Doctor of Business Administration

GETTING FROM MANAGERIAL FRAMING TO EMPLOYEE ACTION IN STRATEGIC CHANGE

A CASE STUDY OF A SALES AUTOMATION and TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

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Contents

ABSTRACT

In contemporary organisations the evolution of technology and increased competition has accentuated the need for strategic imperatives to ensure that the traditional sales organisation is transformed from tactical management of sales transactions to the strategic management of complex strategic customer portfolios and customer relationship for a company's long-term growth (Olson *et al*., 2001; Piercy and Lane, 2005). How management can ensure a successful shift from the conventional sales philosophy to the strategic one is a challenge in many sales organisations.

In this case study of a sales organisation in a multinational company, an examination is undertaken of a strategic transformation that involves a new sales philosophy and the associated sales force automation (SFA) system. Such transformation calls for the sales organisation to shift from tactical and transactional-based selling approach to strategic value creation-based practices. The transition is necessarily supported by SFA system implementation, to which the adoption is invariably hampered by an alarming rate of failures (Bush *et al.,* 2005). So what can be done to ensure a successful shift from the current sales philosophy to the new one supported by the new SFA system? How can management purposely shape the interpretations of the organisation's environment in order that employees understand and 'enact' strategic change (Daft and Weick, 1984; Reger *et al*., 1994)?

In order to explore these questions, a social interactionist (Goffman, 1974) methodological approach is taken to examine the meanings inherent in individual and collective interactions and negotiations. The concept of framing is utilised as an analytical lens to understand strategic changes (Kaplan, 2008) occurring within the case study. Whilst framing as a conceptual bridge linking social psychological and resource mobilization has been researched in social movement participation (Snow et al., 1986; Benford, 1993; Benford and Snow,2000; Reber and Berger, 2005), little progress has been made using such micro-level analysis in understanding mobilizing strategic change

in sales organisation in a theoretically informed and empirically grounded fashion. The overarching aims of this study are therefore to provide a deeper understanding of how management frame such strategic changes in sales philosophy and how the resulting frames are accepted or otherwise in a sales workforce automation and transformation programme.

Applying a framing concept to the analysis of strategic change within the organisation enables us to move away from viewing organisation as a static entity or a fixed structure (Putnam and Nicotera, 2009) and get into the minds of management and employees to understand the internal struggles that are taking place. Most importantly, in this study, as compared to previous works using framing theory to interpret strategic decision making (Kaplan, 2008), this research goes beyond analyzing individual framing practices of key organisational decision makers (senior management) to study how cognitive frames can shape strategic objectives by framing messages to other organisational actors (sales employees) who are required to adopt the intended strategic change. By analysing both managerial framing practice and employee frame alignment as well as the degree of collective action mobilization (Klandermans, 1984), it offers a complete picture of how strategically inclined managers try to change the organisation status quo and how they employ various managerial framing practices to gain support for transformational change of sales philosophy. At the same time, it provides an account of how employees respond to strategic frame alignment process, such that they either accept the frames and take collective action accordingly or partially accept them and take deferred action or passively participate.

The primary contributions of this study to framing theory are: first of all, it advances Kaplan's (2008) original framing contest theory by demonstrating collective action frames are not static characterizations but can be changed or redefined with purposeful managerial framing and reframing. The framing outcome been focused in this research is employee's collective action which is a step further from meaning construction in strategic decision making as in Kaplan's (2008) research. Secondly, while Kaplan (2008)

demonstrated how different organization actors attempt to make their frame resonate and mobilize action in their favour, this research focuses on the interplay between management and employees who have unequal access to organization resources due to organization hierarchy. It shows that despite of the differences, employees are not mere recipient of managerial framing whose only role is to respond (or not) to the framed meanings. Instead, their subsequent reactions to managerial framing shape collective action frame and the resulted action. Finally, it confirms the distinction between consensus mobilization and action mobilization (Klandermans, 1984) which separates management's focus of convincing and activating, and shows how resonance of legitimacy and motivation frames are both necessary conditions for employee action mobilization.

This research also contributes to strategic change studies by showing what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in sales organisations with a theoretical framework that demonstrates how managerial frames are introduced, contested and aligned or partially aligned and the resulting employee participation level. Such a theoretical framework is both empirically informed and practically useful for strategic change practitioners as it delineates factors that determine effectiveness of management's framing efforts in mobilizing employees for action thus help them to evaluate and predict the effectiveness of managerial framing effort and possible outcomes. Finally, this research contributes to sales technology literature by providing a better understanding of how technological frames affect SFA adoption by sales workforce and how management can strategically frame SFA and its value to achieve desired results.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

THE CHALLENGE OF STRATEGIC CHANGE IN SALES ORGANIZATION

In recent years, the evolution of technology and increased competition have accentuated the strategic imperative for the traditional sales organisations to transform from tactical management of sales transactions to strategic management of customer relationship for a company's long-term growth by working across functions to deliver value to customers (Olson *et al.*, 2001; Piercy and Lane, 2007). This emergence of a more strategic sales organisation presents multiple challenges for management, not least to consider how management can frame these strategic changes so that sales employees accept such transformation.

In this case study of a sales organisation in a multinational telecommunications company, an examination is undertaken of strategic change of a new sales approach and the associated technological change. At the time of the study, the company had just completed a major separation and divesture transaction globally which significantly reduced its size to one third of its original portfolio. As a result, the company has a new name, a renewed focus and also hopes to build a new set of strategies. As part of this process of rebuilding and refocusing, the company launched a series of transformation programmes across almost of their functional areas. The Sales Transformation programme was introduced to transform the sales organisation from the traditional product-oriented selling to strategic solution-oriented selling. In addition, a Sales Force Automation (SFA) system was also introduced to replace the traditional ad-hoc manual process of customer relationship management.

The two changes directed by management present tremendous challenges to the organisation and its members during a difficult time of post divesture. At the macro level, as the new company attempts to position itself for survival and growth in the market, the organisational template is rewritten by new vision, identity and structure. New institutional logics needed to be formulated and existing core activities be

replaced. At the individual level, as employees try to make sense of all these changes, they also have to cope with their own fear of uncertainty and reposition themselves for survival and growth within the organisation. For sales employees to accept the transformational changes, they first have to make sense of what the change is all about, they also have to 'buy-in' with such changes and finally they would have to take actions accordingly. Therefore, what becomes critical and challenging is how management try to affect a change in their sales philosophy and overcome the associated internal struggles, as sales employees attempt to adopt a more 'customer solution' oriented selling approach and the supporting Sales Force Automation (SFA) system. Management in this research, thus is defined as anyone in the organization who has the responsibility of setting strategic decisions on the sales transformation, communicating within the organization and ultimately accountable for its success or failure.

WHAT CONSITUTES EFFECTIVE MANAGERIAL FRAMING PRACTICE TO ENABLE STRATEGIC CHANGE?

Organisational researchers have identified that strategic framing enables management to shape the cognitive templates organization actors use to interpret what is going on in the organisation (Bartunek, 1993) and affect subsequent strategic choices as their company goes through transformational changes (Barr 1998; Barr *et al*. 1992; Kaplan, 2008). How employees understand and 'enact' strategic change (Daft and Weick, 1984; Reger *et al*., 1994) has also been explored. However, little research has been undertaken on either the managerial framing processes involved in promoting cognitive understanding and motivation or on the frames that employees utilise in their acceptance or otherwise of strategic actions and resulting changes undertaken. This study fills this gap by utilising framing theory, a construct that originated from an examination of social movement organisations (Benford and Snow, 2000), in order to analyse how strategic change is enacted within a particular organisation during a strategic transformation. Social movement and organization strategic change, these two seemingly unrelated domains, actually share much in common. In both cases a few

individuals or groups envisioned the need for some sort of institutional change to address a problem or opportunity and then initiated movement actions accordingly. Both social movement participants and organisational actors need to engage in framing activities in an attempt to mobilize significant others around the common goal. Therefore, framing theory serves as an appropriate lens for interpreting strategic change activities in organizations.

The researcher's participation in this transformation programme is twofold: as an IT director enabling the technology element of the transformation of a U.S. based telecommunication company where the case study is conducted and as a researcher of this study between 2011 – 2014, during which compilation and analysis of corporate documents, interviews with sales executives and sales employees was conducted in 2012 and a survey of 57 sales employees was undertaken in 2013. Thus practical involvement in the programme led to theoretical insights about the nature of collective action frames (Benford and Snow, 2000) and managerial framing effectiveness in strategic change.

The focus of this research is to supplement previous studies on strategic framing with the following theoretical contributions. First of all, it provides a theoretical framework that demonstrates how managerial frames are introduced, contested and aligned or partially aligned and the resulted employee participation level. In addition, it delineates factors that determine effectiveness of management's framing efforts in mobilizing employees for action. These theoretical contributions to framing theory also lead to several important practical implications: firstly, to produce an analysis of how management use strategic framing to legitimize change for ; secondly, to show how management motivate sales employees to enact on strategic changes through strategic frame alignment and collective action framing (Snow and Benford, 2000) process that inspire employees to take action. Finally, to produce a theoretical framework to enable the evaluation and prediction of the effectiveness of the managerial framing effort and possible outcome, thus serving as a useful tool for strategic change practitioners.

The rest of this document comprises the following sections:

- A critical literature review consisting of a summary of current theories on framing and strategic change and providing a rationale on why framing is a relevant lens for analyzing strategic change. The review concludes with a proposed initial theoretical model which the rest of the study is built upon.

- The methodology section starts with a detailed description of the case and why this particular case is being chosen for the study. It also outlines the research philosophy as well as setting out the researcher's position in terms of using a mixed research approach with both interpretive and realist method, the justification of this approach as well as assumptions and limitations.

- The findings section summarizes the findings from the interpretive and realist approaches and how they answer the research questions respectively, at the same time how additional questions come up as part of this process which lead to the final analysis. By putting the findings and analysis of both studies, the research questions are addressed which in turn enhance the original proposed theoretical model and thus provide a complete picture of the study.

- The document is concluded with a summary of theoretical contribution on framing and strategic change and to sales transformation literature concluded with a reflection on the implications for change practitioners. Finally, it points to potential future research areas that could further deepen and strengthen the understanding of managerial framing practices for sales workforces to enact strategic changes.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In addressing 'what constitutes effective managerial framing to enable strategic change in a sales organization', a vital element of this step is to gauge how management could purposively shape the interpretations of the organisational environment so that employees understand and 'enact' strategic change (Daft and Weick, 1984; Reger et al., 1994). Such 'schemata of interpretation' (Goffman, 1974, p.21) are often referred to as frames.

Although a theoretically rich and useful concept, there seems to be a lack of consistency in how 'frame' is defined, it is even more confusing when coupled with its associated verb, 'framing'. And the level at which they are discussed can also be unclear. The meaning of framing has been characterized as a 'fractured' paradigm (Entman, 1993) that lacks clear conceptual definitions and a comprehensive statement to guide research. In order to use framing as a construct in this research and answer the research question of 'what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organisation', careful explication is given in the literature review section, including the definition of the construct, historical perspectives and how they are connected with strategic change enablement. This will provide more clarity and depth to the specific contributions of this research further into the study. The research context is strategic change in sales organization which refers to sales function within a particular organization. As compared to other functions within an organization, sales team usually plays a unique revenue generating role with incentive driven compensation, and maintains a loose reporting relationship with their supervisors. It is important to understand these unique challenges of sales organization and the subsequent impact to the transformation of sales organization as well as to the sales

employees. The chapter is concluded with the research questions and preliminary model which will be further build upon.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE TERM 'FRAME' AND 'FRAMING'?

What do we mean by the term 'frame'? Frames can be viewed as 'schemata of interpretation' that enable individuals 'to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large' (Goffman, 1974, p.21). It is also useful to think of frames as templates that individuals use for understanding and interpreting what is happening around them by biasing the cognitive processing of information (Weick, 1995). Frames can be applied to anything, in fact, we can hardly look at anything without applying frames and forming assumptions as to 'what occurred before and expectations as to what is likely to happen now' (Goffman, 1974, p. 38). So where does frame come from? A frame is abstracted from one's prior life experience, cultural background, professional role in the organisation etc. which form one's frames repertoires. Once activated, a frame can guide the perception of cues and stimuli of what is happening in real time (Gavetti and Levinthal, 2000; Louis and Sutton, 1991). Therefore, frames repertoires function as 'tool kits' (Kaplan, 2008) for organization actors to construct cognitive frames that inform them 'what is or is not important by grouping certain symbolic elements together and keeping others out' (Williams and Benford 1996, p.3). Such meaningful understandings thereby guide actions accordingly.

Using 'frame' as a verb, to frame, is to 'select from communicating text and make them more prominent such that a particular problem definition, interpretation, evaluation and/or solution is recommended' (Entman, 1993, p.52). Therefore, framing is an active process of meaning interpretation and construction (Snow *et al.,* 1986, Snow and Benford, 1988) so that some aspects of perceived reality become more salient and a particular version of reality is been promoted (Entman, 1993). In the process of doing so, individuals either reinforce their existing interpretive frames or take new frames into the situation (Cornelissen and Werner, 2014) and form a different interpretation of the environment.

Originating from social movement and institution research, the notion of framing has drawn a lot of attention from academics and practitioners. It has been used as the primary empirical base for understanding the social psychological aspect of social movement (Benford and Snow 2000, Snow *et al*. 1986). Since the concept was extended to research in management and organisation theory, it has been used extensively in understanding managerial cognition and to interpret the cognitive processes by which organisation members understand and 'enact' their organisational environment (Daft and Weick, 1984; Reger *et al*., 1994). It has also been used frequently in strategic decision-making studies as the theoretical lens to understand why and how strategic decisions are made and how actions are undertaken (Davis *et al*., 1997; Highouse *et al*, 1996; Nutt, 1998; Kaplan, 2008). Some studies have also taken on a 'linguistic turn' (Alvesson and Karreman, 2000) to analyse the skilled use of language and rhetoric to advance the appeal and relevance of the proposed organisational frame to organization members (Chreim,2006; Vicari, 2010; Hsu *et al.*, 2014) which also give additional insights on this subject.

Although organisation theory and social movement theory seem to belong to different worlds, increasingly, institutional and organisational theorists are using social movement theories to explain the dynamics in organisations (Davis *et al*. 2005). In fact, organisations, in their modern configuration, are becoming more volatile, unpredictable and are behaving more like movements. This might explained why much of the research that brought framing concepts from social movement research to organisation studies focused on contestation (Kaplan, 2008) and organisational change (e.g. Chreim, 2006; Kennedy and Fiss, 2009). Although collective action in social movement is more irrational, spontaneous, emotional, and emergent (Blumer 1957; Smelser 1963); whereas, the pursuit of collective goals within the organization is more rational and purposive. By drawing framing concepts from social movement theories to organization studies, scholars are able to have a better understanding of the purposeful and strategic nature of transformational organisational change and the type of framing tactics

employed by change proponents to draw others into collective action (Benford and Snow, 2000) in order to achieve framing outcomes. It is the intention of this research to further the discussion in this area by looking at how managerial framing tasks achieve the intended strategic change in a sales transformation program.

At an organisational level, frames allow organisational actors to interpret organisation activities. For example, when organisations go through strategic changes, frames can be used as lenses for organisational actors to notice and interpret what's going on, decide and act in response to the strategic changes (Daft and Weick, 1984; Gioia, 1986). Gamson (1992) pointed out that frames are multiple and sometimes can be contradictory or oppositional among different actors that have unequal material and symbolic resources.

The table below provides a summary of different types of frames that individuals may draw upon in dealing with strategic change and how they are used by organisational actors like managers and employees to attribute meaning to the information presented to them. How these interpretations are translated into decisions and subsequent action will be discussed later in the case study.

Types of Frames	Definition	References
Strategic Frame	A jointly constructed cognitive representation of firms in an industry, including assumptions of capabilities and bases of competition	Nadkarni and Narayanan (2007), Gilbert (2006), and Kaplan (2008)
Cognitive Frame	An organized knowledge structure that direct and guide information process and for individuals to interact with their environment	Benner and Tripsas (2012), Weick (1995)
Technological Frame	A subset of cognitive frame consist of assumptions, knowledge and expectations regarding a technology and its uses and consequences of its application	Orlikowski and Gash (1994), Davidson (2002), and Kaplan and Tripsas (2008)
Collective Action Frame	An action oriented action-oriented sets of beliefs and meaning that inspire,	Benford and Snow (2000), Polletta and Ho

Table 1: Types of frames in organisations (Adapted from Cornelissen and Werner, 2014, p.185)

Strategic frames concern organisational strategic decision-making. Strategic decisions

are framed by stakeholders who call attention to seemingly important developments by

making a claim (Witte 1972; Ansoff, 1984) or initiate a strategic decision making effort

when these claims seem 'actionable' (Bryson *et al.* 1995) in the minds of frame makers.

Strategic frames have significant consequences for organisations as they determine how

managers notice and interpret change and translate those perspectives into strategic

choices (Daft and Weick 1984). Therefore, strategic frames 'bind organisations to a set

of capabilities and a course of action' (Benner and Tripsas, 2012 p. 197) but at the same

time they can also limit the number of alternative options. It has been well researched

that managers' frames shape interpretations of the environment in which company

operates and subsequent strategic choices when organization goes through a turbulent

time (Barr 1998, Barr *et al*. 1992, Tripsas and Gavetti 2000).

Cognitive Frames shape how individual actors see the world and how they perceive

their own interests (Kaplan, 2008). Individuals use cognitive frames as part of their

thinking and reasoning process by drawing upon their past experience in their memory

bank which enables them to 'comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate'

(Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p. 51) the current situation, and to make predictions about

the future consequences of their actions (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988). In that sense,

frames have past, present and future elements.

Technological frames concern the assumptions, expectations, knowledge and

experience organisation members use to understand technology in organisations. This

includes 'not only the nature and role of the technology itself, but the specific

conditions, applications, and consequences of that technology in particular contexts'

(Orlikowski and Gash, 1994, P178). Technological frames are deeply influenced by

organisational members' prior experience of similar technology and they also shape

how people categorize one type of technology relative to others they have experienced before. When introducing a new technology such as an ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), HRM (Human Resource Management) or a SFA (Salesforce Automation) system to organisations, the magnitude of the technology changes and how long it takes to implement are also important elements of technological frames. In addition, technological frames can also be subject to the perceived cost benefit of the implementation. This cost does not just refer to the cost of implementation by the company, rather, employees are more concerned with how much time and effort they would personally have to put in to realize the potential benefits for themselves. In summary, technological frames guide how employees interpret what a technology is, how useful it is to them and subsequently whether it is worth the effort to learn or use the technology. Many studies have used the concept of technological frames to analyse technology diffusion (Jones *et al.*, 2002; Lin and Silva, 2005), implementation and adaptation by targeted employees (Bondarouk *et al.* 2009; Chreim, 2006). In this study, the introduction of a new Salesforce Automation System (SFA) as an enabler of company's strategic change will be closely examined to understand how management use the technological frame as part of the overall managerial framing and the effectiveness of such framing for sales employees.

Collective action frames can be defined as 'emergent action-oriented sets of beliefs and meaning that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns' (Snow and Benford, 1998, p. 416). Collective action, therefore, can be seen as 'purposive orientation constructed by means of social relationship within a system of opportunities and constraints' (Melucci, 1995, p 43). Interestingly, collective action may be most evident when organisations go through a period of transformation (Fligstein, 1996) during which organisational actors try to shape the direction of change through constructing legitimating accounts (Creed *et al.* 2002).

If frames are constructed based on past experience, then can a frame change? If not, how can people shift (or have shifted) their thinking and draw different conclusions

based on the same information? If we go back to the interpretive, discursive and context specific nature of frames, we can easily understand how frames can emerge from and be transformed by 'communicative action' among individuals as they attach 'subjective meanings' (Heracleous and Barrett, 2001, p 758) to the situations and subsequently orient their actions. Management and organisational research has addressed this interactive nature of frame by looking into ways in which individuals may overcome the struggle of shifting away from their prior cognitive frames (Benner and Tripsas, 2012) and construct new cognitive frames by engaging in 'framing' and 'reframing' (Goffman, 1974, p.308). Next, let us look at how these concepts apply in organization strategic change.

FRAMING AND REFRAMING: FROM SOCIAL MOVEMENT TO ORGANIZATION STRATEGIC CHANGE

Strategic change requires the organisation to change the current modes of understanding of its operating environment and adjust its action accordingly in order for organisation to take advantage of important opportunities or to avoid consequential threats (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991). This can involve either a redefinition of organisational mission and purpose or a substantial shift in overall priorities and goals to reflect new emphases or direction (Gioia *et al*. 1994). Such redefinition of organization forms involves movement-like transformation processes. Therefore, framing construct from social movement theory can be applied towards understanding the emergence and transformation process of organizations as contested forms of collective action.

Frame Alignment: A Necessary Condition for Strategic Change

Given the substantive nature of strategic change and the impact to the organisation, company leadership would often be setting out the strategies which reflect their values and thinking. But strategic changes are not meant to stay on documents or PowerPoint slides. In order to gear the organisation toward a new direction, management needs to mobilize the rest of organisation members toward that direction by taking appropriate

action.

However, for employees to take collective action, they first need to use their individual frames to understand what the strategic changes are all about. They can then attempt to, either proactively or reactively, align their individual frames to managerial frames. This process is referred as 'frame alignment', in which individual frames resonate with others (Snow and Benford 1988). The objective of the management, therefore, is to generate as much frame resonance as possible from the divergence of organisation members' frames. Frame alignment was initially conceptualized in social movement studies as the strategic efforts by social movement organisations to link their interests and interpretive frames with those of prospective constituents (Snow *et al*, 1986). Similarly, in organisational change, frame alignment between management and employees is a necessary condition for employee participation. However, frame alignment is particularly challenging for organisation members when an organisation experiences changes and as individuals face uncertainties as part of the change process (Kaplan 2008). Metaphorically, if we see the organisation as a ship with senior executives being the captain and officers and employees being the sailors. When the ship experiences a tidal wave, trying to ask the sailors (employees) to align their frames with that of the captain and her/his officer's (manager's) would be a challenging task. So what can management do to achieve collective action frame alignment?

Collective Action Frame Alignment – How to achieve it?
Goffman (1974) pointed out that framing is a joint activity of meaning construction through individual and collective interactions and negotiations. Therefore, managerial framing is successful when employees construct a shared interpretive scheme that align with the intended outcomes of the managers. Frame alignment occurs when the implicit frame that is present in a manager's message with a specific content, becomes congruent with the interpretive frames that guide and ground employees' interpretations of managerial frames (Fiss and Zajac, 2006; Sonenshein, 2006, 2010).

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However, managerial frames are not always taken by organisational members as they do not simply adopt what is handed to them (Weick 1995). Unfortunately, studies often treat frame receivers as playing a passive role of merely responding to manager's messages and their purposefully framed meanings (Bavelas *et al.*, 2000) and often neglect organisational members as active agents shaping the meaning, the course of action and the ultimate outcome of strategic change. In a study of the change of technologies used by employees and the introduction of a sales culture at two Canadian federal banks, Chreim (2006) proposed that the term 'frame alignment' can be complemented with the notion of 'frame (mis)appropriation' to provide a better understanding of how organisational change directed by management can be appropriated, edited and partially appropriated, or resisted altogether by employees. Whilst Chreim's (2006) analysis provides an accounts of how individual frames used by employees in responses to management-directed changes, it did not give enough focus on the dynamics of the interactions between managerial framing and individual framing and how collective action is mobilized as the result.

Core Framing Tasks: Diagnostic, Prognostic and Motivational
In the process of achieving collective action frame alignment, both managers and employees engage three core framing tasks (Snow and Benford, 1988) in their attempt for collective action. Diagnostic framing shapes the understanding of what the problem is, prognostic frames guide strategies and tactics of the solution, finally, motivational framing rationalizes actions, moving people from 'talking' to 'doing'. Diagnostic framing and prognostic framing facilitate agreement or 'consensus mobilization' whilst motivational framing fosters 'action mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984).

Frame alignment occurs where individual frames are linked in 'congruent and complementary' (Snow and Benford, 1988, p.464) and eventually become a collective frame that drives the agreement of the final resolution. Whilst agreement is essential for fostering action, it does not guarantee the mobilization of action and action is a key success factor for any type of strategic change. Without action, any change proposed by

management becomes pure rhetoric. There is a difference between simply identifying a problem and convincing someone that the problem is so serious that they must take action. Therefore, motivational framing provides the necessary rationale for turning prognosis into action. Benford (1993b) identifies four specific motivational frames or vocabularies of motive that emerged in the course of interaction among movement activists as they give meaning to their participation. The four vocabularies are socially constructed and defined by various actors throughout the micromobilization process, they are (1) frames regarding the **severity** of the problem, (2) frames about the **urgency** of the problem and the need for immediate correction, (3) frames pertaining to the likelihood of change or the **efficacy** of collective action and (4) frames concerning the necessity and **propriety** of taking action. The development of these vocabularies of motives is to emphasis certain aspect of the current situation, together with the other core tasks, management construct the discourse of the strategic change that not only provide organisation members with elements of understanding of change but also promote actions toward the change.

Surprisingly there has not been much research done in organisational studies looking at how these four motivational vocabularies been used in organisational or strategic change. It is the intention of this research to address this gap by assessing the effectiveness of these four vocabularies of motive (severity, urgency, efficacy, propriety) and the relative impact to employees' collective action mobilization.

WHAT DETERMINES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION FRAMES?

Since what differentiates collective action frames from other types of frame is its action-orientation (Snow and Benford, 1998), therefore, the effectiveness of collective action frames is measured not only by how well they are received but also by what collective actions people take eventually. The effectiveness of collective action frames largely depends on how well they 'resonate' with the frame receivers. Frame resonance has been highlighted as a major way in which collective action frames vary in terms of their

effectiveness (Snow *et al.,* 1986). The more a frame resonates to its audience, the more likely collective action frame will prevail. As such it is important for frame articulators to ensure an adequate level of frame resonance, but how might this be done? Two sets of interacting factors have been linked to the degree of frame resonance: credibility of the frame and its relative salience (Snow *et al.* 1986).

Credibility refers to the claims made consistent with each other. For example, are the frame articulator trustworthy, or is there empirical evidence that proves that a solution provided is appropriate to the issue? Three dimensions of salience have been further identified: centrality, experiential commensurability and narrative fidelity (Snow and Benford, 2000). Centrality has to do with 'how essential the beliefs, values, and ideas associated with the frames' (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.621) is to the lives of the target audience. Experiential commensurability refers to whether the target audience can relate the frames to their everyday life, or are the frames too abstract for them? Finally, narrative fidelity indicates to what degree the given frames are culturally resonant. The figure below summarizes these factors impacting the degree of resonance of collective action frame according to Snow and Benford (2000).
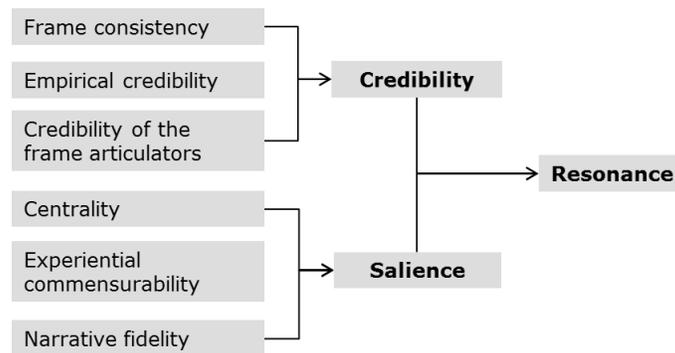
Figure 1: Factors Impacting Resonance of Collective Action Frame (Snow and Benford, 1996)

As the aim of this research is to examine what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organization, it is useful to specifically examine in the case study the extent to which the collective action frames actually

resonated with employees. When managerial frames do not resonate with employees' frame, what can management do to shape and shift their frames to ensure progress?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FRAMES DO NOT RESONATE?

Framing contest – When frames do not resonate

In her study of a research and development organisation at a multi-divisional corporation, Kaplan (2008) identified the 'framing contest' process of two technology strategy initiatives in response to the crash in the market for optical technologies – each involving difficult resource allocation decisions. She contends that framing in strategy making is highly contested and is tightly connected with the political pursuit of interests. A 'framing contest' process occurs as each party aims at neutralizing opposition and building their own collations that deeply influenced by their own interest. Kaplan's (2008) example suggests that although organisation members hold different frames, through purposefully shaping the frames so that they resonate widely by stakeholders, it is possible to affect interpretations of events among various audiences (Benford,1993; Benford and Snow 2000) and to mobilize the support for (or decrease resistance to) to a change. Therefore, more attention should be given to cognitive effects of frames which guide how people selectively gather, notice, analyse and interpret change and translate those perspectives into strategic choices (Daft and Weick 1984). Meanwhile, employees' frames are rooted in individual experiences consisting of employees' experience, education, functional background, their identification etc. So frame alignment do not happen easily. And when employees' frames fail to resonate with managerial frames, two things can happen. One is that they misinterpret what the changes really are, or they find ways to 'challenge, disrupt or invert prevailing assumptions, discourses and power relations' (Folger and Skarlicki 1999, p.36). So what can management do?

Strategic Frame alignment process

Kaplan's (2008) case study shows that for frame alignment to be possible, a certain set of assumptions have to come into play. First of all, organisational actors hold different

frames but change is possible. Secondly, management can purposefully shape the frames of employees in order to mobilize support for (or decrease the resistance to) an initiative. In order to do so, a choice from four frame alignment processes (Snow *et al*. 1986, p.467) can be deployed: *frame bridging,* involving the linking of two or more structurally unconnected frames; *frame amplification,* which exaggerates and clarifies existing values or beliefs, highlighting the most salient issues; *frame extension,* which extends organisation members' interests and frames beyond their primary meaning to include more important issues and *frame transformation,* which involves changing the old meaning of the situation by transforming the conceptual viewpoint and placing it in another frame which 'fits the facts of the same concrete situation equally well' (Watzalawick *et al*, 1974, p.95 in Chreim 2006, p.1264). The table below is a summary of a frame alignment process defined by Snow *et al.* (1986, p.467).

Process	Meaning
Bridging	Bridge ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames
Extension	Depicting an interest and extending beyond its primary interests to include more important issues
Amplification	Accenting or highlighting issues that are more salient
Transformation	Changing old understandings and meanings and/or generating new ones

Table 2: Summary of frame alignment processes (Snow et al. 1986, p.467)

Each of these processes will be further investigated to understand how they are leveraged by management as they attempt to align their managerial frames to that of employees and achieve intended framing outcome. The outcome of framing processes in a social movement context is to achieve 'movement goal attainment' (Benford and Snow, 2000). This concept can be theoretically borrowed into an organisational context, where it can be seen as achieving frame alignment between employees' frames and managerial frames thus establish resonance of collective action frames.

At this point, concepts and their definitions related to frames and framing have been presented. Figure 3, below, brings together, and shows the relationship between, the

concepts important in this thesis: core framing task, frame alignment process and framing outcome during strategic change. This fills one gap in the literature on framing theory, which has not so far directly conceptualized the relations between framing tasks and strategic frame alignment process. Such a relationship is further investigated and validated empirically in this case study how strategic frame alignment processes enact the core framing tasks.
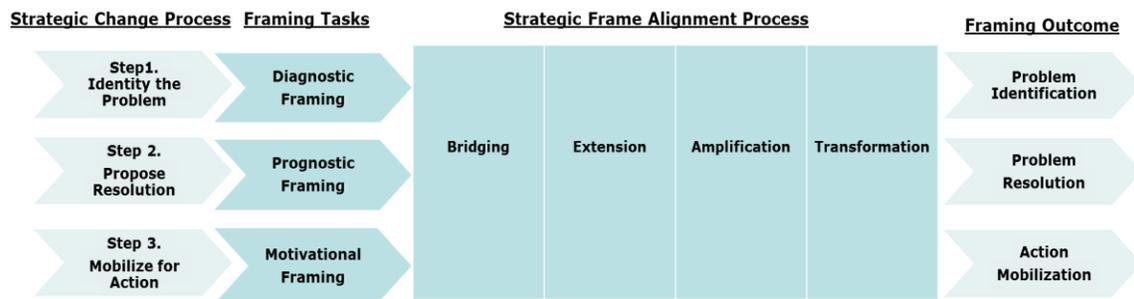
Figure 2: Relationship of core framing tasks, frame alignment process and framing outcome

So how does this concept relate to sales transformation? What are some challenges a sales organization might face which a strategic sales transformation attempts to address? Are the challenges considered process related issue or system issues or both?

SALES TRANSFORMATION - A PROCESS CHANGE OR SYSTEM CHANGE OR BOTH?

A sales function is comprised of an important task-based culture within the organisation which is linked to its customers (Futrell and Sager, 1982) and sales force strategies are increasingly vital to achieving the top priorities of business strategy (Webster *et al.*, 2005). Sales workforces also play a critical customer facing role in developing and sustaining relationships with the customers (Cannon and Perreault, 1999). Thus, sales transformation represents an important aspect of a company's strategic change plan, since a sales organisation's role is to translate the company's strategy to an everyday reality through adding value for customers. A number of studies have underlined the recent trend of sales transformation in the traditional sales organisation in response to key pressures from the marketplace (Piercy, 2003). In fact the change to a sales function

can be so disruptive that some would argue 'sales functions are in the early stages of a transformation comparable to that which reshaped manufacturing 20 years ago' (Mazur, 2000, p.31). So what are these evolutionary changes?

Evolutionary changes of a sales function's work orientation

Storbacka *et al.* (2009) summarize the evolutionary changes of sales function's work orientation as (1) from operational to strategic (2) from function to process and (3) from isolated to cross-functional. I further elaborate below the driving forces behind these changes and the implications in a business-to-business (B2B) environment which the company of this case study operates in:

1) *From operational to strategic*: First of all, technology has automated most part of business-to-business order taking and product knowledge acquisition which are two important value propositions of sales people traditionally. With order taking done by an internal operation's team or external distribution channel partners, and product knowledge obtained from a website, a sales function's main value proposition becomes creating and maintaining relationship with the customers. Moreover, as customers become more savvy and better-informed (McDonald *et al.*, 2000), the sales process is much less about selling a product and more about creating values for end users in a business-to-business environment. This places additional demands to sales function in terms of their responsibilities and skill sets required.

2) *From function to process*: Traditionally, the sales function is only responsible for enabling selling transactions. With their role transforming from operational to strategic, the selling process is now extended to pre-sales and post-sales. Sales are no longer an independent function, they are now an integrated part of a long-term, ongoing process of customer engagement and management. The boundary of this ongoing process keeps expanding such that the beginning and ending point are becoming increasingly blurry.

3) *From isolated to cross-functional*: As sales responsibility spans across different stages of customer engagement, sales departments are being transformed from an

isolated function with little cross-functional influence, to an integrated sales department with increasing connectivity to other organisational activities, such as finance, marketing and operations. This requires them to work more collaboratively, which also means they need to share information cross-functionally.
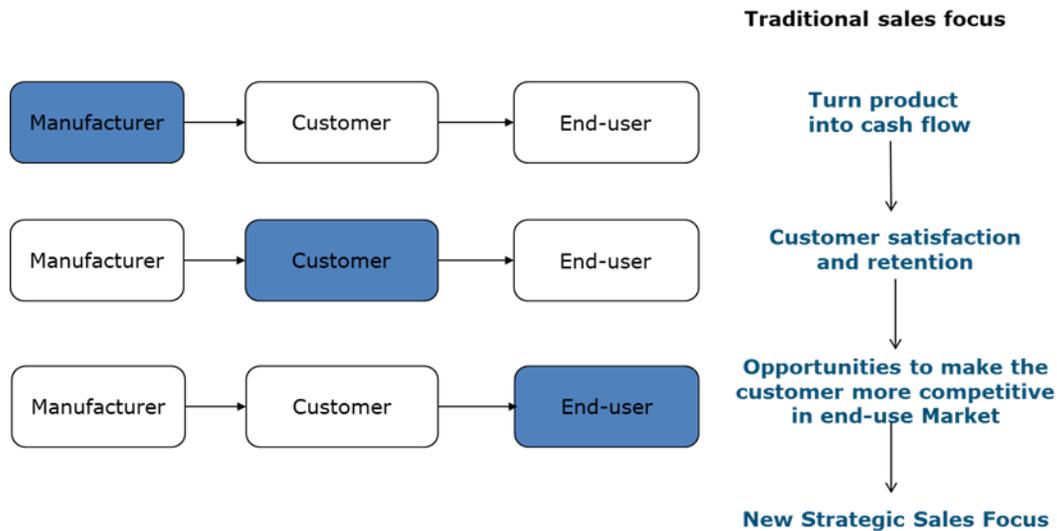
Figure 3: Changing focus in strategic sales (Piercy and Lane, 2003, p.577)

Piercy and Lane (2003) illustrates such changing focus in strategic sales organisation in the above figure. The highlighted area represents the strategic focus area as sales function migrates from its traditional role to the new strategic role. This shift of focus from tactical and transactional to strategic value creation means the value propositions or promises of the sales function are shifting from creating value to the company to creating value to customers as end users. Such value propositions place more requirements on sales people at different levels. For example, the new processes needed for sustaining value delivery to customers through sales organisations are likely to require sales people to have knowledge that goes far beyond with the traditional selling activities. Additionally, in order to create and sustain value to the end users, a sales organisation would need to acquire more in-depth knowledge of the products, solutions and extend their reach beyond the traditional selling activity and be able to integrate with other internal functions and external partners.

The current infrastructure surrounding many sales organisations, however, does not support such goals and in order to realign those structures and processes around their customer strategy, many organisations turn to Sales Force Automation (SFA) systems for help.

Sales force automation (SFA) systems

Sales Force Automation (SFA) systems promise to improve the productivity of the sales force, whilst improving customer relationships through the enhancement of the data collection, integration, analysis, and distribution of information (Speier and Venkatesh, 2002). Nonetheless, literature has shown that the adoption and use of SFA technologies have been less successful than originally hoped for, with failure rates above 50% (Bush *et al.,* 2005), what is even more alarming is according to Accenture's 2012 Sales Performance Optimization Study, 85% of organizations that deployed new sales technology tools in the past year did not improve their sales performance (Accenture, 2012). SFA technologies have been widely researched both at the organisational level (Bush *et al.,* 2005; Honeycutt *et al.,* 2005; Buehrer *et al.,* 2005) as well as at an individual level (Morgan and Inks, 2001, Jones *et al.,* 2002). And it is not surprising that a number of studies have focused on the alarming failure rates associated with SFA systems adoption. Unfortunately, many such literatures have treated it as a technology adaption or diffusion issue only (Speir and Venkatesh, 2002; Honeycutt, 2005). For example, some literatures suggest there is a small but significant correlation between salespeople's information technology usage level and their knowledge of the market, their technical skills, their ability to target profitable customers and sale performance (Ahearne and Schillewaert, 2001). Sales people's acceptance of SFA technology has also been linked to personal innovativeness (Jones *et. al.* 2002) and time investment to learn the technology (Parthasarathy and Sohi, 1997).

Some attribute the failure of SFA adoption to the added stress such an implementation gives to sales people, due to perceived additional workload and the learning curve of

the systems (Rangarajan *et. al.* 2004). As a result, salespeople experiencing role conflict due to competing demands placed on them are more likely to exhibit reluctance toward increasing effort necessary to learn SFA technology. Other literature highlights the perceived value of the system to sales people themselves versus non sales functions are different (Rangarajan *et. al.* 2004). In general, a salesperson has two organisational roles: professional sales and organisational member of organisation. However, when there is a conflict between expectations from these different roles, a salesperson is more likely to opt out of his or her organisational role because salespeople generally view themselves first as professional sales whose main responsibly it to sell and second as organization members who share other organizational responsibilities (Speier and Venkatesh, 2002).

One of the most important values of a SFA system is business intelligence (Piercy and Lane, 2003) generated by raw data originally inputted by sales people. This intelligence is mostly used for having a better visibility of the sales pipeline, which is critical to the organisation as a whole in terms of better forecasting accuracy, lower inventory and overall financial performance. However, with the transparency provided by SFA, salespeople will no longer be the sole owner of their customer information as it becomes visible through the SFA system. The increased information access and transparency enable the company as a whole, not just the sales force, to have a closer relationship with customers (Tanner *et al.*, 2005). What the organisation is demanding essentially is for salespeople to perform boundary-spanning roles (Barnes *et al.*, 2006) by increasing flows of valuable information back to the company. Therefore, adopting a customer-oriented sales approach at the organization level fundamentally changes the roles of sales, as well as the nature of their relationships with the organization (Bush, 2007). Whilst the change to the organisation is strategic, this change to individual sales people is very much personal.

Whilst much has been said about the importance of the strategic change of the sales function and the related challenges, it is surprising to note how most studies focus

primarily on the organisational level and ignore the fact that although the decision of such strategic change is made at management level and the result is reflected at organisational level, the execution of the transformation needs to be carried out by sales people. Their participation is the ultimate deciding factor of whether transformational change can be turned into operational reality or simply stay in the boardroom. Without their buy-in and participation, sales transformation is more rhetoric than action. It is therefore necessary to shift the analytic focus from organisational level strategy making to individual level framing of the strategic decision and action taking by employees. By using such micro-level analysis to understand the mobilization of strategic change in sales organisation, this research fills such gap and contributes to management practice with theory on how management can strategically frame change to achieve desired results.

THEORECTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Kaplan's framing contests model offers both a cognitive and a political view, therefore, it serves as a foundation for understanding change dynamics in this case. The diagram in Figure 4 below, is a framework adapted from Kaplan's (2008, p.736) framing contest model. (Kaplan's original model is referenced in Appendix 2).
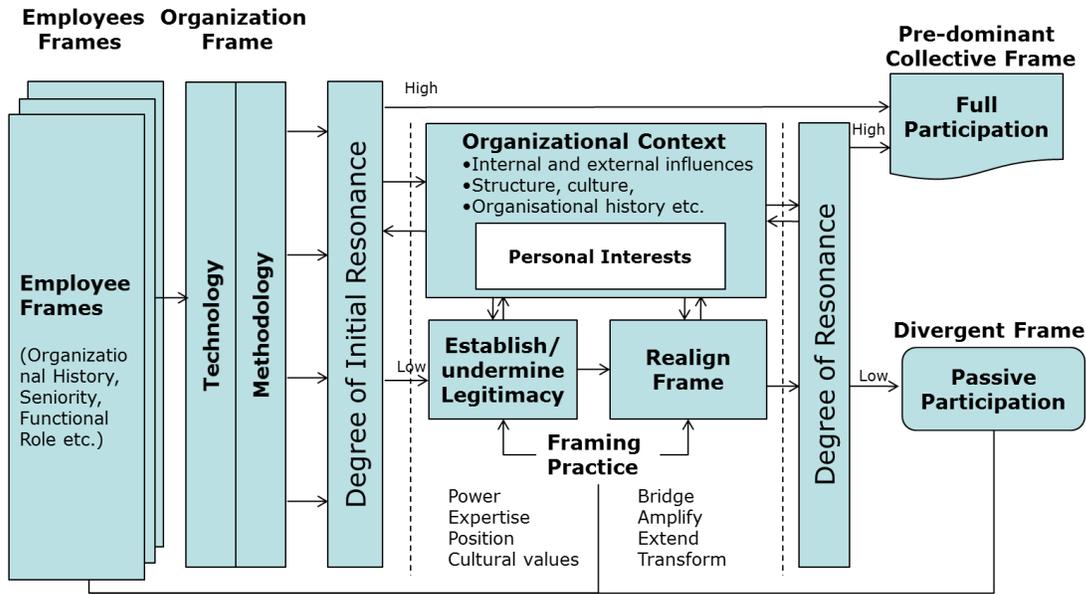
Figure 4:   Framing contest process in organisation change (Adapted from Kaplan 2008, p.736)

Whilst Kaplan's model was useful in terms of explaining how an individual's frame is predominate in the framing contest process, the model has been mostly focusing on the decision makers i.e. the management rather than on the decision takers i.e. the employees. Furthermore, it does not explain how resonance of frames turns into collective action. Nor does it address the motivational aspect of framing which is the focus of this research. The intention of the research is to fill this gap by addressing these research questions: What constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organization? Specifically, how do sales management use managerial framing to legitimize a transformational change of sales organization? How do they motivate sales employees to enact strategic change in sales philosophy in their sales practice and adoption of related SFA technology? What factors determine the effectiveness of managerial framing? The next section reveals how these questions will be addressed with interpretive and Realist research methods within the research setting.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a rationale for the ontological, methodological and epistemological position taken in this study followed by detailed information on the case study, including the research setting and the process of data collection. This is followed by a research roadmap which graphically outlines the sequential steps taken. Finally, a detailed description of the design of the study is given.

ONTOLOGY

As a practitioner, ontology, methodological and epistemology are not something we think about every day in our daily work. However, as a researcher, how we consider the nature of phenomena, specifically the cause and effect relationships in this reality, determines what kinds of methods are used to uncover this relationship (Hall, 2003). In this study the researcher orients from a socially constructionist position, believing that through interaction with others and the world at large, we construct our version of reality based on our own interests, values and worldview.

In researching how managerial framing is used in strategic change, and how resulting frames are accepted or otherwise by a sales workforce, the researcher is interested in understanding what meanings sales people give to their reality, not just how reality works (Van De Ven, 2007). The researcher recognizes that different observers may have different viewpoints and the 'truth' we are referring can vary from one person to another (Easterby-Smith, *et al.*, 2002). However, there is a broader commonality, or overlaps where these 'truth' are interwoven. The aim of this research is to discover that commonality of managerial framing in strategic change using a case study.

EPISTEMOLOGY AND MIXED RESEARCH METHOD

Epistemology is a general set of assumptions about the best way of inquiring into the nature of the phenomenon in the world (Easterby-Smith, *et al.*, 2002). Because different worldviews reflect different ways of understanding knowledge, a particular ontological

position usually implies a specific epistemological approach (Morgan and Smircich, 1980). However, whilst the distinction between paradigms may be very clear at the philosophical level, when it comes to the choice of framework within which the research question is pursued and the processes by which the research is undertake, the distinction breaks down (Bulmer, 1998; Punch, 1986). Therefore, rather than getting into a philosophical debate around the nature of research in the social sciences relating to views on ontology, methodology and epistemology, the researcher believes that a particular choice of data collection and analysis method should be selected on its perceived appropriateness to aiding the answering of the research question. Overall, the social constructionist view is taken, that reality is subjective rather than an absolute that is independent of its perception. In composing the theoretically informed and empirically tested research questions orienting this study, and given the pragmatic nature and phased workshop sessions and assessment requirements of a DBA study, the researcher chose 'mixed methods', a procedure for 'collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study' (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998 p. 17-18).

There are three major rationales for conducting mixed methods analysis for this case study. First of all, whilst qualitative and quantitative research each has its merits and limitations, in combination, and assuming the overall direction and significance of the two data sources are fairly similar, they provide a more triangulated approach to answering a research question than either research approach alone (Onwuegbuzie and Tedlie, 2002). Furthermore, it is a pragmatic decision due to the requirements of the DBA to conduct both qualitative and quantitative research. Rather than having to settle with just one type of research method in the final document, it allows for making the most use of the rich amount of data and findings generated from interviews and surveys and building of understanding gained from one phase of study to another. Finally, a 'mixed methods' approach doesn't mean each method must carry equal weight and in this study the weighting is more towards qualitative research. After exploring the

research question qualitatively, a survey instrument was developed to allow a quantitative component to help neutralize bias and provide multiple viewpoints.

Because the interviews are conducted in one language (Chinese Mandarin), and because interpretation/writing up is done in the English required by the University's doctoral regulations, there is inevitably an inherent challenge of meaning making due to the translation process. The specific measures taken to reduce the translation bias will be explained later in this chapter.

The mixed research method has received its share of criticism, not least the way it can create confusion for both the researchers doing the research and readers of the study. Ultimately, it requires the researcher to master both approaches proficiently and the effectiveness of the research method is judged by the robustness of the design and the interpretation of the findings. The section below talks about how qualitative and quantitative methods are designed in this study and the connection of the two is elaborated more in the analysis and findings chapter.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CASE STUDY

The case study method is adopted for this research as it allows the researcher, who is also an active participant of this organisational change, to 'retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events' (Yin, 1994) as it occurs. Another reason for choosing a case study approach is the desire to cover the 'contextual conditions' (Yin, 1994) of the organisational change which the researcher believes are highly pertinent to the phenomenon of the study.

Research Setting and Role of the Researcher

This case involves a large U.S. based, multinational telecommunication company that at the time of the study had just completed a major separation and divesture transaction globally which significantly reduced its size (annual global revenue $28 Billion, 50,000 employees worldwide originally) to one third of the original portfolio. For the purpose of this research, it will be referred to as the M Telecom Organization (MTO). As the result

of the divesture, the remaining company is working towards a renewed identity and also hopes to build a new set of company values and strategy. As part of this process of rebuilding and refocusing, the company has launched a series of transformation programmes across almost all functional areas. The Sales Transformation programme is introduced to transform the sales workforce from product-oriented selling to solution-oriented selling that tailors to customers' need and the goal is to eventually become a trusted advisory firm for the customers. Part of the strategic change is the introduction of a Sales Force Automation tool (SFA) which has two major components: Opportunity Management and Account Management. These two embedded tools are in the same SFA system but serve different purposes. The Opportunity Management Tool requires sales people to input their sales pipeline information, whilst the Account Management Tool requires sales people to plan and record their customer engaging activities such as customer visits, cold calls etc. Both tools can only be used effectively if the sales people follow the new sales process rigorously. For example, if there is not adequate preplanning before a customer visit, then there would not be any information for sales people to upload to the Account Management Tool.

Knowing such transformational change cannot be achieved overnight, management adopted a phased approach. The comparative chart below illustrates the focus, the expected outcome and skill set required by the sales people for both short term (Sales 2.0) and long term (Sales 3.0) as it compares to the current status quo (Sales 1.0).

	Sales 1.0 (Current)	Sales 2.0 (Short-term goal)	Sales 3.0 (Long-term goal)
	SALES 1.0 PROVIDER OF PRODUCTS	SALES 2.0 PROVIDER OF SOLUTIONS	SALES 3.0 PROBLEM SOLVER & TRUSTED ADVISER
Focus	Internal organisation focused	External customers focused	Focus on customer's business problems
Process	Different ways of selling that is product-oriented	Common way of selling that is solution-oriented	Common way of selling that's solution-oriented
Cross-selling*	Each product is sold independently	The ability to cross sell product and services from multiple businesses is critical	Not just selling individual products, but rather the values we bring to customer
Required Skill Set	Product knowledge	End to end knowledge of the solution for the particular vertical market that's serving	Customers will recognize us as thought leaders and trusted advisers
System used	Inconsistent use of up to 150 systems throughout the sales cycle	Consistent use of a consolidated systems including CRM system	Consistent use of a consolidated systems including CRM system and social network to connect with customers
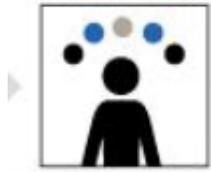
Table 3: Comparative chart of Sales Transformation at different stages of the program at MTO (extracted from various program communication)

Cross-selling refers to the ability to sell different product or solution through different sales teams or channels.

The different Sales Transformation stages reflect the progressive steps management want the organization to take and their expectation of employees in terms of the skill sets required and systems to be used.

Why This Case?

There are three reasons why this particular case is chosen for the study. First of all, Piercy (2010) argues that involvement, intelligence, integration, internal marketing, and infrastructure serve as the four pillars of sales force transformation process. This case provides a holistic view of almost all four pillars, including both the infrastructure (SFA technology) and process components of a sales strategic change. Technology and process change are interdependent of each other and together they will achieve the intended strategic changes if executed effectively. This combination and interdependency provide additional insights and dimensions to studies of strategic change that is enabled by technology which increasingly interested researcher as they try to understand the role of information technology in organisations and its implications for organisation (Markus and Robey, 1988). Secondly, the scope of the project is well defined and the timeline of the project implementation coincides with the research timeline which makes it easier for conducting interviews and any follow up data collection. Last but not least, being the IT director accountable for delivering the SFA system to the regional sales organisation (mostly Asia Pacific users), the researcher has a unique access to the data and the informants which is critical to data collection.

In this study, the researcher adopted the simultaneously dual role of active participant and observer of organisational change activities. The benefit of this approach is that it allows the researcher to immerse herself in the organisational context being studied which is typical of a case study approach. However, the downside of this approach is the researcher's own judgments come into play when constructing the hypothesis for testing the theories. As such, several measures have been put in place to try to distance myself as the researcher, including getting a second coder to encode some qualitative data which will be explained further in the later part of this document.

RESEARCH ROADMAP

The research roadmap shows the journey that this research has undergone between 2011 to 2014. In addressing the overarching research question of what constitutes

effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organization, the researcher begins from the interpretive phase of collecting and analysing qualitative data in order to address the first set of orienting questions. The initial analysis from the interpretive study provides additional insights which lead to the next set of orienting questions. It then shifts to realistic study phase by using the qualitative data, an instrument was developed such that findings from the first phase are tested through a set of hypothesis during this phase. In the final phase, results from both studies are put together for more in-depth discussion and a final theoretical framework is presented at the end.

Research Question:

What constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organization

↓

Preliminary Literature Review

How management use strategic framing to legitimize change	How management motivate employees to enact on strategic changes	What factors determine the effectiveness of managerial framing
Literature Review	Literature Review	Literature Review
Step 1. Raw Data Collection	Step 5: Generating Hypothesis	Step 8. Link the findings of qualitative and quantitative analysis
Step 2: Semi-Structured Interview		
Step 3: Frame Analysis	Step 6: Conduct Questionnaires	Step 9. Theoretical Framework
Step 4: Data Analysis	Step 7: Data Analysis	Step 10. Final Conclusion
Interpretive Study	**Realist Study**	**Putting the Result Together**

Figure 5: Research Roadmap

The roadmap above shows the research steps taken in this study and the following sections explain the design of the approach and steps taken at this stage of the research.

Step 1: Raw Data Collection of Management Communication

One effective way to research framing activities is to study naturally occurring speech, because framing is conversational (Goffman, 1974). Due to the limitation of the research setting where most of the managerial conversation take place in the format of emails and other virtual communication format, such approach would be problematic. In addition, most of senior management are based in MTO's U.S. headquarters, and not available for direct interview by the researcher. Therefore, written text or transcribed text from management communication are used instead. Throughout the sales transformation programme implementation at MTO, a number of communication campaigns were rolled out. This included: internal communications relating to the strategic change process distributed either electronically or verbally at various stages of Sales Transformation, such as internal email communication at all levels (global sales executive, regional sales executive); presentations delivered by senior sales executives at the annual sales kick off meetings from the end of 2011 to end of 2012 and, video recording posted on the employee portal. This internal communication (originally in English) has been transcribed and documented for this research and serves as the primary data sources for identifying and analysing the frames used by management.

In addition, multiple sessions of three-day instructor led training were organized around the world for the sales workforce as mandatory training. At the same time, a shorter version of on-line training was also launched for non-sales people in order for them to understand the same concept and to lend their support to the sales people. Such communications were also captured, transcribed by the researcher and used as raw data source which both qualitative and quantitative studies are built upon.

Step 2: Semi Structured Interview of Employees

The semi-structured interview is chosen as the main data collection method for qualitative research because it provides high validity in terms of enabling an in-depth understanding of the discourse and frames used by organisation members in order to

make sense of the change situation (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). A total of 15 employees across different levels of the organisation's hierarchy with different functional roles were selected in order to understand how their diverse background influence and shape their understanding and responses to the change.

The interviewee are referred by their functional role in the analysis section, below chart indicates a simplified organization chart, each interviewee is also given a short name reference as 'Initial of the function + number', such reference will be used in data analysis sections.
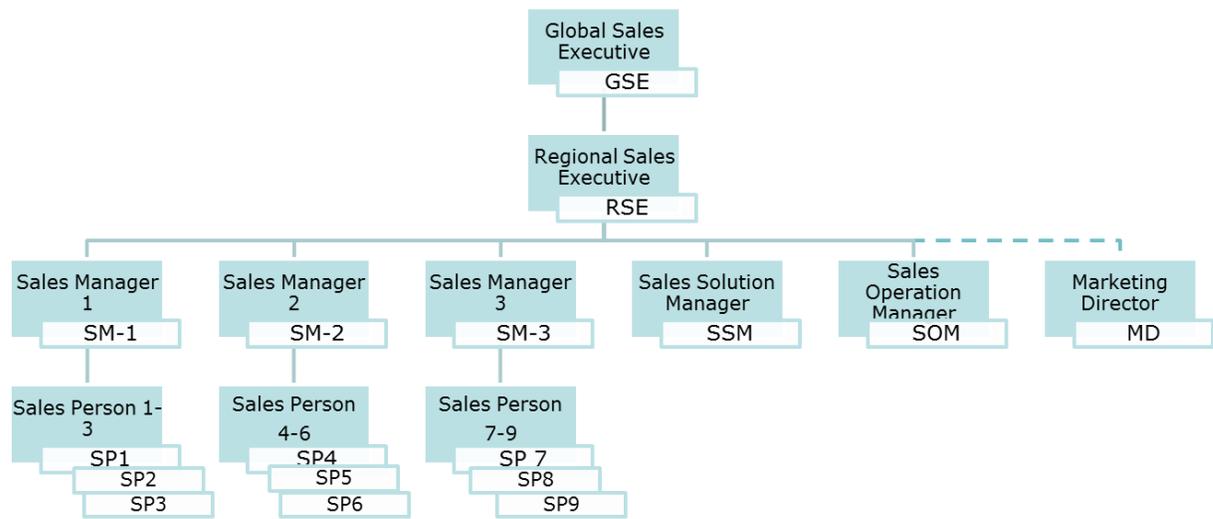
Figure 6: Organization chart and naming convention for the interviewees

Interviews were conducted after the Sales Transformation training which happened during three consecutive months between May and July 2012. The sequential nature of the training schedule proved beneficial in conducting multiple iterations of interviews across a rolling case study. The interview questions were designed around Kaplan's framing contest model as the preliminary model for the interpretive study to make sure the questions address all factors that potentially related to any framing contest. Most of the questions are open ended, with additional follow up questions as appropriate to probe further especially when signs of hesitation or confusion are evident. The goal was

to capture, as much as possible, a retrospective account of the employees' response to the change as they perceived it.

Also through observation of meetings and conversations related to the Sales Transformation program, the researcher picked up artefacts and organisation documents which sometimes led to new samples of informants and observations. For example, in a conversation with the project manager, one discovery was the Salesforce.com adoption rate result, a system-generated statistic that monitors the percentage of system utilization. The result showed that there was a relatively low adoption rate for sales team in China as compared to other countries in the Asia Pacific. The researcher then did a follow up conversation with the senior sales executive of China to ascertain his opinion on this result. This interview uncovered additional details which is very valuable in providing insight to the analysis.

Immediately following the interview, field notes or recorded conversations were converted into write-ups. When recording the interview results, special attention was given to the structure of their answers, expressions, and hidden meanings used to articulate the frames they used to interpret reality (Ford and Ford, 1994).

Since most of the employees are based in China, the interviews were conducted in the local language which is Mandarin with the exception of the project manager who is based in Singapore. Field notes were also taken in Chinese with some terminologies in English or if the original comments were made in English. The transcription was done in English as a two-step cognitive process where the interviewees' responses were first translated into English in the head of the researcher and then typed into a computer. Special attention has been given during the translation process to pick the word that best fits not only the meaning of the original message but also the context of the original message since 'meaning is always within context and context incorporate meaning' (Mishler,1979 as in Miles *et al.* 2014, p.167). However, through choices of

words, the researcher is already interpreting the responses subjectively and interjecting her own judgment and bias to the analysis which could be a limitation.

Step 3: Extracting and Categorizing Management Frames

The last step of the interpretive research is to extract and categorize management frames from the raw data collected in order to have an in depth understanding of how management frame the sales philosophy change that is intended to influence employees. By having both information on hand, it would shed some lights on how individual employees' frames contested with the managerial frame.

This part of the analysis is done through frame analysis which can be seen as a form of content analysis as it is a technique for approaching a text with the goal of understanding how certain idea elements are linked together into package of meaning and explaining why such idea elements are meaningful (Creed *et al*, 2002). This approach is based on the assumption that frames, as 'schemata of interpretation' (Goffman, 1974, p21), can be uncovered, reconstructed and made explicit through the analysis of their textual form. By this definition, the process of frame analysis can be tedious because only an intensive 'discursive analysis from the bottom up, from the text to the frame' can reconstruct framing processes (Johnston, 1995, p219). In this sense, the researcher must be actively involved in an ongoing empirical dialogue between what is been communicated (either verbally or written) by management and their mental processes, so that such discourse can be turned into a 'well-constructed map of concepts' (Vicari, 2010, p 509).

Dual-researcher approach for increased validity

Whilst the researcher as an 'insider' of the program provides direct access to do so, it also creates concerns for intersubjective validity of the findings. To balance this potential bias, for coding of managerial frames, the research employed both an 'insider' and an 'outsider' researcher approach (Evered and Reis, 1981). The inside researcher being myself is an active participant in the strategic change process who conducted the

data collection and the initial data analysis. An outside researcher was brought in later to conduct a more objective analysis of the data by acting as the second coder. I successfully recruited my husband as this outside researcher not only because he is a convenient choice, but also because he was going through the same DBA study himself in the same cohort with me. He is as well trained as I am in dealing with qualitative and quantitative data. In addition, he is familiar with my work at MTO and the overall operating environment yet at the same time not so close to the Sales Transformation program as I am. Last but not least, in his own research, he also utilized 'framing' as one of his theoretical lens so he is fairly familiar with the empirical concept being discussed in this case. The benefit of having the 'outsider' researcher as a second coder is that it helps to check the underlying ideologies that might incline the first analyst (the 'insider') to label a frame that represents my own interests and perspectives. This dual-researcher, grounded approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987) has been used as a means of generating insights about the initiation of strategic change (Gioia and Kumar, 1991) and is well suited to this research.

Categorizing managerial frames is done by following these steps. First the raw text contents were initially coded or labelled which is essentially a shorthand for the essence of each idea package that's grounded in the original text and may even be directly quoted phrases (Creed *et al.*, 2002). Next similarly worded labels were grouped and pattern is identified as theme and sub-theme. The second coder repeats this exercise separately. Through the initial coding, several themes were identified which were refined through consensus building between the two coders. Ultimately ten frames that commonly occurred in management communication were identified.

Step 4: Interpretive Study Data Analysis

Eliciting these frames from management communication helps the researcher to understand the deep logic beneath them and how they were reflected in managerial communication at the time the frames were deployed. Seeing the count of the key words used by management provides and ultimately which ones resonated more with

the employees and become the dominant frames that generate actions by employees pushes the researcher to a deeper understanding of the dynamic nature of collective action framing.

More detailed analysis of the data will be further explained in Chapter 4.

Step 5: Generating Hypothesis

The findings from the interpretive research provides insights to how framing was used in strategic change mobilization and legitimating of strategic change in the case study organisation. However, it also leaves many questions unanswered. This leads room for further analysis of frame alignment processes whereby managements' goal is to mobilize employees' actions toward the desired direction. At the same time, employees make sense of the information presented to them through their own interpretive frames which sometimes do not align or even contradict each other. Such paradoxes are further complicated by the complexity of internal organisation environments and external competitive landscapes. The result is that, whilst legitimacy of the change is achieved, there is still no or little action from the employees.

Since this research is aimed at understanding the connections, a combination of two common quantitative methods, content analysis and sample surveys, are adopted. Using content analysis, the researcher methodically converted corporate documents (email, transcribed video etc.) in textual format to numerical frequency and/or intensity of meaningful categories that are statistically manipulative (Johnston, 2002). The survey method is well suited for testing the correlation of different factors affecting resonance of collective action frames which are hypothesized based on results from qualitative research.

The frame analysis reveals insights about the frames management used and total **ten** major frames were identified and occurrence of the frames were counted and categorized into three types: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames.

Types of Framing Task	N	%
Diagnostic Framing	155	66%
Prognostic Framing	75	32%
Motivational Framing	4	2%
Total	234	100%

Table 4: Frequency of framing tasks in management communication

Table 4 summarizes the occurrence of each type of framing task and it shows a drastic imbalance of different types of frames management deployed, with a high occurrence of diagnostic, moderate prognostic and weak motivational frames. Does the occurrence of different framing task correlate with employees' understanding of the issues, solutions and their collective action mobilization? This preliminary finding itself does not necessarily suggest a clear theoretical framework for understanding its impacts to employees' understanding of the strategic change and their collective action mobilization. Nonetheless, these findings provide the basis for explicating an informative analytical framework which the following hypotheses are built upon.

Hypothesis 1: The alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly result in collective action mobilization.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive correlation between motivational framing with collective action mobilization.

Step 6: Conduct Survey

To test out the hypothesis which is a set of correlation based arguments, the next step of the study used a survey approach to explore the relationship. A survey's ability to accurately and reliably produce data on respondents' cultural values has always been widely debated among researchers because whether respondents can accurately and honestly reveal their true values and beliefs is questionable (Kwan and Walker 2004). This limitation was taken into account when constructing the survey questions. A draft survey was designed and distributed to a few respondents just to test out whether the language is clear and understandable to them. Necessary adjustments were made

before the final 26 questions (See appendix 1) were constructed, some questions containing sub-questions. The formulation of the survey question takes these into consideration. Firstly, questions are structured in order that each one addresses one specific aspect of employee resonance toward a particular managerial frames, these are considered independent variables. The last two questions ask the employees to indicate their level of usage of the two SFA tools: Opportunity Management Tool and Account Management Tool. These two tools are in the same SFA system but serve different purposes. The opportunity management tool requires sales people to input their sales pipeline information, whilst the Account Management Tool requires sales people to plan and record their customer engaging activities such as customer visit, cold call etc. Since both tools can only be used effectively if the sales people follow the new process rigorously, these two self-assessment questions effectively measure the degree of action mobilization by sales employees which are considered as dependent variables.

Care was taken to formulate the questions in a non-confrontational matter. A Six Point Likert scale anchored by 1) Strongly agree 2) Agree 3) Slightly agree 4) Slightly disagree 5) Disagree and 6) Strongly disagree was used instead of the more commonly used Five Point Likert scale. The reason being the target group of sales people taking the survey are all Asians and mostly Chinese people. For cultural reasons, even when they don't want to take the survey they would most likely do it anyway to avoid saying 'no'. The researcher is concerned that for those respondents who do not want to spend the time taking the survey, they would simply take an easy route by picking neutral answers. With the six Likert scale, neutral answers are not available so it forces the respondent to think and come up with an answer which will lead to a more accurate survey result. The questions were pre-tested among several sales and non-sales people to check for their level of understanding of the questions especially given the survey was constructed in English which is not the first language of many correspondents.

Paper surveys were then distributed to sales people at the annual sales kick off meeting which is the annual gathering of key sales people from the region. A total of 70 surveys

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were distributed, out of which 57 were returned, completed and usable with a response rate of 80%. Such a response rate would be very difficult to get if the surveys were distributed electronically.   The survey results were then manually inputted into an Excel spreadsheet and imported into Minitab, a statistic tool the researcher used to conduct the correlation analysis to test out the hypothesis.

Step 7: Realist Data Analysis

Details to be further explained in Chapter 5.

Step 8/9/10: Putting the result together

One of the advantages of using both qualitative and quantitative research material is that it allows the research to link to the result and findings from both interpretive and realist research. When doing so, the analysis can be done more thoroughly and the final findings can be presented from multiple angles. Chapter 6 presents a more holistic picture by looking through findings from both interpretive and realist research and how they relate to the overarching research question. The analysis ends with a theoretical framework which is advanced from the initial framework.

OVERCOMING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Interpretive studies conducted in a different language from the primary language of the research presents its challenge because meanings which are the heart of qualitative analysis, cannot be sufficiently ascribed by the researcher who presents the data and findings to the readers in a language differs from the study's participants (Lopez *et al.* 2008). However, for this study because the respondents of the interview are all based in China with limited English skills, if the interviews had been conducted in English, more meaning would have been lost due to the interviewees' lack of ability to sufficiently express themselves. The researcher therefore decided to conduct the interview in Chinese and manage the dilemma by carefully looking into the research process in order that minimum bias would be introduced and to ensure accuracy of the translation of source data as much as possible.

Whilst there is no well-defined standard in qualitative research for translating transcribed material, it is well accepted in research that 'a translation should (a) reproduce as accurately as possible the source data, (b) use the natural form of the target language, and (c) express all aspects of the meaning in a way that is understandable' (Larson, 1991 in Lopez *et al*. 2008 p.1729). The following measures have been taken to assure the data accurately reflect the original discourse from the interview respondents as much as possible. First of all, the interview result was transcribed into the source language (Chinese) and then translated into the target language (English) as opposed to directly transcribing the participant interview into the target language. By doing so, it allows the researcher to adequately address concerns regarding interpretation and ensure the accuracy and meaningfulness of the data presented (Lopez *et al*. 2008). Secondly, rather than using another interpreter to translate the transcript, the researcher did all the translation by herself. While researching in a bilingual setting presents its challenges, it also offers a unique opportunity in terms of research method as the researcher can use the experience of translating to discuss points in the transcript (Temple and Young, 2004). There are several occasions where I have had to stop and think about whether there is a specific meaning worth noting when I was translating.

Finally, it is important to highlight the differentiation between frame analysis and rhetorical analysis. Rhetorical analysis focuses on what is actually said or written which is the performative aspects of discourse, rather than on the knowledge embodied in mental structures that textual production presumes (Johnston, 2002, p.67). This inevitably puts too much focus on linguistics and the nuances of language which would either get lost in translation or become misleading. Correct interpretation of cognitive frames, on the other hand, often requires reference to broader textual context, cultural and biographical understandings (Kelman, 2005, p.78). The researcher's immersion of the organisation and the Sales Transformation program, as well as her bilingual and bicultural background allow for a broader understanding of the contextual and cultural

background of the case. Of course, despite these steps, with the researcher being an active organisation member and playing an active role of the SFA project implication, it inevitably brings in her own judgement into the above process.

Ethical Issues

Research ethic refers to the subject being researched and the research is conducted, funded or and finally to how is the result to be used (Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swartz, 2002). The researcher's DBA program is funded by the employer, as such the selection of the topic as well as the research process are fully transparent to the employer. The employer did not request full disclosure of the research result which allows the researcher to freely interpret the result based on empirical data and her own judgement without having to worry about how the result would be received by the employer.

When requests for an interview and survey were sent to respondents, the intention of such requests are fully disclosed. While the researcher's relatively senior position allows her to access these respondents, sometimes it is also been observed that also effects respondents' willingness to express their views candidly. Overall, the research subject, the process meet the ethical standard of the DBA program.

The following chapters will demonstrate the findings from interpretive and realist studies and finally what the rich data tells us when putting the results together.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM INTERPRETIVE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

In addressing the research question 'what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organization?', the initial literature review highlights the potential value of an interpretive approach to the study. At this stage, an important first step is to examine how management introduce and legitimize strategic change and specially what frames and managerial framing tasks were used in this legitimisation process to achieve consensus from employees. The next stage, and of equal importance, is to examine how do employees account for their responses to the managerial framing effort, or in other words, did they 'buy into' the story?

The interpretive study focuses on the following questions which orient the research:

- What frames do management used to legitimize the justification of the strategic change?
- How do different groups of employees deploy different frames by drawing upon their individual frame repertoires in responding to managerial frames?
- How do management deploy managerial framing tasks (frame bridging, extension, amplification and transformation) to align contested frames?

For the rest of this chapter, findings from the interpretive study are presented as the story get unfolded and the above questions get addressed.

MANAGERIAL FRAMES TO LEGITIMIZE STRATEGIC CHANGE – THE MANAGERS' STORY

Managers' strategic frames have significant consequences for organisations as they determine how management notice and interpret the current situation which then translate into strategic choices (Daft and Weick 1984) for organization. However, in order for employees to understand and interpret the organization environment and

these strategic choices, management would have to engage in framing practices to shape the desired outcome. Before we get into how framing practices are used by management, let us begin with an end in mind by looking at how strategic change was initiated within MTO.

The strategic change initiative was constructed by a small group of selected senior executives and outside consultants in the company's U.S. headquarters as part of its strategic planning shortly after the divesture transaction was concluded. The technology element of the sales transformation is the product of another consulting company which provides the Salesforce Automation software named Salesforce.com. Together they mapped out the current internal and external environment (Thomas and McDaniel, 1990) and defined a revised conception of the organisation. The story can be summarized as follows (the bold highlights represent key words used as part of the managerial frames):

> *Once upon a time, there was a great company that enjoys 85 years of history with great '**products**' and customers loved it. However, ' **fierce competition**' changed the competitive landscape and now' **customers**' demand more '**solutions**' from us rather than just 'products' . In response to this '**outside forces**', we need to change our existing '**processes**' , '**systems**' and '**culture**'. By referencing '**best practices**', we now defined a new sales approach that consists of '**common [selling] process**' and a Sales Force Automation 'system'. This is a tremendous '**organisation investment**' for the company as well as '**personal investment**' for you - sales people. According to industry benchmarks, if you adopt these changes, **sales performance** will likely to increase by 5% and we will all live happily ever after.*

Of course, management are not so naïve as to believe that such a story will be easily accepted by employees. Rather, they are aware of the challenges they are facing in order to get employees to 'buy into' their story. Senior sales executives take every

opportunity they can get to communicate the initiative such as: annual sales kick off meetings, webcast to employees, email communication at all levels (global sales executive, regional sales executive) as well as multiple training sessions conducted around the world. Table 5 shows the frames, key words repertories used, count of the key words and excerpt from management communication. The count of key words is to indicate the frequency of the frames used. Each frame has also been categorized by the core framing task "diagnostic", "prognostic" and "motivational".

Category	Frame	Key Words	Count	Excerpt from Management Communication (White Paper, Email etc.)
Diagnostic	Customer Focused Culture	• Helping Customer • Customer Centric	114	We can create a standard methodology about things great sales people do to serve customers better. Sales Way promises to enable greater customer centricity
Diagnostic	Inconsistent process	• Sales Best Practice	33	Some of the best sales don't necessarily have the best practices, so if they can tweak what they're doing, they can be even better.
Diagnostic	Multiple System	• System • Tool	5	Today, we have 150+ systems and tools, and our processes differ across regions and even across business teams
Diagnostic	Outside Force	• Competition • Economic Conditions	3	With increase competition and challenging economic condition, sales leaders are focusing on improving areas that will provide the greatest impact for their organisations.
Prognostic	Solution	• Solution-focused • Solution Provider	67	We need a highly-collaborative, solutions-focused services team providing solutions to meet those needs. Ultimately becoming our customers' problem solver and trusted adviser.
	Common Process	• Common Process Common Methodology Common Language	20	We must apply industry knowledge of what world-class selling organisations do and use our insights into our current selling methods to develop a common language and approach…. The path to trusted advisor is not what we sell but how we sell.
	Simplified System	• Selling Approach • Simplified system		It will also provide a universal framework with simplified systems and processes
Prognostic	Culture	• Having Outside-in Culture	4	Driving the outside-in, customer-centric culture is essential to our successful journey to Sales 3.0
Motivational	Investment	• Investment to Sales	6	We made a big investment in the Sales Way. Sales Way is our single largest investment in our sales people to date.
	Sales Performance	• Sales Performance	3	According to industry and benchmark studies, programs like Sales Way typically increase revenues by 5 percent or more sales performance.

Table 5: Managerial Frames Observed in Sales Transformation Program Communication (White Paper, emails from sales executive etc.)

As the table above shows, diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing have all been deployed in the managerial framing process which can be summarized in three main themes as illustrated in Figure 7:

1) The current practices and the existing interpretive template is no longer appropriate (Gioia and Kumar, 1991)

2) The adoption of new organisational practices (Kostova and Roth, 2002) is justified

3) The future will be better if we carry out identified prognostic actions

Figure 7: Core managerial framing tasks used in this case

So how do employees account for these managerial framing activities? What frames do employees hold themselves? Do they align with managerial frames or contested? To what extent do employees "buy into" a manager's story?

FRAMES DEPLOYED BY EMPLOYEES: THE PRODUCT OF INDIVIDUALS' FRAME REPERTOIRES

When presented with the same managerial frames, do employees respond more or less the same or differently? If they are different, where does the difference come from? We know that demographic measures and different individual backgrounds generate knowledge and values and they become frame repertoires that function as toolkits as individuals construct cognitive frames in responding to specific situations (Kaplan, 2008). When seeing frames as the encoding of a variety of previous experiences,

including: functional background, previous experience with technology, their functional membership and position in the organisation, each of these areas has its own institutional logic that guides views and behaviour (Thornton and Ocasio 1999) of employees. An employee's functional role and the prior exposure they have as part of that role also make a significant difference in terms of their diagnostic and prognostic frames.

In this study, interviewees' accounts provide substantial evidence supporting this argument. For example, during her interview, the marketing director exhibited a strong alignment with the managerial frame. When asked about whether she thought of the Sales Way program as a sales approach change or sales system change, she stated:

I think of it as the entire sales approach and the direction of the company have changed.

She further added her views on the additional skill set needed as the result of this change:

My job will change entirely. Previously, we just need to provide product information for example a catalogue, now we need to be able to tell a solution story. The skill set requirements are also different. Also in the past, we just need to know what we've been told (by the product team), now we need to know how to ask the right questions. We need to work closely with Sales and package it to something more easily understood by the customers. (MD)

She quoted a view she has recently shared in a media interview where she drew a comparison of the Sales Way Program with IBM's successful transformation from product-oriented company to a service provider. In this case, an industry success story serves as a 'bridge' that helps connect the current situation in MTO with a past experience of a comparable company in a similar situation. Her functional role as a marketing manager provided her with the knowledge and exposure which contributed to her frame repertoire and construction of her frames.

Additional evidence, as shown in Table 6 below, indicates that frames used by employees are articulations of their experiential understanding, prior experience, industry knowledge, organisation history etc. which shape their understanding of management frames.

Frame Repertories	Frame Nature	Evidence	Contested?
Industry Knowledge	Diagnostic	*When I first heard about it, I didn't understand it, all I knew was that it's going to be a big change but I didn't have any details at the time. When I did understand it, my understanding is no different from the industry understanding which is going from product sales to solutions sales. However, I didn't know the process changes. Conceptually everyone in the industry talks about solution selling. Concept wise, it's nothing new and beside the name (of the company) has changed, so it's all anticipated. (MD)*	**No**
Organisation History	Diagnostic	*I didn't understand it [when the Sales Way was first introduced]. But I think it's not that much different from what we have been talking about all along. We've been talking about 'solution selling' since I joined company. (SP-7)*	**No**
Past system experience	Prognostic	*But if you are determined to push for this [change], there must be pros and cons. The key is that you have to overcome the initial pain so people can see the true benefits. Just like Salesforce.com, we've had it since beginning of the year but it's still not mandatory, it's still in trial period. (SM-1)*	**Yes**
Mergers and Acquisition	Prognostic	*In terms of concept, urgency and necessity – we all get it, but how far can it go? You can't rely on just a one-time training to achieve the change. We need to consider whether to bring in new resources from outside [rather than organic growth). (SSM)*	**Yes**

Table 6: Frame repertories used by employees

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The employees' accounts above provide rich evidence that frames deployed by them are products of their frame repertoires which are 'tool kits' (Kaplan, 2008) they draw upon to construct their own cognitive frames. Therefore, when provided with the same managerial frames, employees' own frames guided their views of the organization issue and what might be the solution which may or may not align with the managerial frames presented to them. The next section will take a closer look at employees' responses to each type of managerial framing task: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing.

EMPLOYEES' RESPONSES TO MANAGERIAL FRAMING

In the previous section it has been demonstrated that a diverse range of employee frames were deployed as employees were presented with managerial frames related to the strategic change of sales philosophy and system. A number of questions emerge which now need to be answered. Given the divergence between the employees' and managers' frames, then, what framing practices did management use to legitimize the justification of change? More particularly, how were different framing practices: frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension and frame transformation (Benford and Snow, 2000) used as a means of aligning contested frames between employees and managers? And finally, did employees 'buy into' the managers' story? Interview responses provide a mixture of results relating to diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames.

Diagnostic Framing: Partially aligned

Diagnostic framing shapes the understanding of what the problem is, i.e. what went wrong and who could be said to be to blame. The frame analysis shows a total of 155 counts of diagnostic frames observed in the data, including four major frames: 'customer focused', 'adopting best practice', 'improving system' and 'outside force'. By aggregating the common 'grievance' and 'hot buttons' or what Gamson (1992) calls the 'injustice component' of diagnostic frames, management define the current organization issues and faults. 'Customer focused' as the most frequently used

managerial frame received a wide acceptance from the employees who agree that we can do a better job of being more 'customer' focused. As one sales manager said:

Our culture is a manufacturing culture, it is not a culture that's sales oriented. Instead of putting customer requirements as priority, we focus on products, we always tell our customer how good our products are. (SM-2)

The repeated emphasis of 'customer focused' is an example of management using *frame amplification* as a springboard for mobilizing support. The phrase 'customer focused' which used to be a clichéd statement, now has been assigned with a new definition with more clarity. Through frame amplification, management is able to identify, idealize and elevate a basic value that presumably has been taken for granted by employees but has not inspired collective action for whatever reason in the past (Snow *et al*., 1986, p. 469).   After all, which company does not talk about the customer as part of its core value? Evidence shows it is useful for helping employees to see things differently. One Solution Manager made the comparison between the way a customer visit is done today and how using the new system will help the sales team to better prepare for customer meetings:

Currently whenever we have a customer meeting, we have a bunch of people going to the customer site, we prepare our talking points but we don't really care whether the customer listens or not. Often time we don't present in ways that are considerate to customer's needs. Perhaps concept wise, we understand [it] but we just didn't practice it in such way. (SSM)

The frame 'Sales Best Practice' is used by management to highlight the fact there is a lack of consistent sales approach currently. As the global sales executive said in a town hall meeting with global sales team:

We had a lot of great sales people in the world that are doing things differently. Some people are very relationship oriented, some are very technical oriented, some

knew the right people to call. All those things are what made us great throughout the years. But if we can create a standard methodology about things great sales people do to serve customers better. Not everybody is going to be a robot, everybody is going to do things the same way but the best can help the people become the best. (GSE)

It all sounded good, however this 'sales best practice' frame is a hard sell, as one Sales Manager commented:

What's best for other companies may not be applicable to us, every company is different, how can you ask us to copy other companies' best practices? (SM-3)

From the analysis it appeared to be the case that this frame was not well received. What about the frame 'system'? It is not surprising that a technological frame has largely been used by management to build the legitimacy of change based on 'grievance' related to the complexity of the current systems. For example, in the white paper published by management it quotes:

Throughout the sales cycle, up to 150 systems will be accessed in order to obtain the necessary information to complete the sales cycle. (White Pager, p.2)

However, interview results indicate that non-sales employees who usually benefit from the information provided by sales people into the system question sales people's commitment to it.   When asked how the new SFA system would add value to her, one sales operation manager said:

Systems? Sales people always ask for it, but once they have it, they don't want to use it.   I've seen it many times, they asked for a tool, you gave one to them and then they would say it's not as good as Excel or their hard copy paper or too much work. (SOM)

On the other hand, this sales operation manager thinks systems only play a secondary role in the whole sales process:

I didn't think of this as a technology issue, systems are just there to support the process. (SOM)

The same view has been shared by other sales people. Some also questioned the return on investment of the system, as one sales person commented:

The more time I spend on the system, the less time I spend interfacing with the customers. (SP-1)

On the one hand, they will need to learn the new SFA system and integrate the new sales approach and technology into their daily practice. On the other hand, they're expected to continue performing their regular sales activities without disruption. In fact, it is expected they will deliver more results in order to justify the investment the organisation made to the system. It is not a surprise that time spent on systems is perceived as a distraction to sales people because of the conflicting goals presented to them, so the fact that 'system' as a prognostic frame didn't receive much resonance is perhaps mostly due to its 'efficacy'. They just do not know how they are supposed to achieve it while balancing both demands.

Prognostic Frames: Partially aligned

Prognostic frames relate to ways of addressing the problems identified in diagnostic framing by enacting specific strategies (Benford and Snow, 2000). In their prognostic framing, management argue that becoming a 'solution provider' instead of a 'product provider' is the way forward and having a 'common sales process' with 'simplified system' will enable a 'customer focused culture' and transform the company to a 'solution selling' organization.

As demonstrated earlier, interview results show a consistent pattern of partial alignment when it comes to diagnostic frames. With the exception of 'system', everyone seems to agree on what the problem is and who is to blame, however, when it comes to

what to do with it, the discrepancies emerged and frames are only partially contested. As one solution manager indicated:

I think this (the Sales Way) is the right thing to do, but whether this will support the company's long term sustainability, that's the question. I believe everybody thinks change is necessary, no one would argue this (Sales Transformation Program) training is useless, but when it comes to really change people's behaviour, that's difficult. (SSM)

The last diagnostic component of frame that management used to justify the Sales Transformation program is 'outside force'. The original intent of this managerial framing is to use increased competition and challenging economic condition as justifications for implementing Sales Transformation at this particular conjunction of the company's growth. However, this frame encountered an unexpected response from some employees who hold a 'mergers and acquisition' frame themselves. One Sales Solution Manager commented:

Perhaps we need to consider whether to bring in new resources from outside through acquisition rather than relying on organic growth.(SSM)

This example further demonstrates that frames are always 'interpretive' and 'context-specific' (Bondarouk *et al.* 2009), therefore, when choosing certain frames to legitimize the justification of a strategic change, management cannot assume employees will come to the same conclusion on prognostic action even when using the same diagnostic framing. In this case, sales people have been on the ground knowing how fierce the 'outside competition' can be more than anyone else in the organization, they could not agree more with this diagnostic framing. However, when using their own interpretive frames, they come to a completely different conclusion about what needs to be done here. It appeared to be the case that they thought adapting a 'best practice' sales process or a SFA system would be the answer to 'outside competition'.

Overall, given the extensive emphasis of diagnostic frames, evidence shows that employees feel the issues identified by management are valid and therefore diagnostic frames are not contested in most cases and considered partially aligned. However, as the last example shows, when it comes to prognostic framing, not everyone is in agreement on what the prognostic solutions should be. Next, we will examine how motivational frames are received.

Motivational Frames: Poorly aligned

Motivational frames can provide a necessary rationale for employees engaging in collective action and move people from simply 'talking' about the change to actually 'doing' it. For example, one of the motivational frames used by management is to position the new sales process training as 'the biggest investment' ever made to the sales people with the objective of helping them with their sales skills. For example, the consultant/trainer talked about the training as an '*Investment in your personal craftsmanship of selling*' and referred the graduates of the class as '*PhD of Sales*', meaning they have achieved the highest level of salesmanship which can be a valuable personal asset in terms of sales' career and skill development. During the interviews, many respondents have indicated their high resonance of the 'investment' frame as one of the sales people said:

There are two types of investment: time and money. In this case, we can clearly see that the company has invested in both, flying everyone over to this three days of training is quite a commitment. I really think I benefited a lot from it. (SP-2)

Training itself is not the goal of the Sales Transformation program. However, by framing training as 'investment' to sales people, management strategically aligned it with employees' personal interest of improving their sales skills. This is a smart use of 'frame extension' by extending 'the boundaries of its primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view' (Snow *et al*. 1986, p.472) of the employees. By extending the 'investment made by organisation' which is less appealing to individuals as personal

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investment, it leads employees to believe that the proposed solution is in their own best interests (Fligstein, 2001). In doing so, it appears as if the value and interests of the employees is congruent with that of the organisation. Frame extension thus serves as a great 'hooking' (Lofland, 1977 as in Snow *et al*, 1986, p.473) in mobilizing employee, but is it enough? Is the 'hook' strong enough to allure employees take further action?

Table 7 provides a summary of different managerial frame alignment practices (frame bridging, amplification, extension and transformation) observed in this case and their effectiveness is also assessed through employee interviews.

Managerial Framing	Example of Managerial Frame Alignment	Employee's Resonance	Effective-ness
Bridging	Our sales organisation is clearly 'best-in-class', but we have the opportunity to become 'world-class'. And solution selling is 'what world-class selling organisations do'.	*I don't think it's a fad, actually, even if it is a fad, it has some valid reasons. Why so many companies and smart people are saying the same thing, it must have some valid points. (SSM)*	High
Amplification	This is not just a sales organisation opportunity. This is the company's opportunity. It is a chance to transform our culture and fully focus on our customers and their business needs.	*Sales Way isn't the change, it is to enable the higher level of change which is much deeper. I'm positive because I believe in the direction of the company. If you believe in the direction of the company transformation, then you'll understand that it's going to impact you one way or the other. (MD)*	Depends, only if the employee resonate with that higher value already
Extension	The consultant/trainer talked about the Sales Transformation program as 'investment in your personal craftsmanship of selling' and referred the graduates of the class as 'PhD of Sales' meaning they have achieved the highest level of salesmanship.	*I have been with this company for 12 years and I have never seen this level of commitment from the management before. (MD)*	Medium
Transfor mation	The path to trusted advisor is not what we sell but how we sell.	*I think Sales 2.0 (solution selling) is doable but 3.0 (trusted advisor) is not likely. (SSM)*	Low

Table 7: Framing practice used by management to generate employee resonance

As you can see some frames resonated well and others remain divergent. So overall to what extent did employees "buy into" manager's story? The next section provides more details to this question.

TO WHAT EXTENT DID EMPLOYEES 'BUY INTO' THE MANAGER'S STORY?

So far, we have seen how the alignment of employee and managerial frames may be affected through the skilful use of frame bridging, amplification and extension, and that some are more successful than others, as we can see in the examples provided in Table 7. The question is that given all these managerial framing practices, did the frames resonate with employees well enough enable enough motivation to act on the part of employees? In other words, did employees 'buy into' the story?

Two approaches were taken by the researchers to understand the effectiveness of the overall frame alignment process. First, during the interview, the researcher not only asked for employees' views on the new change, but also what actions they will take as the result. These action-oriented questions help to identify employees' intentions to participate in the change. And the answers turn out to be a split result. Those who are from non-sales function such as marketing, technical support type of function show a strong sense of frame alignment. However, by contrast, the narratives exhibited by the sales workforce show strong sign of frame divergent by choosing to participate passively. When asked if he will use the 'opportunity management sheets' in the Sales Force Automation system, one sales person says:

If the tool is mandatory, I will use it but if it is optional, then frankly, I will not. That doesn't mean the tool itself is useless, I may still go through the chart mentally but I just won't trouble myself logging it into the system. (SP-4)

Another sales person expressed a deferred decision making by commenting:

I would have to wait and see whether my manager requires us to use it or not. If this becomes the template we use during our operations review, then by default, we will have to use it. Otherwise, I think no one will go through the trouble doing so. (SP-5)

Interviews clearly showed that the new frame did not resonate enough to mobilize action around it for most of the sales employees. Instead, it remained as divergent and the decision of whether to follow the new practices becomes deferred. To further valid this conclusion, the researcher did a follow up analysis by looking at the actual system utilization two months after the program was officially rolled out to the sales people and they have been fully trained. Data shows that the overall adoption rate of the system is less than ten percent. This result shows a poor level of collective action mobilization despite managerial framing efforts.

SUMMARY

The result of the interpretive study provided evidence in the following three areas:

Firstly, it confirms the notion that frames shape how individual organisational actors perceive strategic change as they enact different frames by drawing on their frame repertories. Therefore, frame repertories serve as a 'tool kit' which either enhance or limit one's understanding of the frames presented to them.

Secondly, managerial frames played a critical role in shaping strategic change through which the process is facilitated by organisational framing alignment process. Skilful use of frame bridging, extension, amplification and transformation can play a decisive role in shaping employee's response in some cases.

Finally, the first round of content analysis reveals insights about the frames management used. A total of ten major frames were identified and occurrence of the frames were counted and categorized into three types: diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames.

Types of Framing Task	N	%
Diagnostic Framing	155	66%
Prognostic Framing	75	32%
Motivational Framing	4	2%
Total	234	100%

Table 8: Frequency of framing tasks in management communication

Clearly management has been making an effort to purposefully shape the frames with the goal of mobilizing supports to the program or reduce opposition (Benford and Snow, 2000) by employees. However it appears that there is drastic imbalance of different types of frames management deployed, with diagnostic and prognostic frames much more prevalent than motivational frames. And interview results show that both diagnostic and prognostic frames are partially aligned, whilst motivational frames are poorly aligned. This last piece of observation opens up new questions for solving the puzzle: does alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing lead to collective action? What about motivational framing? Are there any correlations between frame alignment and action mobilization? These new questions were addressed next via a realist approach.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS: A REALIST APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

The results of the interpretive study confirm the finding that frames are drawn upon in a critical way by sales management as they try to shape the outcome of strategic change through processes of strategic frame alignment. It also shows that diagnostic and prognostic frames are partially aligned while motivational frames are poorly aligned. So how does this finding relate to the research question: "What constitute effective managerial framing practice to enable strategic change?" Upon further coding and counting the frequency of key words used as well as categorizing each framing task, it was found that there was extensive emphasis by management on diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks. This suggests management spend a lot of effort trying to explain to the employees about the issues and the suggested solution. One emerging issue which is important at this stage of the research is "does the number of different framing tasks correlate with employees' understanding of the issues, solutions and their collective action mobilization?" The preliminary findings did not directly address it, nonetheless, these findings provide the basis for demonstrating an informative analytical framework for which the realist study is built upon. The hypotheses below were constructed in order to test this important issue:

Hypothesis 1: The alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly result in collective action mobilization.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization.

To test out the above hypothesis, correlation analysis, which is a way of investigating whether two variables are correlated or connected with each other (Buglear, 2005) will be used. In order to do so, three questions need to be addressed 1) What variables are to be studied? 2) How would the values be gathered? 3) How would the analysis be done?

As stated in the methodology chapter, a survey instrument is used to gather the values. Paper surveys were then distributed to sales people at the annual sales kick off meeting which is the annual gathering of key sales people from the region. A total of 70 surveys were distributed to sales employees, out of which 57 were returned, completed and usable. The survey results were then manually inputted into an Excel spreadsheet.

The independent variables are assessed by calculating the mean and standard deviation of the corresponding survey answers which indicate the degree of frame resonance for each of the managerial frame, the smaller the mean is, the more resonance of that particular frame (there are a few questions being constructed in a negative fashion). This is to find out the degree of resonance for diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames. For the motivational frame, it is also further categorized by the four vocabularies of motive (severity, urgency, efficacy and propriety) in order to have a better understanding of which motive resonates more with employees.

Similarly, the dependent variables are measured by calculating the means and standard deviation for the two survey questions which indicate the level of usage of the two SFA tools by employees: the Opportunity Management Tool and the Account Management Tool. These two tools are in the same SFA system but serve different purposes. Both tools require sales people to input their sales pipeline information and record customer engagements rigorously which is part of the new sales philosophy. So these two self-assessment questions serve as good indicators for the degree of employee action mobilization.

Now that both dependent and independent variables values are available, the final step is to test the hypothesis of whether there is a correlation between frame resonance and action mobilization. Survey results are imported into a statistical tool Minitab to check for Pearson correlation coefficient, which measures the strength of the connection between the variables. In linear regression, the t-statistic is useful for making inferences about the regression coefficients. To have a large t-statistic is a good rejection of the

null-hypothesis that the factor has zero effect on the dependent variable (Buglear, 2005). Therefore, a larger one implies that the coefficient was able to be estimated with a fair amount of accuracy. But in a correlation analysis, accuracy itself is not sufficient, whether the correlation is statistically significant enough is also important in order to have a meaningful discussion on any possible correlation. And statistical significance is indicated by p-value. If p-value was 0.5, it means there is a 50% probability that the results were due to chance. However, when $p < 0.05$, it is considered statistically significant. In the next sections, each hypothesis will be tested to demonstrate how the analysis support or reject the hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly result in collective action mobilization.

Results from the interpretive analysis showed that there is a relatively strong alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing. However, the question still remains as to whether this is sufficient to mobilize employees for action. Whilst interview accounts provide some insights, a quantitative study can provide additional data points for further analysis.

Table 9 shows the degree of resonance for diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames from survey results. For motivational frames, they are also further broken by the four vocabularies of motive so that more specific information can be used for analysing which specific motive generate more resonance.

Frame Alignment Types	Frame Resonance	Mean	Standard Deviation
Diagnostic Frame	Customer - We need to be customer focused	1.569	0.65
	Process - Sales process needs to be fixed	2.870	1.415
	Culture - We have inside-in culture today	3.123	1.415
	System - Current system needs to be fixed	1.356	0.57
Prognostic Frame	Process - How we sell is important	1.649	0.89
	Process - We can learn from best practice	2.140	0.766
	Culture - Having outside-in culture is important	1.825	0.847
	Culture - We need to change to outside-in culture	1.912	0.688
Motivational Frame	Propriety – Sales people are important	1.789	0.860
	Propriety – This is Investment to Sales	2.018	0.719
	Propriety – This is My initiative	2.123	0.496
	Propriety – There is personal benefit	2.035	0.801
	Propriety – This is my manager's responsibility	3.912	1.455
	Propriety - This is beyond my responsibility	2.140	0.971
	Urgency – We need to make change now	2.228	1.035
	Efficacy – Impact to organisational performance	2.579	1.149
	Efficacy - Impact to individual sales performance	2.088	0.931

1- Strongly agree   2- Agree   3-Slightly agree   4- Slightly disagree   5- Disagree   6 -Strongly disagree

Table 9: Degree of frame alignment (Diagnostic, Prognostic and Motivational)

The result shows that the degrees of resonance vary. With the exception of 'culture' frame, in general, diagnostic and prognostic frames are either "strongly agree" or "agree" and motivational frames are "slightly agree" which mostly coincide with what qualitative analysis result.

As for employee action mobilization, the result indicates that less than 20% of sales have used the system as part of their day-to-day practice and 30% of people have never used it. Because the two tools are related, there is a strong correlation between the two with Pearson correlation of 0.958 and *P* value = 0. Note that at the time the survey was taken, it has been a full year since the Sales Way program was first introduced to the sales people and it has been three to six months since they have taken the mandatory training which covered one hundred percent of the entire sales workforce. So lack of know-how may be able to be eliminated as one of the reasons why people have not taken action yet.

Choice in Survey	Answers in Survey	Opportunity Mgt. Tool (Mean= 2.86)		Account Mgt. Tool (Mean = 2.80)	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
A	I have never heard about it	2	4%	2	4%
B	I know what it is but never used it	15	26%	18	32%
C	I have used it at least once	29	51%	26	46%
C	I have used it as my day-to-day practice	11	19%	11	19%

Table 10: Dependent Variable - Result of Sales Way tool adoption from the survey

Overall, as the statistics indicated, with the extensive emphasis on diagnostic and prognostic frames, the resonances of such frames are fairly strong except with 'culture'. However, as shown above, less than 20% of respondents said they have used the tool as part of their day-to-day work and almost 30% of respondents never used it. This result is consistent with the interpretive research result and partially supports the hypothesis that just sharing the understanding of the issue and solution does not guarantee a successful consensus mobilization and action taking by employees. Alignment of diagnostic and prognostic frames which focus on achieving 'consensus mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984) is insufficient to address 'action mobilization'. As Snow and Benford (1998) suggested, obstacles other than a lack of understanding stand between successful consensus mobilization and action. It is hypothesized that the latter task requires motivational motion for participation. Therefore, the next hypothesis focuses on exploring the correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization.

Hypothesis 2:   There is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization.

Different from diagnostic and prognostic framing which focus on 'issue' and 'solution', the key focus of motivational framing is to promote 'action' through addressing the motive (Scott and Lyman 1968). In social movements, SMOs operate in a competitive environment and compete with one another for various resources that are deemed a necessary condition or situation to achieve their goals (Zald and McCarthy 1980; Snow and Zurcher 1980). Similarly, sales people have competing demands placed on them, each of these demands is competing for sales people's time. As a result, sales people

need to be highly motivated to take action on something that they perceive as less valuable and/or have less priority than their primary focus of selling.

If motivational framing is the key for action mobilization, then theoretically there would have been a correlation between motivational frame alignment (independent variables) and action mobilization (dependent variables). Table 11 shows the correlation of each specific vocabularies of motive (Benford and Snow, 2000) used in motivational frames and the correlation of its alignment with action mobilization. Again, here the action mobilization is measured by employees' self-assessment of whether they adopted the new process and system.

Motivational Frame	Opportunity Mgt. Tool		Account Mgt. Tool	
	t Statistic	P value	t Statistic	P value
Urgency – Why do I need to take action now?				
It is urgent to make the change now	0.207	0.123	0.229	0.086
Efficacy – How can I be sure this is going to work?				
Increase organisational performance	0.15	0.878	0.41	0.683
Increase individual sales performance	1.25	0.216	0.64	0.527
Propriety – Why do **I** need to take action?				
Sales people are critical to the success of the program	0.154	0.253	0.192	0.152
Sales Way is the largest investment to sales people	0.255	0.056	0.246	0.066
The organisation is counting on me to change	0.321	0.015	0.279	0.036
I feel I have personally benefited	0.196	0.145	0.215	0.108
The transformation is my manager's responsibility	0.021	0.878	0.109	0.418
I feel it's beyond my responsibility to change	0.292	0.027	0.284	0.032

Table 11: Correlation of motivational framing effectiveness with action mobilization

Result in table 11 shows there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization, however, the significance of the correlation varies. Specifically, statistical results from the survey indicate that employees' resonance to **urgency** is average (mean = 2.228), whilst there is some level of correlation of urgency and employees' action taking toward using the Sales Transformation tool (t = 0.207, p=0.123 for tool#1 and t= 0.229 and p=0.086 for tool#2), the correlation is not as strong. This partially suggests that employees' resonance of the 'urgency' component of motivational frame does not necessarily lead to effective mobilization of action.

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Klandermans (1984) argues that movement participation is contingent on beliefs that the action will be efficacious. Snow *et al*. (1986) share a similar view that optimism about the outcome of a collective action would enhance the probability of participation and vice versa. For people to act collectively, they 'must believe that such action would be efficacious, i.e., that change is possible' (Oliver, 1985, p.21). In order to amplify the efficacy of the Sales Transformation Program, management sought to nurture efficacious beliefs by emphasizing the organisation's past track record, for example, the Global Sales Executive, at his town hall meeting to global sales team, talked about historical performance to increase credibility:

We've done this before. Sales, product and services teams have delivered many one-of-a kind solutions over the years, often through heroic efforts. We want to do it again, but this time we are maximizing our business impact. (GSE)

Another example of amplifying the efficacy is to quote how programs similar to Sales Transformation program have helped other organisations, as seen in the program communication White Paper:

The world-class companies that instilled discipline within their organisations recognized benefits, including (but not limited to) improving the individual sales representatives' quota achievements, increasing revenue by 5 percent or more, enhancing overall customer relationships and strengthening their brand. (White Paper, p.3)

Despite these efforts of promoting efficacy by the management, survey results show not all people are convinced this is going to make any difference to the organization. Some remain pessimistic regarding the impact of the Sales Transformation program to the organisation's success, whether it is revenue, customer relationship, branding or to their own sales performance. And the correlation of efficacy to action mobilization is relatively weak (t = 0.15, p=0.878).

Even when presentations by management make sense to the employees, there is always the question "Why do **I** need to take action, can't this be done by other organisation members?" For example, some sales people have stated in interviews that the department administrator should be the one that performs data loading to the SFA system, whilst sales' responsibility is to be out in the field selling rather than spending time performing data punching. Whilst people think they have the responsibility to do something, they do not necessarily feel they are obligated to respond. In his research on social movements Benford (1993b) argued that movements must attend to another motivational framing task: amplification of beliefs about the propriety of taking action to improve the identified problem. In social movements, this means nurturing a sense of duty or even ethical responsibility among movement participants. As this lesson been drawn upon into organisational study, it can be seen as cultivating employees' organizational responsibility in order to achieve the value of the organization. One specific example of how this can be done is a message from the Global Sales Executive as he said in the town hall meeting to sales people:

This is not just a sales organisation opportunity. This is the company's opportunity. It is a chance to transform our culture and fully focus on our customers and their business needs. (GSE)

This shows an effort of trying to amplify the value of Sales Transformation to something of a higher value. Propriety, in this case, can be conceptualized in terms of what Fireman and Gamson (1979, p.31-32) call loyalty and responsibility, both of which are not merely individual attributes, but cultural or belief systems involving individuals' relationship with their organisation or a broader community (Snow and Benford, 1986). The relationship of sales people with the organisation is reflected by how they see their responsibility to the organisation as compare to their primary sales responsibility. As suggested in the literature (Speier and Venkatesh, 2002), sales people have two roles in the organisation, when facing conflicting demands, their sales role takes precedence of their other organisation role and they would always view delivering sales numbers as

their primary responsibility. The relationship is also complicated by the fact that sales people have a relatively loose reporting relationship with their supervisors. Sales organizations are highly sales performance driven, as long as they can deliver sales revenue, sales people usually do not take orders from their supervisors seriously. It has been observed that in management communications organisational responsibility was not clearly articulated and the obligation to the organisation was not emphasized. All of these factors together could explain the medium level of resonance of propriety (Mean = 2.33). On the other hand, when correlating the alignment level of propriety with the two indicators of action mobilization, a relatively high correlation is evident. What this means is that those who feel 'the organisation is counting on me to change' are more likely to take action ($t = 0.321$, $p=0.015$ for tool#1 and $t= 0.279$, $p=0.036$ for tool#2). On the other hand, people who feel it is beyond their responsibility to change are unlikely to take action ($t = 0.292$, $p=0.027$ for tool#1 and $t= 0.284$ and $p=0.03$ for tool#2), possibly because they think the responsibility lies within other organisation members such as their managers or other functions.

In summary, statistical analysis indicates that there is a relatively moderate correlation of severity and urgency, with the possibility of employee taking the actions related to Sales Transformation. The results also indicate that efficacy does not significantly influence salespeople's action, although this result is questioned due to the appropriateness of the survey question. Finally, resonance of propriety often leads to effective mobilization of action. Figure 8 summarizes the above findings into a diagram.
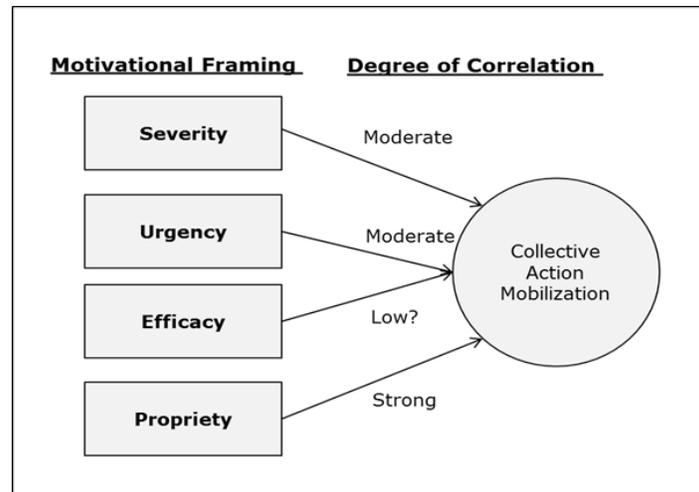
Figure 8: Correlation of motivational framing and collective action mobilization

Now let us summarize the result and realist analysis, and how does that relate to the overarching research question: 'What constitute effective managerial framing practice to enable strategic change in a sales organization?'

SUMMARY

The result of the realist research analysis provides important insights in two areas: first, it confirms the notion that alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly result in collective action mobilization. Secondly, by exploring the relative impact of the four vocabularies of motivational framing (severity, urgency, efficacy, propriety) on the participation of strategic change, it shows there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization while the significance of the correlation varies. These findings provide useful evidence to understand how managerial framing practice enables the enactment of employee collective action in strategic change. In the next section, findings from both interpretive and realist study will be put together for further analysis and the final theoretical framework will be presented.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION - BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

INTRODUCTION

This study began with the overarching research question: "what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organisation?" Given the challenges presented in this case study, what can be done to ensure a successful shift from the current sales philosophy to the new one supported by the new SFA system? How can management purposely shape the interpretations of the organisation's environment in order that employees understand and enact these changes? With findings from both interpretive and realist studies presented so far, we have seen the examination of the journey from managerial framing to employee action in strategic change unfolded from different perspectives. What comprised of single threads of information, when bringing them together, now begins to make sense as we see it as part of a canvas. So what picture is being presented on the canvas? Let's step back and take a look at the major findings from the change dynamics that have taken place in this sales organisation and consider how management can move from managerial framing to employee action (or not).

For the rest of this chapter, a brief return to the literature will take place in order to refresh our understanding on collective action frames and why that is important in achieving collective action in organizations. The case study will then be re-visited in order to decipher what constituted a collective action frame in this sales transformation program. Based on the evidence from the interpretive and realist research, a discussion will take place on how, through managerial framing, 'consensus mobilization' and 'action mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984), the two aspects of collective action framing, are achieved and what happens when they are not fully aligned. Finally, the theoretical framework will be presented as a particular contribution of this study.

FROM COLLECTIVE ACTION FRAME TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Collective action is defined as any action taken together by a group of people whose goal is to enhance their common interest and achieve a common objective (Olson, 2009). In social movements, collective action is often comprised of a set of 'bottom up' actions undertaken by social movement activists (Benford and Snow, 2000; Melucci, 1989; Klandermans, 1984) who construct collective action frames in order to gain support from significant others, such as members of the public. Similarly, strategic change in organisations involves a small group of individuals setting out a common vision and then soliciting support from organization constituents such as employees, who hold their own interests. It may appear that social movements operate at grassroots level whilst strategic change is initiated by management level who supposedly have more authority and power to make the change happen. However, increasingly organisations do not have complete control over their constituents (Tsoukas and Chia, 2002) and strategic frames presented by management are not always aligned with employees' frames as they do not simply adopt what is handed to them (Weick, 1995), as seen in this case. The word 'collective' can be misleading in the sense that people tend to treat collective action frames as mere 'aggregations of individual attitudes and perceptions' (Gamson,1992, p. 111). But as Gamson critically points out, collective action frames invoke a negotiated 'shared meaning' (Gamson,1992, p. 111) of some problematic situation that is in need of a change or fix. Gamson (1992) further argues that there are three frame components shaping collective action frames: injustice, agency and identity. The injustice component, sometimes also referred as 'grievance', can be understood as a 'hot button' that once activated is able to strike people's interpretative frames. The agency component is related to empowerment which refers to the possibility of changing a current problematic situation and 'empower people by defining them as potential agents of their own history' (Gamson, 1992, p.7), rather than waiting for other people to do something to improve the situation. The

identity component refers to the process of defining 'we' verses 'they', that is, an opposing party who have different interests or values.

Literature indicates that collective action frames have two sets of characteristic features: first, they are 'action-oriented sets of beliefs and meaning' (Snow and Benford 2000, p. 614) that legitimate a problematic situation and inspire others to affect change through core framing tasks. Secondly, they are dynamically constructed through interactive and discursive processes that attend to above core framing tasks. Together they generate collective action frames (Gamson, 1992). The link between collective action frames and mobilization has generated considerable research on social movements (Benford, 1987; Mooney, 1990; Klandermans, 1984) thus demonstrating the importance of collective action framing processes in mobilization. As we draw upon this concept to strategic change in organizations, we can see that for collective action frames to become predominate frames, they need to be 'voted' (Weick, 1985, p. 6) on implicitly by frame beholders and how sales people vote is influenced by managerial framing practices. Thus to address the overarching research question of "what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organisation?", it becomes clear that the link from collective action frame to collection action mobilization is the key.

COLLECTIVE ACTION MOBILIZATION IN SALES TRANSFORMATION

If we go back to the definition of collective action frames as an 'action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns' (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.614), we can see there are three key words in that definition: 'action', 'legitimate' and 'inspire'. The focus on 'action' sets it apart from just ideology beliefs. Strategic change, by definition, is an 'action-oriented' set of future orientation that company wants to take. In this case, the aim of the collective action of this sales organization is to move away from the previous 'product oriented' selling to 'solution oriented' selling philosophy, which represents a key industry trend of sales organisation

transformation. The creation of this new 'vision' (Battilana *et al*., 2009) is a discursive act of framing (Hirsch, 1986) and is considered crucial to strategic change. This new sales philosophy of 'solution oriented selling' also serves as a master frame (Benford *et al.*,1986) that other managerial frames fold under, such as 'customer oriented', 'outside-in culture', and 'sales performance'. Literature suggests that whether a master frame can become the predominant collective action frame (Benford and Snow, 2000; Gamson and Lasch, 1983) and be effective in appealing to others and to mobilize them into action, is highly dependent on the resonance of such frame. In other words, 'the higher the degree of frame resonance, the greater the probability that the framing effort will be relatively successful' (Snow *et al*. ,1986, p. 477), all other things being equal.

The result from the interpretive study shows the degree of employee's resonance to different managerial frames varies. It also shows skilful use of managerial framing practice such as frame bridging, extension, amplification and transformation (Snow *et al*. 1986) can play a critical role in shaping frame alignment result, which in this case, diagnostic and prognostic framing being partially aligned and motivational framing poorly aligned. The realist study confirms the notion that alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly contribute to action mobilization. And by exploring the relative impact of the four vocabularies of motivational framing (severity, urgency, efficacy, propriety), it shows there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization. However, what accounts for resonance of collective action frames? What determines the mobilizing effectiveness of managerial framing and reframing efforts? And why do some frames generate resonance, thus affecting mobilization, whilst others do not? What is the link between collective action frames and the generation of incentives for action, or what Klandermans calls 'action mobilization' (1984, 1988)? These emerging questions point us to further exam the link between managerial framing and collective action mobilization.

Klandermans (1984) made an important contribution to resource mobilization theory by making the distinction between consensus and action mobilization which separated the processes of convincing and activating. 'Consensus mobilization' fosters or facilitates agreement whilst 'action mobilization' can move people from 'talking' to 'doing'. When looking at what accounts as effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change, it is helpful to follow these two separate and yet related aspects and look at how managerial framing affect "consensus mobilization" and "action mobilization". An important part of consensus mobilization is ensuring both understanding and acceptance of the strategic change among key constituents which is a central element of the legitimacy (Fiss and Zajac, 2006). Specifically, management needs to 'provide explanations, rationalizations, and legitimation for the activities undertaken in the organization' (Pfeffer, 1981 p. 4). So let us start with building legitimacy which is the key of achieving consensus on what needs to be done (diagnostic) and how to do it (prognostic).

Building legitimacy

Research indicates that strategic change can be achieved as the result of shifts in the underlying logic by which legitimacy is assessed (Ruef and Scott, 1998) and adoption of new organisational practices (Kostova and Roth, 2002) is justified. Legitimacy can be understood as 'a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate' (Suchman,1995, p.574). Evidence in this research shows building legitimacy in strategic change is a result of two cognitive processes. First a current taken-for-granted organisation practice would be considered no longer valid and warrants change. Secondly, a new organisation practice will need to be established as legitimate such that there is little doubt in the minds of employees that the new practice 'serves as a natural way to effect some kind of collective action' (Hannan and Carroll, 1992 p.34).

Let us take a closer look at how these two logically connected processes were executed by management and how successful it was.

1. *The Use of the 'Injustice' components*

Diagnostic frames have to do with the articulation of what Gamson (1992) calls 'injustice components' i.e. what went wrong and who is to blame. The injustice component of collective action frame, also referred as 'grievance', is a recognition of an institutional problem, a barrier needing to be fixed (Gamson, 1992) or some practice that was previously seen as tolerable but now is no longer bearable. To build legitimacy of strategic change, management needs to highlight 'grievance' in the current organisation practice before they can propose the new ones. Frame analysis in this study shows diagnostic frames such as 'process' and 'system' which include: 'Process not customer focused', 'Inconsistent Process, 'Complicated systems' and 'Competition/outside force' are mainly used by management to highlight 'grievance' (summarized in Table 12) . By aggregating these common 'grievance' or 'hot buttons', management defines the problems and faults and prescribe prognostic actions such as 'common process', 'simplified system' and 'outside in culture'.

Grievance	Example from Sales Transformation White Paper
Current process doesn't support 'customer focused' culture	*The current sale process is seen to be more 'internal focused' rather than about 'customers' needs' and it's often been viewed as 'compliance requirement.*
Current process lacks of consistency	*However, today's lack of consistency in the sales process' makes it difficult for various internal organisations to collaborate with the sales team with each region/country following its own process.*
Current system is too complex for cross functional collaboration	*Today, we have 150+ systems and tools, and our processes differ across regions and even across business teams'.* *Today's process and system are very difficult for sharing best practices and talking to each other since the internal environment is very difficult to navigate.*
Outside force	*Sales organisations are under constant pressure to perform. With increase competition and challenging economic conditions, sales leaders are focusing on improving areas that will provide the greatest impact for their organisations*

Table 12: Summary of 'injustice' components of managerial frames

Qualitative data shows that the 'injustice' component of the diagnostic frame resonates well with employees. With the economic down turn, sales people find it harder and harder to sell as a 'box mover' (the institutional vocabulary that refers to low value-adding sales activity i.e. just moving the product package). At the same time, pressured by Wall Street, management kept raising the sales quota, which makes sales people's life even more challenging. Management recognizes such 'grievance' and even tries to tap into the resentment, as stated in the Sales Transformation White Paper (p.3):

Sales organisations are under constant pressure to perform. With increase competition and challenging economic conditions, sales leaders are focusing on improving areas that will provide the greatest impact for their organisations. Customers are mandating that sellers elevate their game in terms of how sales representatives engage with them.

Whilst people often assume sharing the issue or problem leads to believing in a solution, when putting interpretive and realist research data together, it suggests otherwise. For example: the survey shows there is a strong alignment of the diagnostic aspect of the 'systems' frame (with Mean = 1.356) which indicates people in general agree that systems need to be improved. However, on the prognostic side, interview result shows employees have largely discounted that having a new SFA system is the solution to the problem and they question the value of doing so. Finally, the survey results shows only 30% of respondents have been using the new SFA system since its introduction. If diagnostic frames contributed to understanding of the problem, then why does sharing the same understanding lead to a different level of action mobilization? Now let us consider how each problem is matched with a solution and how prognostic frames are introduced.

Problem (Diagnostic)	Solution (Prognostic)	Example from Management Communication
Current process isn't customer focused	Best practice	*We must apply industry knowledge of what world-class selling organisations do and use our insights into our current selling methods to develop a common language and approach.*
	Focus on how we sell	*The path to trusted advisor is not what we sell but how we sell.*
	Having outside-in culture	*Driving the outside-in, customer-centric culture is essential to our successful journey to Sales 3.0* *- White Paper*
Current process lacks of consistency	Common process	*We need a highly-collaborative, solutions-focused services team…. and ultimately becoming our customers' problem solver and trusted adviser. –GSE*
Current system is too complex for cross functional collaboration	Simplified system	*We need to provide a universal framework with simplified systems and processes. - White Paper*
Outside competition	Design of the system	*The designing of the system was to enable partners to differentiate themselves which will help them stand apart from the competition and gain credibility with prospects, customers. - White Paper*

Table 13: The matching of diagnostic and prognostic component of managerial frames

Let us further analyse the matching of prognostic frame with diagnostic frame by taking 'customer focused' frame as an example. In an employee's mind, "we have been talking about this for years" as one sales manager commented in the interview, and "nothing has been done" (SP-2). So the question people are wondering is why adopting 'best practice' and 'focus on how we sell' is the answer to this long-discussed issue. How would "apply industry knowledge of what world-class selling organisations do" and "develop a common language and approach" (Sales Transformation Program White Paper, p. 3) actually improve customer focus? This example further confirms that

decision and action require a 'matching' between a diagnostic problem and a prognostic solution (Kaplan, 2008), when there is a mismatch, it is unlikely that frames will resonate. It also shows that the adoption of an injustice frame alone is not sufficient to account for the direction of action. Thus, the injustice frame must be accompanied by a 'corresponding shift in attributional orientations' (Snow and Benford, 1986, p. 474) which is another part of legitimacy building: reframing.

2. *Reframing through Frame Transformation*

Deriving from dissatisfaction with the status quo (Schein, 1996), reframing involves a process of 'cognitive redefinition' or changing the templates that shape interpretations of the current situation (Bartunek, 1993). Frame transformation appears to be a necessary condition for participation in movements that seek dramatic changes (Snow *et al*. 1986).

Going from 'Product selling' to 'Solution selling' requires a major shift of employees' understanding. Under such a master frame of 'Solution selling', there are legacy frames that need to be transformed to new ones which are more relevant for the current situation. Through managerial reframing which connects with or bridges categories of understanding (Goffman, 1974), management find ways of developing understanding and creating legitimacy for change. Table 14 summarizes these legacy vs. new frames and we will take one specific example to better understand how management attempted to transform the frame and how successful it was.

Legacy Frames	New Frames
Product Selling	Solution Selling (Master Frame)
What to sell	How to sell
Individual sales having different selling process	Adopt a common sales approach based on 'best practice'
Working in silos and having multiple systems	Working cross functionally using one consolidated SFA system

Table 14: Comparison of Legacy vs. New Frames

The comparison shows a transformational change from the legacy frames to the new frames. And the key of this transformational shift lies in what management referred as *"*The path to trusted advisor is not what we sell but how we sell*"* (Sales Transformation Program White Paper, p.2)*.* However, going from 'what to sell' to 'how to sell' requires 'a systematic alteration' (Goffman, 1974, p. 45) that dramatically reconstitute what has already been taken-for-granted by sales employees for years. The new frame 'how to sell' is introduced by management based on best practice and by connecting the new sales approach to what 'best in class' sales organisations do, management seek to boost credibility of the new frame. For instance, an industry benchmark study result was quoted as follows in the Sales Transformation program White Paper (p.3):

Industry benchmarks on business-to-business selling concluded companies that have instilled rigor around capturing and promoting best practices across the sales cycle are able to improve their overall sales performance, especially in the areas of: qualified opportunities; account acquisition; productivity per sales person; quota achievement.

Evidence shows on the one hand, by comparing and connecting the current issue with what best in class companies do, it helps to establish credibility of the prognostic solution, however, it does not do much to promote salience. As one sales person said:

Conceptually, I understand this is the right thing to do because everyone else (in the industry) is doing is, I know what they (management) are talking about, but I don't know how we can achieve it? What works for other companies do not necessarily work for us. (SP-5)

To highlight the point even further, management used another argument which is completely against the conventional wisdom of sales people's understanding of a sales philosophy. As illustrated in this town hall message from the global sales executive:

And that [best practice] is not just about making the number but also knowing where you're in the selling process, how you go about helping customers be better and how you move your customers along the journey to allow them to be better.(GSE)

Clearly management is trying to engage in reframing in order to promote 'solution selling' as an alternative frame and to mark the contrast with the current frame of 'making the number' which only concerns with 'what to sell' and does not care about 'how to sell'. Such a legacy frame does not align with the company's new direction as it moves toward to 'solution selling'. To further clarify, the global sales executive made an even stronger point at a town hall meeting with the global sales team:

By the way, some of the best (sales people) don't necessarily have the best practices, so if they can tweak what they're doing, they can be even better. (GSE)

Interview results show that employees respond differently to this new frame of 'how to sell'. Interestingly, those who are not in sales roles and do not carry sales quota responded quite positively, as one sales operations manager commented:

This program helps to standardize the sales behaviour, and helps everyone to find rooms for improvement. (SOM)

However, on the other hand, those who carry sales quotas responded negatively, as one sales manager indicated:

These are all the right things to do. But I am not convinced this [change] will help me with meeting my quota. I mean how is having a common [selling] process going to help me with getting my next order? (SM-3)

Apparently this new frame did not resonate well with sales employees who actually need to do the selling. Why is this the case? I would argue it is because the new frame has little bearing on the institutional logics embedded in historical understandings of sales people's main responsibility which is to sell. In their mind, as sales people, their number one job is to sell and their performance is measured directly based on how much they can sale regardless how they do it as long as it is ethical. They believe that if a sales person can make a good sales performance then this person must have the bestselling practice. This implies that there is no need to learn other selling practices

even though that selling practice may be considered as the industry best practice. This evidence suggests that for people to interpret a new frame at hand, it needs a linkage with the current practices, in an experiential sense which 'grounds' (Goffman, 1974) the otherwise abstract idea of 'solutions selling'. By doing so, it will give additional credibility and ultimately achieve more resonance with sales employees.

One of the indicators of an effective reframing is that the new fame is considered taken for granted or internalized (Werner and Cornelissen, 2014). Several interview respondents also mentioned the importance of internalizing the new process, with one sales person saying that the new sale approach needs to be in our 'DNA', another person commented:

Let's put it in this way, right now, the program looks like something that goes on top of what we have. As opposed to something that's like blood going through the organisation. That's how programs like this can turn from 'dive' to 'dead'. (SP-6)

His comment represents a common concern shared by employees that if the new methodology is not becoming internalized, then it could easily fade out. Literature indicates for a frame to be considered as 'natural' and taken for granted, it must to be anchored (Goffman, 1974) or connected (Benford and Snow, 2000) with individual's own experience. The example shown above further confirms that when the new frame is not 'grounded' with sales people's experiential experience or the broader institutional logic, the appeal and resonance of the new frame is low, and reframing tends to be mistaken as simply renaming or re-labelling. As one sales employee said:

I didn't understand it when the program was first introduced. But I think it's not that much different from what we have been talking about all along. We've been talking about 'solution selling' since I joined company. (SP-7)

This example also suggests that comprehensibility is vital in establishing legitimacy, as Suchman (1995, p.573) pointed out, organisation legitimacy is achieved 'when they are

understandable, rather than when they are desirable'. Whilst there is plenty of information about the changes provided by the management, it is not easy for employees to navigate and make sense. Yet reframing occurs only when the new information achieves a semantic redefinition or cognitive broadening (Schein, 1996) such that the current frame can have a different or broader meanings than what people previously believed. For sales employees, this process involves learning when 'solution selling' is adopted and how it connects with their day-to-day sales practice.

In summary, consensus mobilization requires a match between the diagnostically identified 'grievance' and prognostically proposed 'solutions'. And to do so, the legacy frame must be transformed into the new ones through reframing which discursively iterates and bridges past schemas with current ones (Werner and Cornelissen, 2014). Thus what was previously been taken for granted is now reframed as problematic or something that seen as acceptable in the past now is reframed as needing to repair or change. By doing so, it will change the conceptual viewpoint of the situation (Chreim, 2006). It would have been helpful if in the process of reframing, managers could have used rhetorical devices to connect elements of the proposed new selling process to broader cultural understandings by explaining how 'helping customer to be better' can directly affect sales people's concern of 'meeting sales quota' in a positive way. This effort would have greatly supported the comprehensibility of the change (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005) and the resonance of the new frame, so that shifts in a predominant frame could have been achieved. (This effort is seen after this research is concluded, subsequent management communication adopts some story telling rhetoric technique by using real stories of how a sales person or team helped their customers to be better and how that earned the trust from customers.)

So far we have seen how managerial framing affects the degree of frame resonance on legitimacy through use of 'injustice' component of diagnostic frame and through reframing the interpretations of the current situation. Together, these efforts help to

build consensus on the legitimacy of the new sale philosophy which is a necessary condition for employee action mobilization. Next, we will look into action mobilization which focuses on moving employees to go beyond just 'agreeing' to actually 'doing'.

To inspire action through motivational framing

Whilst diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks focus on achieving what Klandermans (1984) refers to as 'consensus mobilization', motivational framing, on the other hand, inspires 'action mobilization', which is the final component of collective action frame. In modern organisation, management no longer hold absolute power, and authority cannot be translated directly to direction. Like social movement activists, management needs to inspire employees to take collective action toward the common vision. Motivational framing, therefore, serves as a 'call to arms' (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.199) and provides the rationale for engaging in prognostic action.

Frame analysis in this case study indicates there is a significant emphasis on diagnosis framing, some prognostic framing and little motivational framing. Whilst the alignment of diagnostic and prognostic frames are fairly strong, the resulting action mobilization is quite disappointing, with survey results indicating that less than 20% of sales employees were using the system as part of their day-to-day practice and 30% of people have never used it a year after the initial training was completed. The realist study examines this phenomenon by hypothesising 1) alignment of diagnostic frames does not directly result in collective action mobilization and 2) there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization. The analysis partially confirms the notion that there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization despite the significance of the correlation varies. The more resonant the motivational frames are, the more likely employees will take action toward the Sales Transformation program.

Realist studies also further investigate the correlation of each of the specific vocabularies of motive: urgency, severity, efficacy, propriety (Benford and Snow, 2000)

used in motivational frames and the correlation of its alignment with action

mobilization. Evidence shows there is a relatively moderate correlation of severity and

urgency with the possibility of employees taking the action. On the other hand,

resonance of propriety often leads to effective mobilization of action. The above results

shed some light on the relative impact of the four vocabularies of motivational framing

on frame resonance. However, it still did not address to what extent motivational

frames function as 'prods to action' (Benford 1993b; Snow and Benford 1988) and what

factors determine the effectiveness of motivational framing. To further investigate this

question, let us go back to the qualitative data for a moment and take a further look at

what motivational frames are used by management. Table 15 shows managerial

motivational frames used by management and examples quotes from management

communication.

Motivational Frame	Example from Management Communication
Organisation Investment	*We made a big investment in the Sales Transformation Program. It is our single largest investment in our sales people to date. – Global Sales Executive at town hall meeting with global sales team*
Increased Sales Performance	*Promoting best practices across the sales cycle are able to improve sales performance.* *According to industry and benchmark studies, programs like Sales Way typically increase revenues by 5 percent or more sales performance.* *- Sales Transformation Program White Paper (p.3)*

Table 15: Summary of managerial motivational frames

As you can see there are two main motivational frames used by the management:

'organisation investment' and 'increased sales performance'. 'Organisation investment'

is referring to the cost of the organisation to roll out the program including the SFA

system cost as well as the training cost to all sales employees as part of the global

implementation.

Interview accounts show that employees could care less about the organization

investment to the SFA system, although they are not questioning the validity of the

technology itself, they are more concerned with what the technology can do for them. One sales person put it rather concisely by saying:

The (SFA) tool, if you use it right, it's useful. If you didn't use it right, it's a piece of junk. It can only add more none value adding work to us. (SP-8)

This example shows that employees care more about the 'return on investment', which is the added value of SFA. However, evidence shows that the perceived value of the SFA system is different among employees and depends on their functional roles i.e. sales functions or other non-sales functions. For example, one of the most important values of SFA system is that of business intelligence (Piercy and Lane, 2003) which was generated by raw data which was originally input by sales people. However, the intelligence is mostly used for having a better visibility of sales pipeline which is critical to departments such as finance, business planning and supply chain as they would directly benefit from improved forecasting accuracy, lower inventory and of course, the organisation as a whole will also benefit. Unfortunately, the value of intelligence is not as obvious to sales people themselves when it comes to improving their own sales performance, therefore, the perceived value to individual sales person is very low.

On the other hand, the frame 'making the number' held by sales employees consistently triumph over other frames and became the predominate frame. The interview results clearly supported this position. As one sales person said:

Especially for new sales, they can barely finish their number, they would rather not to touch the system. However, I can see for management, it's a useful tool indeed. Particularly for supply chain, if we don't give them the right information, they will be in deep trouble. (SP-6)

What this suggests is that when confronted with a highly complex and uncertain environment without a clear and easily recognizable value proposition, sales people tend to use frames familiar to them to form simplified information and make context-

specific interpretations (Goffman, 1974). So whilst management developed a motivational vocabulary based on company's long term growth, employees, however, focused almost exclusively on their short term gain. They understand that "for individual sales maybe it will add more work but for the organisation, it's going to make it more productive" as stated by the global sales executive during a video conference to global sales, they just need to be convinced that the value they are getting worth the effort they are putting in.

As we can see so far, motivational framing tasks must build salient elements (Snow and Benford, 2000) to raise employees' participation levels. And the salience of the frame being promoted depends on whether the value being promoted is already rooted in existing sentiment. If so, the framing effort required would be less as compare to if the value has little bearing on sales people's personal interests. Otherwise, to increase the salience of the new frame, management must incorporate interests by extending the boundaries of its primary framework that has considerable salience (Snow *et al.*, 1986) to sales people. This explains why training is framed as an 'investment to sales people' by management. By framing the mobilization appeals in the language of 'investment to sales people', management seek to define Sales Transformation program as something serving the best interests of sales people. The unspoken message here is that through 'improving the selling skills', it will ultimately help improve sales performance and their ability of meeting the sales quota or 'making the sales number' which has been the core interest of the sales people. By portraying the objective as attending to the values or interests of sales people, this managerial framing task is attempting to achieve the alignment of individual sales people's value and interest with that of the organisation. Survey result shows that there is a relatively strong alignment of the 'personal investment' frame (mean = 2.018) and a strong correlation to effective action mobilization (t = 0.255, p=0.056 for SFA tool#1 and t= 0.246 and p=0.066 for SFA tool#2).

However, interviews of sales people show the acceptance of the 'personal investment' frame is contingent upon its efficacy, as one sale person put it:

Yes I do think of it as investment. If we can implement it, rather than just going through as a formality, then I'm sure the return on investment will be good. (SP-9)

Efficacy as another vocabulary used in motivational framing refers to whether what's being promoted can be achieved. Klandermans (1984) pointed out that efficacy of a mobilization campaign in persuading the individual is a key determinant of participation. In this case, sales people also take a manager's commitment as a sign of efficacy, for if management do not even believe it is going to work and do not 'walk the talk', why should sales people? As one sales employee bluntly put it:

If we could ask senior management to take the lead, if they could express their expectation for people to use it….for example, if my manager would personally use it, then it would help a successful implementation, otherwise, we could easily go back to our previous behaviour. (SP-4)

The mixed response from employees suggests the expectations of the values are important incentives which directly influence their willingness to participate. The willingness to participate in a social movement can be defined as 'a function of the perceived attractiveness or averseness of the expected consequences of participation' (Klandermans, 1984, p.586). Specifically (a) the expectation that participation will help to produce the collective value; (b) the expected selective costs and benefits and the value of these costs and benefits.

There are many ways of using managerial framing to amplify the value such that the new frame has a higher significance and salience with the individuals and organisation. For example: by amplifying what the Sales Transformation Program promise to deliver (Sales Transformation program White Paper, p.4), it raises the expectation of the collective value the participation will produce.

For the individual sales representative, the Sales Transformation Program promises to:

> • *Raise acumen and professionalism*

> • *Sharpen and hone selling skills*

> • *Enable greater customer centricity*

> • *Produce more fruitful and successful customer conversations'*

The same concept is repeated many times by the consultant during the training, for example:

> *At the end, the company gained the result, individual sales gets to improve his/her own sales craftsmanship, and increased productivity and the company realized the benefits too.*

Such discourse positioned the Sales Transformation program as a 'win-win' solution, and that seems to resonate with some employees. As compare to previous programs similar to this, sales employees feel "what's smart about this round of change is the emphasis of individual benefits to sales employees and give people more incentive to know more about the program '' as one sales manager said during the interview.

Effective mobilization can sometimes also involve amplifying negative consequences of not taking action or remains status quo. Such negative framing might prompt people to engage in more effortful processing or message elaboration (Cacioppo and Petty, 1986). For example: management use statistics from an industry research and benchmarking study to illustrate the consequences of not having the right selling skills to sales people across industries as in the White Paper (p.2):

> *According to IDC, a market research company, sales people in all sectors are not doing well, specifically:*

> • *33% of all unsuccessful deals could have been won if the seller had been better informed and had acted in a more client-oriented manner.*

> • *57% of customers feel that sales people are poorly prepared or not prepared at all in initial meetings.*

• *More than 50% of customers expect sales to be better informed about client-specific requirements and goals.*

Management emphasize the severity of the current situation and push for urgency by amplifying the negative consequences of not adopting the best practice advocated in the Sales Transformation program. The goal is to convince sales people that, sales transformation, this particular cause is more serious than other priorities and thus requires their action.

In addition to framing practices that amplifies the severity of the issue, action mobilization can also be contingent upon fostering a sense of urgency. When presented with an organisational challenge, sales people not only need to be convinced about the efficacy of the issue, they also need to be convinced that they need to make a change now rather than deferring to future action. In the case of nuclear disarmament, even though people conclude that the problem is the most troublesome (as compare to other SMO causes), unless the expected undesirable result are believed to be imminent, there are always reasons for postponing action (Benford, 1993). Similarly, in a sales organization, there are always other initiatives and demands that compete for sales people's attention. In order to amplify the urgency of the issue, management amplified internal forces such as '*the increasing complexity of the organisation as the result of acquisitions and organic growth*' and external forces such as '*increased competition and challenging economic conditions'.* Like severity, urgency can also be framed either in terms of the possible future consequences if collective action is not taken.

In summary, evidence in this research shows building legitimacy in strategic change is a result of two cognitive processes that involves promoting a particular problem definition by using the 'injustice' frame, and providing a matching 'prognostic' solution through reframing. The resonance of a collective action frame is affected by the credibility and comprehensibility (Suchman, 1995) of the frame and its salience to targets of mobilization. Credibility is essential to legitimating prognostic action as employees need

to know what they are about to embark on is something credible. Comprehensibility is vital in achieving legitimacy because when prognostic and diagnostic frames don't match, people get confused and can't comprehend the information presented to them. Finally salience plays a much critical role in reframing and motivational framing. Evidence also suggests that to inspire action, management must engage in motivational framing to move employees from 'agreeing' to 'doing'. And the effectiveness of motivational framing depends on the salience of the new frame, the efficacy and the perceived values of the collective action, together they serve as important incentives which directly influence employees' willingness to participate.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION MOBILIZATION

By now, we have seen how 'consensus mobilization' and 'action mobilization' are affected by legitimacy building and motivational framing. The analysis in this study demonstrates the link between collective action frames and the generation of motivations for action. It also explains why some frames generate resonance thus affecting mobilization, whilst others do not. The following section further conceptualizes these two dimensions and how they affect collective action mobilization.

Evidence in both interpretive and realist data repeatedly points us to the final conclusion of this research - legitimacy and motivation are both necessary conditions for collective action mobilization. This case provides a rich account of what happens when both conditions are met and when one of the conditions is not met.

Highly legitimacy/High motivation-Active Participation

As previous analysis shows, frame resonance on legitimacy can be achieved through the use of 'injustice' component of diagnostic frame and reframing the interpretations of the current situation. And motivation is primarily driven by perceived value which is measured by costs and benefits. For non-sales people, the Sales Transformation program provides many benefits including better accuracy and transparency of the sales information and a more streamlined process. As much as they enjoy the benefits

provided by the SFA system, non-sales function people are not the ones who will be inputting the information into the system, so there is little cost to them, therefore, the perceived value to non-sales functions people is relatively high. As the marketing director says:

I'm positive because I believe in the transformation direction of the company.
And when asked about how her specific actions of participation of the Sales Transformation program, she indicates that:

My job will change entirely. Previously, we just need to provide product information for example a catalogue, now we need to be able to tell a solution story…… We need to work closely with Sales and package it to something more easily understood by the customers. (MD)

It's not a surprise that people who showed a high level of commitment are all in non-sales functions where there is a high level of legitimacy and since they only get the benefits of the program without having to do a lot of work, they are also highly motivated to accept the system. Therefore, for this group of people, with both legitimacy and motivation highly resonated, their willingness to participate the Sales transformation is considered quite high.

High legitimacy/Low motivation – Passive Participation
In Kaplan's (2008) original model, she points out when frames remain divergent, decisions would be deferred. However, when we further delineate the resonance of legitimacy and motivation of collective action frames, it shows different responses. For those people who view collective action frames as highly legitimate but still lack of motivation to take action, they sometimes would chose to participate passively. When asked if he will use the 'opportunity management sheets' in the SFA system, one sales person says:

If the tool is mandatory, I will use it but if it is optional, then frankly, I will not. That doesn't mean the tool itself is useless, I actually think it's pretty useful. I may still go

through the chart mentally but I just won't trouble myself logging it into the system. (SP-5)

In this case, the resonance of legitimacy is pretty high, the sales person recognize the tool itself can be useful, however, he is not motivated enough to use it unless it is mandatory. Another sales person demonstrated a different type of passive participation by attempting to put in less useful information to the system. When asked about whether he plans to input customer contact information into the SFA system as required, he responded:

> *Sure, if I have to input customer information into the system, I would, but I will put in their desk phone number rather than their cell phone number. (SP-3)*

Apparently, this sales person is prepared to do what he is asked to do but he is not going to provide useful information fearing that information will be taken by other sales people. His concern is not built upon the belief that the new system and process are not legitimate, but rather, the resonance of motivational frame. Whilst management may position SFA as a productivity tool, sales people perceive it as a tool for management to gain control over their valuable account information. To many salespeople, the information they hold about their customers represents an important resource that will bring value to themselves, the more account information they hold about their customers, the more indispensable they are to the organisation (Morgan and Inks, 2001). Therefore, some sales people feel there is little incentive for them to share their valuable customer information by putting it into a standard format that is readily accessible, and easily transferable to other sales person. The transparency of data is valuable to the organisation as management can use it to manage sales pipeline or maintain customer relationship at the organisation level. At individual sales level, there is little motivation to them so if they were asked perform it as a mandatory task, they would respond with passive participation either by putting false information into the system or skipping important steps.

Low Legitimacy/High motivation – Deferred Decision

A 'deferred decisions' (Tversky and Shafir, 1992) represents employees' decision of not to decide, which indicates a partial alignment of collective action frame as the degree of resonance is not strong enough to enact action. The narratives told by some sales people show strong evidence of deferred decision when they experience low legitimacy and high motivation. One sales person expressed a deferred decision by commenting:

I can totally see why we're doing this [change] but whether sales people will follow [the new methodology], we can't tell now, it is still too early to see the benefits. This could be like many programs in the past that we talk about it this year but by next year, no one would even mention it. (SP-6)

For this group of people, despite their high motivation, they question the efficacy of the program and suspect this could be just another 'corporate fad' that comes and goes. Unless they are fully convinced that the prognostic solution will address the diagnostic problem, otherwise, they would rather deferred their decision. The survey result shows 30% people have never accessed the system, we can safely assume that some of these 30% people fall under the category of delayed participation rather than simple rejection.

It is worth noting that whether it is an interview or a survey, it is only a snapshot, yet strategic change is rather dynamic and the frame alignment process is a non-linear, iterative process. For example, when the change becomes mandatory and there is penalty of not using the new tool involved, it is less likely that sales people will reject it all together. Again, negative consequences can serve as a motivation, just not a pleasant one. When the SFA tool replaces the traditional manual excel spreadsheet and becomes a template for sales regular operation review, it serves as a high motivation for the employees to use the tool. Passive participation can become active participation when employees start to see benefits of using the new process and system, motivational frame then start to resonate therefore trigger related action. Adversely, if frames remain divergent then decisions would continue to be deferred or participation continues to be passive or even dropped all the together.

Low Legitimacy/Low motivation – Rejection

Evidence in this case does not identify rejection by employees, but from the other evidence demonstrated so far we can anticipate that when there is little legitimacy and low motivation, it is likely that employees will reject the proposed collective action frame all together.

To summarize, building on Klandermans' (1984) resource mobilization theory, results from this research further validated the distinction between consensus and action mobilization. 'Consensus mobilization' fosters or facilitates agreement through legitimacy alignment and 'action mobilization' and moves people from 'talking' to 'doing' through motivational frame alignment. The combination of interpretive and realist data in this research demonstrate that legitimacy and motivation serve as two important conditions of employee action taking. This is summarized by the model in Figure 9, below.

	Low- Motivation	High- Motivation
High Legiticay	H3: High Legitimacy/ Low Motivation **Passive Participation**	H2:High Legitimacy/ High Motivation **Action**
Low Legitimacy	H1:Low Legitimacy/ Low Motivation **Rejection**	H4: Low Legitimacy/ High Motivation **Deferred Decision**

Legitimacy

Figure 9:   Two conditions of employee collective action

The above figure shows theoretically how the two conditions affect employee action mobilization and what happens when the conditions are not met. The production of this model fills a gap in the literature explaining the connection between framing theory and

resource mobilization theory (Klandermans, 1984) in organization studies. By linking specific managerial framing practices to the two dimensions of collective action frames: consensus mobilization and action mobilization, it provides a useful framework to understand collective action framing and its consequences. On the practical side, it shows how managerial framing plays a dual role of convincing and activating in strategic change and helps anticipate what happens when both or one of the conditions are met.

THE UPDATED THEORECTICAL FRAMEWORK

By now, the picture of how managerial framing can affect employee mobilization becomes clearer. It is therefore time to go back and revisit the original theoretical model which is based on Kaplan (2008)'s 'framing contest' model. The revised model shown in Figure 10 describes the iterative process of managerial framing and how degree of resonance of collective action frame affect the resulting action in strategic change.
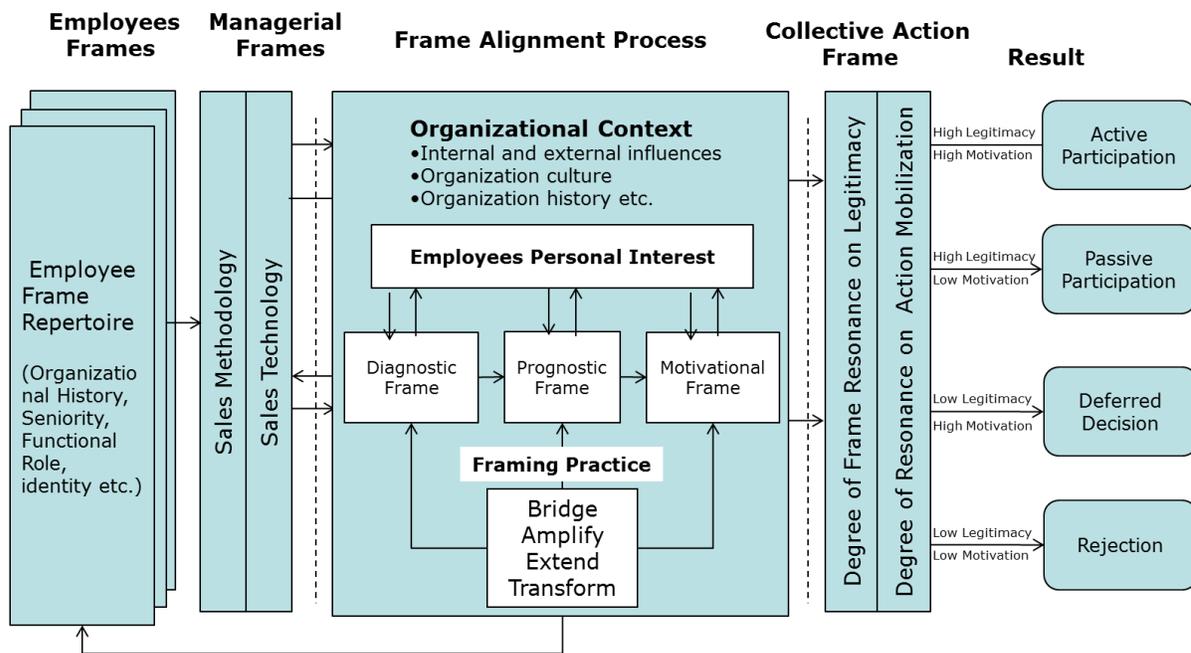

Figure 10：From managerial framing to employee action

This model shows how employees frame and managerial frames interact within organizational context where organization's strategic goal intertwines with employees' personal interest. It also shows how through effective framing practice (bridge, amplify, extend, transform), management can attempt to align diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames with that of employees to achieve resonance of collective action frame. Finally, it indicates the two dimensions of the collective action frame: legitimacy and action mobilizations, both are necessary conditions for employee action mobilization, and the expected result when the conditions are not met. While this model is built based on Kaplan (2008)'s original framing contest model, it advances the original model and provides several contributions to framing theory and strategic change which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Discussed in the next chapter will be implications of the findings of this study for company executives and change practitioners in their everyday practices so that they can better understand strategic change in organisations.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERIAL PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

In answering the research question: "what constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organisation?" this study advances prior research on framing (Gamson, 1992) and strategic change theory, as well as sales transformation and technology adaptation literature. Highlighted in this final chapter, then, are: the lessons learned from this research, the contributions to theory and practice, a discussion around implications for managerial practice and suggestions for future studies in framing and strategic change research. Finally, the limitations of this research will be presented.

CONCLUSIONS OF RESEARCH

The research question:"What constitutes effective managerial framing practices to enable strategic change in a sales organisation?" comprises three sub-questions which have been addressed throughout the research and which serve as the summary of this research:

1) **How do sales management use managerial framing (diagnostic and prognostic) to legitimize a transformational change of sales organization?**

   Evidence from this research shows that managerial framing affects the degree of frame resonance on legitimacy through the use of the 'injustice' component of a diagnostic frame. First of all, ensuring both understanding and acceptance of the strategic change among key constituents of the organization is a central element of the legitimacy. Through diagnostic and prognostic framing respectively, management builds consensus on what needs to be done and how to do it, thus providing explanation and rationalization of the strategic change. Secondly, consensus mobilization requires a match between the diagnostically identified 'grievance' and prognostically proposed 'solutions'. Finally, for the proposed new organizational practices to be established as

legitimate and employees take it as natural way of collective action, legacy frames must be transformed into new ones through a reframing process that discursively iterates and bridges past schemas with current ones (Werner and Cornelissen, 2014). By connecting elements of the new practice with past schemas, it increases the comprehensibility of the change and the resonance of the new frame, so that shifts in a predominant frame can be achieved.

2) How do management motivate sales employees to enact strategic change of sales philosophy and adoption of related SFA technology?

Whilst diagnostic and prognostic framing tasks focus on achieving 'consensus mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984), motivational framing, on the other hand, inspires 'action mobilization' to move employees from 'agreeing' to 'doing'. Motivational framing, therefore, serves as a 'call to arms' (Benford and Snow, 1988, p.199) and provides the rationale for engaging in prognostic action. The realist element of this DBA study supports this argument through a set of hypothesis and the result partially confirms the notion that there is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization. The more resonant the motivational frames are, the more likely employees will take collective action.

Realist research in this study also investigates the correlation of each of the specific vocabularies of motive: urgency, severity, efficacy and propriety (Benford and Snow, 2000) used in motivational frames and their relative impact on action mobilization. Evidence shows there is a relatively moderate correlation of severity and urgency with the possibility of employees taking the required action.

Finally, for motivational framing to mobilize employees into action, salient elements must exist (Snow and Benford, 2000). Through effective framing practices (bridging, amplifying, extending and transforming), management can increase the salience of the new frame, whilst at the same time incorporating employees' interests, since their

willingness to participate is a function of the perceived costs and benefits of their participation.

3) What constitutes effective collective action frames?

The effectiveness of collective action frames largely depends on how well they 'resonate' with the frame receivers. Frame resonance has been highlighted as a major way in which collective action frames vary in terms of their effectiveness (Snow *et al.,* 1986). This DBA study takes this argument further by delineating resonance of legitimacy and motivation as two dimensions of a collective action frame. It creates a framework that shows both are necessary conditions for collective action mobilization. When resonance of legitimacy and motivation are both high, it is likely to lead to active participation, whilst high legitimacy and low motivation would result in passive participation. Finally, low legitimacy and high motivation could lead to delayed participation. Whilst there is no data in this DBA study to support the scenario of rejection, it is anticipated that low legitimacy and low motivation would result in rejection.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY

By addressing the research questions above, the study has made several important contributions to framing theory and strategic change, as well as literature on sales transformation and related SFA adoption.

Contributions to Framing Theory and Strategic Change

While framing theory is wildly researched in social movement studies, little has been done in research of strategic change particularly in a sales organization where management and employees' frames are contested and organization and personal interests are intertwined. This DBA study advances prior research on framing (Benford and Snow, 2000; Kaplan, 2008) which describes various framing tasks (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational) by theorizing how these framing tasks affect collective action mobilization, the ultimate goal of social movement and strategic change. Through

identification of frame alignment processes relevant to framing tasks (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational), the findings of this study fill such a gap by providing a set of propositional arguments that suggest when and how certain framing tasks should be used in managerial framing processes.

The overall theoretical framework produced as part of the research describes the iterative process of managerial framing to employee collective action in strategic change. Such a framework contributes to both research of framing and strategic change particularly in a sales organisation. By providing an account of how strategically-inclined managers can employ various managerial framing practices to gain support for transformational change, it is demonstrated that collective action frames are not static characterizations, but can be changed or redefined with purposeful managerial reframing. However, whether the proposed collective action frame can survive and eventually become new organisational forms depends on how much collective action frames resonate with employees and whether new institutional logics become dominant (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005) through effective reframing.

The conceptualization of the two dimensions of collective action frames: consensus mobilization and action mobilization, which are represented by resonance of legitimacy and motivation frame respectively, provides a useful framework to understand collective action framing and its consequences in strategic change.

Contributions to Sales Transformation and Sales Technology Literature

The importance of the strategic change of the sales function and the related challenges have been well researched. How technology such as Salesforce Automation system supports or hindrance such transformational change has also received its fair share of attention. This study adds to this extant literature by identifying issues related to transformational change in sales organizations, not least the highly political aspects where managerial interest and individual interests are shown to be dynamically intertwined. However, it further adds knowledge by shifting the analytical focus from

organisational-level strategy making to managerial framing and frame alignment at the individual sales level. By understanding employees' response to managerial framing and the resulting action mobilization, it puts sales employees right in the centre of this research on strategic change in a sales organisation which fills the gap in the sales literature. In addition, rather than treating SFA adoption simply as technology adaptation, this research shows how technological frames affect the perceived usefulness of the system and alignment of the diagnostic aspect of the system does not directly result in agreement of prognostic action of SFA adoption. By taking framing construct from social movement research and used in strategic sales organization studies, this research also contributes to sales technology literature by providing a better understanding of how technology frames affect SFA adoption by sales workforces and how management can strategically frame SFA and its value to achieve desired result.

Contribution to Methodology

Another contribution that this study makes to framing theory is in the area of research methodology and methods. Whilst much prior research in social and organisational studies have used a qualitative approach such as in-depth case studies to explore framing processes and their effectiveness, this research shows that other alternative approaches are equally effective. While qualitative approaches focus on how frames are created, quantitative content analysis allows for 'encoding' the punctuation, distilling and naming managerial frames. It also allows for 'digging' for implicit meanings, assumptions and possible conflicts between management's framing task and the alignment with employees. The result of this analysis prompts more questions and hypotheses which can be further tested using hypotheses and surveys to assess factors impacting framing effectiveness, therefore better predicting the use of different framing tasks. When combining the results from both studies, the characterization of the frames emerges, and the holistic view provides us with considerable insights into the ideological

dynamics of mobilizing employees and sustaining the structure necessary for successful collective action during strategic change.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

With the conclusions from this research and the theoretical contributions, how might management frame strategic change for action differently? What are the implications for executives and change practitioners to ensure a successful shift from the current sales philosophy to the new one supported by the new SFA system? How does the analysis from this research help company executives to purposively shape the interpretations of the organisation's environment in order that employees understand and 'enact' strategic change? In the next section, these practical implications will be discussed.

1) Management need to rethink their role from convincing to activating

One key implication highlighted by this research is the emphasis of employees as active agents shaping the outcome of strategic change in organisation. Despite their lack of organizational power over management, they nonetheless shape change implementation through actively engaging in interpretation, production and maintenance of managerially-framed meaning. Management frequently talk about 'people are our greatest assets' to the point of becoming a cliché. However, when framing their messages of strategic change, they tend to neglect employees as active agents, instead casting them as mere recipients of their message whose only role is to respond (or not) to their framed meanings. As evidenced in this case, meanings shape both organisation realities and actors' subsequent reactions to such realities (Hardy, Palmer, and Phillips, 2000). But when management's efforts to shape the frames associated with a decision are met with counter framing efforts by employees, what should managers do? Clearly, management need to rethink their role in strategic change other than just simply laying out the vision and directing employees to follow. By skilful use of framing tools to influence sensemaking of organisational members, it increases the comprehensibility of the decision. At the same time, whilst establishing legitimacy of

the issue and solutions is important, management also needs to clearly articulate the credibility of the new frame and how it relates to employees' own frames through reframing. Finally, just framing the issue and the solution itself is not enough, in order to move employees from 'agreeing' to 'doing', management need to provide an attractive value proposition by addressing the question 'What's in it for us'? Here the 'us' represents both the organisation as well as employees. What we need to bear in mind is that, organisational interest and employee interest can conflict with each other. And even among employees, interest might be different from one group to another depending on their functional roles. Therefore, instead of communicating a 'one size fits all' message, management need to develop their 'discursive ability' (Maitlis and Lawrence, 2007) and tailor the message differently to fit different interests groups, with frame repertoires functioning as toolkits from which they construct cognitive frames in response to specific situations. Managerial framing needs to focus on helping employees connect the new frames to their own interest, priorities and experience, and supporting them in reflecting critically on the frames they have and the new ones being offered. In this sense, managerial framing process essentially becomes the process of establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relations between the organisation and the employees whom they depend on to make the change happen. This may help managerial practice to improve what can threaten a potentially successful organisational change implementation.

2) Management/Employees Interaction is Key to Legitimacy Building and Reframing

The importance of reframing is highlighted in this research as the key means of legitimacy building in strategic change. By changing the interpretive templates of employees, it enables them to interpret the current situation differently. Interaction between management and employees is key to a reframing process because it serves two purposes: first of all, through management and employee interactive engagement, such as dialog or group meetings, it allows for vetting of ideas and sharing of feelings (both positive and negative). Not only does it help the management to understand

employees' frames but also, through discussions, it provides management with an opportunity to articulate specific strategic goals rhetorically, and thus support the building of legitimacy. Comprehensibility is vital in establishing legitimacy of organisational initiatives because such legitimacies are only achieved 'when they are understandable, rather than when they are desirable' (Meyer and Scott, 1983). Employees' accounts in the DBA study indicated that whilst there is plenty of information about the changes provided by management, it is not easy for employees to navigate and make sense of what those changes are and what the changes mean to them. And without a clear understanding, it leaves it up to individual employees' interpretation through their own frames which can be biased and may affect behavior in ways that do not reflect the genuine purpose of the original framing (Payne, 2001). For example, the employee who had the 'mergers and acquisition' frame interpreted the Sales Transformation program as getting the MTO company ready for acquisition which is far from the truth. This shows that even when employees share the same diagnostic framing, it cannot be assumed that they would come to the same prognostic action as employees draw from their own frame repertoire (Kaplan, 2008). In this case, the employee's organization history activated the 'merges and acquisition' frame and thought the prognostic solution should be selling the company to a competitor.

Secondly, the resolution of competing frames occurs through the interaction of employees' frames and the interpretive process of the management frames. It is precisely the interactions of the interpretive processes that shape frame transformation and the emergence of a collective action frame. In this case, communication between management and employees is mostly done one-way through management emails, video and remote town hall meetings. Given the nature of a global company with diverse geographic presence, however, its effectiveness is questioned. As one sales operation manager said:

Even though there has been a lot of email communication from senior leadership team, but email is email. (The vision) sounds empty, more like a slogan, I can't fully

appreciate it.   Face-to-face communication from direct manager would be much more effective. (SOM)

The lack of interaction between management and employees can be a contributing factor to why some new institutional logics failed to establish legitimacy. As one sales director said *'If there had been communication [with my manager], at least I would feel more pressured to use the tool'.* In addition, for reframing to be effective, the new frame needs to provide a coherent experience (Goffman, 1974) to employees. And research findings show that by 'grounding' of the new frame in experiential sense, it would help employees to see the linkage of their own frame and management's. This can only happen when there are sufficient interactions between management and employees. Therefore, it is important to have an iterative communication process with built-in feedback loops that promotes employee engagement especially for management seeking to make a change to the status quo (Jerit, 2008). After all, framing is a discursive act. These interactive and communicative processes between employees and management affect frame alignment through increasing the credibility and resonance. As we see in this research, management's ability to skilfully effect and sustain a certain type of frame alignment process i.e. frame bridging, extension, amplification and transformation depending on the goal of that specific framing task (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational), in part determine the differential success of strategic change.

3) Shifting the focus from 'consensus building' to 'action mobilization' and moving employees from 'talking' to 'doing'.

Building on resource mobilization concept which consists of 'consensus mobilizaiton' and 'action mobilization' (Klandermans, 1984), the findings of this study imply that the key to effective strategic change requires employees to go from 'talking' to 'doing'. Whilst it is tempting for management to focus on diagnostic and prognostic framing, however the analysis shows just sharing the understanding of the issue and solution

does not guarantee a successful consensus mobilization and immediate action by employees. And just because employees agree with management's contention that a problem exists, does not guarantee that they believe change is possible, nor would they drop their other priorities and focus on this. Motivational framing, as one of the key elements among the three core framing tasks that hold collective action frame, delivers a common platform for processes of meaning construction and signification and provides a comprehensive understanding of why and how certain organisational decision such as strategic change should occur and why they need to take action. It is important for management to formulate a shared reality through shared vocabularies such as amplifying 'severity', 'urgency' and 'efficacy' which helps to promote a shared belief that change is necessary and achievable. Management must also incorporate 'propriety' as a central dimension of the vocabularies in order to address the question 'Why me?'. Findings from this research show that failure to do so resulted in employees' deferred action or passive participation toward the strategic change. Successful mobilization hinges more on shared beliefs that collective action will produce the changes desired by the employees not just by management.

For easy reference, Table 16 shows a summary of this study's contribution to the theory and implication of practice of this research, as well as where evidence can be found in this document.

Contribution to Theory	Evidence Page #
1. The theoretical framework describes the iterative process of managerial framing to employee collective action in strategic change. Such a framework contributes to both research of framing and strategic change particularly in a sales organisation. By providing an account of how strategically-inclined managers can employ various managerial framing practices to gain support for transformational change, it is demonstrated that collective action frames are not static characterizations, but can be changed or redefined with purposeful managerial reframing.	P. 81 - 93
2. It provides a model that shows how legitimacy and motivation serve as two conditions of employee action mobilization. The production of this model fills the gap of framing theory and resource mobilization theory by linking specific managerial framing practices to the two dimensions of collective action frames: consensus mobilization and action mobilization. It also provides a useful framework to understand collective action framing and its consequences.	P. 100 - 104
3. This research fills the gap of framing theory by providing theorization on how framing tasks affect collective action mobilization. Through identification of frame alignment processes relevant to framing tasks (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational), it also provides a set of propositional arguments: 1) The alignment of diagnostic and prognostic framing does not directly result in collective action mobilization. 2) There is a positive correlation of motivational framing with collective action mobilization. Such proposition suggests when and how certain framing tasks should be used in managerial framing process.	P. 70 -79
4. It adds to the literature of sales transformation by shifting the analytical focus from organisational-level strategy making to managerial framing and frame alignment at the individual sales level. Rather than treating SFA adoption simply as technology adaptation, this research shows how technological frames affect the perceived usefulness of the system and alignment of the diagnostic aspect of the system does not directly result in agreement of prognostic action of SFA adoption. This also contributes to sales technology literature by providing a better understanding of how technological frames affect SFA adoption by sales workforces and how management can strategically frame SFA and its value to achieve desired result.	P.60 – 62 P. 86 P. 94-96

Contribution to Practice	Evidence Page #
1. *Management need to rethink their role from convincing to activating* One key implication highlighted by this research is the emphasis of employees as active agents shaping the outcome of strategic change in organisation. Despite their lack of organizational power over management, they nonetheless shape change implementation through actively engaging in interpretation, production and maintenance of managerially-framed meaning. Therefore, management need to rethink their role from convincing to activating existing frames of employees, keep in mind that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be sufficient to address the divergent frames.	P. 56- 64
2. *Management/Employees Interaction is Key to Legitimacy Building and Reframing* Interaction between management and employees is key to a reframing process. These interactive and communicative processes between employees and management affect frame alignment through increasing the credibility and resonance. As we see in this research, management's ability to skilfully effect and sustain a certain type of frame alignment process i.e. frame bridging, extension, amplification and transformation depending on the goal of that specific framing task (diagnostic, prognostic and motivational), in part determine the differential success of strategic change.	P. 84-93
3. *Shifting the focus from 'consensus building' to 'action mobilization' and moving employees from 'talking' to 'doing'.* The findings of this study imply that the key to effective strategic change requires employees to go from 'talking' to 'doing'. Motivational framing, as one of the key elements among the three core framing tasks that hold collective action frame, delivers a common platform for processes of meaning construction and signification and provides a comprehensive understanding of why and how certain organisational decision such as strategic change should occur and why they need to take action.	P. 93 -100

Table 16：Summary of contribution to the theory and implication of practice

LIMITATIONS

This research offers a number of implications for academic research on strategic change and sales workforce automation and to change practitioners. However, the findings of this study should be viewed in light of some limitations. First of all, the study was conducted in a single industry and organisation; consequently, generalizability of the research results may be limited.

Moreover, most of the interviewees and survey respondents are based in China with the interviews conducted in Chinese and survey questions in English. Meanings could be lost or misinterpreted during translation by the researcher. This would be an inherited issue with conducting research using foreign language despite the researcher's effort to minimize the risk by doing all the transcribing and translating herself.

Additionally, whilst the researcher's role as the IT director responsible for providing the SFA solution to the Sales Transformation program provides her with unique access to projects and informants, her relatively senior position in the organisation hinged on interviewees' willingness to express their views candidly. It has been noticed that several interviewees showed signs of holding back their views or intentionally sound more positive despite being informed about the confidentiality agreement. For example, in one occasion, as the interview wraps up, the interviewee asked the researcher a rhetorical question: *"My answer sounds pretty good, right?' Or 'I sounded very positive, didn't I?"* *(MD)*

Another boundary condition of the paper is that the researcher tried to restrict the scope to a specific change within the organisation, rather than considering many changes that might be occurring at the same time within the organisation. Both the interview and survey questions were designed such that it underpins only the change for the sales workforce, despite that, at the same time, other transformational programmes were being launched simultaneously in the organization and this might also have had an impact to sales employees.

FUTURE RESEARCH

By empirically addressing the myriad ways in which getting from managerial framing to employee action in strategic change, we can begin to understand how management and employee frames can be aligned to achieve the intended strategic change and when they are not fully aligned, how employees either defer their participation or participate passively . This offers great insights to management as they strategize managerial framing tasks in order to enact salespeople's participation levels, which in turn are impacted by the resonance of management frames. These factors also build part of an organisation's identity as 'identity constructions are an inherent feature of the framing process' (Benford and Snow, 2000, p.632). Therefore, organisations also need to consider human, social, and psychological aspects of any new changes, as well as their links to identity. A reluctance to adopt the new sales philosophy could also be linked to the broader context that the entire organisation (not just sales organisation) is going through a post-spin off transformation, as organisation is struggling to define its new organisational identity, sales employees are also having a difficult time defining their sense of self. Organisation actors 'produce' collective action because they are able to define themselves and their relationship with the organisation environment. Therefore, identity, as a collective action frame component, can be considered as a multi-layered dimension generated by both prognostic and motivational elements (Vicari, 2010). Findings of this research can possibly lead to future developement of discussions around the identity component of collective action frames and develop a better understanding of how participation of the strategic change could enlarge their personal identity. At the same time, how employees see themselves and their relationship with the organisation can impact on the managerial frame alignment process. As Hunt *et al*. (1994, p. 185) noted, 'not only do framing processes link individuals and groups ideologically but they proffer, buttress, and embellish identities that range from collaborative to conflictive'. In exploring this issue, future research could analyse how collective action framing processes constitute as a central mechanism facilitating this linkage between individuals' and the boarder organisation's collective identity. This would offer

additional insights to strategic changes, particularly like a transformational change programme similar to the Sales Transformation program studied here. I hope the research findings and the highlighted opportunities would inspire future research to further advance framing theory across a variety of organizational and institutional context.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Survey Questions

MSI Sales Way Employees Survey

Dear colleagues:

MSI Sales Way program was introduced to you at last year's sales kick off meeting. It mapped out our evolution from product provider (Sales 1.0), to solutions provider (Sales 2.0), to problem solver and trusted adviser (Sales 3.0). We would like to take this opportunity to conduct a survey and get a better understanding of how you think of the program.

There are total 26 questions and your response will be completely anonymous. The result of the survey will be used to help us improve the program. And on a personal note, this is also part of my research for a doctorate degree that I am working on. I thank you in advance for your time and effort!

Sincerely,
Lin Gao
Director, Global Government Affairs
Motorola Solutions
Research Student of Doctor of Business Administration
at Nottingham Trent University, U.K.

Appendix 2: Framing Contest Model from Kaplan, 2008 (page 736)
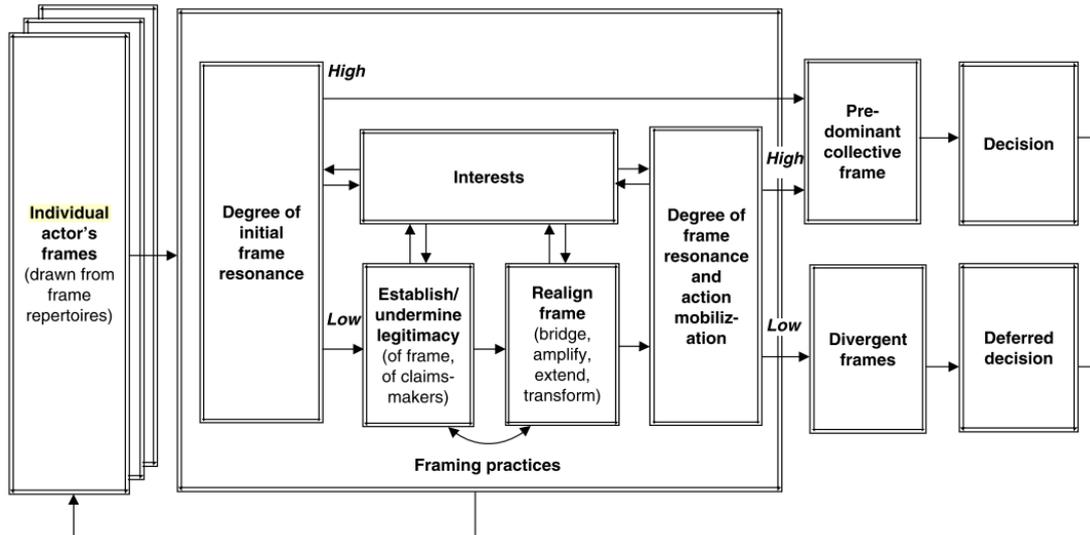
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