TO WHAT EXTENT DO CORPORATE EVENTS AND CONFERENCES IMPACT UPON AN ORGANISATIONS CORPORATE CULTURE?

A CASE STUDY OF UNIPART MANUFACTURING GROUP

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B.A. (Hons.) Event Management 2017
Signed Statement

I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation's corporate culture using Unipart Manufacturing Group as a case study. Unipart was selected as a case study due to the scale of the organisation and the close link the researcher has within the organisation. It was deemed the ideal organisation to explore the impact corporate events and conferences can have upon an organisation, as well as the organisation's corporate culture.

Within this dissertation an extensive literature review was conducted, as well as a breakdown of the methodological choices which have been justified, and a results and discussion chapter which relate back to relevant theory to the research study. With regards to the data collection, the researcher opted for a mixed-method approach including semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. This mixed-method approach enabled the researcher to gain a more in-depth understanding of the participant’s event experiences, motivations, views on networking, corporate culture, mission statements and the type of events they typically attend, in order to gain an insight into the effectiveness of these corporate events and how they reflect Unipart’s corporate culture. The key findings within this research study is that corporate events can be a source of communication, networking, motivation and learning and developing, which all reflect Unipart’s strong corporate culture of The Unipart Way. The Unipart Way is a system in which engages employees in order to motivate and equip them with the necessary skills in order to diagnose issues and create innovative solutions. The research study found that through the participant’s experiences corporate events and conferences provide networking opportunities, individual development as well as staying current within innovation. As corporate culture is a strong factor that determines an organisation's behaviour, Unipart’s corporate events and conferences allow an opportunity to share these beliefs through achieving the organisation's key objectives through these events.
Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge the following:

Thank you to Darryl Gibbs for guiding and supporting me through this process, your help and advice has been extremely beneficial.

Thank you to my parents and family for always supporting and motivating me to be the best I can be. Thank you for always believing in me when I didn’t believe in myself.

A massive thank you for Unipart Manufacturing Group and the participants who helped me shape this research study, I appreciate you all taking time out of your schedules to help me.

To my housemates, I don’t think I could have done this research process without you all. Thank you for keeping me sane and for your amazing friendship throughout the past three years.
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Introduction
1.1. Setting the Scene

‘Corporate culture is understood as an expression of shared values or as ‘the way we do things around here’, having the propensity to bind employees to the organisation in a positive and rewarding way. [...] Belonging and committing to an organisation’s values and activities can strengthen its cultural cohesion. The motivation for gaining employee commitment is sourced from the potentially favourable outcomes for employees and the organisation’ (Price and Whiteley, 2014, pp213)

Price and Whiteley (2014) describe corporate culture as a sense of belonging. Willmott (1993) also agrees that corporate culture as a way in which an organisation can connect with the hearts and the minds of the employees, in order to define their purposes through the way that they think and feel within the organisation. Some may say that an organisation’s corporate culture is the beliefs and behaviours of which employees are expected to act, and is a result of the collective traits of the employees within an organisation. With regards to corporate events and conferences, corporate culture plays an integral role. Allen (2008) suggests that the changing trend of business functions have now become more sophisticated and complex, ‘as a company develops and expands their reach in order to meet their changing needs and those of their evolving clientele’ (Allen, 2008, pp3).

‘Businesses used corporate events to foster goodwill between employees and management, encourage company loyalty, raise morale, demonstrate leadership, and provide training and show employee and customer appreciation’ (Allen, 2008, pp5)

Therefore the researcher decided to question as to whether corporate events and conferences could be deemed as a driving force towards organisational and individual success? A motivational factor amongst employees? Or an opportunity to create valuable relationships with suppliers and consumers? This research study will challenge these questions in order to find out the impact corporate events and conferences can have upon an organisation and if these events effect an organisations corporate culture.

1.2. Research Rationale

It is known that corporate events and conferences are used as a form of marketing to communicate and engage with stakeholders, however the researcher believes that there is a gap within existing literature as to whether these corporate events are associated with an organisations corporate image. Therefore it was deemed that it would be appropriate for the researcher to understand from an employee and attendee of Unipart’s corporate events point of view, the link between the event and Unipart’s corporate culture. The researcher also wanted to build knowledge upon the impacts corporate events have upon an organisation, as well as the relevance to the organisations corporate culture. Some literature regarding corporate events suggest that the primary reason as to why employees attend these events is due to the fact that it is expected of them within their role. The researcher wanted to explore the experiences the attendees have had at corporate events, their own insights into motivation and networking, in order to build an understand into whether corporate events and conferences benefit themselves individually as well as Unipart as an organisation.

1.3. Identifying the case study- Unipart

Unipart is a ‘leading provider of manufacturing, logistics and consultancy services’ (Unipart 2017). The organisation’s leading business system, The Unipart Way is a method to build a ‘unique range of capabilities to deliver productivity
improvement and innovation for all customers’ (Unipart 2017). The headquarters of the organisation is based in Cowley, Oxfordshire, however the organisation operates worldwide including, Europe, North America, Australia and Japan, working across a variety of sectors including automotive, rail, marine and leisure (Unipart 2015). The number of total colleagues employed within the organisation (including agency colleagues) is 7393, as well as 57 sites throughout the whole group (Unipart 2015). In 2014 Unipart formed a £32 million joint business venture with Coventry University called The Institute of Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, where 60 students from the university come to the institute site as well as attending lectures at Coventry University (AME 2014).

1.4. Identifying the research
The research study aims to understand the impact corporate events and conferences can have upon an organisation, using Unipart Manufacturing Group as a case study. The researcher hopes to understand the benefits that the individuals experience whilst attending these events, as well as Unipart as an organisation. This is due to the fact that within academic theory it is suggested that the real motivations that an attendee has when attending corporate events, is solely due to the fact that they have to attend, as it is deemed that attendance should be expected to go as it is an aspect of their job role. The research also aims to understand a correlation between Unipart’s corporate culture and their involvement within corporate events and conferences. All of the research aims to apply existing theory to employees at Unipart Manufacturing Group.

1.5. Aims and objectives
The main aim of the research is to investigate the impact and effectiveness corporate events and conferences has upon an organisation, using a case study of Unipart Manufacturing Company.

In order for the researcher to achieve this aim, the following objectives must be achieved:

1. To review the academic literature to investigate the importance of corporate events within an organisation, as well as assessing the relevance to the organisations corporate culture.
2. To conduct primary research through the use of questionnaires and interviews at a Unipart office to measure the effectiveness of corporate events and conferences that the delegates of the organisation attend.
3. To provide a critical overview of whether the corporate event and conferences at Unipart are fit for purpose and whether they reflect the organisations corporate culture and strategic aim.
4. To offer recommendations to Unipart Manufacturing Group.

The main objectives of the research study enable the researcher and the reader to understand the progression used in order to achieve and meet the overall research question. Initially the researcher will review the relevant literature in order to understand the topic and to review as to whether there are any gaps within the existing literature. The researcher will then conduct a mixed-method approach to research, through the use of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires, in order to explore the effectiveness of Unipart’s corporate events and conferences taking into consideration the participants motivations, experiences and insights into networking. The researcher will then review the collected data in order to provide an insight into the participant’s views on corporate events and conferences within Unipart. This will then enable the researcher to expand existing theory with applied experiences and insights from Unipart’s employees.
1.6. Outline of Chapters
The abstract, acknowledgments and list of tables have come before this introduction to the chapters.

Chapter 2: The literature review
The literature review allows the researcher to present the scope of research that is relevant to this research study. The review allows the researcher to critically analyse existing academic literature in relation to this study. Within the review the researcher will summarise, compare and evaluate the literature. The literature review explores the topics including the typologies of corporate events, experiences at events, the importance of networking, corporate culture, mission statements and motivation in the work place.

Chapter 3: Methodology
The methodology is used to describe the chosen research methods to ensure as to whether the study can be carried out. This chapter provides a justification to the research methods, as well as considering other methods and stating the reason as to why they were not chosen. The researcher discusses the sampling methods used within the study, the accuracy of the data collection, as well as the reliability, validity and ethical issues regarding the data analysis. Constraints and limitations of data analysis are also explored and discussed. The actual data collection process is reviewed and discussed, as well as detailing the thematic analysis method which will be used to analyse the interview data. An introduction to the interview and questionnaire participants is also included within this chapter.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion
The researcher will present and discuss the results of the data collection, from both the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The researcher will ensure clarity within this chapter through presenting the data in the same order as the literature review. Within this chapter all collected data will be linked back to the literature discussed previously, in order to explain the significance. The author will include quotes taken from both the interviews and questionnaires as well as presenting some of the results from the questionnaire in a bar chart, as a visual aid. Towards the end of the chapter the reader will begin to understand the main trends and themes from the data, all of which will be concluded within the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion
Within this chapter all the information taken from the literature review, methodology and results and discussion will be drawn together. The researcher will revisit the aims and objectives, in order to see whether they have been successfully met. Limitations of the research will be explored thoroughly in order to provide recommendations for future research. The author will also summarise the key findings from the data collection, identifying the key themes from the research study of which will be taken from previous chapters. The references and appendices will then follow this chapter and conclude the research.

1.7. Summary
This chapter has provided the reader with an introduction to the research topic as well as providing a rationale behind the study. The researcher has provided a background to Unipart, the case study used in the research study as well as identifying the area of which the researcher hopes to discover further. Lastly the researcher has provided
specific aims and objectives, as well as a brief chapter outline. At the end of the research study the researcher hopes to have identified as to whether or not Unipart’s corporate events and conferences are effective, as well as identifying to what extent these corporate events and conferences impact upon Unipart’s corporate culture. The researcher believes that this can be achieved through the use of an effective literature review, methodology as well as applying existing theory to the employees of Unipart Manufacturing Group.
2

Literature Review
2.1. Introduction

This section will provide a critical review of the literature that will support the research aims and objectives, and will also discuss the viability of the topic discussing whether it is suitable to undergo the research project. The researcher will discuss the existing literature based upon: the typologies of corporate events, the experience at events, networking, corporate culture, mission statements and motivation.

2.2. Typologies of Corporate Events

There are a range of different typologies with regards to corporate events, and it is vital that these type of events are accurately distinguished. According to Allen (2008) distinguishing the type of corporate function allows organisation to establish company objectives and allows the opportunity to deliver a clear message to the attendees, which will result in effectively meeting the events objectives. ‘The name you give your function sets the tone and the company’s intention. For example, a business meeting paints a very different image or event ‘energy’ than a client or employee appreciation function, even though both can conceivably be very similar in delivery’ (Allen, 2008, pp7). The different typologies of corporate events will now be discussed in further detail.

2.2.1. Product Launches

Product launches typically feature ‘celebrations of new products and corporate innovations, aimed at corporate employees as well as wholesalers, distributor, retailers, and even the general public’ (Preston and Hoyle, 2012, pp352). Allen (2008) suggests that by providing attendees with an incentive to attend a product launch event, is deemed more effective in getting attendees to attend and engage with the company and the product. Attendees need a purpose to come to the event other than just to experience the product as ‘they know they can purchase your product or service through normal channels without giving up an investment of personal time’ (Allen, 2008, pp110).

2.2.2. Exhibitions and Trade Shows

Exhibitions and trade shows consist of ‘large numbers of manufacturers and retailers displaying a selection of their products to potential buyers and/or the general public’ (Bladen et al, 2012, pp313). Typically exhibitions are an effective tool to target the consume target market or for a business purpose. Exhibitions are ‘likely to host accompanying conferences or seminars, which enable visitors to meet and speak to individual companies and organisations from the industry in question’ (Bladen et al, 2012, pp314). Thus meaning that exhibitions provide the opportunity for networking and allows for significant individuals from particular industries to present current innovations and knowledge on a more intimate and personal level, which would in fact benefit the attendee greatly. Characteristics of most exhibitions and trade shows include ‘a marketing or communication tool. The benefits of these events are that they allow direct customer contact, provide a platform for products and services, and create marketing opportunities by allowing the media to focus on companies or products’ (UFI 2011).
2.2.3. Incentives

Internal corporate events such as ‘staff social events, team building, incentives and award nights are seen as valuable tools to inspire and motivate staff and as contributing to the development of a successful corporate culture’ (Bowdin, Allen and Harris, 2012, pp61). Through the use of incentives or training programmes it allows the attendee to achieve personal and professional growth as well as developing their business skills. Allen (2008) cites that if an organisation wants effective results from their employees, it is vital that through investing in their personal and professional growth and developing these business skills it has a beneficial impact on themselves, customers and the organisation.

2.2.4. Corporate Conferences

Allen 2007 states that corporate conferences can host two very different objectives depending on whether it is a company representatives attending industry conferences against a company’s in-house conference where only their employees were attending. The nature of a conference can be narrowed down further as they ‘can be limited to employees brought in from around the world to attend the company conference or be industry related, centred around a main topic of discussion and open to colleagues, suppliers and clients’ (Allen 2007, p18). Typically the main aim of a corporate conference is to ‘exchange ideas and information, to discuss and in some cases negotiate, to build friendships and close business relationships, to encourage better performance by individuals and organisations’ (Rogers 2008, p2). The Convention Industry Council (2011) defines conferences as an event with no tradition, continuity or periodicity, with no time limit although they are typically shorter in time and on a smaller scale.

2.3. Experience at Events

In order for an attendee to feel as though they have enjoyed the experience of the event that they have attended, the experience should be ‘accompanied by a sense of freedom, and of competence and control’ (Getz, 2012, pp172). In order to understand the conscious experience at events, it is vital to understand the following:

- ‘Anatomy of the experience (What happened to you? Intensity, duration.)
- Moods, emotion, feelings (self-evaluation of the experience); intensity, relaxation, activation (bored/excited; energetic/tired; active/passive; alert/drowsy).
- Involvement: perceived duration; narrow focus of attention; ego-loss.
- Cognitive components (ideas, beliefs, thoughts, images/imagination, meanings attached).
- Sense of competence/control.
- Sense of freedom.’ (Getz, 2012, pp172)

Getz (2012) states that due to assumption that people attend conferences and meetings purely for extrinsic reasons, as it is part of their job role or business, there is limited research on corporate event experiences. However Oppermann and Chon (1997) ‘discussed the decision process, constraints, and both extrinsic and intrinsic
motivations for convention attendance by members of associations’ (Getz, 2012, pp189). Therefore with regards to attendees experience at corporate conventions or meetings, professional goals and networking opportunities are key extrinsic motivations. Getz (2012) also suggests that due to the fact there are many choices and opportunities for corporates to choose from, better opportunity, locational factors and destination image play a role in the decision making process of attending corporate events. Davidson (2003) discussed that there are benefits between destinations and the attendee, with regards to adding pleasure to their participation in corporate events, as ‘a convention might represent a rate or once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit an attractive area’ (Getz, 2012, pp189). Getz (2012) proposes that there is an upcoming trend regarding event experiences, in order to build and sustain relationships between companies and the customer. ‘In this context planned events are brand building tools, and the experiences have to be evaluated in terms of how they meeting corporate marketing aims’ (Getz, 2012, p203).

According to O’Sullivan and Spangler (1998, p3), event experiences include the following:

- ‘Participation and involvement in the consumption.
- That state of being physically, mentally, socially, spiritually, or emotionally engaged.
- A change in knowledge, skill, memory or emotion.
- The conscious perception of having intentionally encountered, gone to or lived through an activity or event, and
- An effort directed at addressing a psychological or internal need’ (Getz, 2012, pp176)

O’Sullivan and Spangler (1998, p23) also describe the five constraints of experience, including:

- ‘Stages: Events or feeling that occur prior to, during and after.
- The actual experience: Factors or variables that influence participation and shape outcomes.
- Needs being addressed.
- Roles of the participant and other people involved (personality, expectations, behaviour) in shaping outcomes.
- Roles of and relationships with the provider of the experience (ability and willingness to customise the experience, control it).’ (Getz, 2012, pp176).

2.4. Effective Corporate Conferences

Numerous research studies have shown that there is a movement towards ‘smaller corporate events, as meetings are attended by fewer delegates’ (Davidson and Cope, 2002, pp174). According to the UK Conference Market Survey, there is a declining average attendance figures for corporate sector meetings, which fell ‘for example, 138 delegates in 1999 to 111 delegates in 2001’ (MIA, 2000 and 2002 p57). Regarding the effectiveness of the corporate conference, the organisation may have to become more aware of the costs concerning transport and accommodation for several delegates to attend. However in some cases the conference may ‘function equally well with fewer of their employees present’ (Davidson and Cope, 2002 p79). Taking costs in to consideration, the corporate conferences can be cost effective to the organisations finances. Shone (1998) states that the industry comprises of a number of elements, such as the availability of attractions, the provision of transport, the availability of accommodation, food and drink, and the provision of infrastructure and support services. In order for a corporate
conference to be deemed effective, the significance lies within these factors mentioned. If each of these aspects are met successfully then it provides the structure for a successful corporate conference.

2.5. Importance of Networking

Networking can be described as a critical competency for individuals as it provides the opportunity to ‘develop and maintain relationships with others for the purpose of mutual benefit [...] gain access to needed information or resources [...] and obtain guidance, sponsorship and social support’ (De Janasz and Forret, 2008, p1). Networking reflects active attempts by individuals to develop and maintain personal and professional relationships, in order to achieve mutual benefits within their work or career, according to Forret and Dougherty (2001). Social capital can be related to the links and understandings that enable individuals to work together, and can therefore provide an advantage within an individual’s career. Seibert, Kramier and Liden (2001) prove this as they state that ‘the structure and content of an individual’s network provides access to information, resources and career sponsorship, which in turn are related to salary, promotions, and career satisfaction.’ This reflects that networking can be valuable resource as people and their knowledge are an organisations primary asset and can be seen as a source of competitive advantage (Drucker, 1992), therefore proving that networking is not only beneficial to the individual, but to the organisation too. However with regards to the literature of networking events, Mitchell, Schlegelmilch and Mone, (2016) suggest that there is little known about the value created for individuals attending networking events, and that networking events are unusual in that attendees create value for other attendees. This therefore means that it is important to measure the customer value with regards to networking and networking events, and to understand what is deemed valuable from the attendee’s perspective when attending corporate and conference events. Mitchell, Schlegelmilch and Mone (2016) came to the conclusion that a learning value is a core value from the networking events. Learning values can be reflected into specific benefits for the individual within and organisation such as ‘gaining new customers, business partners, suppliers which are mediated by that individual’ (Mitchell, Schlegelmitch and Mone, 2016, p103).

Networking can also provide individuals and organisations with innovation value results, such as ‘speeding products to market, pooling complementary skills and acting as a key vehicle for obtaining access to external knowledge’ (Pittaway, Robertson, Munir, Denyer & Neely, 2004, pp210). With regards to innovation, it allows to showcase the organisation against competitors, gain information on industry trends and benchmark an individual or organisation during a network environment.

Another value that networking can benefit an individual or organisation is reputation. This is connected to how attendees perceive the employer brand value within networking. Reputational value is a result of networking and connecting with credited businesses and reflects well on the organisation as a whole.
2.6. Corporate Culture

It is known that amongst business professionals corporate culture is ‘significant determinant of organisation behaviour and performance […] and examples of an organisation’s culture are often pinned down in the media to illustrate how business successes and failures may be attributed to specific organisational culture’ (Hiller and Verdier, 2014, p93). Research has been carried out by economists to define an organisation’s culture as ‘shared beliefs and preferences among members of one organisation […] this cultural homogeneity helps to solve coordination problems and incentive issues within the firm by getting closer views and aspirations of employees and/or by aligning these aspirations with firms objectives’ (Hiller and Verdier, 2014, p94). This piece of research describes that an organisation’s culture is closely linked with the organisation’s key goals and objectives, and that if the employee’s views reflect the organisation, it will then result in a well-rounded and successful organisation. However, according to Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales (2015) there are several definitions of corporate culture. For example one view, ‘is that culture represents the unspoken code of communication among members of an organisation […] culture is a convention that helps coordination, like which side of the road we drive on’ (Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales, 2015, p61). However in comparison, O’Reilly (1989) argues that most individuals care about the people who surround them. Meaning that ‘if we share a common set of expectations with the people we work with, we are under their control whenever we are in their presence’ (Guiso, Sapienza, Zingales, 2015, p62). Literature based on corporate culture states that there are two different definitions of a company’s culture, strong and weak. A strong culture can be defined as an organisation ‘where time is invested in communicating and reinforcing this culture, and where all employees are behaving in ways consistent with this culture’ (Flamholtz and Randle, 2011, p9). However a weak culture is described as ‘one that employees have difficulty defining, understanding or explaining. The culture may not have been defined, or it is not being actively managed […] which results in employees interpreting the companies values for themselves, which sometimes results in the company having not one but many cultures’ (Flamholtz and Randle, 2011, p9). Furthermore, Flamholtz and Randle (2011) describe that there are several specific reasons as to why corporate culture is an important factor of an organisation:

- ‘Culture does influence organisational success
- Culture is a strategic asset (a source of competitive advantage)
- Culture functions as ‘organisational glue’
- Culture affects financial performance
- Culture is a driver or strategic building block of organisational success
- Culture influences the success of people in organisations
- Culture is a more important factor than ‘strategic fit’ in mergers and acquisitions’
(Flamholtz and Randle, 2011, p13)

2.7. Mission Statements

An effective mission statement can be defined as ‘the fundamental unique purpose that sets a business apart from other firms of its type and identifies the scope of the businesses operations in product and market terms’ (Pearce
and David, 1987, p109). There are many areas that mission statements can benefit; such as staff motivation, as an effective statement helps individuals produce something worthwhile. Thus meaning that an organisation’s mission statement is a general declaration of attitude and outlook (Pearce and David, 1987). According to most literature a company’s mission statement can be used as a managerial tool and ‘can help focus the organisation on what really matters’ (Ireland and Hitt, 1992, p34). According to Vizeu and Matitz (2013), a mission statement with regards to management of an organisation, can be associated with providing focus and direction to employees as well as encouraging their performance, thus suggesting that a mission statement serves as a source of inspiration and a powerful communicative tool. However in some cases mission statements can be too generalised and not specific enough. For example it is argued that ‘mission statements should contain measurable goals, differentiate the firm from others, identify the firms’ aspirations rather than just its present business, be relevant to all stakeholders, and be inspirational’ (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997, p59). Addressing employees within an organisation’s mission statements is common. For example according to Leauthesser and Kohli (1997) many mission statements include an organisation stating commitment to providing an atmosphere of which employees can grow and feel a sense of accomplishment. Furthermore, mission statements can be used as a method of setting a good impression on the organisation, as ‘organisational missions are created to give an impression that the firm has appropriate and publicly acceptable objectives’ (Bartkus and Glassman, 2008, p210). It is suggested by Bartkus and Glassman (2008) that this is due to the fact that organisations want to build a positive relationship with their stakeholders, resulting in an organisation’s mission statement to typically include concern for employees, society and customers.

2.8. Motivation in the workplace

Maslow (1954) suggested a classification of ‘basic needs into five categories: physiological, safety and security, belongingness, esteem and self-actualisation’ (Lester, 2013, p15). This theory suggests that if more of these basic needs were met, the better psychological health of the individual. With regards to the self-actualisation category, ‘self-actualisation involves deepening one’s personality, strengthening one’s value system, creating greater challenges for oneself, and developing new ways to express compassion’ (Hall and Hansen, 1997, p24). Thus therefore means that the concept of self-actualisation can reflect on an individual’s talents and goals. Thus meaning that an employee’s basic needs should be satisfied during their time at an organisation, and therefore meaning that the individual will become more motivated and will have a positive effect upon their work for the organisation.

Furthermore there are many methods to effectively motivate employees and increasing their morale. For example Hopkins (1995) suggests that social gatherings such as organised recreation, charitable work or holiday parties, ‘can create an atmosphere of caring and support that will give employees a sense of belonging that will carry over in their work’ (Hopkins, 1995, p26). The literature suggests that the sense of belonging with the organisation will result in employees taking responsibility within their role and responsibilities, therefore improving the morale of the workforce. Hopkins (1995) also proposes that employee meetings are an effective way to boost motivation. Meetings such as ‘complaint sessions, discussion forums or informal ‘bull’ sessions’ (Hopkins, 1995, p27) are all beneficial ways in creating a system of communication between employees and management.

2.9. Effectiveness of motivated staff
According to Thomas and Adair (2004) to be able to get the best from people, it is imperative for an organisation to maintain consistent high performance, and ensuring that individuals are inspired to work to the best of their ability, all of which depends on the skills of motivation and leadership. ‘Motivation is about something within you impelling you to move forwards, to achieve a goal, to make progress in a task. The ‘something’ which is the driving force may be a need, or a desire, or an emotion’ (Thomas and Adair, 2004, p58) all of which drives individuals to act or work in a certain way. Thomas and Adair, (2004, p58) also stated that ‘the typical qualities of a motivated person include:

- A willingness to work
- Dedication to the project or common cause
- Alignment of the person with the organisational goals
- Commitment
- An appetite to achieve
- An energy
- Drive and determination
- Tenacity
- Strength of purpose
- Orientation to work’

Thomas and Adair (2004) suggest that in order to motivate individuals, provide an incentive for them to do something, in order to initiate certain behaviours and to stimulate them into an activity. This therefore can be done by ‘infusing them with your own spirit, sense of achievement and motivational thoughts’ (Thomas and Adair, 2004, p59).

According to the literature, Herzberg (1959) claimed that ‘people who are satisfied with their jobs were motivated by the need for achievement, recognition, self-actualisation’ (Thomas and Adair, 2004, p65), and therefore by building these motivators organisations allow their employees to have more job enrichment.

As part of the literature, Herzberg (1959) suggests six motivating factors that therefore result to job satisfaction. One of which being the possibility of growth, where individuals have the potential to grow professionally within the organisation. With regards to the research topic, corporate conferences and events allow the opportunity for employees to network and gain knowledge, all of which allow personal and professional growth, thus resulting in a well-rounded and motivated individual who will benefit the organisation.
3

Methodology
3.1. Introduction
This research study used a mixed method approach as a research method as it is the most suited method for the chosen topic. A mixed method is one ‘in which the researcher uses multiple methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2001, pp174). The researcher will highlight the characteristics of both qualitative research and quantitative research, as well as including a comparison between both the research methods, to come to the conclusion of the justification of a mixed method approach to the research study. Lastly, the ethical reasons and validity around the research will be discussed, as well as the data collection and analysis methods.

3.2. Characteristics of Qualitative Research
‘Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that the qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, pp3). One of the reasons as to why the researcher chose qualitative research methods, is due to the fact that it allows the opportunity to talk directly to people and gather up close information, providing a face to face interaction with the participants. Qualitative research is also appropriate for the research study as there is an issue that needs to be explored further. This method of research allows the researcher to directly address the issue and to not fully rely on existing literature. ‘We use qualitative research to follow up quantitative research and help explain the mechanisms or linkages in casual theories or models’ (Creswell, 2012, pp48). The theory behind the research project provides a basic background of the trends and associations, however qualitative research provides a deeper understanding of the participant’s responses, and therefore provides a more thorough insight into the research study.

3.3. Characteristics of Quantitative Research
‘Quantitative research involves the interplay among variables after they have been operationalised, allowing a researcher to measure study outcomes’ (Martin & Bridgmon, 2012, pp3). At the core of quantitative research is measuring and analysing how the variables change through the results gathered from the research. Therefore allowing the researcher to ‘determine the relationship between one thing and another in a population’ (Hopkins 2008). Quantitative research is used to measure the problem through the use of producing numerical data, and then used to measure the opinions and attitudes within the sample population.

3.4. A comparison between Qualitative and Quantitative Research
Glesne & Peshkin (1992) suggests that are four main differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods.

1. Assumptions:
   - Quantitative: reality is single and tangible. Social facts have an unbiased reality.
   - Qualitative: reality is multiple and constructed. Realty is socially constructed.

2. Purposes:
   - Quantitative: generalisability, prediction and casual explanations
   - Qualitative: contextualisation, interpretation and understanding actors’ perspectives

3. Approach:
   - Quantitative: manipulation and control, formal, structured instruments, deductive, seeks consensus, reduces data to numerical indices
   - Qualitative: emergence and portrayal, researcher as the instrument, inductive, seeks pluralism and complexity, makes little use of numerical indices

4. Researcher role:
   - Quantitative: detachment and impartiality, objective representation, outsider’s point of view
   - Qualitative: personal involvement and partiality, empathic understanding, insider’s point of view

Adapted from Glesne & Peshkin (1992)
3.5. Mixed-Methods Approach

Therefore, a mixed-method approach was reasoned to be fit for the research topic as the results from both the quantitative and qualitative research can be used to support each other, as well as to see if they confirm each other’s findings (Vogt, Gardner and Haeffele 2012). A mixed-method approach also allows the researcher to ‘use one method to inform another method’ (Vogt, Gardner and Haeffele, 2012, pp107). Interview data can provide a broader sample of the population, equally questionnaires can probe into deeper areas of a topic raised.

3.6. Mixed method research justification

The methods used to carry out this study include semi structured interviews and questionnaires, as well as relevant reviewed literature that are suitable to the topic of the study. Due to the nature of the mixed research study, a case study of Unipart Manufacturing organisation was used. This design of qualitative research can be defined as ‘the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information’ (Creswell, 2012, pp97). The main justification as to why a case study was incorporated into the research study is due to the fact that the results are of particular relevance. ‘As applied research the research could well produce recommendations in relation to things like organisational rules and practices, social policies or agendas for change’ (Denscombe, 2002, pp43). Therefore through the use of questionnaires and interviews to the employees of Unipart the results provide evidence to support the study and enables the researcher to compare the results to existing literature and to lastly evaluate and provide recommendations to the organisation.

3.7. Description of sampling methods

The main method used to obtain the data was of a mixed method nature, this therefore influenced the choice of methods used. Ezzy (2002) describes that that the main importance of sampling is due to the relevance to the research question. Samples allow the researcher to conduct valid research practice as it enables to ‘obtain generalizability in quantitative research and trustworthiness in qualitative research’ (Wilson, 2014, pp45). With regards to the research topic in question, it was deemed that selective sampling was a practical and relevant means of research for the topic. This is due to the fact that ‘the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research’ (Patton, 1990, pp169). The research study focuses specifically on Unipart and Unipart’s employees’ experiences at corporate events and conferences. Therefore selective sampling is the most appropriate method as it is a ‘calculated decision to sample a specific locale according to a preconceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions, which are worked out in advance for a study’ (Coyne, 1997, pp624). The selective sampling method allows the researcher to directly target subjects who possess specific characteristics that will benefit the research, in this studies case all subjects are an employee of Unipart and have attended corporate events and conferences.

3.8. Accuracy of data collection

Denscombe (2002) states that researchers are faced with two questions when it comes to the accuracy of the research; the first being whether or not the data is valid and whether the methods used to collect the data are reliable. To ensure that the data collected is accurate, the researcher ensured that all questions posed to the interviewees were specific and relevant to the research question, in order to highlight the matter that is under investigation accurately, therefore successfully fulfilling the aim. The researcher made sure that right questions were being asked through ‘making sure that the question is on target as far as what needs to be known and what is already known about the topic the researcher wishes to investigate’ (Denscombe, 2002, pp101). Therefore the researcher ensured that the questions had correlation to the literature review. Through the use of a mixed-method
approach the researcher ensured that the data collection is neutral and consistent. This was achieved as the researcher did not interfere and minimised the amount of interpretation on their part, as ‘the more the explanation calls for intricate insights and detailed insider knowledge the more it opens the way for bias to creep into the analysis’ (Denscombe, 2002, pp110). Whilst collecting the data the researcher ensured that the questions set were opened ended in order to prevent biased answers that would affect the results of the research.

3.9. Reliability, validity and ethical issues of data analysis

It was decided that the best method to prepare the data from the semi-structured interviews was to transcribe the narrative off the recording device used. The data collected from the interviews are reliable as the interviews were one to one and used standardised questions for each interviewee. Transcribing allows the researcher to highlight segments in the data that relate to the research question as well as the literature topics that were mention in the literature review. Analysing the interview data allows the researcher to physically see a correlation and response between the data and the research question, as ‘this segment is a unit of data which is a potential answer or part of an answer to the question you have asked in this study’ (Marriam, 2014, pp176). When analysing the data it was clear that there was a recurring consistencies, which were relevant to the research topic therefore proving that the method of analysing the data is reliable. This also shows that the data analysis is valid as the results prove that the questions asked by the study have been answered efficiently, therefore staying on topic and providing a range of answers that aid a conclusion to the research question. With respect to the ethical issues regarding data analysis, the three main issues that may occur include siding participants, disclosing only positive results and disrespecting the privacy of the participants (Creswell, 2012). In order to ensure that these ethical issues are addressed, the researcher has ensured that various perspectives will be shown and that all conflicting findings are reported. When analysing the transcripts of the interviews, the researcher ensured that the participant’s actual names were not used, and were defined at male 1, 2 and female 1, 2, 3, 4.

3.10. Constraints and limitations of data analysis

‘In methodological literature one refers to saturation in terms of nothing new or unpredictable turning up when collecting data’ (Flick, 2013, pp475). This may become a limitation to the researcher, as whilst analysing the collected data it may become apparent the data does not provide statistical significance. This will therefore have an effect on the feasibility on the research study. However the results of the study have proven that there are relatable and contrasting findings that reflect or contradict the literature based on the study. It is also important the researcher ensures that they are using the correct methods and tools in order to accurately analyse the data effectively. However the researcher has made sure that the methods of analysing the data are suitable in order to publish accurate findings.

3.11. Methods chosen and justification

3.11.1. Interviews

An interview can be defined as ‘a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study’ (DeMarrais, 2004, pp55). Interviewing is one of the best techniques with regards to the research study as the researcher only chose to interview selected individuals. The typology of the methods used include semi-structured interviews which include ‘a mix of more and less structured interview questions’ (Marriam, 2014, pp89). Typically all questions are used flexibly and the majority of the interview is guided by a list of questions that need to be explored further. The main reason as to why semi-structured interviews were used is because it allows the researcher to ‘respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to the new ideas on the topic’ (Marriam, 2014, pp90). Semi structured interviews were deemed the most appropriate in order to successfully fulfil the research aims and objectives.

3.11.2. Structured versus semi-structured interviews
Interviews are conducted typically on a face to face basis, however interviews can be separately categorised. ‘They can range from informal, unstructured, naturalistic, in-depth discussion through to very structured formats with answers offered from a prescribed list in a questionnaire or standardised interview schedule’ (Jupp, 2006, pp157).

With regards to structured interviews, the more directed and concentrated the interview is, generally less time-consuming and less problematic is the analysis (Jupp 2006). However when opting for structured interviews, ‘there is generally an increased likelihood that the researcher might not be asking the most significant questions or unduly structuring responses’ (Jupp, 2006, pp158). Whereas semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to talk freely regarding the research topic and can produce valuable grounded research. Conversely the data can be ‘very time-consuming to analyse and the potential for bias on behalf of the interviewer might be increased’ (Jupp, 2006, pp157).

3.11.3. Questionnaires

The other method that the researcher used was questionnaires. Questionnaires were beneficial to the research study as it provides an opportunity to compare and contrast against other research as well as gaining large amounts of data from a varied individuals within the organisation. This is vital to the researcher as the only other means of research was done via semi-structured interviews, therefore questionnaires provides data from a large scope of the organisation and not just those who were organised to be interviewed.

3.12. Research process

3.12.1. Interviews

Through a close link to Unipart Manufacturing Company, the researcher was able to communicate via email to participants the details and nature of the research study. From there the researcher was able to organise six semi-structured interviews spread out across two days at the organisations base office. The respondents all worked for Unipart and all had varied roles across the organisation, including personal assistants to the institute director. The researcher managed to access interviews from a range of different individuals in different job roles, providing scope to the research study. The researcher constructed a list of semi-structured questions that needed to be asked, and recorded the responses on a mobile phone. The interviews were held within the Coventry division, where the interviewer met the respondents at their personal offices within the organisation. Typically each interview lasted around twelve minutes once each question had been answered to the best of their ability. To begin with the researcher felt anxious about conducting the interviews, but once the researcher and the participant began to communicate and engage with the questions, the researcher felt more at ease and comfortable.

3.12.1.1 Analysing interview data

Thematic analysis was deemed the most appropriate method of analysing the data gathered from the recorded interviews. ‘Thematic analysis allows a researcher with a qualitative method and design to develop themes and a code’ (Boyatzis, 2009, pp160). After the process of transcribing the interview, notes were then organised using thematic categories which are drawn from the literature relevant to the research topic. The quotes taken from the transcripts are then sorted into the modified categories, for example motivation in the work place. The researcher will then consider patterns in light of existing literature, and will then demonstrate how the findings relate to the understandings of others (Angrosino 2013). There is potential that the findings ‘may confirm what is already known and add new illustrative examples to an established perspective. Or they may run counter to the expectations and thus stimulate further research’ (Angrosino, 2012, pp 74).
3.12.2. Questionnaires

Moving on, the researcher was also able to distribute questionnaires at the organisation through the researchers close link, as well as communicating with the receptionist to hand out the questionnaires to the employees. The questionnaires were clear and concise and enabled the researcher to obtain the correct responses needed. The researcher obtained ten full completed questionnaires, within fifteen being distributed to the organisation.

3.12.2.1. Analysing questionnaire data

The researcher analysed and presented the questionnaire data through the use of pie charts, bar and line graphs of which will be used to back up the qualitative data collected from the interviews. The results gathered from the questionnaires will be presented during the results and discussion chapter of the research study, in order to support the findings to generate a stronger discussion regarding the results collected.

3.13. Table 1: Introduction to Interview Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Transcribed as</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Years working at Unipart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl Perrin</td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Institute Director</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham Giles</td>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Principle Engineer</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison H Robb</td>
<td>F1</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison Perry-Ogden</td>
<td>F2</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny Mawee</td>
<td>F3</td>
<td>Marketing and Early Talent Coordinator</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May Alon</td>
<td>F4</td>
<td>Solutions Design Engineer</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.14. Table 2: Introduction to Questionnaire Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Years of working at Unipart</th>
<th>Transcribed as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing Engineer</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Q1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Manager</td>
<td>6 years or above</td>
<td>Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Centre Operations Manager</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing Engineer</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Q4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>6 years or above</td>
<td>Q5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Controller</td>
<td>6 years or above</td>
<td>Q6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer at AME (Research &amp; Development)</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Q7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Development Manager</td>
<td>6 years or above</td>
<td>Q8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Engineer</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Q9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>6 years or above</td>
<td>Q10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.15 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and given reasoning for the chosen research design of a mixed-method approach, through using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The researcher has considered ethical considerations, sampling techniques as well as validity issues regarding the research topic. Constraints and limitations of the data analysis have been taken into consideration, as well as detailing the way in which the data was collected and recorded in order to successfully begin the process of analysing and preparing the results.
4

Results and Discussion
4.1. Introduction

Within this chapter the researcher will present the results of the six semi-structured interviews, as well as using the results from the questionnaires to support the data. The researcher hopes to find a link between the findings and the existing literature, as well as being able to potentially contribute to the current academic knowledge. The chapter will include both the findings from the research as well as a discussion, in order to add a framework to the results. The thematic analysis method enabled the researcher to produce six sub themes, including: corporate culture, experience at events, mission statements, motivation, networking and the typologies of events.

4.2. Typologies of Events

4.2.1. Respondents Contribution to Typologies of Events

The typologies of corporate events (see section 2.2, pp6), according to Allen (2008) are vital to distinguish as it allows organisations to determine the businesses objectives as well as providing an opportunity to deliver a specific message to the attendees, therefore meeting the events objectives and targets. Allen (2008) also suggests that the type of event that is being hosted, mirrors the company’s intention and tone of the event. For example when the participants were asked during the interviews what type of events have they attended in the past, one respondent replied stating:

“We’ve done team building for cost saving, divisional meetings which are the management ones’ (F3)

This statement agrees with Allen (2008) as for example team building events will have a contrasting dynamic and goals compared to a divisional meeting where the focus will be on corporate targets between managerial members of staff.

When the researcher began to collect the data for the research project it was clear that due to the market that Unipart is in, trade shows and exhibitions are the more frequent corporate events that the participants attend. Bladen et al (2012) propose that trade shows include manufacturers displaying a section of their product to potential buyers or even the general public. One participant described a trade show that they had attended previously:

“I’ve been to a couple of trade shows, one in Durham which was called Octoberfest that was at the end of October, that was just a manufacturing show. I’ve hosted a stand in the Ricoh in November in an event called Imagineering, which is about trying to get young people, typically primary school up to year 6 interested in science, so that was a science fair’ (M1)

Bladen et al (2012) also suggests that exhibitions and trade shows enable participants as well as manufacturers to network and communicate with their audience on a more personal level, which is clear that participant M1 hope to have achieved at these trade shows an exhibitions, as well as sparking an interest with the general public regarding Unipart Manufacturing.

One participant spoke about their attendance at past trade shows with their previous employer:
I’ve been to trade shows when I worked with Wedgewood, where I worked in the marketing department. So of course you go to tradeshows to show our wears, and that was always exciting because you would see what your competitors are doing’ (F1)

The respondents experience at trade shows prove that they enable organisations in particular industries, in this case manufacturing, to present the current innovations that are ongoing in that specific market from existing competitors. The respondent also mentioned that due to the fact that they were an employee of a marketing department, attending trade shows were a valuable tool to market the product or service. For example within the researchers literature review, UFI (2011) suggest that trade shows allow the organisation to market and communicate directly to the customer, provide a platform for the products and services as well as sparking a marketing opportunity for media to concentration on the organisations products and services.

Internal corporate events such as team building were discussed by participants during the researcher’s interviews. With regards to internal corporate events such as team building, Allen (2008) believes that if an organisation wants to get the full potential out of their employees, an investment should be made into their personal and professional growth, as well as developing their business skills. Participant M1 continued to describe a recent team building event that they had attended:

‘Last week we have a team building event, so that was over at the university where we had two of the research centres, one in tourism manufacturing and one in transport mobility, so collectively that was probably around about 100 people. And I took some of the Unipart staff along to that, so that they could participate in and contribute to it in regards to giving a business perspective but also they could see what’s going on, on the really low level far from the market research so I’ve done that within the last week’ (M1)

The response therefore agrees with Allen (2008) with regards to the fact that team building events allow the attendees to achieve professional growth, as well as developing their business skills. This will then in turn have an effect upon themselves as an individual, Unipart’s customers and then lastly the organisation as a whole.

With reference to the research that was under taken in the form of a questionnaire, the respondents were asked what type of events they typically attend and were given the option to tick as appropriate. The results are shown below in the form of a bar graph:
The results that had been collected show that conferences was the most frequent corporate event that the research sample attend. The Convention Industry Council (2011) describe conferences as an event that sticks to no tradition, continuity or periodicity, with no time limit. This therefore means that conferences are typically a broad category of corporate event that can be large or smaller in scale and does not have a set structure or content, meaning that the participants are more likely to attend a varied structure based upon a conference. One participant pointed out an annual conference that they have attended:

‘We do an annual UMG conference, so that’s pretty much all I go to at the moment’ (F2)

The Unipart Manufacturing Group annual conference was also mentioned in another participant’s statement:

‘We’ve got sort of internal conferences, we’ve got a couple a year’ (F4)

Rogers (2008) suggests that conferences allow for all parties to exchange ideas and knowledge, build business relationships and can encourage higher performance from the individuals as well as the organisation as a whole.
4.3. Experience at Events

4.3.1 Respondents Contribution to Experience at Events

Within the literature chapter (see chapter 2.3, pp7), Getz (2012) suggest that there are specific factors of which determine the experience participants endure as to whether the event is enjoyable. One of these aspects include the anatomy of these experience, this is regarding what actually happened at the event, the intensity as well as the duration. When undertaking the research, the researcher asked what events the participants have enjoyed and why. One participant stated that he enjoys internal conferences more so than trade shows due to understanding more about how the seniors operate within Unipart:

‘I enjoy some internal conferences and management conferences just because you sort of get more of a feel for how some of the seniors operate and I enjoy trade shows to a point, but then I find there just a sales opportunity really for other people, so I don’t enjoy having things sold to you for a whole day, it can get a bit tiring when you just want a bit of technical knowledge really’ (M2)

The participants answer supports Getz (2012), as the actual content of a trade show has an effect on the participants overall experience of the event, however the content of internal conferences are of interest to the individual, having a positive impact upon the individuals experience.

Getz (2012) believes that there is an assumption that attendees of conferences and meetings are purely for extrinsic reasons, as the attendance is due to the role of the individual. When researching as to what attracts the participants to attending corporate events and conferences, the researcher collected mixed results. For example one participant stated that:

‘I think that it’s the topics discussed, so if it’s something that I can learn from, if it’s something that’s new, if it’s something that I can relate to as well’ (F4)

However in comparison to this, one participant stated that their attendance depends on how long the conference or event is as well as the content included, which also relates back to Getz (2012) anatomy of the event.

‘Probably that they are not too long, and that the speakers are interesting and that the topics are interesting’ (F2)

One respondent strongly agreed with Getz (2012) suggestion that people only attend conferences and meetings for the reason that it is incorporated into their role:

‘Nothing other than sometimes it’s a bit of a duty to go. And I do want to catch up with what’s been going on’ (M2)

Moving on, Getz (2012) suggests that there are many choices and opportunities with regards to corporate events and conferences, meaning that locational factors play a significant role when attendees decide to attend these events. The researcher investigated as to what is the most important factor for the attendees when attending corporate events and conferences. The results are shown below:
Most important factor when attending corporate events and conferences

The results show that the availability of the attractions is a strong factor that determines as to whether the individual decides to attend the event. These results validate Davidson (2003) suggestion that there is a correlation between certain destinations and the attendee, which adds an appeal to participate. Similarly, Getz (2012) agrees that a corporate event or conference presents an opportunity to visit an area that hosts appealing attractions, as well as the actual event.

According to O’Sullivan and Spangler (1998) a constraint of an event experience can be due to the participants needs not being addressed accurately. The researcher questioned participants as to what they would change regarding the corporate events and conferences that they attend. One participant highlighted that a clear message is vital for attendees:

‘So I think it’s about having a clear message, what the purpose is. I think it’s also understanding what people want to find out. And I think the other thing is, you know, it’s about being honest so you know if were talking about a specific topic, recognising where we are and where we kind of want to get to, trying to fit around that’ (F4)

O’Sullivan and Spangler (1998) also suggest that constraint of an event experience can be sourced from the understanding of participants such as their personalities, expectations and behaviours that will shape the events outcome. With regards to the researcher’s results, one respondent believes that the participants’ enjoyment of a corporate event or conference is determined by engagement and the potential to develop and learn from the event:

‘It’s about how we can make something exciting and interesting that they feel they’re going to leave having learnt something and that it was really worthwhile. So I think it’s about really trying to understand what the purpose of it is and how we’re going to position it, how we’re going to sell it, because we’re not just selling it at a cost to attend, the biggest driver it whether someone can give a day of their time’ (M1)
In relation to the role of the participants at corporate event and conferences, when asked if they could describe events that they have not enjoyed and why, one respondent stated that team building events are less appealing with regards to engaging and working with more senior individuals of Unipart:

‘Probably the team building events and team building because it does take you out of your comfort zone as I said, and especially if you’re with people who are slightly more senior than yourself’ (F1)

The research of O’Sullivan and Spangler (1998) indicates that the participation and involvement regarding the consumption at the event, also an impact upon the event experience. For example one participant suggested that the structure of involvement with corporate events and conferences is vital in order to achieve a successful event that the attendees have enjoyed:

‘I would try and steer away from the kind of sales pitch of everything and try structure it so it’s more of, for example and industry conference, I would rather make it smaller so that as you walk through it, it kind of tells you a story and creates a solution, or a series of solutions are available rather than just everyone saying ‘what are you in the industry?’” (M2)

Many other participants agreed that the structure and content of the event is an important factor when determining the success of an event. One participant suggested a range of different conferences that are suited to varied levels within the organisation:

‘Maybe have a similar conferences for the grades below and the grades above, so they’re at different levels so they’re pitched at different people’ (F3)
4.4 Networking

4.4.1 Respondents Contribution to Networking

Within Janasz and Forret’s (2008) literature (see chapter 2.5, pp9), networking is described as an opportunity to develop and maintain relationships, considering the purpose of a benefit that impacts both parties, as well as obtaining guidance and support. Janasz and Forrett (2008) suggests that networking allows professionals to develop as well as maintain professional relationships that will mutually benefit their work and careers. When conducting the research, the researcher inquired whether networking allows for innovation with the help from external knowledge. One participants answer supports Janasz and Forret’s statement:

‘I went to a briefing event for TSB and one of our main customers is JLR, and I met some guy from JLR that would be interested in working with AME and it was a different level, we normally interact with people on product related projects but this guy was actually working for JLR as a government funding representative, and he was interested on working on overall manufacturing projects with us’ (M2)

Another participant also agreed with the idea of achieving mutual benefits within their work through the use of networking:

‘Innovation is about the generation and diffusion of ideas. In terms of the generation of ideas, it helps bring people together that probably wouldn’t have been together but also for the diffusion of ideas, it helps kind of disseminate that and you can further enhance ideas and innovation’ (F4)

However some segments of the research suggests that it depends on the type of role the employee is in as to whether networking is a beneficial way to develop and benefit from external knowledge. For example:

‘There’s probably certain people who, not myself, but certain people who will find that networking is the key to getting on and being known, within my role, it’s administrative. So I don’t see myself going further’ (F1)

With regards to the networking aspect of corporate events conferences, Mitchell, Schlegelmilch and Mone (2016) concluded that a learning value is a core value to the participant’s attendance at these events. This part of the literature also suggests that these learning values can be reflected into benefits such as gaining new customers, business partners and suppliers which have been created by that individual. During the research, the researcher questioned the participants as to whether networking is an important aspect whilst attending corporate events and conferences. The data collected suggests that the participants agree with Mitchell, Schlegelmilch and Mone (2016):

‘Conferences is not just about the topic, but also understanding who is doing what, so and who you can contact further. So you know, we went to a conference recently so we could understand if there was any partnerships we could have with anyone for a project, so those sort of things create a foundation’ (F4)

Another participant also agreed that networking provides an opportunity for gaining and building relationships with other professionals within the industry:
‘I believe it’s important because you get an understanding of what other people do, you know we can all be a bit insular in our own little world, and when you go to these events then you realise that the issues that you have are not just within your little organisation, other people have the same issues as well so it’s good to network’ (F1)

One individual also suggested that networking at corporate events and conferences will benefit a professional relationship with customers, business partners or suppliers, as it puts a face to a name:

‘If you need to deal with somebody if you’ve actually met them and talked with them and seen them face to face it makes it easier when you pick up the phone or email them, you know there’s a face to a name’ (F2)

With regards to the questionnaire data, participants where asked ‘what is the primary research for attending corporate events and conferences?’ the results are displayed below:

![Diagram of primary reason for attending corporate events and conferences]

Figure 3- Primary reason for attending corporate events and conferences

As the data shows, the primary reason of attending corporate events and conferences are for the attendees to exchange ideas with professionals as well as building close relationships with other attendees. This therefore builds upon Mitchell, Schlegelmilch and Mone (2016) idea that a learning value taken from these types of events is the most valuable aspect when attending.

Furthermore Pittaway, Robertson, Munir, Denyer & Neely (2004) advises that networking can provide individuals an opportunity to benefit from complementary skills from professionals through the use of obtaining external knowledge. One participant contributed to this opinion by stating:

‘We’ve got seven divisions to get round and network and make sure that you’ve caught up with everybody that you’re trying to chase down for things and also, when you’re looking at doing new things it’s good to be introduced to new people in the business’ (F3)
The knowledge that can be gained through the use of networking can provide individuals at Unipart with innovative results through the use of these beneficial skills, as well as knowledge on the industry.

Seibert, Kramier and Liden (2001) believe that the content and structure of an individual’s network will provide access to information, resources as well as career sponsorship, which can be related back to career satisfaction.

When speaking one participant, he discussed a time where networking benefitted Unipart:

‘At the middle of November we had the launch event with the Royal Academy over at Aston, so this is where I and Bob find out what we have to do, but we also meet people who are part way through their three year program and network with them. So there was a chap from Huddersfield University, who is hosting a visiting professor and I got talking to him and that’s actually lead to some business for Unipart, so we’re making some prototypes of exhausts for projects that their working on and their now going to visit us on the 6th of January about a second project which is for the car company for Ginetta, they actually make sports cars so there’s some direct business for Unipart that’s come out of that’ (M1)

This example strongly relates to Drucker (1992) who suggests that networking can be a valuable resource as people and their knowledge can be a primary asset to an organisation, as well as a source of competitive advantage.

Through attending the Royal Academy launch event, the participant was able to create a new project opportunity with leading professionals, in order to better enhance the organisations ability to strive for innovation.
4.5. Corporate culture

4.5.1. Respondents Contribution to Corporate Culture

As previously discussed in the literature review (see chapter 2.6, pp10), Hiller and Verdier (2014) suggests that corporate culture is a major determinant of an organisation's behaviour and performance. Hiller and Verdier (2014) also implies that corporate culture is constructed of shared beliefs amongst the employees of an organisation, therefore the cultural consistency can be closely linked with achieving the organisations key goals and objectives.

This aspect of Hiller and Verdier’s (2014) research was reflected in five of the respondent’s outlooks towards the effect of Unipart’s corporate culture. It was clear when discussing the corporate culture at Unipart that the culture is seen as an encouragement in order to be successful as an individual as well as posing as a framework to work within to meet the organisation's key objectives.

For example when asking the participants whether they believed Unipart’s corporate culture is effective with regards to individual and organisational success, some responses included:

‘I think so, because it encourages you to think differently so it means when you start your role and go ‘how can I do that better’ or ‘how can I do it differently to make it more effective?’’ (F3)

However M1 described Unipart’s corporate culture as a framework for employees to follow:

‘I think the Unipart way and the culture that it creates is just a framework, many businesses create a framework for what’s expected of their employees’ (M1)

One participant described that the organisation's corporate culture has an impact as to how productive employees are:

‘I think the culture does affect how productive we are and how successful we are’ (M2)

Flamholtz and Randle (2011) research suggests that a strong culture is present when time has been invested into communicating and reinforcing the culture and where employees are behaving in line with it. The responses when asked how Unipart’s corporate culture is reinforced within the workplace consists of training, regular meetings to ensure that all employees are aware of the organisation's culture and how to act upon this.

For example one respondent suggested that all employees are provided with an opportunity to develop through the use of a culture that allows employees to have their say:

‘Within Unipart everyone’s got a say, so within the workplace everybody has an opportunity to improve their working environment or what they do with their customers’ (F2)

One participant described the methods of which Unipart implement their corporate culture in the workplace:

‘There’s basic training, several levels of training to the Unipart Way. Around that we have some continuous improvements, ideas. We have regular meetings with around what we call a comsale, which is a structured meeting format where we talk around the Unipart Way, so things like contingency improvements and other things’ (M2)
In terms of whether the training provided by Unipart regarding the organisations corporate culture is effective, one respondent summed their attitude up by stating:

‘It’s built into the employees, they do a lot in terms of educating the employees’ (F3)

It was made clear to the researcher that the majority of the respondents were aware of Unipart’s corporate culture and the key goals and objectives associated with it. The main theme that was determined from the data was the concept of ‘The Unipart Way’, which is ‘a designed system that engages every single employee within an organisation. It is not only there to motivate people, it equips them with the skills to diagnose problems and create innovative solutions that will make a dramatic difference’ (Unipart 2017).

Guiso et al (2015) believes that if there is a common set of expectations between colleagues, whenever that certain group of people are together they are influenced by the common ground, in this case the Unipart Way. It is clear that the majority of the participants from the interviews and questionnaires are aware of the Unipart way or the organisations corporate culture.

For example when asked in the questionnaire, ‘using one sentence, could you define Unipart’s corporate culture?’ one response stated:

‘Aspires to drive staff participation and engagement’ (Q3)

However some responses described that Unipart’s corporate culture is based on engaging and meeting the needs of their customers:

‘To deliver the real and perceived needs of our customers through a process of engagement and continuous improvement’ (Q2)

‘Unipart is focused on building relationships through customer engagement’ (Q5)

In contrast to this one respondent described that the corporate culture of the organisation is based upon the individuals’ goals and not specifically focused upon the customer:

‘Always strive to continuously improve a process or performance- and don’t accept the status quo’ (Q6)

Lastly one participant simply summed up the corporate culture as:

‘The Unipart Way’ (Q10)
4.6. Mission Statements

4.6.1. Respondents Contribution to Mission Statements

Within chapter 2.7 (pp10), Pearce and David (1987) believe that mission statements are a unique purpose that can set an organisation, as well as allowing the organisation to project the scope of their organisation regarding the product and market. Pearce and David (1987) also suggest that an organisations mission statement can have impact upon staff motivation as well as the quality of the work that they produce that’s in line with businesses mission statement. Majority of the literature based on mission statements suggest that it can be used as a managerial tool and can help the organisation focus on what really matters, according to Ireland and Hitt (1992).

However when conducting interviews, the researcher found that the responses regarding Unipart’s mission statement were vague, suggesting that the employees had little or no awareness on the organisations mission statement, for example:

‘I wouldn’t be able to quote Unipart’s mission statement, I don’t know what it is. I don’t know whether it’s a failure on my part but I don’t know what their mission statement is’ (M1)

Vizeu and Matitz (2013) suggest that mission statements serve as a powerful tool of inspiration and communication, thus encourage performance and focus. One participant stated that Unipart’s mission statement is unrecognisable to the employees:

‘It’s long and unrecognisable. So you know if you look at your big names, it’s a strap line, clear strap line of what they’re doing. I know mission statements aren’t a strap line but they do have a vision to them, but I don’t think it’s well understood throughout the business, of what the business is’ (F3)

Conversely Leuthesser and Kohli (1997) believe that mission statements can be over generalised as well as being too inspirational and vague, not focusing upon an organisations measurable goals. This therefore makes it hard for employees to understand and react to an organisations mission statement due to the fact that they are too ambiguous. This is proven, as one respondent said that:

‘I would say that it is very wordy, and it doesn’t actually tell me, although I think most mission statements are like that. I don’t think it would be something that you would say ‘yeah I get that, that’s absolutely what we’re about’. I think it’s hard when you’ve got a very broad company’ (F2)

According to Bartkus and Glassman (2008) an organisations mission statement should be used as a way in which to improve the organisations reputation, in order to give the impression that the organisation has appropriate and publicly acceptable objectives. One of the participant’s response when asked if they could define Unipart’s mission statement included:

‘I think so yeah, so it’s to understand our customers better than anyone else and to serve them better than anyone else’ (F4)

In relation to Bartkus and Glassman (2008), this is due to the fact that Unipart wants to create a beneficial relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders, as the mission statement relates to the employees as
well as its customers. Also, Leauthesser and Kohli (1997) believe that a company’s mission statement should set the basis of an atmosphere where employees can grow and develop. The research that was taken regarding Unipart’s mission statement, it is clear that the majority of the participants struggle to determine the organisations specific mission statement. This could be reliant on the fact that Unipart is a large organisation with many sectors including the automotive aspects to aerospace, making it difficult to pin point Unipart Group’s overall mission statement. However, Unipart has a common ground called The Unipart Way, which could be seen as an overall strategy that the organisation uses in order to drive engagement for the employees as well as their customers. The Unipart Way could be a factor as to why the participants were unaware of the corporate mission statement, as Unipart’s corporate culture is based upon The Unipart Way which incorporates the organisations vision or mission statement. Therefore through using the term mission statements with the participants, this may have confused the respondents as The Unipart Way is the only system that motivates and supports the employees, and could be a tool that replaces a mission statement through incorporating the corporate culture with Unipart’s vision.
4.7. Motivation in the workplace

4.7.1. Respondents Contribution to Motivation

Previously in the literature review chapter, motivational theories were discussed (see chapter 2.8, pp11). Maslow (1954) suggests there are five categories that if are satisfied will result in better psychological health of an individual, one of which includes self-actualisation. In relation to this Hall and Hansen (1997) suggests that self-actualisation involves deepening one’s personality and creating greater challenges for oneself.

Hall and Hansen’s (1997) suggestion that self-actualisation can be achieved through creating new challenges for an individual as well as contributing to developing a person’s personality, is mirrored within the results of researcher’s semi-structured interviews. For example when asking the respondents what motivates them at work, one answer came back as:

‘I think for me, learning and developing. Learning new things and being able to use those skills’ (F4)

Due to the nature of Unipart as a manufacturing organisation, respondents emphasised the need for a challenge within their work life:

‘I’m engineer so innovation, solving problems, working with a team which is performing well, all of those things really. And coming up with solutions for engineering problems really’ (M2)

Another respondent answered similarly, stating:

‘I need the challenge, I need to be doing something different, something new, something that’s going to push me’ (M1)

Therefore Hall and Hansen’s (1997) concept of self-actualisation through the use of daily challenges in the work place can have an effect on the individuals’ motivation, resulting in a positive effect upon the standard of work achieved.

Furthermore Hopkins (1995) proposes that when individuals work within an environment that offers a sense of belonging, the care and support of others will carry over in to their work. When asking the respondents what particular aspects of their job they enjoy, respondents suggested that interactions between other members of staff is enjoyable, for example:

‘I enjoy working with people, I enjoy working with the students here, I find that quite rewarding’ (M2)

Similarly another individual responded with:

‘I enjoy working with people, and that’s the role of a PA. I do enjoy helping people’ (F1)

Another respondent discussed that problem solving with other members of staff can be rewarding as well as enjoying the challenge of doing so:

‘When you’re up against it, you’re able to get out of it or advising people what they need to do, so quite often within this role people will say ‘how do you think I should approach Carol on this or do you think I should say that’’ (F2)
The sense of belonging through supporting and caring for other employees will result in individuals taking accountability within their roles and responsibilities, and as Hopkins (1995) suggested improving the morale of the work force.

Moving on, Thomas and Adair (2004) (see chapter 2.9) suggest that in order to motivate individuals, an incentive should be provided in order for them to achieve certain goals, or to initiate certain behaviours. Typically monetary awards are often used as an incentive to prompt individuals to become motivated, therefore the researcher inquired whether money is a motivation at Unipart:

‘No I wouldn’t say money is the driver, its more enjoying what I do and actually getting to the end of the day and not thinking ‘oh god I don’t want to go back tomorrow’ (F2)

Many of the respondents agreed likewise, and suggested that monetary awards are not the biggest contributing factor in order to motivate them, for example:

‘I think you know to a basic degree yes, but I think I’m more motivated by learning new things so I feel like I’m progressing myself personally and at an academic level’ (F4)

Recognition is also a common contributing factor regarding motivation:

‘Money is nice, but it’s not the be all end all, so I don’t want a pat on the back every time I do something, that’s not me but it’s nice every now and then to be sort of appreciated’ (F1)

One respondent suggested that money is a basic factor to motivation, however recognition is a strong force:

‘I think money is a necessity, I’m quite happy. I think that the reward for me is a successful projects and being recognised’ (M2)

Lastly, Herzberg (1959) proposes that growth is one of six motivating factors that result in job satisfaction. The possibility of growth is dependent on whether individuals have the potential and opportunity to grow professionally within the organisation. The potential of professional growth can stem from a range of different aspects, such as team work, regular communication, effective training and recognition to name a few.

When the researcher conducted a questionnaire, the main motivation in the workplace consisted of varied and interesting work, team work, good work life balance, regular communication and regular appraisal and positive feedback. These results are displayed below:
This clearly shows that varied and interesting work is a main motivational factor within Unipart. With regards to corporate events and conferences, these events allow for a different environment for the individuals to network and gain knowledge, therefore providing an opportunity for employees to remain motivated resulting in job enrichment.

4.8. Summary

Within this chapter the results of both the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires have been analysed by the researcher, as well as providing descriptions as to whether the findings agree or disagree with existing literature. The researcher compared the findings of the data against relevant theories, and discussed the findings further. The key findings from the data will be described within the conclusion chapter of this research study.
Conclusion
5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This conclusion chapter assesses the research conducted within the project and determines as to whether the aims and objectives of the research project were achieved. The researcher will also discuss the limitations of the research, as well as discussing the summary of the key findings of the results. Recommendations will also be provided for future research in this particular area of study.

5.2. Aim and objectives Revisited

In order to recognise and adhere to the aim of the research:

To investigate the impact and effectiveness corporate events and conferences has upon an organisation, using a case study of Unipart Manufacturing Company

The researcher ensured that the following objectives were achieved:

To review the academic literature to investigate the importance of corporate events within an organisation, as well as assessing the relevance to the organisations corporate culture.

The researcher ensured that this objective was met through the use of a thorough academic literature review, where the following topics related to the research study were discussed: typologies of Corporate Events, Experience at Events, Importance of Networking, Corporate Culture, Mission Statements and Motivation in the work place.

However the researcher experienced a lack in research regarding corporate event experiences, as it could be argued that there is assumption that individuals only attend conferences and meetings solely because it is a part of their job role. Therefore making it difficult for the researcher to explore this area of the theory as in depth as the researcher would have preferred.

To conduct primary research through the use of questionnaires and interviews at a Unipart office to measure the effectiveness of corporate events and conferences that the delegates of the organisation attend.

This objective was successfully achieved as the researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews, investigating the impact and effectiveness of corporate events and conferences upon the organisation, through the use of direct and indirect questioning. The aim was fulfilled further through a mixed-method approach, as the researcher used questionnaires to further the investigation. This mixed-method approach facilitated the researcher to deepen the investigation into the impact of corporate events and conferences, therefore gaining more insights from varied participants to produce valid data.

To provide a critical overview of whether the corporate events and conferences at Unipart are fit for purpose and whether they reflect the company’s corporate culture and strategic aim.
The researcher believes that this objective has been successfully met as the research collected shows the effect corporate events and conferences have upon employees, taking into consideration the participants past experiences, motivations, as well as Unipart’s corporate culture. The research that the author collected will be discussed further within the summary of key findings within this chapter.

To offer recommendations to the manufacturing organisation Unipart.

Lastly, this objective was achieved through the data that was collected and analysed by the researcher, taking into consideration existing theory regardless of whether it supports the data or not. Recommendations will be discussed later on within this chapter, taking into account the researcher’s findings as well as developing literature.

5.3. Limitations of Research

The limitations regarding the research will now be discussed, in order to easily identify the background of the research collected:

- With regards to the semi-structured interviews within the mixed-method approach, the researcher would ensure that there was an equal number of male participants to female participants, as there were more women (four more) compared to the males (only two). This would therefore enable the researcher to provide more scope regarding the research, and deliver more reliable data.
- Due to the fact that the mixed-method approach of questionnaires and interviews focuses on a smaller scope of individuals, it makes it more difficult for the researcher to generalise the results, as the research provides information on individual’s experiences. Therefore the results are extremely specific and not relative to a wider audience. In order for the data to be generalised, the researcher could focus on two or more manufacturing organisations, and not be subject to just one. If the researcher would have dedicated more time into sourcing another willing manufacturing organisation to take part in the study the research study could have had more depth to it. This would therefore provide a larger scope on the whole industries corporate events and conferences and how they reflect the organisations corporate culture, providing the research with more reliable and respectable results.
- The researcher also recognised that due to the fact that the interviews were hosted within the respondent’s place of work, this may have had an effect upon the answers they chose to provide the researcher. This may be of a result of not wanting to be overheard by colleagues whilst answering questions regarding their personal motivations and bad experiences during corporate events and conferences. In one case one participant decided to answer the researcher’s questions within the centre of an open plan office, making it easier for colleagues to engage within the researchers and participants conversation.
- With regards to the questionnaires, the researcher deemed it was best to leave the forms with a member of staff behind a reception desk of which they said they would be willing to hand out the forms to members of staff that pass the desk. The researcher believed that this would be the best method to reach a larger scope of employees. However, now the researcher realises that this may have not been the case, as the employees
may not have the time to fill in a questionnaire without knowing the full intent behind the study, as the researcher was not present.

5.4. Summary of Key Findings

The research conducted provided the researcher with valuable understanding into how Unipart’s corporate events and conferences impact upon the organisation, as well as understanding the extent of the impact the events have upon the corporate culture. The key findings are summarised, all of which are not listed in order of importance:

- Employees are all aware of Unipart’s corporate culture, through the use of the Unipart Way, which is basic framework that guides and presents what is expected of all employees
- The corporate culture of Unipart is built into the employees of Unipart, as everyone is aware of the Unipart Way. This culture allows individuals to improve their working environment and relationships between colleagues and customers
- Motivational factors for the employees at Unipart is a result of challenging scenarios, solving problems, learning and developing their skills as well as working within a successful team environment
- Monetary awards were deemed not the most important factor regarding motivation. Varied and interesting work for individuals was the most influencing factor. In relation to corporate events and conferences, these events offer a different environment for employees to network and develop, suggesting that these events are a motivating factor
- Within Unipart’s industry of manufacturing it seems that attending corporate events and conferences is an effective method for employees to network and build business relationships that will benefit the organisation. Partnerships tend to stem from corporate events and conferences to establish new, innovative projects
- With regards to the event experience, employees suggested that the content of the event should have a clear message that is relevant to the organisation, as well as an opportunity to learn and develop further
- The researcher discovered that employees were unaware of Unipart’s mission statement, as it is difficult to cover a broad organisation. Unipart however set consistent standards through the use of the Unipart Way, which can be deemed as the organisations overall strategy and corporate culture. This therefore replaces a mission statement by incorporating Unipart’s corporate culture with their organisational vision
- Another key finding is that Unipart employees typically attend more trade show events and conferences. Trade shows allow Unipart to present current innovations within the market, as well as an opportunity to market and communicate to stakeholders. Conferences allow the employees to learn, develop and understand the industry and organisation further

5.5. Recommendations for future research

The researcher has taken into consideration the limitations of the research, as well as the relative theory that this research study has provided, in order to propose recommendations to benefit any further research regarding this topic:
• The research study should include another manufacturing case study in order for the researcher to compare and contrast Unipart against another existing organisation. This would therefore increase the strength and scope of the study, as it would provide the reader with a broader insight into the use of corporate events and conferences in relation to organisations corporate culture.

• The researcher should ensure that there are equal amounts of male and female participants with regards to the semi-structured interviews. This will then enable the researcher to produce balanced results.

• The topic on mission statements should be investigated further, in order for the researcher to understand why employees are unaware of the organisations mission statements, and to provide suggestions for the organisation in order for them to develop from this.

• Within the interviews, the researcher should directly question if the employee feels as though the organisations corporate culture is reflected within the corporate events they attend. Although these questions often are implied within the questionnaires and interviews, with many respondents indicating that this was the case, perhaps a direct question would have proved more effective.

• With regards to the semi-structured interviews, the researcher could ensure that the number of management level participants were equal to the number of non-management individuals, in order to increase the reliability of the study as well as gaining more of a scope across the whole organisation.

5.6. Summary

When reviewing the original aim of the study, the research has successfully determined the impact corporate events and conferences has upon an organisation through using Unipart Manufacturing Company, Coventry as a case study. The research has shown how corporate events and conferences can be a source of communication, networking, motivation, learning and developing, which all can relate back to the organisations corporate culture, The Unipart Way. The research study has also contributed to existing literature, as some areas of the study agree with present theory as well as challenge it. Furthermore, the researcher has also identified gaps within the theory as well as areas that could be explored further for future research.

In conclusion, the researcher believes that corporate events and conferences have an impact upon an organisation corporate culture and strategic aim, as the events can provide a source of networking opportunities with potential stakeholders as well as allowing employees to develop themselves as an individual through knowledge and skills that can be gained through corporate events and conferences. Due to the nature of the manufacturing industry, employees require opportunities to be challenged within their role, as well as keeping up to date with innovation within the trade in order to be successful. The researcher found that corporate events and conferences allow employees to network and gain valuable understanding on current trends and knowledge in order for them to better themselves individually as well as Unipart as a whole. As theory suggest corporate culture is a determinant of an organisations behaviour and performance, of which the researcher believes that corporate events and conferences benefit commendably, as these shared beliefs are linked with achieving Unipart’s key objectives through the use of corporate events and conferences.


Unipart Group (2017). We have a different way of working. We call it The Unipart Way. Available at: [https://www.unipart.com/about-unipart/the-unipart-way/](https://www.unipart.com/about-unipart/the-unipart-way/) (Accessed: 23 March 2017)


7

Appendices
# 7.1. Appendix 1 - Ethics Form

## DEVOLVED ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To be completed by student and supervisor before submission to Ethics Approval Panel</th>
<th>Student Signature</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application for ethics approval</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant information sheet</td>
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<td>Participant consent form</td>
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<td>Pilot interview/s</td>
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<td>Pilot questionnaire/s</td>
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<td>Confirmation of interviewee participation</td>
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First Submission: [ ] Resubmission: [ ]

Date: ____________

**For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panel Members</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module leader, Chair:</td>
<td>P. J. E.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
<td>J. G. H.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CSM Ethics Committee Representative:</td>
<td>L. M. W.</td>
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Date: ____________ Date of Reassessment: ____________

**Outcome:**

- [ ] Project Approved
- [ ] Reference number issued: ____________
- [ ] Chair’s Action
- [ ] Application not Approved

**Comments for projects not fully approved:**

- Amend P.1.5 to reflect interview.
- Amend consent form regarding company anonymity.
- Amend questionnaire to include more tick boxes to reduce time spent completing.
- Check reduction in questionnaire + relevance of Q.14 + 15.

The original to be retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader.

In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.
Application for ethics approval

PART ONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of applicant:</th>
<th>Katie Hind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor (if student project):</td>
<td>Darryl Gibbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Unit:</td>
<td>School of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
<td>20057690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme enrolled on (if applicable):</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>To identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation’s corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expected start date of data collection:</td>
<td>01/12/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate duration of data collection:</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Body (if applicable):</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
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<td>Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines?</td>
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<th>Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:</th>
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<td>Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human tissue samples</td>
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<td>Practice based not involving human participants (e.g. curatorial, practice audit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compulsory projects in professional practice (e.g. Initial Teacher Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS)</td>
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If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required.

If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project

The aim of the project is to investigate the impact and effectiveness corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation’s corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study. Primary research will be conducted through the use of questionnaires.
and interviews at the company to allow the researcher to measure the effectiveness of corporate events and conferences that the delegates of the organisation attend. One of the main reasons as to why this area of research was chosen is so that the researcher can research and provide a critical overview of whether the corporate events and conferences at the large manufacturing logistics company are fit for purpose and whether or not they reflect the company's corporate culture and strategic aim. At the end of my research the aim is to be able to provide recommendations to the manufacturing organisation, to aid them to improve the use of their corporate conferences and events.

DECLARATION:
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework.

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of the applicant:</th>
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<th>FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Name of supervisor:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darryl Gibbs</td>
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| Signature of supervisor: |

Research Ethics Committee use only

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<th>Decision reached:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project approved in principle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision deferred</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project not approved</td>
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<td>Project rejected</td>
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Project reference number: Click here to enter text.

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<th>Date: Click here to enter a date.</th>
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| Signature: |

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:
Click here to enter text.

PART TWO only to be completed if primary research is to be undertaken

A RESEARCH DESIGN
A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project? No

A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used. Most CSM projects will not use a protocol so this section will be answered N/A

A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project

The research projects method of data collection will be through the use of questionnaires and interviews with the agreed participants.

Questionnaires

One of the main reasons as to why questionnaires have been chosen for the research project is due to the fact that it is an effective method of collecting data across a large organisation.

The questionnaires will be distributed to all participants that attend corporate events and conferences, as this information will be available to me through a link to the organisation. The anticipated size of the research sample is to be around 10-20 participants. As this allows the researcher to gain enough information for the research study to be of value and accuracy. Permission has already been confirmed to distribute the questionnaire throughout the organisation.

Interviews

With regards to the interviewing aspect of the research, it has been chosen to also interview participants from the organisation. Interviews were chosen as it is a more personal method of research, and may allow the participant to open up and provide more detailed answers, and therefore providing the researcher with more thorough answers to benefit the research project. Contact will be made during November and interviews are aimed to be held during December/January. The aim is to interview around 7-9 participants from the organisation, with already 5 people confirming participation, as this provides a thorough scope of research.

For both the interviewing and questionnaire aspects of my research, participants will be recruited from a close link who is at a managerial level within the firm. This link will be contacting potential participants directly. The individual’s participation during the interviews will take around 15-20 minutes, and the questionnaires around 5-10 minutes.

In order to go ahead with the interviews, consent from all participants is required through completing the consent form.

In order to protect the participant’s confidentiality and anonymity, it will be ensured that their right to anonymity will be reiterated throughout the research. It will also be ensured

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1 An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here.
that the researcher will only record the age and gender of the participant. Permission for the researcher to include the companies’ name has also been confirmed within the letter to the organisation.

The data collected from the questionnaires will be on Microsoft Excel through the use of graphs, tables and charts. The data collected from the interviews will be analysed through the use of thematic analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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**B  PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE**

**B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?**

The researcher has past experience collecting market research data for a charity event as part of a University module. This market research included creating an online questionnaire to enable the researchers to find out the wants and needs of our target market, to ensure that our event related to our target market. The researchers used an online program on which over 100 people responded to our questionnaire. This has therefore given the researcher experience of creating online questionnaires and analysing the data found.

**B2 Student project only**

**What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?**

The supervisor has past experience supervising student projects at undergraduate level, as well as being a module leader for Conferences, Exhibition and Corporate Events of which relates to my proposed research project. Past experience of undertaking research for undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications. The supervisor has also conducted interviews and focus groups as part of his PHD research.

**C POTENTIAL RISKS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>C1 What potential risks do you foresee?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There may be a risk of not meeting the research deadlines, as some participants may have a tight schedule to follow, and may have to delay their contribution to the</td>
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</table>
research project.

- Whilst arranging interviews, it may cause inconvenience to the interviewees during their busy work day.
- The interviewee may not want to answer some questions if the information provided is too personal or confidential.
- The amount of questionnaire responses may also be a risk within the research project, as it cannot be predicted how many participants will fill in the questionnaires.

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?

Any potential risk identified in A3 or C1 must be addressed in this section.

- It will be ensured that a consent form and project description will be signed by the participant before contributing to the research project, to make sure that they are fully aware of their participation.
- The researcher will ensure that all questions asked during the questionnaire and interviews are appropriate and suitable to ask the participants.
- The participants will be notified that they are able to withdraw their data at any time during the research project.
- Interviews will be arranged in advance at a location including the time and location, to ensure that the participant has the time to partake.
- Participants will also be notified that they will have full access to the data collected.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Corporate events and conference impact on corporate culture
Project summary
The purpose of this research project is to identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation’s corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study. Primary research will be conducted through the use of questionnaires and interviews, in order to measure the effectiveness of corporate events and conferences that delegates of the organisation attend. The research project hopes to be able to research and provide a critical overview of the corporate events and conferences, and to determine whether these events are fit for purpose and if they reflect the company’s corporate culture and strategic aims. At the end of the research project, the researcher hopes to be able to provide recommendations, to aid the organisation to improve the use of their corporate events and conferences.

Why have you been asked to participate?
You have been asked to participate because you fit the profile of the population being studied; as you are an employee of Unipart and regularly attend or organise corporate events and conferences.

Project risks
The research involves the completion of a questionnaire and participation in a focus group interview and which will be recorded for later analysis. The researcher believes that there are no significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that any of the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the study at any time - we will completely respect your decision.

How we protect your privacy
All the information you provide will be held in confidence. We have taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location by the research team. When we have finished the study and analysed all the information, the documentation used to gather the raw data will be destroyed except your signed consent form which will be held securely for 5 years. The recordings of the focus groups/ interview will also be held in a secure and confidential environment during the study and destroyed after 5 years.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project then please contact:
Katie Hird, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: si20057090@cardiffnet.ac.uk
Cardiff Metropolitan University
Ethics Committee

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:
Participant name or Study ID Number:
Title of Project: To identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation's corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study.
Name of Researcher: Katie Hind

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [ ]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [ ]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [ ]

4. I agree to the interview [ ]

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications Yes No [ ] [ ]

6. I would like my organisation's name to be anonymised in all publications [ ] [ ]

[Signature] [Date]

Name of person taking consent [Date]

[Signature of person taking consent]
Dear Andrew Hind

I am an undergraduate student at Cardiff Metropolitan University. The title of my research is to identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation's corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study. Its aim is to investigate the impact and effectiveness of corporate events and conferences upon an organisation, using a case study of manufacturing company X. As part of my research I would like to undertake research with people who are employed in a service industry company at supervisory level and below. I am writing to you because Unipart fits the profile of this type of organisation and also employs a sufficient number of employees so as to provide a large enough number of potential participants. Before any primary data is collected this project will have been approved by Cardiff Metropolitan University and all data collection will be in accordance with the university's ethics code of practice.

My purpose in writing is to ask if you would permit me to issue a questionnaire and host interviews to your employees. Their participation would be entirely voluntary, neither they nor the company would be identified in the research and it would only take 10 to 15 minutes for each employee to complete a questionnaire. I would hope to gain 10-20 responses from your employees.

The areas which would be covered by the questionnaires and interviews include:

- Employee motivation
- Attendance of corporate events and conferences
- Networking during corporate events and conferences

I shall be very happy to make the results of my research available to you as a participant in the research when it is complete. If you would like to participate in this project and or are interested in discussing it further please contact me.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Katie Hind

Email: st20057690@cardiffmet.ac.uk
## SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of semi structured interview</th>
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<td><strong>6. Communication</strong></td>
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<td>Do you believe that the company’s mission statement serves as a source of inspiration and a powerful communication tool? Do you believe that this is important when attending corporate events and conferences that this is clearly stated?</td>
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<td>Do you believe that it is important to convey Unipart’s mission statement when attending corporate events? If so, why?</td>
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<td><strong>7. Motivation</strong></td>
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To identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation's corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study.

The purpose of this research project is to collect primary information in relation to investigate the impact and effectiveness corporate events and conferences has upon an organisation, using a case study of Unipart.

If you would prefer not to take part in the project then I thank you for your time and you need not complete the questionnaire. If you are willing to take time to fill in the questionnaire, your answers will be kept confidential.

If you require any further information about this study, please contact Katie Hind at s20007090@cardiffmet.ac.uk.

Thank you for your assistance.

1. Job role at Unipart:

2. Number of years working for Unipart:

3. How many times a year do you attend corporate events and conferences?

4. What was the last corporate event or conference that you attended and where?

5. What makes a successful corporate event? (Describe in your own words)

6. In your own words, describe the benefits of networking during corporate events and conferences
7. What is the primary reason for attending corporate events and conferences? (Tick one)
   - Exchange ideas and information
   - Negotiation
   - Build close business relationships
   - Encourage better performance

8. Using one sentence, could you define Unipart’s corporate culture?

9. Using a scale of 1-5 (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important) rate the most important factor when attending corporate events and conferences:
   - Availability of attractions
   - Provision of transport
   - Availability of accommodation
   - Food and drink
   - Provision of infrastructure and support services

10. Do you believe corporate events and conferences allow for personal growth?
    - Yes
    - No
    If yes, please state why:

11. Do you agree with the following statement: ‘Attending conferences in a new environment inspires new approaches and ideas, that allows professional development’
    - Yes
    - No
    If yes, please state why:

12. What are the types of events that you typically attend? (Tick as appropriate)
    - Conferences
    - Seminars
    - Meetings
    - Team building events
    - Trade show events
    - Press conferences
    - Networking events
    - Trade fairs
    - Board meetings
13. If you were in a position where you were responsible for organising corporate events and conferences, what would you do differently? Please provide examples:

14. How could you be better incentivised in order to do your job more effectively? Please provide two examples:

15. What aspects of your job do you enjoy?

16. What motivates you at work? (Tick as appropriate)
   - Varied and interesting work
   - High quality training and development
   - Team work
   - Good work life balance
   - Regular communication
   - Regular appraisal and positive feedback
   - Recognition and reward for performance

Letter of confirmation from organisation
Dear Mr. Hind,

I am writing to request your permission to permit me to issue questionnaires and host interviews to your employees regarding my research project. I have attached a letter of which all the information regarding my project can be found.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Katie Hind

---

Dear Katie

Thank you for your interest in our company and the support we could offer.

We would be delighted for you to have interviews with members of our teams. We will arrange to have a wide range of staff made available so as to ensure your investigations are robust and meaningful.

Please let me know what further information you need from our side in order to move things on.

Many thanks and regards

Andy Hind
# Semi-Structured Interviews

## Order of semi-structured Interview

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- Do you believe Unipart’s mission statements create an impression that the organisation has appropriate and publicly acceptable objectives? Does this benefit the relationship between the organisation and your stakeholders?

- Do you believe that it is important to convey Unipart’s mission statement when attending corporate events? If so, why?

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7.3. Appendix 3. Questionnaire Form

QUESTIONNAIRE

To identify to what extent corporate events and conferences impact upon an organisation's corporate culture using a large manufacturing logistics company as a case study.

The purpose of this research project is to collect primary information in relation to investigate the impact and effectiveness corporate events and conferences has upon an organisation, using a case study of Unipart.

If you would prefer not to take part in the project then I thank you for your time and you need not complete the questionnaire. If you are willing to take time to fill in the questionnaire, your answers will be kept confidential.

If you require any further information about this study, please contact Katie Hind at st20057690@cardiffmet.ac.uk.

Thank you for your assistance.

1. Job role at Unipart:

2. Number of years working for Unipart:
   - 6 months or under
   - 1-3 years
   - 4-5 years
   - 6 years or above

3. How many times a year do you attend corporate events and conferences?
   - Once a month or more
   - Every 2 months
   - Every 3 months
   - Once or twice a year

4. What was the last corporate event or conference that you attended and where?

5. What makes a successful corporate event? (Tick as appropriate)
   - Speakers delivering relevant and interesting information
   - Networking opportunities
   - Good location
   - Active participation
   - A professional, smooth event experience
6. As an individual, what are the benefits of networking during corporate events and conferences? (Tick as appropriate)
   - Generation of referrals and increased business
   - New opportunities
   - Gaining relevant connections
   - Professional advice
   - Raising professional profile/reputation

7. What is the primary reason for attending corporate events and conferences? (Tick one)
   - Exchange ideas and information
   - Negotiation
   - Build close business relationships
   - Encourage better performance

8. Using one sentence, could you define Unipart’s corporate culture?

9. Using a scale of 1-5 (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important) rate the most important factor when attending corporate event and conferences:
   - Availability of attractions
   - Provision of transport
   - Availability of accommodation
   - Food and drink
   - Provision of infrastructure and support services

10. Do you believe corporate events and conferences allow for personal growth?
    - Yes
    - No
    If yes, please state why:

11. Do you agree with the following statement: ‘attending conferences in a new environment inspires new approaches and ideas, that allows professional development’
    - Yes
    - No
    If yes, please state why:

12. What are the types of events that you typically attend? (Tick as appropriate)
- Conferences
- Seminars
- Meetings
- Team building events
- Trade show events
- Press conferences
- Networking events
- Trade fairs
- Board meetings

13. If you were in a position where you were responsible for organising corporate events and conferences, what would you do differently in order to benefit yourself as an individual? Please provide examples:

14. Do corporate events allow yourself to be incentivised in order for you to do your job more efficiently? If so, please state why.

15. Do you enjoy attending corporate events? Please give reasoning for your answer.

16. What motivates you at work? (Tick as appropriate)
- Varied and interesting work
- High quality training and development
- Team work
- Good work life balance
- Regular communication
- Regular appraisal and positive feedback
- Recognition and reward for performance
7.4. Appendix 4- M1 Transcript

Katie: OK, so can I ask what position and details of your role are here at Unipart?

M1: Yeah, so I’m the institute director, so you probably know what the institute is, so my role is to run the institute on a day to day basis and also to manage the relationship between the university and Unipart.

Katie: OK, how long have you been working here?

M1: I joined on the 28th of April 2014, so just under three years.

Katie: OK, and can I ask where else have you previously worked?

M1: Yeah, so previously I was in Rolls Royce, and before that I worked for a company called Dana which is an American company making car parts.

Katie: Right OK, and were you aware of their corporate culture?

M1: I didn’t know anything about Unipart’s corporate culture until I came here.

Katie: Oh really, the next question was if you were aware of Unipart’s corporate culture.

M1: I’m aware of it now having been here, but prior to coming here I didn’t know anything about where Unipart had got to and where it is today, it was only through going to interviews for this job and understanding a little bit more about it.

Katie: Yeah, can you say what are the key goals and objectives of Unipart as an organisation?

M1: It is a hard question, I mean fundamentally the Unipart way, the principles around Unipart way, the customers first, the employees are put right up there and so I think corporate social responsibility in terms of the community the company operates in and plus its employees, its customers are really at the heart of what everything is about.

Katie: Yeah, and how is Unipart’s corporate culture reinforced within the workplace and is it effective?

M1: I think that everyone is aware of the Unipart way, I think its variable in terms of different areas of the business and how well its deployed so if we look down in Oxford the head office there, it’s very much a part of the culture and the day to day, the way people do things down there, it’s very obvious that people live and breathe it and use it all the time. I think here, everyone knows it, everyone understands what it is from what I can gather. I don’t think it’s quite as embedded in everything that we do but certainly it’s taken seriously I think in the business and everyone tries to follow the principles. I think we could try and get closer to what other organisations, like in Cowley, in what they do if we want to be better at it. I would cite them as more of a better example of where it’s put in practice than what we do here. But no one is dismissing it and people recognise it.

Katie: I see that it is displayed on the wall outside.

M1: It’s a lot more than having a poster up, it’s about the way we do things and the way that we work with one another and communicate, so I think fundamentally the intent of the Unipart way and what that creates in a corporate culture, I think it does come through in the business.

Katie: Yeah, and does Unipart’s corporate culture have an effective on the organisational or individual success, do you think it helps day to day?

M1: I think so, I think the Unipart way and the culture that it creates is just a frame work, many businesses create a framework for what’s expected of their employees so, yeah it works it’s Unipart’s way of doing things, other companies have got their way of doing things but for Unipart I think it does and I think it’s really important that every company has something like that. Other businesses that I’ve been in before have their own versions of it and everyone is expected to, not just to toe the line but to embrace it if you know what I mean and really want to do it, and Unipart is no exception, so yeah it does its important.
Katie: Yeah OK, and when attending corporate conferences or events what is the overall aim you hope to have achieved after attending?

M1: I go to quite a few conferences ranging from technical conferences through to more business type conferences, so just to give a few examples, one of the type of conferences that we try to go to that happens in February is the Powertrade conference, that is the time where every, in February each year, everyone in the Powertrade sector comes together and it’s got a really technical focus so, why would I go to that, I go to that to meet people I know, that I wouldn’t otherwise see so it’s a good time to catch up and we also hear other organisations presenting, what’s the latest thing they’re doing, so we keep pace with what the sectors doing what the important things are, so that’s on a technical front, and then there’s other conferences that I might go to like the EEF, the Engineers Employers Federation which is more a body supporting the sector and you tend to find them much more business focused, but again the reasons for going there are the same really, is to find out what are the hot issues in the business, to hear MP’s talking about how the government’s responding to it and also to influence as well as meeting new people and new partners so it’s about for all the conferences it’s about finding out what’s going on out there in regards to whatever the conference is focused about and to have a presence within our network of people.

Katie: OK, and does attending corporate events and conferences provide an incentive for professional growth and if so how?

M1: I think it does in a number of ways really, I mean professional growth doesn’t happen in isolation, you’ve got to be out there, knowing people, knowing people in the sector, so if we’re looking at for example, becoming chartered, chartered engineer. Then we wouldn’t do that within our own organisation, you need external recognition, external references, so it’s important to do things out in the community and further afield, rather than just in your own business. So it’s about moving the sector forward, and going to those sort of events gets you to know the right people, connecting the right doors to do it. So I think it is important, you’ve got to be an expert in your own area, so going to the technical conferences means you know what’s going on and you can shape the way forward and shape your own career so, it’s about going to the conferences it’s about making sure you’ve got your eyes on what’s going on in the outside world rather than what’s going on within your own four walls. And you know it’s the same within your own life, you know you wouldn’t just stay in the house and not worry about what’s out there, you watch the news and you find out what’s going on out there and it’s just being aware and knowing what you’re going to participate in out there.

Katie: Yeah, what type of events have you attending recently, like trade shows, conferences, team building?

M1: Yeah, so last week we had a team building event, so that was over at the university where we had two of the research centres, one in tourism manufacturing and one in transport mobility so, collectively that probably around about 100 people. And I took some of the Unipart staff along to that, so that they could participate in and contribute to it in regards to giving a business perspective but also they could see what’s going on, on the really low level far from market research so I’ve done that within the last week. I’ve been to a couple of trade shows, one in Durham which was called Octoberfest that was at the end of October; that was just a manufacturing show. There’s the manufacturing management show a couple of weeks ago that I went to, in the Ricoh. I’ve hosted a stand in the Ricoh in November in an event called Imagineering, which is about trying to get young people, typically primary school up to year 6 interested in science, so that was a science fair. Over a variety of different things.

Katie: Yeah, and what events have you enjoyed and why?

M1: I enjoy all of them. For different reasons, so the Imagineering one’s great because there’s loads of kids there and I’ll take my kids along and they’ll enjoy it and stuck in and you can just people you know, who are just having fun and making balloon powered cars and remote controlled sweeping brush, some crazy stuff that they do, but it’s fun for kids, and I like doing that. And then the bigger shows, just knowing what’s going around, I quite like to just go and see what other companies are exhibiting, so yeah, I mean I know what to expect with these things so I don’t tend to go to the ones that I’m not going to enjoy.

Katie: Yeah, so during corporate events and conferences how often do you network and communicate with other delegates?

M1: Always yeah.
Katie: OK, and could you give me an example as to when networking during corporate events has benefitted yourself or Unipart?

M1: So, I’ve just taken on a visiting professor, it’s actually the chap who set up the Imagineering, a guy called Bob Shanks. So I run a royal academy grant for paying for Bob, for three years which is great, because we’ve got some money to do it. And so, at the middle of November we had the launch event with Royal Academy over at Aston, so this is where I and Bob find out what we have to do, but we also meet people who are part way through there three year program and network with them. So there was a chap from Huddersfield, Huddersfield University, who is hosting a visiting professor and I got talking to him and that’s actually led to some business for Unipart, so we’re making some prototypes of exhausts for projects that their working on and their now going to visit us on the 6th of January about a second project which is for the car company for Ginetta, they actually make sports cars so there’s some direct business for Unipart that’s come out of that.

Katie: And do you believe that networking allows for innovation with the help from external knowledge?

M1: Yes, like I said.

Katie: Yeah, like you said before. Would you be able to define Unipart’s mission statement and how does this vary from competitors?

M1: I wouldn’t be able to quote Unipart’s mission statement, I don’t know what it is. I’m not actually a Unipart employee, but that doesn’t make any difference. I don’t know whether it’s a failure on my part but I don’t know what their mission statement is.

Katie: That leads on to the next question, do you believe that the company’s mission statement serves as a source of inspiration and a powerful communication tool?

M1: I’m sure it does, but I wouldn’t like to say how many people could actually quote it back to you.

Katie: OK, what motivates you at work?

M1: What motivates me? I need the challenge, I need to be doing something different, something new, something that’s going to push me so that’s one thing. The other thing that motivates me to come to work is being with people. I love people, and I need to be with people, so it’s about having, you know when you’re younger and lower down in the organisation, their basically friends as you spend a lot of time at work, and as you move up through the organisation relationships with people changes, but fundamentally it’s about being with people, that’s what makes it special to me.

Katie: Yeah, and what aspects of your job do you enjoy?

M1: Like I said again, it’s the people. Yeah, I like to see, you know I decided to make a change in my job three years ago and come and do this and what I’m enjoying now is the balance between not just doing manufacturing and making stuff and all of that you would get with the corporate culture but what we’ve got here with our students, you know you’ll probably see the students when you leave, we’ll have about 80-90 of them here today, and you know we wouldn’t have had that three years ago, it’s fantastic.

Katie: So do people study here then? It looks nice, the lecture rooms.

M1: Yeah, it’s a good environment, they love it.

Katie: It’s nice, are you motivated by monetary awards or by any other incentives?

M1: I am motivated by money but less so now than when I may have been in the past. I wouldn’t necessarily be motivated to do a different job just because of the money but I think that’s again once you get to a certain point, you’ve got enough money it doesn’t make a different having anymore so I would put it on my list of things that motivate me to come to work and do more and take on more challenges but it would be on the list but not on top of the list.
Katie: Yeah, could be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?

M1: No, it’s absolutely fine. I’ve not got any one on my back telling me what to do. The best thing I’ve got about my job is that it’s up to me to go and shape it and no one telling me what to do. And I’m expected to keep reinventing things and coming up with new ideas and doing stuff but no one’s telling me what to do, so I can make my own decisions, I know I’ve got the support to do things and it’s great to have that latitude to do what you want. We know what frame work we’re working with and to have that freedom and responsibility and accountability that goes with it, I think it’s one of the most important things in what motivates me to do the job, and I have the ability to do all of that.

Katie: Yeah, and if you were in a position where you were responsible in organisation corporate events and conferences, what would you do differently?

M1: See to a point, I am responsible for things like that because I am going to run a couple of events next year. We ran one here last year last November, what would I do differently? I think it’s really important to get the right people to them, so you’ve got right people speaking and then right people networking. When we ran our event here last year, we struggled to get sort of the people we wanted not sure why, but it’s about how we package the event up and how we can sell the event to someone. So everyone’s busy, so what have we got to do to convince someone that they’re going to cancel meetings that were already in their diary on a particular day and come to something different, come to your event. And its about how we can make something exciting and interesting that they feel they’re going to leave having learnt something and that it was really worthwhile. So I think its about really trying to understand what the purpose of it is and how we’re going to position it, how we’re going to sell it, because we’re not just selling it at a cost to attend, the biggest driver is whether someone can give a day of their time.

Katie: Yeah, that’s it. That’s all my questions. Thank you very much.
Katie: So can you tell me your position here and the details of your role?

M2: I’m the principle engineer so I look after research projects here at the AME apart of Unipart and apart of the university.

Katie: OK, and how long have you been working here?

M2: I’ve worked here in this department for two years, and at Unipart for five years.

Katie: OK, and where else have you previously worked?

M2: Jaguar Land Rover, before that Ford motor company and before that a company called Mechadyne, and I started at Rover, I did an apprenticeship there when I was 17.

Katie: OK, and were you aware of their corporate culture when you were at these organisations?

M2: You sort of get involved in the culture, but I wouldn’t say I was particularly aware of any of that to be honest, you just go with the flow.

Katie: Yeah, are you aware of Unipart’s corporate culture?

M2: Some parts of it we get fairly regularly reminded of, so yeah but then the culture that Unipart wants you to be reminded of, so yeah I am quite aware of the culture that we have got.

Katie: Yeah, can you tell me what are the key goals and objectives of Unipart as an organisation?

M2: The AME aims to create new sort of streams of revenues through research and for example new products and services that we can offer to our customers, new customers. Unipart Manufacturing is very much a manufacturing company and as a business needs to make money by manufacturing quality goods for our customers.

Katie: OK, how is Unipart’s corporate culture reinforced within the work place, and is it effective?

M2: How’s it reinforced? Well we have the Unipart way and there’s basic training, several different levels of training to the Unipart way. Around that we have some continuous improvements, ideas, and you know people follow. There are continuous improvements all around, with people solving problems at their own level, which I kind of agree and disagree with sometimes. So people are basically trained with all of those things, and we have regular meetings with around what we called a comsale, which is a structured meeting format where we talk around the Unipart way, so things like contingency improvement and other things.

Katie: OK, would you say Unipart’s corporate culture has an effective on organisational and individual success?

M2: Yes it does, individual success people can be more successful if they adopt the culture and they sort of brain wash themselves absolutely to the letter. I think the culture does affect how productive we are and how successful we are and that’s why I think it needs to not be something that’s fixed, it should be something that could maybe be adapted as we go along.

Katie: Yeah OK, when are you attending corporate events and conferences, what is the overall aim you hope to have achieved after attending?

M2: I suppose when I go to conferences depending on what it’s about to learn, to stay informed about how the business is doing, about what other businesses are doing. So yeah really it’s all about keeping informed and up to date with how things are going.

Katie: Yeah, what attracts you to attending corporate events?

M2: Nothing other than sometimes it’s a bit of a duty to go. And I do want to catch up with what’s been going on.

Katie: Yeah, would you say that attending corporate events and conferences provide an incentive for professional growth?

M2: I don’t quite understand the question, so it’s do they encourage you to grow?
Katie: Would you say it’s like a motivation for you to grow professionally by attending these events, does it provide an opportunity for growth?

M2: For me, so far no.

Katie: No, OK. What type of events do you normally attend, like conferences, team building, trade shows?

M2: I go to some trade shows. We don’t do any team building events here and I don’t go to that many conferences, so as I said mainly trade shows.

Katie: What events have you enjoyed and why?

M2: I enjoy some internal conferences and management conferences just because you sort of get more a feel for how some of the seniors operate and I enjoy trade shows to a point, but then I find their just a sales opportunity really for other people, so I don’t enjoy having things sold to you for a whole day, it can get a bit tiring when just want a bit of technical knowledge really.

Katie: During corporate events and conferences how often do you network and communicate with other delegates?

M2: Yeah, every time. I should say as well the other thing that we go to is TSB, we’ve got a funding body from the government so we go to those events as well and I find those the most interesting, they’re the best networking events as well, so apart from trade shows those are probably the more interesting type of conference that I go to.

Katie: Do you believe that networking is important during corporate events and conferences?

M2: Yes, I think it’s probably the most important thing you can get out of it really.

Katie: Yeah, and could you provide me with an example as to when networking during corporate events has benefitted yourself or Unipart?

M2: Recently I went to a briefing event for TSB and one of our main customers is JLR, and I met some guy from JLR that would be interested in working with AME and it was a different level, we normally interact with people on product related projects but this guy was actually working for JLR as a government funding representative, and he was interested on working on overall manufacturing projects with us. So though although we haven’t got anything over yet, it’s a really good relationship going forward.

Katie: Yeah, do you believe networking allows for innovation with the help from external knowledge?

M2: Yes it does, because especially at those innovate events we meet other people that are innovating and specialising in things which will help us in some way or another.

Katie: Yeah, could you define Unipart’s mission statement?

M2: As in their overall strategy? On the top of my head, no. I know it, I’ve seen it but I couldn’t.

Katie: No, OK. I’ll skip these questions. What motivates you at work?

M2: I’m engineer so innovation, solving problems, working with a team which is performing well, all of those things really. And coming up with solutions for engineering problems really.

Katie: Yeah, what aspects of your job do you enjoy?

M2: I enjoy working with people, I enjoy working with the students here, I find that quite rewarding and I enjoy engineering when you’ve got some breathing to do it and yeah that’s about it really.

Katie: OK, are you motivated my monetary awards or by any other incentives?

M2: I think money is a necessity, I’m quite happy. I think that the reward for me is successful projects and being recognised.

Katie: And could you be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?
M2: I think you probably could, it’s difficult in a big company because the way to incentivise me is probably different to the next person so I think mainly it’s about recognition through performance development plans, those kind of things.

Katie: Yeah, if you were in a position where you were responsible for organising corporate events and conferences, would you do anything differently?

M2: Yeah I think I would, I would try and steer it away from the kind of sales pitch of everything and try structure it so it’s more of a, for example an industry for conferences, I would rather make it smaller so that as you walk through it, it kind of tells you a story and creates a solution, or a series of solutions are available rather than just everyone saying ‘what are you in the industry for?’ and you ask them what they’re doing and they don’t really know what the for industry is. I think I would make it more of a kind of as you walk through your getting a clearer and clearer picture of what the companies are about and what they can mean to you.

Katie: Brilliant, well that’s it. Thank you.
7.6. Appendix 6- F1 Transcript

Katie: Can I ask what’s your position and details of your role here?
F1: I’m a PA and I look after the managing director of UPA and his senior leadership team.
Katie: How long have you worked here?
F1: 3 years.
Katie: OK, and where else have you previously worked?
F1: I’ve worked for value retail, which is at Bicester Village, I’ve worked for Wheatabix, I’ve worked for Muller Dairy, the yoghurt organisation, I’ve worked for Wedgewood. So rather large organisations.
Katie: Wow, Ok, and were you aware of their corporate culture when you were there?
F1: I don’t think it was such a big deal back then, because I’m talking about probably 15 years ago, and I don’t think you know we weren’t really privy to it or anything like that. I’m sure if we asked it would have been fine but it wasn’t… we weren’t aware really. We had no reason to really ask.
Katie: Yeah, Ok. Are you aware of Unipart’s corporate culture?
F1: *pauses* Probably not really, because I don’t think, again, it’s at the forefront of my mind really. But again I’m sure that there are ways of finding it on the internet, so if I need to find out I can.
Katie: Well the next question was what are the goals and objectives of Unipart as an organisation?
F1: *pauses again* I don’t know, I’m sorry.
Katie: No, don’t worry. When attending corporate conferences, what is the overall aim you hope to have achieved after attending?
F1: I think it’s to come away with a greater understanding of what it is that’s being presented. So you always think of these things as, if it’s a long day or morning, you think ‘oh gosh its time out of the office, which is precious’ but then you come away thinking ‘oh I didn’t know that’, so it is quite, you do gain quite a bit of information from them. You do think ‘oh gosh, it is taking X amount of my time’, but it’s worth it.
Katie: OK, what attracts you to attending corporate events?
F1: Because as I say, you do find out things. There’s times that people will ask you questions and you’re not aware and sometimes you find out the answers. And also, you meet people from the other part of the organisation that you would not normally speak to.
Katie: Yeah, and would you say attending corporate events and conferences provide an incentive for professional growth, and if so how?
F1: Oh gosh ok, for my probably not because you know I’ve been a PA for many, many years now and I don’t see my role changing at all, so if anything I disclaim more information, which is helpful but it doesn’t change my role or anything.
Katie: What type of events have you attending, like conferences, team building, trade shows?
F1: Yeah, I’ve been to trade shows when I worked for Wedgewood, where I worked in the marketing department. So of course we had to go to tradeshows to show our wears, and that was always exciting because you would see your competitors and they were doing. I’ve been to team building events when I worked with Muller Dairy and that can take you out of your comfort zone a little bit. But afterwards you think ‘oh gosh I really enjoyed it’, and then the conferences and things are mostly to do with the company, the organisation. UMG hold a conference every year and we go to that and any other conferences that we are invited to.
Katie: OK, and what events have you enjoyed and why?
F1: I think I probably enjoyed sort of trade show fairs because it’s probably more up my alley and I think working within the marketing department as well it’s sort of seen as a funky kind of area to be working in. And yeah, I just enjoyed it because also the product we were making was really quite lovely, quite beautiful and very popular.

Katie: And what events have you not enjoyed and why?

F1: Probably the team building events and team building because it does take you out of your comfort zone as I said, and especially if you’re with people who are slightly more senior than yourself. And I class myself not completely shy, but sometimes you are shy when you’re speaking out in front of others.

Katie: OK, during corporate events and conferences how often do you communicate and network with other delegates?

F1: Probably at break times, so there are usually about, depending on how long the conference is, two or three breaks, so you usually just go across and chat to people. And it’s nice to be introduced to other people as well, that maybe you’ve heard of but haven’t actually met.

Katie: OK, and do you believe networking is important during corporate events and conferences?

F1: I believe it’s important because you get an understanding of what other people do, you know we can all be a bit insular in our own little world, and when you go to these events then you realise that the issues that you have are not just within your little organisation, other people have the same issues as well so it’s good to network, I feel.

Katie: Yeah, and could you give me an example as to when networking during corporate events and conferences has benefitted yourself or Unipart as an organisation?

F1: Probably not here at Unipart. No, because when we go to the conferences we probably know more people than people we don’t know, so yeah I wouldn’t say probably here.

Katie: OK, and do you believe that networking allows for innovation with the help from external knowledge?

F1: I do, there’s probably certain people who, not myself, but certain people who will find that networking is the key to getting on and being known and whereas, you know, within my role it’s administrative. So I don’t see myself going anything further so.

Katie: OK, would you be able to define Unipart’s mission statement?

F1: *pauses* No.

Katie: A lot of people have said that so don’t worry.

Katie: What motivates you at work?

F1: I just think the people around me, you know this organisation has its peaks and troughs, like were going great no issues downstairs and then suddenly we have a few issues and the people all come together, and that’s probably why I’ve been here so long because we do work with some great people here.

Katie: What aspects of your job to do enjoy?

F1: I enjoy helping people, and that’s the role of a PA. You know, if someone asked me to do something, yeah some tasks can be slightly mundane but some tasks can be not so. So yeah, I do enjoy helping people.

Katie: OK, are you motivated by monetary awards or by any other incentives?

F1: Money is nice, but it’s not the be all and end all, so I don’t want a pack on the back every time I do something, that’s not me but it’s nice every now and then to sort of be appreciated.

Katie: Yeah, could you be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?

F1: I probably could but as to what would incentivise me I really don’t know. I think what I do is great and if I was offered something else it wouldn’t incentivise me anymore but it would be nice to be offered something nice.
Katie: if you were in a position where you were responsible in organisation corporate events and conferences, what would you do differently?

F1: I think the first thing really is to shop around, because you do find that you tend to go back to the same venue all the time. There not always the best, you know if you go to other organisations they may be able to offer you a little bit more of an incentive to go with them. And I think also people get bored of the same venue, it’s nice to go to different places. So I think I would probably start with shopping around, not necessarily the best price but different locations.

Katie: Thank you very much, that’s everything.
7.7. Appendix 7- F2 Transcript

Katie: What’s your position and the details of your role here at Unipart?

F2: I’m the executive assistant to the UMG managing director.

Katie: OK, how long have you been working here?

F2: Coming up to 25 years.

Katie: Wow, and where have you previously worked?

F2: Rover group, MG Rover.

Katie: OK and were you aware of their corporate culture?

F2: Yes.

Katie: And are you aware of Unipart’s corporate culture?

F2: Yes.

Katie: Could you tell me what the key goals and objectives are of Unipart as an organisation?

F2: It’s just what you think what they want to do, so they want to be the first choice partner as a logistic partner or manufacturing partner with businesses. They want to be able to provide lean solutions to their customers and work as a partnership towards their goal.

Katie: OK, how is Unipart’s corporate culture reinforced within the workplace and is it effective?

F2: Within Unipart everyone’s got a say, so within the workplace everybody has an opportunity to improve their working environment or what they do with customers, and its recognised in whether its small scale OCC’s or a mark in action which can be recognised by the customer or somebody internally, so and that is the real, whole ethos of the business that you know you can actually make a difference to the company that is either to your internal customers or your external customers.

Katie: Yeah, so does Unipart’s corporate culture have an impact on organisation and individual success?

F2: Yeah I think so, because you get rewarded for it. Whether that’s financially, whether that’s you get invited to a recognition ceremony or you get a letter or something, so yes I’d say so.

Katie: OK, when attending corporate conferences what is the overall aim you hope to have achieved after attending?

F2: That people know more about the business and what the business is getting up to, particularly in areas that maybe they don’t deal with on a daily basis.

Katie: OK, what attracts you to attending corporate events?

F2: Probably that they are not too long, and that the speakers are interesting and that the topics are interesting.

Katie: OK, does attending corporate events or conferences provide an incentive for professional growth and is so how?

F2: No I don’t think it necessarily does, I think it’s just broadening what you know about the business.

Katie: Yeah, what type of events have you attended, like conferences, team building?

F2: We do an annual UMG conference so that’s pretty much all I go to at the moment.

Katie: OK, and what events have you enjoyed and why?

F2: Well, there’s only that one. But it’s good to actually catch up with other people but also even though I work for Carol and she covers all the UMG businesses there’s bits of stuff that you don’t actually know even though you’re dealing with the people all the time, so it’s good to catch up and there’s interesting bits that you find out.
Katie: I was going to ask what events you haven’t enjoyed and why, but obviously that’s the only one. During corporate events and conferences how often do you network and communicate with other delegates?

F2: Every time it’s a break you go and talk.

Katie: Do you believe that networking is important during corporate events and conferences?

F2: I think because if you need to deal with somebody if you’ve actually met them and talked with them and seen them face to face it makes it easier when you pick up the phone or email them, you know there’s a face to a name.

Katie: OK, could you give an example as to when networking during corporate events has benefitted yourself or Unipart?

F2: I don’t know anything specific, but I guess a couple of companies within the divisions didn’t realise that something will be done a certain way and one of the businesses they’ve kind of said ‘can we come and see you on that’, but nothing specific to me myself.

Katie: OK, do you believe that networking allows for innovation with the help from external knowledge?

F2: No, not necessarily.

Katie: How would you define Unipart’s mission statement and how does this vary from competitors?

F2: *reads from an online presentation defining Unipart’s mission statement* From that I would say that it is very wordy, and it doesn’t actually tell me, although I think most mission statements are like that. I don’t think it would be something that you would say ‘yeah I get that, that’s absolutely what we’re about’. I think its hard when you’ve got a very broad company.

Katie: That answers my next couple of questions anyway. What motivates you at work?

F2: I think just having a good working environment and having a bit of a laugh and a joke during the day.

Katie: Yeah, and what aspects of your job do you enjoy?

F2: I like the organisation and problem solving, so when you’re up against it, you’re able to get out of it or advising people what they need to do, so quite often within this role people will say ‘how do you think I should approach Carol on this or do you think I should say that’ or equally Carol will set the challenge to say ‘right I need this doing can you do it’.

Katie: Yeah, are you motivated by monetary awards or by any other incentives?

F2: No I wouldn’t say money is the driver, it’s more enjoying what I do and actually getting to the end of the day and not thinking ‘oh god I don’t want to do back tomorrow’.

Katie: Yeah OK, could you be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?

F2: Not to be more effective, I don’t know I think I have a really good relationship with my boss and know that things are working and that isn’t necessarily because of if I get bonuses or I get loads and loads of praise but you know that you’re doing a good job and that’s probably what motivates me.

Katie: If you were in a position where you were responsible for organisation corporate events or conferences, what would you do differently?

F2: Have the information far more in advance, so we do organise at this office corporate events so corporate hospitality things like that and quite often the list of who they want to invite is a little bit late in the day and then if they can’t come your scratting around for people so it’s having plenty of time to organise it.

Katie: OK, that’s it that’s all my questions, thank you very much.
Katie: What’s your position here and what’d the detail of your role?

F3: I’m a marketing and early talent coordinator. So marketing is quite broad, it’s pretty much any request that comes through I either coordinate it or delegate it out to an agency or I do it myself. An early talent coordinator is working with institute and working with the students to make sure that they’re integrated into the company.

Katie: OK, and how long have you been working here for Unipart?

F3: 5 years ago, since 2011.

Katie: 5 years ago? OK, and whereas have you previously worked?

F3: Coventry University, at the student union so I’ve worked there for just over ten years.

Katie: Yeah, and were you aware of their corporate culture?

F3: At my previous job? Yes.

Katie: Are you aware of Unipart’s corporate culture?

F3: Yes.

Katie: And what are the key goals and objectives of Unipart as an organisation?

F3: Unipart manufacturing, probably logistics.

Katie: Logistics ok, and how is Unipart’s corporate culture reinforced within the workplace and is this effective?

F3: It’s built into the employees, they do a lot in terms of educating the employees, so working in a very lean manufacturing way you don’t realise it. So when you start, I think it’s kind of drilled into you the Unipart way is kind of just automatically enrolled, so if you’ve never worked in manufacturing before, for me it was one of those tools really that they give you and skills set that you don’t realise that you’re using and it’s something that a manufacturing business use.

Katie: Yeah OK, does Unipart’s corporate culture have an effect on organisational and individual success?

F3: I think so, because it encourages you to think differently so it means when you start your role and go ‘oh how can I do that better’ or ‘how can I do it differently to make it more effective’, especially in marketing you know if you’re sitting there with a form that’s come through for different people for signatures, you go ‘can I make this any quicker because this is just taking too long’. You know, or the process every time you figure out a process for something you then start to look at it and go ‘right how can we make that process better’ which is very much part of your lean

Katie: Right OK, when attending corporate events and conferences, what is the overall aim you hope to have achieved after attending?

F3: Well I go to the same one that Alison does, so for me it’s knowing the business and what they’re doing and what their vision is for the next year and where they’re going.

Katie: Yeah, what attracts you to attending corporate events?

F3: Because you have to. No, it is a good time of the year, although I wouldn’t say it’s a corporate event, they do stay to the nations, and they do update you every half year on how the companies doing and a lot of the time they do address some of the questions that the monthly employee forum will address, but it’s made it up to a bigger level so if there’s an issue in the business it often gets addressed, so every half year and then a full year.

Katie: Yeah, does attending corporate events and conferences provide an incentive for professional growth, and if so, how?
F3: Yes, I would say it does because when you go you’re learning more which encourages you, especially with UMG, because as different divisions, to know what other divisions are doing, it would push you to say ‘ah actually that’s working for them; have we tried it or have we thought about it and what are we going to do’.

Katie: OK, what types of events have you attended in the past, like conferences, team building, trade shows?

F3: We’ve done team building for the cost saving ones, the divisional meetings which are the management ones, and I don’t know what else I’d say. I don’t think Unipart put on many conferences, but when they do they’re quite big.

Katie: Yeah quite large scale, OK, and what events have you enjoyed and why?

F3: I like the divisional one, because it does give you that insight in what the divisions are doing, and especially for my role it ties in because then I think ‘I could be doing that to help them’ and it encourages me to think what we could be doing and it introduces you to people that you then go ‘I need to meet them because that will help me bring something to the company’

Katie: OK, and what events have you not enjoyed and why?

F3: There are the odd events that are weekly, which is a cost saving one and it addresses all the circles they call it, and I think we, because there are so many of them, it makes it difficult to go to, because they’re weekly. It’s only due to frequency, if they were monthly and you know they picked out the best, you know I would go and see them, but because they’re weekly, and I understand they’ve got to have their recognition, but it’s a lot of commitment to go each week, especially if you’re on a job where you might not be at your desk.

Katie: Yeah, OK, during corporate events and conferences how often do you network and communicate with other delegates?

F3: Yeah I’d say the big one that we go to, I’d say it’s quite a good conference because we’ve got seven divisions to get round and network and make sure that you’ve caught up with everybody that you’re trying to chase down for things and also, when you’re looking at doing new things it’s good to be introduced to new people in the business, because every year turnover changes and it’s nice to be introduced to new people if anybody has moved up through the company, as there’s a certain level of people you start to meet new people in the company. And as well when you do that, you find out, for marketing purposes, it’s useful to think ‘oh they would be ideal for helping social media’, you know it gives you a different idea of whose in the company and whose willing to help so you can address them first really.

Katie: Yeah, OK, do you believe that networking allows for innovation with the help for external knowledge?

F3: Yeah because everyone’s bringing in different information, so a company overview is very specific to your company but the conferences often have every year a theme, so this year they did industry for, so Jane Semester did a presentation on industry for which brings up obviously the innovation side, so then people start to think ‘oh hang on, could I be working with them’ not necessarily for me in my role, but it would help because then you could help support them and what they’re doing whether it be a presentation, marketing material, pop up banners, then go into events, what material can we give them, and so it gives you that, even if it’s a presentation slides. So for instance they did, they’re going to a customer and want some material that we don’t quite have, and you know we could create a power point presentation that would help them that’s a presentation that could go on a screen behind them or you know get some files printed that’s got that information on. So it’s quite handy to be supporting the division.

Katie: Yeah, OK how would you define Unipart’s mission statement and how does this vary from competitors?
F3: It’s long and unrecognisable. So you know if you look at your big names, it’s a strap line, clear strap line of what they’re doing. I know mission statements aren’t a strap line but they do have a vision to them, but I don’t think it’s well understood throughout the business, of what the business is.

Katie: Yeah

F3: And the vision changes, so you look at a big organisational change you wonder whether their vision changes because it’s obvious it’s not going to be reflected straight away.

Katie: Yeah. What motivates you at work?

F3: I love my job. I really enjoy my job, because it’s fitted in. I feel like it’s waited for me. I’ve kind of waiting for it, because it’s like the one job that genuinely, I’ve worked in jobs that I haven’t enjoyed and jobs that I do like and get on with, but it’s fits everything that I’ve done like my background, and it’s just slotted in.

Katie: What aspects of your job do you enjoy?

F3: All of it. No, it’s really difficult because it’s different day to day. I like the challenge that if someone came in and asked me to do something that I’ve never done, I’d still try and do it or work my way round it, find out how I can do it. There’s always ways and there’s always people to ask, so you know in this office, there’s always an engineer a throw in that way, you know if there’s anything for the marketing side of it, I can definitely think you know if I don’t know I can go and find it out. I’m more tempted to say you know ‘I will find this out’ and I’ll get a response.

Katie: Yeah, are you motivated by monetary awards or any other incentives?

F3: I think you would be, but it doesn’t drive me to work every day. You know, you enjoy your job and you wouldn’t give it up for the world but you know if there was an incentive then you would try harder to do certain bits.

Katie: OK, could you be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?

F3: Training really, but I couldn’t say now I need training in this, this and this, it comes up so at the moment I’d be sitting there saying ‘yes I need training in websites, because we’re developing more’ but its only as the job role progresses, so you couldn’t walk into it and say ‘yes I need this to do this job’, you find out by doing the job rather than saying actually to help the company I’d like training in certain areas just to help me understand it more. Or you know if it was the design side of it, to help for cost reduction, whether I dabble with free stuff it would be nice to say I’ve got this.

Katie: If you were in a position where you were responsible in organising corporate events and conferences what would you do differently?

F3: I’d have them aimed at different, at the moment I feel like they’re quite specific to a pay grade and where your position is, not just saying I’d do that differently, but just maybe have similar conferences for the grades below and the grades above, so they’re at different levels so they’re pitched at different people. So you still get the company overview and the vision which you know you don’t always think, that whereas we go to one that sees all seven divisions, the different pay grades, so the state of the nation which is done half yearly and internally for one division so they don’t see what the rest is out there. And when you’re one big company you kind of want that overall, so maybe more of a five minute presentation from the other guys and then a big chunk of your presentation. It defiantly helps going external presentations because you feel like it’s a ,you know a purpose to go round and listen, you’re not going to get it again, but you can also see the costs and you know the business impact of getting everyone out of the business for the day. You know we did it for health and safety, putting everyone on the shop floor for the day, you can see the business impact so the coordinating of it and making the business still run at the same time, I wouldn’t want to get involved in that, but doing it so everyone understands the whole business would be worth it.

Katie: OK, thank you that’s everything.
7.9. Appendix 9- F4 Transcript

Katie: Can you tell me your position and the detail of your role that you do here?

F4: Yeah, so I’m a solutions design engineer, so I work on designing warehouses, supply chains those sort of things for companies in line with their requirements.

Katie: OK, cool. How long have you been working here?

F4: At Unipart? Since 2011, 5 years.

Katie: OK, and where else have you previously worked?

F4: I went straight from university. I studied at Birmingham.

Katie: OK, and are you aware of Unipart’s corporate culture?

F4: Yeah, so do you want me to describe it?

Katie: Yeah, that’s kind of what the next question is, the key goals and objectives.

F4: So the key part of Unipart’s culture is on continuous improvement, so one of the main objectives, there a number of key objectives, one of them is associated with that, one of the objectives is to become industry leading, and sort of technologies, and there’s profit goals, stuff like that.

Katie: OK, could you tell me how Unipart’s corporate culture is reinforced within the work place and is it effective?

F4: Yeah, so in terms of the corporate goals, Unipart does a lot of training and stuff like that to kind of embed the lean sort of side of things, so there’s a lot of work done on that. Kind of a lot of marketing stuff, so kind of those sort of things like that.

Katie: Yeah OK, would you say that Unipart’s corporate culture has an effect on organisational and individual success?

F4: I think so, in terms of organisational success, you know the whole kind of culture of reducing costs and improving your efficiency so, in that respect yes. In terms of individual success, yeah I would say so as well, because it’s really about training people so that they can become as great as they can be.

Katie: When you’re attending corporate events or conferences what is typically the aim you hoped to have achieved after attending?

F4: So like internal conferences? So what do I want to achieve? I guess it’s about kind of networking, learning what other people are doing and if there’s any applicability for me. I think it’s those sorts of things.

Katie: Yeah, what kind of events do you normally attend, like conferences, trade show’s?

F4: We’ve got sort of internal conferences, we’ve got a couple a year. And I also go to some trade conferences that are relevant so like, technology based or whatever.

Katie: Right OK, what events have you enjoyed attending and why?
F4: I think some of the external conferences have been interesting when it comes to greeting and getting to know some companies and what they’re actually doing that’s relevant to us. Sometimes you kind of don’t realise what the part of the process is, technology wise, so going to see that.

Katie: Yeah, and what events have you not enjoyed and why?

F4: I think where it’s been a bit disorganised or where it’s not been kind of clear of what there, if there’s a message, you know I think those have been less enjoyable.

Katie: OK, during corporate events and conferences, how often do you network and communicate with other delegates?

F4: So during internal corporate events, quite a lot because you tend to know people anyway. During conferences, like external conferences, it’s a bit more difficult. Because people have got their own interests as well, but you know, you do try to, that’s kind of a big focus in both of them so that is something I do try to do.

Katie: Yeah, and why do you believe networking is important during corporate events and conferences?

F4: I think you know, conferences is not just about the topic, but also understanding who is doing what, so and who you can contact further. So you know, we went to a conference recently so we could understand if there was any partnerships we could have with anyone for a project, so those sort of things creates that foundation.

Katie: OK, could you give an example as to when networking has benefitted yourself or Unipart?

F4: Yeah, so I think that sort of example that I just said is probably relevant.

Katie: Yeah sorry, and do you believe that networking allows for innovation?

F4: I guess so, because innovation is about the generation and diffusion of ideas. In terms of the generation of ideas, it helps bring people together that probably wouldn’t have been together but also for the diffusion of ideas, it helps kind of disseminate that and you can further enhance ideas and innovation, so I think yes.

Katie: Not many people have been able to answer that one but would you be able to define Unipart’s mission statement?

F4: I think so yeah, so it’s to understand our customers better than anyone else and to serve them better than anyone else.

Katie: OK, you’re the first answer for that one so far.

F4: I think that’s what it is, but hopefully my name isn’t against this!

Katie: No it’s not, don’t worry. Do you think it is important to convey Unipart’s mission statement when attending corporate events or conferences? Is there an opportunity to?

F4: I suppose there is, I think maybe indirectly through presentations but yeah there probably is an opportunity to drive that forward a little bit.

Katie: Yeah, what motivates you at work?

F4: I think it’s, does it have to do with this?

Katie: No, anything.

F4: I think for me, learning and developing. Learning new things and being able to use those new skills.

Katie: OK, and what aspects of your job do you enjoy?

F4: I enjoy new projects, so I work on a project basis. And meeting customers as well, so having a bit of a different sort of interaction that just internally.

Katie: Yeah, are you motivated by monetary awards or any other incentives?
F4: I think you know to a basic degree yes, but I think I’m more motivated by learning new things so I feel like I’m progressing myself personally and at an academic level.

Katie: Yeah, OK, how could you be better incentivised to do your job more effectively?

F4: I guess, I dunno. I guess being given more opportunities to do new things. I kind of do get a lot of that, but.

Katie: OK, and if you were in a position where you were responsible for organising corporate events or conferences, what would you do differently?

F4: So I think it’s about having a clear message, what the purpose is. I think it’s also understanding what people want to find out. And I think the other thing is, you know, it’s about being honest so you know if were talking about a specific topic, recognising where we are and where we kind of want to get to, trying to fit around that. So I think it all comes around, I’m being a vacant but it’s all about having a clear objective and being really direct about it. In a lot of conferences they talk around it and not about it.

Katie: OK, thank you.

F4: I bet people said like different people.

Katie: People did say about it being more specific.