RMB and its clients as a whole. RMB’s clients are subject to a multitude of complex risks and understanding these risks is critical to providing high level advice to RMB’s clients. Pulling from my literature review, Senge (2006) affirmed “when teams are truly learning…individual members are growing more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise” (p. 9). He also proclaimed that “team learning is vital because teams, not individuals,
are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. This is where the rubber meets the road; unless teams can learn, the organization cannot learn” (p. 10).

Restrictions for travel were put in place back in 2008 after the economic crisis and subsequent tax revenues fell sharply. During the “make it happen” café, it was discussed that some relief was being experienced in this area with approval moved from senior executive level to the branch’s Executive Director. Approval to attend or travel to professional conferences was still tightly controlled. An example would be attending the annual Risk and Insurance Management Society’s national conferences where industry peers commonly meet and share knowledge. Travel to some conferences where RMB consultants are presenting has been permitted as this demonstrates value for money.

Because RMB consultants and executive are highly specialized, education ensures these staff members were kept current in their areas of expertise. This would also assist in increasing the branch and Education Team profile. When referring to an expert’s education, Yukl (2013) attests “in many professions it is important to keep informed about new developments by reading technical publications and attending workshops and seminars” (p. 191).

More education was requested by RMB’s clients in the study findings. During the “make it happen” session, it was communicated that 2015 saw an increase in travel for the Education Team. The Education Team had provided several education sessions to its clients. One discussed in the café was a risk management conference in the fall of 2015. This would be a collaborative effort between the Education Team and some UCIPP members. Absent from this discussion was the SPP members. An RMB conference being planned back in 2008 was cancelled even though the conference the year earlier was a large success.
During the “make it happen” café after providing the draft recommendations, I noted that education was needed and it was important to connect with our peers. One participant indicated travel approval to provide clients services within the province was now within the branch. However, there were still restrictions on attending conferences.

With the information given, the recommendation was that restrictions around education and/or travel to be lifted entirely if it can be demonstrated by the requestor that it is work related, including going to professional conferences. Kouzes and Posner (2012) discussed the drawbacks of cutting budgets for travel and training indicating the benefits of promoting internal and external communication. They affirmed, “unless external communication is actively encouraged, people interact with the outsiders less and less frequently, and new ideas are cut off” (p. 175).

**Organizational Implications**

There was much rich data received from the participants during the client survey, Education Team interviews, world cafés, and risk assessment, with additional comments received during the “make it happen” café after review of the recommendations. All this would benefit the Sponsor and organization if action was taken. Stringer (2014) attested when discussing participant voices that “action research seeks to reveal and represent people’s experience, providing accounts that enable others to interpret issues and events in their daily lives” (p. 213).

**Sponsor engagement.**

I have been involved with many projects at varying degrees of complexity but never as an academic researcher delving into the world of the social sciences. This path was new to me in that I wore a proverbial “white lab coat” and had to consider ethics around the protection of
participants. Through this, the Sponsor of the study played an exemplary role allowing me to undertake the study freely as she saw the organizational benefits from the big picture being satisfied as long as I informed her of the steps along the way. We met when needed and she always made time for me. She entrusted the process and me even though at times I did not know what the outcomes would be. She allowed branch resources and staff time to fully participate if they choose to without involvement unless called upon. Participant sessions were anonymous and arranged in a manner that offered them environments to speak freely, without fear of power over or their roles being affected in any way.

The Sponsor was made aware of concerns regarding interference and the need for participants to have a voice. This included not directing me in any way as this could denote influence and possibly hinder the data or findings. She was also advised and understood my role as a researcher and organizational member had to be walked carefully as not to skew the data. Participants were also curious about the different approach as most had not been part of a scientific research project and my role at times was not understood. In the end, I could not have asked for a better Sponsor and the data received was as rich as I could have hoped for in an organizational setting where we were directly involved. The sponsor indicated after the fact that she appreciated the project and findings. I advised her from the start of the journey that the Master’s degree and Thesis would be mine but the data was hers as the Executive Director to hopefully promote growth in the branch. Being new to the role of Executive Director, the Sponsor showed a keen interest in my study as it had relevance to the Education Team as well as to the branch. She was my former Director and always appreciated learning new things and
encouraged others to do the same. Kouzes and Posner (2012) affirmed “the truth is that the best leaders are the best learners” (p. 335).

**Undertaking changes within their organization.**

Burke et al. (2009) proclaimed “new beginnings do foreshadow later outcomes. Changes started by charismatic individuals will create paths to change and resistance quite different from those of changes begun by natural, catastrophic events” (p. 1).

Much was shared, and I hoped learned, during the study by the participants and leaders who decided to involve themselves. With respect to how the results of the inquiry would have leaders undertake change, this was evident in the themes pulled from the data during the analysis. Specifically, the participants wished for change through: (a) wanting a new leadership approach, (b) being more proactive, (c) having more opportunity, (d) envisioning more recognition, (e) less working in silos, (f) wishing for better processes, (g) having more time to assist clients, (h) maximizing IT, (i) seeing more trust, (j) attaining more pride, (k) adding new human capital, (l) the advent of more internal and external collaboration, and (m) seeing more education internally and externally.

During the “make it happen” café, whilst discussing the draft recommendations, participants further explored what leadership could do to undertake change which included clarity with respect to the branch mandate and roles. They indicated an inquiry should be undertaken in this regard to better understanding the mandate and roles. They also raised the idea of breaking down silos to promote a homogeneous view and structure. I questioned what risk management should look like? This inquiry could be undertaken during or in separate branch and team meetings. The benefits would include consultant’s better understanding of the mandate and
roles in the branch as a whole and consistency in client advice provided across RMB. Client understanding in this respect could increase their understanding of what RMB and the Education team does, and it could potentially raise the profile of the branch. By not undertaking this review, teams would continue to operate at different levels and in silos as well as the client’s understanding would likely not increase.

Further discussions in the “make it happen” café occurred around the need for a new leadership approach and budgets which indicated the government took a reactionary approach when implementing cutbacks. I avowed this view should be changed and additional funds be allocated to our budgets as RMB’s programs demonstrated value for money with substantive savings for government. This could be demonstrated to senior executive at a Provincial Treasury Executive meeting or invite them to the branch. If successful, additional funds would be allocated to RMB’s operational budgets permitting such things as new hires and travel to conferences to increase RMB’s knowledge and profile. If not completed, RMB would continue to operate at a percentage of its potential with the client’s understanding never truly realized. As well, consultant knowledge would wane with the industry moving ahead at a faster pace with client risks getting more complex.

Participants during the “make it happen” café also saw value in the recommendation to rotate advisory team Directors to educate them and possibly raise the branch’s profile in the future. This would permit learnings, consistency amongst the RMB team Directors and team members, less feeling of staff working in silos as well as potentially raising the Education Team’s profile.
With respect to the recommendation on the need for more human capital, participants during the “make it happen” café affirmed the need to support what you create and the need for more resources. The Education Team’s workloads have been increasing approximately 15% per annum with Lean initiatives implemented to assist in alleviating this additional stress. The Team was also dealing with more complex projects. The Education Team was at a state of being overworked and adding two intermediate consultants to the Team would help to alleviate this burden. A case should be made to show senior executive who permit such hires that the Team’s understaffing is now at a critical point. This would reduce the workloads of the consultants, diminish stress, permit consultants more time to work on their client complex risks issues, allowing them to be involved with major projects, as well as raise the image of the Education Team. If this was not done, Education Team members would likely burn out and leave or use the Team as a stepping stone for advancement like a revolving door, never raising the Team’s profile.

When conversing about the recommendation to introduce a new specialist position relating to construction, it was stated such a specialist would likely be headhunted. Construction risks are high, these projects are complex, and the stakeholders are highly skilled; therefore, this appeared warranted and was still suggested. As noted above, a case should be made to demonstrate the need to senior executive for such a hire. By not implementing this recommendation, branch consultants would: (a) continue to work on such complex construction risks off the side of their desks, (b) struggle to maintain their daily roles, (c) have clients waiting for construction contract language they desire, (d) not give the best advice with many distractions, and (e) potentially make an error on large high profile provincial projects.
Participants in the “make it happen” café when discussing the recommendation for more collaboration denoted this was occurring within RMB but more could be implemented. I also recommended this occur at a strategic level across divisions. What this would look like could be determined in branch meetings or RMEX. This would benefit RMB with less work in silos, more team building, more knowledge sharing, and consistency in RMB mandate and roles. By not undertaking this recommendation, this would be the antonym of the benefits that RMB would derive.

During the “make it happen” café the recommendation to implement Leaner processes was looked at favourably whether facilitated by an internal or external expert. From this, RMB could maximize efficiencies and potentially reduce staff workloads across the branch. If a Lean expert was engaged with RMB in this regard, this would: (a) see the branch reach its true measure of effectiveness, (b) relieve the branch of unnecessary processes, (c) mitigate staff being over worked, (d) result in consultants having more time to offer expert advice, and (e) lead to better client servicing.

With regards to the recommendation into more education, café participants indicated 2015 saw an increase in travel for the Education Team and the branch with approval now being at the branch level. However, there were still restrictions on attending conferences permitting peer interaction and education with the recommendation that these restrictions be lifted. This could be accomplished by encouraging senior executive who have implemented this restriction to see the benefits derived from this education and risks that will occur over time if they continue down this path. As mentioned, these risks would see (a) less peer interaction, (b) less educational opportunities, and (c) less recognition as a professional.
Attempting to close ARE loop for future growth.

With the “make it happen” café completed and pulling from Rowe, Graf, Agger-Gupta, Piggot-Irvine and Harris’ (2013) Action Research Engagement (ARE) Model (Figure 17), I requested a meeting with the Sponsor to help lead RMB from the organizational “Readiness for Change Cycle” to the “Transitional Zone” in hopes of attaining step 5 “Recontextualize & Reconstruct for Organizational Change” (p. 20). The meeting was held on August 26, 2015. Step 5 depicts “engage[ment] to formulate change intervention or action plan and initiative steps to implement the plan as the next step in the action research process” (p. 20). This would hopefully lead to step 6 Sponsor Plans Action. This was a productive meeting wherein I explained to the Sponsor my hopes to move closer to the change action cycle, if she was in agreement. During the meeting, we went over each recommendation to see if the research findings and draft recommendations provided could be actionable.

(Figure 17: Action Research Engagement (ARE) Model (Rowe et al., 2013, p.20)
From the first recommendation on what leadership could do to undertake change with respect to clarity of RMB’s mandate and roles, the Sponsor indicated this was “doable.” She indicated the branch could benefit from more consultant discussions in this respect and we could implement takeaways that would apply to the consultant’s daily work. This included standard awareness on the mandate and roles, managing client expectations (an example being lead time for responses) and educating clients on what it is we do. We also discussed the time needed on complex projects and how specialized RMB had become. This initiative would be started at the RMEX level within RMB and then presented to the consultants. To summarize, work would be done to establish “Service Standards.” This would start with an analysis on “what is meant by a risk management overview.” The analysis would assist in determining context into “what we do and why we do it.” And, “if it is different, why is it different?”

With regards to our discussions on the need for a new leadership approach, budgets and cutbacks, the Sponsor indicated this was above her control. When we conversed on the recommendation to rotate consultant team Directors, she indicated this could be looked at in the future. The reasons mentioned were that new critical hires within some of these teams needed more training.

When we changed to the need for new human capital (example two intermediate consultants), the Sponsor stated this had been looked at and with the research findings this would assist her to back a critical hire request for a new Education Team intermediate consultant. Other factors such as Lean needed to be considered. A risk assessment would need to be done and a business case would have to be completed to determine the rationale. She would start with one request and analyze the need for another hire in the future. If/once approved, the new person
would have to be trained as most consultants start about two years behind the knowledge needed at the branch.

To further the need for new human capital and the need for a construction specialist in RMB, the Sponsor agreed with the level of specialization with six people in the branch who had worked on P3 projects. There would be a risk to the branch if that person was head hunted and the position was left vacant. She felt RMB had the capacity to handle P3s in each team and acknowledged more could potentially be on the horizon. The Sponsor affirmed she would include this discussion during the meeting on the mandate and roles.

When we covered the recommendation for more collaboration, the Sponsor was aware consultants suffered from not having enough time and they had been giving the round tables and working groups a low priority. She agreed that this would be included in an upcoming branch meeting to discuss options. The Sponsor indicated she was looking at a strategic plan for what the branch’s vision and mission would be. We discussed inviting consultants to other forms of meetings for further collaboration and knowledge sharing opportunities. For the Education Team, she advised this included inviting Team member(s) to strategic knowledge management initiatives.

As the meeting progressed, the recommendation to implement Leaner processes within RMB and the Education Team was provided. She agreed with this recommendation and indicated that RMB did not have enough staff to dedicate one to being a black belt. The Sponsor continued by stating she would be contacting and external expert to look at RMB’s procedures and processes. She would then consider alternatives from this branch review. If there was value derived, the expert would be asked to review Lean principles at the individual team levels.
From the last recommendation for the want for more education, the Sponsor agreed and we discussed that travel approval was now at her level and she appreciated promoting staff learning opportunities. She indicated that she would like to see the restriction on professional conferences lifted but that this would take time. The Sponsor confirmed approvals had been granted to consultants when speaking at conferences. She advised the reason conferences have been restricted was the negative media attention derived and this had some justification.

In the end, I felt this was a very productive meeting which saw many benefits coming from the study. The Sponsor was very appreciative of the findings, recommendations and looked forward to where these initiatives would take RMB and the Education Team in the future.

With respect to the Sponsor attesting she would be looking into how these recommendations would be incorporated into the strategic plan and the branch’s vision and mission, this indicated to me the recommendations that were accepted could have a lasting effect. Going forward, these would potentially continue into the Transition Zone of the ARE’s Change Action Cycle (Rowe et al., 2013) being: 5. Re-contextualize & Reconstruct for Organizational Change, and 6. Sponsor Plans Action, to 7. Take action (p.20).

Stringer (2014), when discussing strategic planning, avowed:

It enables stakeholders to describe

A vision of their long-term aspirations

An operational plan that defines the particular projects or activities that will accomplish this vision

Action plans that lay out the tasks and steps required to enact each of these projects or activities (p. 191, emphasis in original).
So where could the findings and recommendations take RMB? From a third party perspective, Torbert (1999) observed what the data was about, the practice of, and the development of action inquiry. Specifically he indicated in his meta-analysis of his and other scholar’s works that organizations in the Strategist stage “were perceived as more competent by other organizational members” (Para. 48). Torbert (1999) continued discussing the benefits of the Strategist stage when he affirmed:

- development supported 15 progressive organizational transformations, with dramatic increases in business indicators of success, while the five CEOs measured at pre-Strategist stages supported a total of 0 progressive transformations and several instances of serious deterioration in business indicators. The developmental changes were measured independently by three trained raters who achieved a level of reliability beyond 0.9 (Para. 49).

From the aforementioned, researchers have confirmed that leaders who took heed in the action inquiry approach, received value strategically and organizationally both internally and externally.

Implications for Future Inquiry

Much was ascertained during the study into “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” Going forward, future data could be gathered to assist the Education Team if they separated the UCIPP and SPP groups to determine if there were differing perspectives into how they perceived the Team’s mandate and roles, services as well as understanding of risk management.
When viewing the six recommendations, each of these could be an individual study, or follow-up, to determine if the analysis undertaken was, in the end, made a part of RMB’s strategic plan. If so, what were the results, or the successes and learnings derived from same? By undertaking all or some of these studies, this data could then be compared against my data to conclude any similarities or deviations.

As this study was focused on the Education Team in advisory roles, additional research could be undertaken by RMB to delve deeper into the perspectives of the branch as a whole including interdepartmental views. This could entail anonymous surveys internal to the branch and external to RMB clients to determine how they perceive RMB mandates and roles, services as well as their knowledge on risk management. In addition, how did the changes that affected RMB over the last two years look from a broader lens? More learnings would be uncovered and future growth could be realized from such efforts.

Missing from this study were views and opinions from senior executive whose lens may be similar or appear substantively different from those of the participants, the Sponsor and my understanding. By including them in the study, this would add an additional layer of findings and learnings that could, in the long run, assist RMB to reach its highest potential.

Lastly, from a conversation with my Supervisor, it was discussed how a full risk assessment from a positive lens could be undertaken in this or other research as this method has not been explored enough in the literary world. This would also align with an Appreciative Inquiry stance.
Albert Einstein quoted "To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science” (Einstein & Infeld, 1961, p.92).

Thesis Summary

This chapter discussed the recommendations derived from the study findings, the organizational implications, and implications for future inquiry. From the extensive rich data received during the Education Team client surveys, Team interviews, consultant and RMEX world cafés, and a risk assessment, six recommendations were concluded. These were drawn from the participant’s thoughts, feelings, values, and wants which were: (a) to provide a better understanding of the Education Team’s mandate and roles; (b) offer a new leadership approach, (c) provide more human capital, (d) offer more collaborative internal and external stakeholder opportunities, (e) implement Leaner processes, and (f) afford additional internal and external educational opportunities. These recommendations were then vetted further in a separate “make it happen” café after participants reviewed the study findings and draft recommendations which added strength to the suggestions.

Subsequent to this, I met with the Sponsor in an attempt to close the ARE loop and promote for future growth as she, as the Executive Director of RMB, had the ability to make the recommendations actionable. This meeting was fruitful in that she was receptive to nearly all of the recommendations that would assist the Education Team in their efforts to support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement. This was evident in our discussions about (a) an attempt would be made to build a case for a new critical hire that would be brought to senior executive and, if successful, assist the Team with its heavy workloads and
raising their profile. She also agreed to (b) further consultation with respect to a new construction specialist, (c) holding future RMEX meetings to clarify RMB’s mandate and roles for dissemination amongst the branch consultants which would bring consistency and potentially raise RMB’s status, (d) include options for additional collaboration in a future branch meeting, in addition to her looking at RMB’s strategic plan for what the branch’s vision and mission would be, (e) retaining an external Lean expert to assist the branch in bettering its efficiencies, and (f) favouring future educational opportunities including professional conferences where possible.

My role in the future project or post-thesis was not clear subsequent to the meeting with the Sponsor but as a member of the Education Team I will have pride in the fact I was able to help the Team by reaching out to community. Kouzes and Posner (2012) attested “strategies, tactics, skills, and practices are empty without an understanding of the fundamental human aspirations that connect leaders and constituents” (p. 32).
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

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APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB


APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

APPENDIX A: RISK MANAGEMENT BRANCH ORGANIZATION CHART
APPENDIX B: EDUCATION TEAM INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL KEY STAKEHOLDER CHART
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership Degree at Royal Roads University, Jeffrey Milne (the Student) will be conducting an inquiry research study at the Province of British Columbia’s Risk Management Branch to ascertain “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” The Student’s credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by calling Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership, at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email Xxx@xx.xx

Inquiry Team Member Role Description

As a volunteer Inquiry Team Member assisting the Student with this project, your role may include one or more of the following: providing advice on the relevance and wording of questions and letters of invitation, supporting the logistics of the data-gathering methods, including observing, assisting, or facilitating an interview, world café or risk assessment, taking notes, transcribing, or reviewing analysis of data, to assist the Student and the Province of British Columbia’s Risk Management Branch organizational change process. In the course of this activity, you may be privy to confidential inquiry data.

Confidentiality of Inquiry Data

In compliance with the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Policy, under which this inquiry project is being conducted, all personal identifiers and any other confidential information generated or accessed by the inquiry team advisor will only be used in the performance of the functions of this project, and must not be disclosed to anyone other than persons authorized to receive it, both during the inquiry period and beyond it. Recorded information in all formats is covered by this agreement. Personal identifiers include participant names, contact information, personally identifying turns of phrase or comments, and any other personally identifying information.

Bridging Student’s Potential or Actual Ethical Conflict

In situations where potential participants in a work setting report directly to the Student, you, as a neutral third party with no supervisory relationship with either the Student or potential participants, may be asked to work closely with the Student to bridge this potential or actual conflict of interest in this study. Such requests may include asking the Inquiry Team Advisor to: send out the letter of invitation to potential participants, receive letters/emails of interest in participation from potential participants, independently make a selection of received participant requests based on criteria you and the Student will have worked out previously, formalize the logistics for the data-gathering method, including contacting the participants about the time and location of the interview or focus group, conduct the interviews (usually 3-5 maximum), world café or risk assessment with the selected participants (without the Student’s presence or knowledge of which participants were chosen) using the protocol and questions worked out
previously with the Student, and producing written transcripts of the interviews or focus groups with all personal identifiers removed before the transcripts are brought back to the Student for the data analysis phase of the study.

This strategy means that potential participants with a direct reporting relationship will be assured they can confidentially turn down the participation request from their supervisor (the Student), as this process conceals from the Student which potential participants chose not to participate or simply were not selected by you, the third party, because they were out of the selection criteria range (they might have been a participant request coming after the number of participants sought, for example, interview request number 6 when only 5 participants are sought, or focus group request number 10 when up to 9 participants would be selected for a focus group). Inquiry Team members asked to take on such 3rd party duties in this study will be under the direction of the Student and will be fully briefed by the Student as to how this process will work, including specific expectations, and the methods to be employed in conducting the elements of the inquiry with the Student’s direct reports, and will be given every support possible by the Student, except where such support would reveal the identities of the actual participants.

Personal information will be collected, recorded, corrected, accessed, altered, used, disclosed, retained, secured and destroyed as directed by the Student, under direction of the Royal Roads Academic Supervisor.

Inquiry Team Members who are uncertain whether any information they may wish to share about the project they are working on is personal or confidential will verify this with Jeffrey Milne, the Student.

**Statement of Informed Consent:**

I have read and understand this agreement.

__________________________  ____________________________  _____________
Name (Please Print)          Signature                      Date
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

APPENDIX D: SPONSOR LETTER OF AGREEMENT

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership Degree at Royal Roads University, Jeffrey Milne (the Student) will be conducting an inquiry research study at the Province of British Columbia’s Risk Management Branch to ascertain “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” The Student’s credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by calling Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership, at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email Xxx@xx.xx

Inquiry Team Member Role Description

As the Sponsor and volunteer Inquiry Team Member assisting the Student with this project, your role may include one or more of the following: providing advice on the relevance and wording of questions and letters of invitation and supporting the logistics of the data-gathering methods, to assist the Student and the Province of British Columbia’s Risk Management Branch organizational change process. In the course of this activity, you will not be privy to confidential inquiry data that includes personal identifiers, consent forms or lists of potential participants.

Confidentiality of Inquiry Data

In compliance with the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Policy, under which this inquiry project is being conducted, all personal identifiers and any other confidential information generated or accessed by the inquiry team advisor will only be used in the performance of the functions of this project, and must not be disclosed to anyone other than persons authorized to receive it, both during the inquiry period and beyond it. Recorded information in all formats is covered by this agreement. Personal identifiers include participant names, contact information, personally identifying turns of phrase or comments, and any other personally identifying information.

Bridging Student’s Potential or Actual Ethical Conflict

In situations where potential participants in a work setting report directly to the Student, you, as a Sponsor are not a neutral third party due to your supervisory relationship with either the Student or potential participants, so you will not be asked to work with the Student to bridge this potential or actual conflict of interest in this study. Other third party team members may be involved in sending out letters of invitation to potential participants, receiving letters/emails of interest in participation from potential participants, independently making a selection of received participant requests based on criteria, formalizing the logistics for the data-gathering method, selecting participants (without the Sponsor or Student’s presence or knowledge of which participants were chosen), and producing written transcripts of the interviews with all personal identifiers removed before the transcripts are brought back to the Student for the data analysis phase of the study.
This strategy means that potential participants with a direct reporting relationship will be assured they can confidentially turn down the participation request from their supervisor (the Student), as this process conceals from the Student which potential participants chose not to participate or simply were not selected by the third party because they were out of the selection criteria range. Inquiry Team members asked to take on such 3rd party duties in this study will be under the direction of the Student and will be fully briefed by the Student as to how this process will work, including specific expectations, and the methods to be employed in conducting the elements of the inquiry with the Student’s direct reports, and will be given every support possible by the Student, except where such support would reveal the identities of the actual participants. As the Sponsor and Executive Director of the Branch with power over issues for all participants, you cannot be considered a neutral 3rd party for this research.

Personal information will be collected, recorded, corrected, accessed, altered, used, disclosed, retained, secured and destroyed as directed by the Student, under direction of the Royal Roads Academic Supervisor. This information cannot be shared with you, the Sponsor, at any time before during or after the research.

Inquiry Team Members who are uncertain whether any information they may wish to share about the project they are working on is personal or confidential will verify this with Jeffrey Milne, the Student.

**Statement of Informed Consent:**

I have read and understand this agreement.

________________________  _________________________  _____________
Name (Please Print)          Signature                 Date
APPENDIX E: INVITATION TO SURVEY

Dear Prospective Participant,

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that I am conducting. This project is part of the requirement for my Master’s Degree in Leadership, at Royal Roads University.

The objective of my research project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because you are the senior risk contact for your organization that is insured under the Schools Protection Program (SPP) or University College Institute Protection Program (UCIPP).

This phase of my research project will consist of a 10 minute online survey with Likert-type scale questions where you are asked to rank your agreement with 12 statements, as well as provide any relevant comments pertaining to your work with Education Team. The survey will be open from Monday, April 20th, 2015 until Sunday, May 3rd, 2015.

The attached letter contains further information about the study conduct and will enable you to make a fully informed decision on whether or not you wish to participate. Please review this information before responding.

I would like to make all participants aware that there may be potential for future branch publications arising from this study.

You are not required to participate in this research project. If you do choose to participate, you are unable to withdraw your responses as they will become part of an anonymous set of data.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have additional questions regarding the project and its outcomes.

Clicking on the following link and proceeding to the survey questions will mean that you have given your informed consent to participate in my research project. If you do not agree, or have not given your informed consent, please do not click the following link.

http://xxx.xxx

If you have any questions, please contact me at:
Name: **Jeffrey Milne**
Email: Xxx@xx.xx
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Milne
RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

Study title: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

My name is Jeffrey Milne, and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master’s Degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership Studies: Xxx@xx.xx or XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Purpose of the study and sponsoring organization

The purpose of my research project will be to identify the change goals needed and the steps necessary for the organization to complete these goals. Specifically, the goals of this inquiry are to:

- identify the context and understanding of the mandate at all levels;
- determine which environmental constraints and/or changes are affecting the Education Team;
- ascertain the effects of these constraints and/or changes on the systems and processes; and
- determine what positive outcomes that arise from the inquiry might be implemented.

Your participation and how information will be collected

The research will be completed by using an Action Research methodology with an Appreciative Inquiry stance. This will be done using four types of inquiry methods to obtain the data needed to complete the research, and one follow-up method to share findings and inform recommendations.

An online survey will be sent to Education Team clients, with 12 questions provided in the invitation taking 10 minutes to complete.

Current and former Education Team members and one retired senior consultant will be sent an invitation to participate in one-to-one interviews. There will be four questions asked, which will be included in the invitation, with each interview taking approximately 15 minutes. These will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

There will be two world cafes due to power over concerns. Approximately twenty-five consultants will be invited to the first world cafe, with the four questions being included in the invitation. Each department will have its own table for a comparative during the risk analysis. The second session will occur inviting the Risk Management Branch Executive, with the same four questions attached to their invitation. Each session will take approximately one hour and will be guided by a facilitator.

Invitations will be sent to the Education Team and specific directors from other departments and the executive director to participate in a risk assessment. Through the use of a risk registry tool, the group will ascertain the risks associated with changes that have occurred over the past two years in the Education Team. This will take approximately three hours, and as each risk will be identified during the risk assessment, there will be no pre-population of the risk register.
A final world café or make-it-happen session will invite all participants to a one hour session where the researcher will present his findings. Any further questions will be answered by the researcher. Comments and questions will be audio recorded and scribed to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

**Benefits and risks to participation**

The benefits to the Risk Management Branch will be the identification of all the risks associated with the changes occurring to the Education Team within the last two years. From this a plan can be put in place to make strategic decisions moving forward.

The Risk Management Branch is known to be a learning environment. Each individual will benefit from their participation by getting a clearer understanding of the mandate and roles of the Education Team and Branch. By participating in each or all of the models discussed, each participant will have a greater understanding of community and the benefits of community learning. Because the author works within the Education Team, he will be excluded from the interviews, branch world café and the risk assessment due to direct and perceived power over concerns or potential bias or influence.

Other risks to the consultants are in the form of the Executive having power over them, hence the separate world cafés. A major concern will be breach of confidentiality. To mitigate this, steps will be taken to ensure anonymity where required, and protection of the data will be ensured after the fact. Each session will also be voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time, but any comments they have already made will remain as anonymous data as part of the overall data set of the project. During each method informed consent forms will be provided.

**Inquiry team**

The inquiry team will consist of the author, four facilitators who have volunteered their time, a transcriptionist with no knowledge of the participants of the study, two scribes and the author’s family who will provide support for some administrative duties.

**Real or Perceived Conflict of Interest**

Due to the researcher having a role within the Education Team while also using this inquiry to obtain a Masters of Leadership, this real or perceived conflict of interest will be mitigated by using third parties to engage participants in interviews, lead a world café and facilitate the risk assessment. The researcher will not be involved in choosing the participants, nor will he know who the voluntary participants were at each stage of the research.

**Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period**

The author will work to protect your privacy throughout this study. All information collected will be maintained in confidence with hard copies (e.g., consent forms) stored by a third party or the researcher (where appropriate) in a locked filing cabinet. Electronic data (such as transcripts or audio files) will be stored on a password protected computer or memory stick. Information will be recorded in hand-written format and audio recorded and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific
comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

Based on Royal Roads University requirements, the author (or the third party where appropriate) will keep all research information pertaining to this study for one year past convocation in June 2016. After this point all raw data will be destroyed in accordance with the Risk Management Branch’s document destruction policy. All digital data will be deleted.

Since some participant information cannot be withdrawn from a group session, informed consent forms will outline this fact. Due to the nature of the group method, it is not possible to keep identities of participants anonymous from the facilitator or other participants. Participants are asked to respect the confidential nature of the research by not sharing names or identifying comments outside of the group. Accordingly, participation is voluntary.

Survey data will be collected anonymously using Fluid Surveys, a Canadian online survey tool, and no information will be stored outside of Canada.

Sharing results

In addition to submitting a final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the researcher will also be sharing research findings with the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study, the Education Team Director and other such persons who can learn from this information. This will be done at a make-it-happen session where the research will answer any questions and share findings. Comments and questions will be recorded to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

Procedure for withdrawing from the study

All participation is voluntary, and participants may withdraw from participation at any time. Once the online survey has begun, participants may withdraw at any time, however any submitted information cannot be withdrawn from the data set. Participants in the interview may choose to withdraw their information from the study up until it has been transcribed and de-identified. Participants in the world cafés and risk assessment may withdraw at any time, but their comments spoken prior to their withdrawal, will remain as anonymous data in the inquiry data set.

You are not required to participate in this research project. By replying directly to the e-mail request for participation, beginning the online survey or signing the in-person consent form you indicate that you have read and understand the information above and give your free and informed consent to participate in this project.

Please note that MA-Leadership theses are published through deposit with the Library and Archives Canada, through the Thesis Canada Portal, and the ProQuest/UMI database.

Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

Name: Jeffrey Milne
Email: Xxx@xx.xx
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
APPENDIX F: ONLINE SURVEY

SURVEY PREAMBLE

My name is Jeffrey Milne, and this research project, Appreciating the Mandate of the Education Team in BC Government’s Risk Management Branch, is part of the requirement for a Master’s of Art in Leadership at Royal Roads University. The research includes this survey and is estimated to take ten minutes to complete. The information you provide will be summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual. All data received will be kept confidential.

Clicking on the link in the invitation letter and arriving to these survey questions means that you have given your informed consent to participate in my research project. Once you begin answering these questions you may withdraw at any time; however, your submitted answers cannot be removed from the research data once submitted.

SURVEY

The Educations Team within the Risk Management Branch provides consulting services to its clients the 60 public school districts and 25 postsecondary institutions throughout the Province of British Columbia. From the Team’s mandate, its roles are to provide “risk management advisor/consultant, risk management program development and delivery, and claims and litigation management” to its clients. For the purposes of this study, the researcher will focus on risk management advisor/consultant, risk management program development and delivery services. The following 12 questions will assist the Branch to ascertain how better to assist in how it delivers its mandate to its clients. You are asked to answer these questions on behalf of your organization. If your individual understanding of the mandate and roles of the Risk Management Branch differs from that of your organization, please explain this in the comment section below.

As the contact person for your organization, please rate the following statements on a scale from 5 – strongly agree to 1 – strongly disagree.

1. My organization understands the mandate and roles of the Education Team of the Risk Management Branch.

   □ 5 Strongly Agree □ 4 Agree □ 3 Neutral □ 2 Disagree □ 1 Strongly Disagree

2. My organization understands the consultation services provided by the Education Team.

   □ 5 Strongly Agree □ 4 Agree □ 3 Neutral □ 2 Disagree □ 1 Strongly Disagree
3. My organization values the level of consultation services provided by the Education Team.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

4. My organization has a strong understanding of Enterprise Risk Management.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

5. My organization has a culture where risk management is embedded in our approach.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

6. My organization has a strong understanding of approving indemnities to other parties in contracts including those under the Financial Administration Act.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

7. My organization has a strong understanding of insurance provided under the School’s Protection Program (SPP) or the University College Institute Protection Program (UCIPP)?
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

8. My organization has received sufficient education into operational or contract risk management.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

9. My organization appropriately handles operational and contract risk management.
   - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

10. My organization would value more education relating to risk management.
    - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

11. I have a strong understanding of Enterprise Risk Management.
    - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree

12. I would value more education relating to risk management.
    - [ ] 5 Strongly Agree  - [ ] 4 Agree  - [ ] 3 Neutral  - [ ] 2 Disagree  - [ ] 1 Strongly Disagree
Additional Comments?

If your individual understanding of the mandate and roles of the Risk Management Branch differs from that of your organization, please explain this in the comment section below.

Invitations will be sent out in the fall of 2015 to attend an information session at a conference with the Risk Management Branch. The information gathered at the conference will not be part of this research.

Thank you for participating.

Jeffery Milne
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

APPENDIX G: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW

Dear Education Team Member

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that I am conducting. This project is part of the requirement for my Master’s Degree in Leadership, at Royal Roads University.

The objective of my research project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Data will be ascertained through the use of the questions:

1. Please describe a time when you felt proud to be part of the Education Team of the Risk Management Branch. What was happening, who was there? What was your role in this event or activity?

2. What has the Education Team done, or could it do better, to advance the Lean Principle philosophy promoted by Government, of continuous improvement to build a better workplace, including the enhancement of customer service, saving time and building internal capacity? Describe how this also aligns with the risk management process and the indemnity approval process.

3. If you were to come back to the Education Team in three years’ time, what would be different? If you had three wishes for what the Team would look like or be doing in three years’ time, what would your wishes be?

4. In relation to its mandate and roles, how might the Education Team promote growth in the next five years?

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because of your role in the Education Team.

This phase of my research project will consist of one-to-one interviews and is estimated to last fifteen minutes and be conducted by a neutral third party. Interviews will be held on Wednesday May 6th and Thursday May 7th at XXX, between 1 pm to 3 pm on both days in Quiet Room S342 outside of the RMBs’ office.

The attached letter contains further information about the study conduct and will enable you to make a fully informed decision on whether or not you wish to participate. Please review this information before responding.

Due to the fact that the researcher works directly with interviewees, there is a potential that identification may be made through an individual’s use of specific phrases unique to them. It is prudent that the researcher make the interviewees aware of this so they can make a voluntary, informed decision about participation.

I would like to make all participants aware that there may be potential for future branch publications arising from this study.
I realize that due to our collegial relationship, you may feel compelled to participate in this research project. Please be aware that you are not required to participate and, should you choose to participate, your participation would be entirely voluntary and I will not be made aware of the participants. If you do choose to participate, you are free to withdraw your responses directly after the interview without prejudice. After this point it will be too difficult to remove your responses as they will become part of an anonymous set of data. If you do not wish to participate, simply do not reply to this request. Your decision to not participate will also be maintained in confidence. Your choice will not affect our relationship or your employment status in any way.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have additional questions regarding the project and its outcomes.

Name: Jeffrey Milne  
Email: Xxx@xx.xx  
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX

If you would like to participate in my research project, please reply to the third party facilitator who sent you this invitation and will be facilitating the interview.

Name: XXX  
Email: XXX

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey Milne
RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

Study title: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

My name is Jeffrey Milne, and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master’s Degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership Studies: Xxx@xx.xx or XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Purpose of the study and sponsoring organization

The purpose of my research project will be to identify the change goals needed and the steps necessary for the organization to complete these goals. Specifically, the goals of this inquiry are to:

- identify the context and understanding of the mandate at all levels;
- determine which environmental constraints and/or changes are affecting the Education Team;
- ascertain the effects of these constrains and/or changes on the systems and processes; and
- determine what positive outcomes that arise from the inquiry might be implemented.

Your participation and how information will be collected

The research will be completed by using an Action Research methodology with an Appreciative Inquiry stance. This will be done using four types of inquiry methods to obtain the data needed to complete the research, and one follow-up method to share findings and inform recommendations.

An online survey will be sent to Education Team clients, with 12 questions provided in the invitation taking 10 minutes to complete.

Current and former Education Team members and one retired senior consultant will be sent an invitation to participate in one-to-one interviews. There will be four questions asked, which will be included in the invitation, with each interview taking approximately 15 minutes. These will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

There will be two world cafés due to power over concerns. Approximately twenty-five consultants will be invited to the first world café, with the four questions being included in the invitation. Each department will have its own table for a comparative during the risk analysis. The second session will occur inviting the Risk Management Branch Executive, with the same four questions attached to their invitation. Each session will take approximately one hour and will be guided by a facilitator.

Invitations will be sent to the Education Team and specific directors from other departments and the executive director to participate in a risk assessment. Through the use of a risk registry tool, the group will ascertain the risks associated with changes that have occurred over the past two years in the Education Team. This will take approximately three hours, and as each risk will be identified during the risk assessment, there will be no pre-population of the risk register.
A final world café or make-it-happen session will invite all participants to a one hour session where the researcher will present his findings. Any further questions will be answered by the researcher. Comments and questions will be audio recorded and scribed to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

**Benefits and risks to participation**

The benefits to the Risk Management Branch will be the identification of all the risks associated with the changes occurring to the Education Team within the last two years. From this a plan can be put in place to make strategic decisions moving forward.

The Risk Management Branch is known to be a learning environment. Each individual will benefit from their participation by getting a clearer understanding of the mandate and roles of the Education Team and Branch. By participating in each or all of the models discussed, each participant will have a greater understanding of community and the benefits of community learning. Because the author works within the Education Team, he will be excluded from the interviews, branch world café and the risk assessment due to direct and perceived power over concerns or potential bias or influence.

Other risks to the consultants are in the form of the Executive having power over them, hence the separate world cafés. A major concern will be breach of confidentiality. To mitigate this, steps will be taken to ensure anonymity where required, and protection of the data will be ensured after the fact. Each session will also be voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time, but any comments they have already made will remain as anonymous data as part of the overall data set of the project. During each method informed consent forms will be provided.

**Inquiry team**

The inquiry team will consist of the author, four facilitators who have volunteered their time, a transcriptionist with no knowledge of the participants of the study, two scribes and the author’s family who will provide support for some administrative duties.

**Real or Perceived Conflict of Interest**

Due to the researcher having a role within the Education Team while also using this inquiry to obtain a Masters of Leadership, this real or perceived conflict of interest will be mitigated by using third parties to engage participants in interviews, lead a world café and facilitate the risk assessment. The researcher will not be involved in choosing the participants, nor will he know who the voluntary participants were are each stage of the research.

**Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period**

The author will work to protect your privacy throughout this study. All information collected will be maintained in confidence with hard copies (e.g., consent forms) stored by a third party or the researcher (where appropriate) in a locked filing cabinet. Electronic data (such as transcripts or audio files) will be stored on a password protected computer or memory stick. Information will be recorded in hand-written format and audio recorded and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific
comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

Based on Royal Roads University requirements, the author (or the third party where appropriate) will keep all research information pertaining to this study for one year past convocation in June 2016. After this point all raw data will be destroyed in accordance with the Risk Management Branch’s document destruction policy. All digital data will be deleted.

Since some participant information cannot be withdrawn from a group session, informed consent forms will outline this fact. Due to the nature of the group method, it is not possible to keep identities of participants anonymous from the facilitator or other participants. Participants are asked to respect the confidential nature of the research by not sharing names or identifying comments outside of the group. Accordingly, participation is voluntary.

Survey data will be collected anonymously using Fluid Surveys, a Canadian online survey tool, and no information will be stored outside of Canada.

Sharing results
In addition to submitting a final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the researcher will also be sharing research findings with the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study, the Education Team Director and other such persons who can learn from this information. This will be done at a make-it-happen session where the research will answer any questions and share findings. Comments and questions will be recorded to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

Procedure for withdrawing from the study
All participation is voluntary, and participants may withdraw from participation at any time. Once the online survey has begun, participants may withdraw at any time, however any submitted information cannot be withdrawn from the data set. Participants in the interview may choose to withdraw their information from the study up until it has been transcribed and de-identified. Participants in the world cafés and risk assessment may withdraw at any time, but their comments spoken prior to their withdrawal, will remain as anonymous data in the inquiry data set.

You are not required to participate in this research project. By replying directly to the e-mail request for participation, beginning the online survey or signing the in-person consent form you indicate that you have read and understand the information above and give your free and informed consent to participate in this project.

Please note that MA-Leadership theses are published through deposit with the Library and Archives Canada, through the Thesis Canada Portal, and the ProQuest/UMI database.

Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

Name: **Jeffrey Milne**
Email: **Xxx@xx.xx**
Telephone: **XXX-XXX-XXXX**
APPENDIX H: RESEARCH CONSENT FORM - INTERVIEW

By signing this form, you agree that you are over the age of 19 and have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

☐ I consent to the audio recording of the interview.

Name: (Please Print): __________________________________________________

Signed: ______________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this interview that will assist Jeffrey Milne in his researcher study as part of Masters of Art in Leadership at Royal Roads University. The lead question that Jeffrey will be using to undertake his research is “How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?” I ask you to read through the invitation and confirm you understand this interview is voluntary, that Jeffrey is a member of the Education Team as a Senior Consultant and he periodically acts for the Director. All information received will be de-identified prior to Jeffrey receiving your information for his research. In addition to this, you have had all your questions answered and agree to continue with this interview. I (the facilitator) will then require the consent form be signed. I will retain your consent form and secure it with the recorded data on an encrypted memory stick in a locked cabinet. After the interview, you will be invited to a first round Boardroom C world café, and a risk assessment involving fellow consultants in the Branch, Directors and the Executive Director. After the data is analyzed, you will be invited to a Make-It-Happen Café where Jeffrey will meet with all the participants, including branch consultants, Directors and the Executive Director, to go over his findings and answer questions. If you are ready to begin, I will ask your permission to start the recorder and proceed to ask you the following four questions:

1. Please describe a time when you felt proud to be part of the Education Team of the Risk Management Branch. What was happening, who was there? What was your role in this event or activity?

2. What has the Education Team done, or could it do better, to advance the Lean Principle philosophy promoted by Government, of continuous improvement to build a better workplace, including the enhancement of customer service, saving time and building internal capacity? Describe how this also aligns with risk management and the indemnity approval process.

3. If you were to come back to the Education Team in three years' time, what would be different? If you had three wishes for what the Team would look like or be doing in three years' time, what would your wishes be?

4. In relation to its mandate and roles, how might the Education Team promote growth in the next five years?
Dear Prospective Participant,

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that Jeffrey Milne is conducting. This project is part of the requirement for his Master’s Degree in Leadership, at Royal Roads University.

The objective of Jeff’s project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because of your role in the Risk Management Branch within the Ministry of Finance.

Please find enclosed Jeff’s Invitation, Research Information Letter and Research Consent Form for your consideration. The Boardroom C World Café is voluntary and your anonymity will be protected. The world café will be held on Monday May 11, 2015 at XXX, 3rd Floor at 11 am in Boardroom 303. Due to the recently implemented security requirements within the 3rd floor where the café will be held, Jeffrey Milne will be required to meet any participants from outside of the Risk Management Branch at the entry door as well as escort them out. This will affect your anonymity as a participant should you chose to attend; however, any information provided during the café session will still be de-identified and will continue to remain anonymous to the researcher.

Any questions with respect to the research should be directed to Jeffrey Milne whose contact information is within the attached Invitation. Anyone who agrees to participate will need to attend in person. Being a café, complimentary hot and cold drinks will be served as well as sweet and healthy treats.

Thank you

XXX, Facilitator
RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

Study title: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

My name is Jeffrey Milne, and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master’s Degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership Studies: Xxx@xx.xx or XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Purpose of the study and sponsoring organization
The purpose of my research project will be to identify the change goals needed and the steps necessary for the organization to complete these goals. Specifically, the goals of this inquiry are to:

- identify the context and understanding of the mandate at all levels;
- determine which environmental constraints and/or changes are affecting the Education Team;
- ascertain the effects of these constraints and/or changes on the systems and processes; and
- determine what positive outcomes that arise from the inquiry might be implemented.

Your participation and how information will be collected
The research will be completed by using an Action Research methodology with an Appreciative Inquiry stance. This will be done using four types of inquiry methods to obtain the data needed to complete the research, and one follow-up method to share findings and inform recommendations.

An online survey will be sent to Education Team clients, with 12 questions provided in the invitation taking 10 minutes to complete.

Current and former Education Team members and one retired senior consultant will be sent an invitation to participate in one-to-one interviews. There will be four questions asked, which will be included in the invitation, with each interview taking approximately 15 minutes. These will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

There will be two world cafés due to power over concerns. Approximately twenty-five consultants will be invited to the first world café, with the four questions being included in the invitation. Each department will have its own table for a comparative during the risk analysis. The second session will occur inviting the Risk Management Branch Executive, with the same four questions attached to their invitation. Each session will take approximately one hour and will be guided by a facilitator.

Invitations will be sent to the Education Team and specific directors from other departments and the executive director to participate in a risk assessment. Through the use of a risk registry tool, the group will ascertain the risks associated with changes that have occurred over the past two years in the Education Team. This will take approximately three hours, and as each risk will be identified during the risk assessment, there will be no pre-population of the risk register.
A final world café or make-it-happen session will invite all participants to a one hour session where the researcher will present his findings. Any further questions will be answered by the researcher. Comments and questions will be audio recorded and scribed to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

**Benefits and risks to participation**

The benefits to the Risk Management Branch will be the identification of all the risks associated with the changes occurring to the Education Team within the last two years. From this a plan can be put in place to make strategic decisions moving forward.

The Risk Management Branch is known to be a learning environment. Each individual will benefit from their participation by getting a clearer understanding of the mandate and roles of the Education Team and Branch. By participating in each or all of the models discussed, each participant will have a greater understanding of community and the benefits of community learning. Because the author works within the Education Team, he will be excluded from the interviews, branch world café and the risk assessment due to direct and perceived power over concerns or potential bias or influence.

Other risks to the consultants are in the form of the Executive having power over them, hence the separate world cafés. A major concern will be breach of confidentiality. To mitigate this, steps will be taken to ensure anonymity where required, and protection of the data will be ensured after the fact. Each session will also be voluntary. Participants may withdraw at any time, but any comments they have already made will remain as anonymous data as part of the overall data set of the project. During each method informed consent forms will be provided.

**Inquiry team**

The inquiry team will consist of the author, four facilitators who have volunteered their time, a transcriptionist with no knowledge of the participants of the study, two scribes and the author’s family who will provide support for some administrative duties.

**Real or Perceived Conflict of Interest**

Due to the researcher having a role within the Education Team while also using this inquiry to obtain a Masters of Leadership, this real or perceived conflict of interest will be mitigated by using third parties to engage participants in interviews, lead a world café and facilitate the risk assessment. The researcher will not be involved in choosing the participants, nor will he know who the voluntary participants were at each stage of the research.

**Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period**

The author will work to protect your privacy throughout this study. All information collected will be maintained in confidence with hard copies (e.g., consent forms) stored by a third party or the researcher (where appropriate) in a locked filing cabinet. Electronic data (such as transcripts or audio files) will be stored on a password protected computer or memory stick. Information will be recorded in hand-written format and audio recorded and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific
comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

Based on Royal Roads University requirements, the author (or the third party where appropriate) will keep all research information pertaining to this study for one year past convocation in June 2016. After this point all raw data will be destroyed in accordance with the Risk Management Branch’s document destruction policy. All digital data will be deleted.

Since some participant information cannot be withdrawn from a group session, informed consent forms will outline this fact. Due to the nature of the group method, it is not possible to keep identities of participants anonymous from the facilitator or other participants. Participants are asked to respect the confidential nature of the research by not sharing names or identifying comments outside of the group. Accordingly, participation is voluntary.

Survey data will be collected anonymously using Fluid Surveys, a Canadian online survey tool, and no information will be stored outside of Canada.

Sharing results

In addition to submitting a final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the researcher will also be sharing research findings with the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study, the Education Team Director and other such persons who can learn from this information. This will be done at a make-it-happen session where the research will answer any questions and share findings. Comments and questions will be recorded to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

Procedure for withdrawing from the study

All participation is voluntary, and participants may withdraw from participation at any time. Once the online survey has begun, participants may withdraw at any time, however any submitted information cannot be withdrawn from the data set. Participants in the interview may choose to withdraw their information from the study up until it has been transcribed and de-identified. Participants in the world cafés and risk assessment may withdraw at any time, but their comments spoken prior to their withdrawal, will remain as anonymous data in the inquiry data set.

You are not required to participate in this research project. By replying directly to the e-mail request for participation, beginning the online survey or signing the in-person consent form you indicate that you have read and understand the information above and give your free and informed consent to participate in this project.

Please note that MA-Leadership theses are published through deposit with the Library and Archives Canada, through the Thesis Canada Portal, and the ProQuest/UMI database.

Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

Name: Jeffrey Milne
Email: Xxx@xx.xx
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
APPENDIX K: BOARDROOM C CAFÉ CONSENT FORM

By signing this form, you agree that you are over the age of 19 and have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

☐ I commit to respect the confidential nature of the Boardroom C Café by not sharing identifying information about the other participants.

Name: (Please Print): __________________________________________________

Signed: ______________________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX L: BOARDROOM C CAFÉ QUESTIONS (TEAM MEMBERS)

1. Please describe a time when you felt proud to be part of your Team of the Risk Management Branch. What was happening, who was there? What was your role in this event or activity?

2. What has your Team done, or could it do better, to advance the Lean Principle philosophy promoted by Government, of continuous improvement to build a better workplace, including the enhancement of customer service, saving time and building internal capacity? Describe how this also aligns with the risk management process and the indemnity approval process.

3. If you were to come back to your Team in three years' time, what would be different? If you had three wishes for what the Team would look like or be doing in three years' time, what would your wishes be?

4. In relation to its mandate and roles, how might your Team promote growth in the next five years?
APPRECIATING THE MANDATE OF THE EDUCATION TEAM IN RMB

APPENDIX M: WORLD CAFÉ INVITATION (RMEX)

Dear Risk Management Branch Executive Member (or Former Member),

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that I am conducting. This project is part of the requirement for my Master’s Degree in Leadership, at Royal Roads University.

The objective of my research project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Data will be ascertained through the use of the questions:

1. Please describe a time when you felt proud to be part of The Risk Management Branch. What was happening, who was there? What was your role in this event or activity?

2. What has The Risk Management Branch done, or could it do better, to advance the Lean Principle philosophy promoted by Government, of continuous improvement to build a better workplace, including the enhancement of customer service, saving time and building internal capacity? Describe how this also aligns with the risk management process and the indemnity approval process.

3. If you are to come back to The Risk Management Branch in three years' time, what would be different? If you had three wishes for what the Team would look like or be doing in three years' time, what would your wishes be?

4. In relation to its mandate and roles, how might The Risk Management Branch promote growth in the next five years?

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because of your role in the Risk Management Branch.

This phase of my research project will consist of a Boardroom C Café consisting of only RMEX members and is estimated to last up to one hour. A scribe may be brought in to assist. Conversations will be documented on a flipchart or paper tablecloths. The session will be held May 12, 2015, XXX, 3rd Floor at 11:00 am in Boardroom 303. Due to the recently implemented security requirements within the 3rd floor where the café will be held, Jeffrey Milne will be required to meet any participants from outside of the Risk Management Branch at the entry door as well as escort them out.

The attached letter contains further information about the study conduct and will enable you to make a fully informed decision on whether or not you wish to participate. Please review this information before responding.

I would like to make all participants aware that there may be potential for future branch publications arising from this study.
I realize that due to our collegial relationship, you may feel compelled to participate in this research project. Please be aware that you are not required to participate and, should you choose to participate, your participation would be entirely voluntary. If you do choose to participate, it will be too difficult to remove your responses as they will become part of an anonymous set of data. If you do not wish to participate, simply do not reply to this request. Your decision to not participate will also be maintained in confidence. Your choice will not affect our relationship or your employment status in any way.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have additional questions regarding the project and its outcomes.

If you would like to participate in my research project, please contact me directly as I will be facilitating this Boardroom C café:

Name: Jeffrey Milne  
Email: Xxx@xx.xx  
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Milne
RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

Study title: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

My name is Jeffrey Milne, and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master’s Degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Brigitte Harris, Director, School of Leadership Studies: Xxx@xx.xx or XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Purpose of the study and sponsoring organization

The purpose of my research project will be to identify the change goals needed and the steps necessary for the organization to complete these goals. Specifically, the goals of this inquiry are to:

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- determine which environmental constraints and/or changes are affecting the Education Team;
- ascertain the effects of these constraints and/or changes on the systems and processes; and
- determine what positive outcomes that arise from the inquiry might be implemented.

Your participation and how information will be collected

The research will be completed by using an Action Research methodology with an Appreciative Inquiry stance. This will be done using four types of inquiry methods to obtain the data needed to complete the research, and one follow-up method to share findings and inform recommendations.

An online survey will be sent to Education Team clients, with 12 questions provided in the invitation taking 10 minutes to complete. Current and former Education Team members and one retired senior consultant will be sent an invitation to participate in one-to-one interviews. There will be four questions asked, which will be included in the invitation, with each interview taking approximately 15 minutes. These will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis.

There will be two world cafés due to power over concerns. Approximately twenty-five consultants will be invited to the first world café, with the four questions being included in the invitation. Each department will have its own table for a comparative during the risk analysis. The second session will occur inviting the Risk Management Branch Executive, with the same four questions attached to their invitation. Each session will take approximately one hour and will be guided by a facilitator.

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Benefits and risks to participation
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Inquiry team
The inquiry team will consist of the author, four facilitators who have volunteered their time, a transcriptionist with no knowledge of the participants of the study, two scribes and the author’s family who will provide support for some administrative duties.

Real or Perceived Conflict of Interest
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Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period
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Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

Name: Jeffrey Milne
Email: Xxx@xx.xx
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
APPENDIX N: BOARDROOM C CAFÉ QUESTIONS (RMEX)

1. Please describe a time when you felt proud to be part of The Risk Management Branch. What was happening, who was there? What was your role in this event or activity?

2. What has The Risk Management Branch done, or could it do better, to advance the Lean Principle philosophy promoted by Government, of continuous improvement to build a better workplace, including the enhancement of customer service, saving time and building internal capacity? Describe how this also aligns with the risk management process and the indemnity approval process.

3. If you were to come back to The Risk Management Branch in three years' time, what would be different? If you had three wishes for what the Team would look like or be doing in three years' time, what would your wishes be?

4. In relation to its mandate and roles, how might The Risk Management Branch promote growth in the next five years?
## APPENDIX O: RISK REGISTER (SAMPLE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>RISK EVENT</th>
<th>RISK CAUSE</th>
<th>IMPACT/CONSEQUENCE</th>
<th>EXISTING MITIGATIONS</th>
<th>INITIAL RISK RATING</th>
<th>RISK RATING</th>
<th>ADEQUACY OF EXISTING MITIGATIONS</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL MITIGATIONS</th>
<th>DELIVERABLE</th>
<th>REQUIRED RESOURCES</th>
<th>TASK OWNER</th>
<th>DELIVERABLE</th>
<th>DEPENDENCIES/INTERRELATIONSHIPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 | 1.3       | Timely service delivery to citizens. | Invoice delivery to clients is slow and inaccurate. | - Legacy system is incompatible with data input requirements. | - Data entry practices inconsistent - Manual data checks | - Unmet client service quality performance - Increased A/R - Increased cost of recovery | Manual data checks - Training manual | L (4) | C (4-5) | SUM (4-5) | HIGH | Inadequate | Treat | Long term: - System replacement strategy | Confer with IT Director and budget shop to confirm process and criteria for business case. Re Training manual: Assign lead Re Staff assignment: Review workload breakdown and skills set.
| Sample |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**This prompt row can be hidden to provide more page space.**

**Objective of the risk assessment.**

- **Objective:**
- **RISK EVENT:**
- **RISK CAUSE:**
- **IMPACT/CONSEQUENCE:**
- **EXISTING MITIGATIONS:**
- **INITIAL RISK RATING:**
- **RISK RATING:**
- **ADEQUACY OF EXISTING MITIGATIONS:**
- **ACTION:**
- **ADDITIONAL MITIGATIONS:**
- **DELIVERABLE:**
- **REQUIRED RESOURCES:**
- **TASK OWNER:**
- **DELIVERABLE:**
- **DEPENDENCIES/INTERRELATIONSHIPS:**

**Additional Information:**

- **What planning objective does this event affect.**
- **What is it that you are working to avoid or reduce the likelihood or impact of occurring? Risks are future events that could interfere with achievement of objectives.**
- **What are the triggers, sources or circumstances that could act alone or together to increase the likelihood of the Risk Event occurring? There are usually multiple causes leading to a Risk Event.**
- **If this Risk Event did occur, how would it impact objectives? What are the longer-term or cumulative consequences?**
- **What are you doing now to reduce the likelihood or impact of the event?**
- **What is the triggers, sources or circumstances that could act alone or together to increase the likelihood of the Risk Event occurring? There are usually multiple causes leading to a Risk Event.**
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**Risk Event Evaluation:**

- **How likely?**
- **How severe?**
- **Non-existent, Inadequate, Adequate, Robust, Excessive**
- **Will you treat, monitor, transfer or avoid the risk?**
- **What else are you going to do to better manage the risk?**
- **What form will this mitigation take e.g. a project plan, a report, Treasury Board submission, other?**
- **What is needed to develop and implement the mitigation?**
- **Who will take the lead on this mitigation?**
- **When is the deliverable to be ready?**

**Dependencies/Interrelationships:**

- Does the event or mitigation rely on another team or organization? Does it impact another group?

**Deliverables:**

- System shared with MFAS.
APPENDIX P: RISK REGISTER INVITATION

Dear Prospective Participant,

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that Jeffrey Milne is conducting. This project is part of the requirement for his Master’s Degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University.

The objective of Jeff’s project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant in the risk assessment because of your role or former role in the Risk Management Branch within the Ministry of Finance.

Please find enclosed Jeff’s Invitation, Research Information Letter and Research Consent Form for your consideration. The risk assessment is voluntary and your anonymity will be protected. The risk assessment will be held on Monday May 25, 2015 at XXX, 3rd Floor at 9 am in Boardroom 321 and is scheduled for 3 hours. Due to the recently implemented security requirements within the 3rd floor where the risk assessment will be held, Jeffrey Milne will be required to meet any participants from outside of the Risk Management Branch at the entry door as well as escort them out. This will affect your anonymity as a participant should you chose to attend; however, any information provided during the risk assessment will still be de-identified and will continue to remain anonymous to the researcher.

Any questions with respect to the research should be directed to Jeffrey Milne whose contact information is within the attached Invitation. Anyone who agrees to participate will need to attend in person.

Thank you

xxx, Facilitator
RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

Study title: How might the Education Team support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement?

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Benefits and risks to participation

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The Risk Management Branch is known to be a learning environment. Each individual will benefit from their participation by getting a clearer understanding of the mandate and roles of the Education Team and Branch. By participating in each or all of the models discussed, each participant will have a greater understanding of community and the benefits of community learning. Because the author works within the Education Team, he will be excluded from the interviews, branch world café and the risk assessment due to direct and perceived power over concerns or potential bias or influence.

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Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period

The author will work to protect your privacy throughout this study. All information collected will be maintained in confidence with hard copies (e.g., consent forms) stored by a third party or the researcher (where appropriate) in a locked filing cabinet. Electronic data (such as transcripts or audio files) will be stored on a password protected computer or memory stick. Information will be recorded in hand-written format and audio recorded and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific
comments be attributed to any individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential.

Based on Royal Roads University requirements, the author (or the third party where appropriate) will keep all research information pertaining to this study for one year past convocation in June 2016. After this point all raw data will be destroyed in accordance with the Risk Management Branch’s document destruction policy. All digital data will be deleted.

Since some participant information cannot be withdrawn from a group session, informed consent forms will outline this fact. Due to the nature of the group method, it is not possible to keep identities of participants anonymous from the facilitator or other participants. Participants are asked to respect the confidential nature of the research by not sharing names or identifying comments outside of the group. Accordingly, participation is voluntary.

Survey data will be collected anonymously using Fluid Surveys, a Canadian online survey tool, and no information will be stored outside of Canada.

Sharing results
In addition to submitting a final report to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the researcher will also be sharing research findings with the Executive Director and Sponsor of this study, the Education Team Director and other such persons who can learn from this information. This will be done at a make-it-happen session where the research will answer any questions and share findings. Comments and questions will be recorded to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research.

Procedure for withdrawing from the study
All participation is voluntary, and participants may withdraw from participation at any time. Once the online survey has begun, participants may withdraw at any time, however any submitted information cannot be withdrawn from the data set. Participants in the interview may choose to withdraw their information from the study up until it has been transcribed and de-identified. Participants in the world cafés and risk assessment may withdraw at any time, but their comments spoken prior to their withdrawal will remain as anonymous data in the inquiry data set.

You are not required to participate in this research project. By replying directly to the email request for participation, beginning the online survey or signing the in-person consent form you indicate that you have read and understand the information above and give your free and informed consent to participate in this project.

Please note that MA-Leadership theses are published through deposit with the Library and Archives Canada, through the Thesis Canada Portal, and the ProQuest/UMI database.

Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

Name: Jeffrey Milne
Email: Xxx@xx.xx Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX
APPENDIX Q: RISK ASSESSMENT CONSENT FORM

By signing this form, you agree that you are over the age of 19 and have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

☐ I commit to respect the confidential nature of the Risk Assessment by not sharing identifying information about the other participants.

Name: (Please Print): __________________________________________________

Signed: _____________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________
Dear Risk Management Branch Member,

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that I am conducting. This project is part of the requirement for my Master’s Degree in Leadership, at Royal Roads University.

The objective of my research project is to determine how the Education Team can support the Risk Management Branch’s mandate for continuous improvement? Data has been collected in a variety of methods, and I am ready to share my findings through a “make-it-happen” café that is estimated to last up to one hour. During the session, questions will be answered about the findings. Comments and questions will be audio recorded and scribed to help inform which findings should be implemented by the branch and will help inform the recommendation section of this research. The café will occur on August 21st at 1:30 PM in Boardroom N303 at XXX, Victoria BC. Any out of office participants will have to be let in by Jeff Milne due to branch security.

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because of your role in the Risk Management Branch.

The attached letter contains further information about the study conduct and will enable you to make a fully informed decision on whether or not you wish to participate. Please review this information before responding. I would like to make all participants aware that there may be potential for future branch publications arising from this study.

I realize that due to our collegial relationship, you may feel compelled to participate in this research project. Please be aware that you are not required to participate and, should you choose to participate, your participation would be entirely voluntary. If you do choose to participate, it will be too difficult to remove your responses as they will become part of an anonymous set of data. If you do not wish to participate, simply do not reply to this request. Your decision to not participate will also be maintained in confidence. Your choice will not affect our relationship or your employment status in any way.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have additional questions regarding the project and its outcomes.

If you would like to participate in my research project, please contact me directly as I will be facilitating this make-it-happen session:

Name: Jeffrey Milne  
Email: Xxx@xx.xx  
Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX

Sincerely,  
Jeffrey Milne
APPENDIX S: MAKE-IT-HAPPEN CAFÉ CONSENT FORM

By signing this form, you agree that you are over the age of 19 and have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

☐ I commit to respect the confidential nature of the Make-It-Happen Café by not sharing identifying information about the other participants.

☐ I consent to the audio recording of the Make-It-Happen Café.

Name: (Please Print): ________________________________________________________________

Signed: __________________________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________________________________________________
### APPENDIX T: RISK REGISTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RISK EVENT</th>
<th>RISK CAUSE</th>
<th>IMPACT/CONSEQUENCE</th>
<th>EXISTING MITIGATIONS</th>
<th>INITIAL RISK RATING</th>
<th>EVALUATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If this Risk Event did occur, how would it impact objectives? What are the longer-term or cumulative consequences?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is it that you are working to avoid or reduce the likelihood or impact of occurring? Risks are future events that could interfere with achievement of objectives.</td>
<td>What are the triggers, sources or circumstances that could act alone or together to increase the likelihood of the Risk Event occurring? There are usually multiple causes leading to a Risk Event.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Resources - needing to self preserve in order to manage workloads</td>
<td>- not developing client potential</td>
<td>- blanket agreements with contractors who can provide services across client groups</td>
<td>5 3</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Marketing and outreach efforts drive increase in workload as clients are reminded of their obligations</td>
<td>- providing inaccurate advice</td>
<td>- increased education to clients (conference, website, publications etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Staff that are not fully trained</td>
<td>- timeliness, quality</td>
<td>- developing individual client contacts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pending new hires</td>
<td>- client confidence</td>
<td>- effort at branch level to share information (have been slipping because of availability e.g. roundtable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Backlog of work</td>
<td>- staff burnout, low engagement</td>
<td>- orientation plan for different teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ability to pass effectively</td>
<td>- can not run a continuous marathon</td>
<td>- bi-weekly meetings and 1 on 1s to discuss workload, how things are going</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ability to provide the same level of service for all clients</td>
<td>- increase in claims</td>
<td>- train new staff to efficiently provide service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Staff in work now 60% universities, 40% school districts</td>
<td>- set poor precedence, hard to push back if you've provided advice previously</td>
<td>- train clients to partner in the process, so service can be streamlined</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Good client service leads to more work (reviewing all contracts)</td>
<td>- lose confidence</td>
<td>- having the right people</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Inability to travel</td>
<td>- not sending others</td>
<td>- can we work more strategically to assign the work in a way that responds to client needs at the right level i.e. basic services to more complex)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- if we don't get in early, missed opportunity externally to share information that we gather through relationships with clients</td>
<td>- ability to learn any of our internal processes i.e. publications are a big task, formatting, approvals, logistics, writing articles etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Create expectations for service that we can meet.</td>
<td>- Mobile work environment</td>
<td>- see above</td>
<td>- providing information downloaded to new employees in mobile work environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Information being easily accessible and knowing how to find information</td>
<td>- ability to do interesting work and try new things</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Government is a complex environment to be an employee in (TOL, CAS, iExpense, etc.)</td>
<td>- succession planning (not developing others to take our place)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Internal branch systems</td>
<td>- staff engagement (WES results will be coming soon)</td>
<td>- personal support to new staff is very helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- iVOS practices are inconsistent across the branch</td>
<td>- increased in professional development</td>
<td>- knowledge sharing lunch and learn (have talked about doing more of these)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Experienced staff spending more time with new staff to partner on client files</td>
<td>- see above</td>
<td>- risk notes on website and physical library</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### ACTION
- Risk transfer, monitoring, avoidance, reduction.
- What are you going to do to better manage the risk?

### ADDITIONAL MITIGATIONS
- Sharing knowledge or examples of great work at lunch and learn.
- Contract round table
- Contract check list shared with all staff
- Share risk notes with all staff
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RISK EVENT</th>
<th>RISK CAUSE</th>
<th>IMPACT/CONSEQUENCE</th>
<th>EXISTING MITIGATIONS</th>
<th>L (1-5)</th>
<th>C (1-5)</th>
<th>SUM</th>
<th>RISK RATING</th>
<th>ADEQUACY OF ACTION</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL MITIGATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Ability to experience and gather expertise in person and at conferences, meetings etc. | - inability to travel  
- time to travel or attend professional development opportunities  
- no money  
- asked to embrace technology | - difficult to build relationships over the telephone or video conferencing  
- clients are attending a lot of sessions that we can’t go to. They are moving ahead without us  
- reduction in the ability to network in the industry and with clients  
- reduction in access to information  
- reduction in ability to gauge where you are in relation to others in the industry  
- impact on staff engagement, expertise, etc. they don’t even want to ask to go to conferences any more | - bringing in experts to speak, present to the branch (e.g. Jan Mattingly)  
- more webinars and sharing them with the branch  
- get clients to pay for travel to these  
- narrated PowerPoints for introduction to programs - working out glitches | 5 | 4 | | High | - figure out how to deliver webinars in an effective way that follows privacy policy  
- alternate ways of relating to clients, industry, sessions using technology  
- explore if there are other miniatures that are able to present using technology |
| - Recognizing that the changing workforce will be looking to RMB to provide support and advice | - ability to reinvent the way service is provided  
- embed skills in different places  
- New people coming in - new ideas, innovations, experiences etc  
- explore techniques being used across government. Are other ministries doing things new and innovative (similar constraints, similar tools)  
- being creative - Privacy Commissioner training | | | | | | |
| OPPORTUNITIES | - building capacity within client groups | - identify new groups to target useful information to  
- leverage ADM committees to share information  
- provide training through Learning Centre curriculum  
- Be ready for opportunity to present to Ministry Executive to redefine the mandate of the branch - i.e. DM change  
- opportunity to do things differently?  
- identify personal interests of staff and enable them to pursue areas of interest (are they really good at) | | | | | | |