A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

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DECLARATION

I, Ketsara Koetsuk, declare that the Doctorate of Education thesis entitled *A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration,* is no more than 60,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

ABSTRACT

This research identifies the professional development needs of fifty District Directors employed by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Bangkok, Thailand, in order to produce an operational strategy for a learning organisation and an improvement in work quality. The population sample consists of the Permanent Secretary, two Deputy Permanent Secretaries, and all fifty District Directors of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

The research involves a Proactive Evaluation, in which a needs assessment of a group of fifty District Directors is undertaken. A mixed methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, is applied. The quantitative research component applies a three-round Delphi survey of the fifty District Directors. The Delphi survey identified seven areas from the sixteen originally submitted; as well, a set of five professional development strategies is identified. The seven elements needed to improve their skills and competencies were: leading an organisation; administering responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service; being mature; establishing good human relationships; collaborating effectively with people and their organizations; providing moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality; understanding people in order to satisfy their needs. The five professional development strategies required to promote these needs were: improving skills and competencies; successful training; overcoming problems with training; the duration of training programs; selecting suitable training venues.

Finally, in order to draw these various elements together, a professional development training policy designed to benefit present and future District Directors of the BMA is developed.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The twenty-first century represents the era of a knowledge-based economy where knowledge and information become the most critical sources of national competitiveness. An accelerated movement toward this knowledge-based economy brings about and calls for changes not only in the economic sector but also across the whole of society. This accelerated shift toward knowledge-based economy not only defines competition but also determines individual economies' survival in such competition (Choi Bycong-Hoon, 2004). It is an attempt by the organisation to respond to the surrounding environment and to maximize the success of its operations. Most scholars and researchers agree that learning is inevitable and increasingly important to survive change in today's ever changing workplace.

The concept of organisation as a principle governing memory and learning is not new (Gagne, 1978) and goes back for nearly two decades (Senge, 1990). In organisational learning, the basic premise is a shift in the way that the members of the organisation will learn new ways to perceive and solve problems. Being able to anticipate and adapt in this way will be associated with superior performance over a period of time. In today's world, rapid technological innovation, globalisation, economic reform and demographic change have reshaped the workforce and required individuals

and organisations to adjust accordingly. Smith (2003) argues that in an environment marked by a rapid pace of change, the ongoing development of the skill and knowledge of individuals is a strategic imperative for organisations. This is an important element in maintaining organisational capability and effectiveness and keeping up with changes. The impact of the change will not be the same for all individuals and groups because each will have differing interests and will be affected in different ways. Also, different stages of the change process will affect different individuals and groups.

A key challenge of change is to find the problem and to understand it sufficiently so that analysis and assessment can solve it. In particular, 'needs assessment' is a systematic effort that we may employ to gather opinions and ideas from a variety of sources on performance problems or new systems and technologies (Rossett & Allison, 1987). Needs assessment is a process for quality improvement and should be realistic, clear, coherent, communicated, manageable, and sustainable and integral to the educational mission of the institution to have the greatest potential to yield meaningful results (Rockman, 2002).

In this dissertation, a needs assessment was employed that involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative methods used to collect data by means of semi-structured interviews of three senior executives of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) who control all Districts in Bangkok; the outcomes of these interviews were used to establish a starting point in describing what they believe the District Directors – their subordinates in the BMA – require to improve their skills. This process led to the formulation of 13 key issues.

In a quantitative phase, three rounds of a Delphi survey of fifty District Directors were undertaken with the intent of achieving a consensus on which of the 13 key issues, together with a further three issues identified by the District Directors as part of the survey, were considered to be the most important. The outcome of this was the identification of seven specific skills

and competencies, and five professional development strategies that should be included in any training program designed for District Directors.

Nine of the fifty District Directors were invited to participate in a subsequent qualitative phase in which, by means of individual semi-structured interviews, each discussed the seven skills and competencies and the five professional development strategies. The outcomes of each interview were summarized and formulated as a set of case studies. The findings from the outcomes of the narrative analysis of the semi structured interviews provided a comprehensive profile of the skills and competency needs, as well as appropriate professional development strategies, which led to the formulation of a professional development training policy for District Directors of the BMA.

Statement of the Problem

According to The Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006), the philosophy of 'sufficiency economy' bestowed by His Majesty the King to his subjects is the guiding principle of national development and management. The philosophy of a sufficiency economy, based on adherence to the Buddhist concept of the 'middle path', is advocated to: (a) overcome the current economic crisis that was brought about by unexpected change under conditions of rapid globalisation; (b) achieve sustainable development.

In the Ninth Plan, major emphasis is placed on *balanced development of human, social, economic, and environmental resources*. A priority goal is pursuance of good governance at all levels of Thai society in order to achieve real sustainable people-centred development. A system of good governance was instigated to provide the need for a policy and measures under the rules of law and democracy, and to enable members of Thai society to participate in and be responsible for public managements as well as to promote transparency and improve the quality of public service. Thus, improving the

recruitment system based on competencies and upon the requirements of public administration was important to improve the quality of the public sector workforce (http://www.ocsc.co.th). Building a learning organisation is all about acquiring knowledge from the external environment and bringing it into the organisation to be used to adapt and make changes. The result is a circular process whereby information is constantly fed into the organisational process. Changes are made and monitored with new knowledge continually being fed into the process. This ensures that change and continuous improvement are constants in the firm (Buhler, 2002). It must making serious attempts to develop staff to think and enhance their skills in order to improve the quality of their job.

Bangkok Metropolis or 'Krungthepmahanakorn Amornratanakosin Mahintharayutthaya Mahadilok Phopnopparat Ratchathaniburirom Udomratchaniwet Mahasathan Amonphiman Awatansathit Sakkathattiya Witsanukamprasit' is one of the major cities in the South East Asian Region. It was established as the capital of Thailand in 1782, the year King Rama I ascended the throne. Rather loosely translated, this becomes 'The City of Gods, the Great City, the Residence of the Emerald Buddha, Capital of the World Endowed with Nine Precious gems, the Happy City Abounding in Enormous Royal Palaces Which Resemble the Heavenly Abode Wherein Dwell the Reincarnated Gods, A City Given by Indra and Built by Witsanukam'. To the average Thai, the capital is Krung Thep (Bangkok). Bangkok is the largest city in the country, covering 1,565 square kilometres. According to official statistics, Bangkok's population is 7 million. However, it is generally known that about 30 per cent of Bangkok's residents are not registered because of their mobility between the city and the provinces. The actual population size of Bangkok is believed to be about 10 million, i.e., six times larger than the population of Chiangmai, Thailand's second largest city. Bangkok-centred economic growth in the past four decades resulted in massive urbanisation. Bangkok has become what is known as a primate city: the largest in the country consuming most of the country's resources.

In 1972, National Executive Council Order Number 335 reorganised the form of local government in the metropolis by amalgamating the activities of the Metropolis of Bangkok and of Thon Buri, the Bangkok and Thon Buri Provincial Administrations, the Metropolitan City Municipality and Sanitation Administration into the 'Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA).' In 1975, the National Executive Council Order Number 335 was superseded by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Act 1975 (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, 2001).

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is organised in accordance with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Act 1985, to be responsible for the management of the city of Bangkok. It is the sole organisation at local authority level responsible for the well-being of Bangkok residents. the BMA receives some financial support from the central government. the BMA is comprised of two main bodies: the Governor, and the Bangkok Metropolitan Council. An organisation chart of the BMA is contained in Appendix 12.

This research focuses on the skills and competencies required by District Directors to make them more effective in their role. District Directors have been authorised to perform the following tasks: local governing, community development, occupational training and promotion, registration, police works, public cleansing, city planning, health care, revenue collection and education. These duties are divided and assigned to ten sections: Administration Section; Registration Section; Public Works Section; Environment and Sanitation Section; Revenue Section; Public Cleansing and Public Park Section; Education Section; Finance Section, City Law Enforcement Section (City Police); Community Development and Social Welfare Section (see Appendix 12). Specifically, the research was set in the context of District Directors as lifelong learners each of whom has changing professional development needs. This, in turn, is set against the backdrop of the BMA as a learning organisation. District Directors must be personally responsible for learning and building their skills. the BMA should provide

the resources to support learning through its training program. They must understand their own performance reviews as well as their own aspirations to improve their skills and competencies to elevate their quality of work. The aim of this dissertation was to study the skills and competencies required by these District Directors in order to produce an operational strategy for workplace learning and improvement of work quality.

Objective

The primary objective of this study was to undertake a Proactive Evaluation that: 1) establishes the skills and competencies required by District Directors in the city of Bangkok; and 2) outlines professional development strategies required to promote these skills and competencies.

Research Questions

There were three research questions:

1. What skills and competencies do District Directors need in order to improve their on-job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation?

2. What professional development strategies are required to promote the knowledge and skill development of District Directors?

3. What skills and competencies are required by District Directors in order for them to carry out their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration?

Contribution to Knowledge

This research establishes the skills and competencies required by District Directors in the BMA, and gives an indication of appropriate professional development strategies that might be used to achieve these skills and competencies. This in turn assists in formulating a job description for their role. At the same time, it supports the value of using Proactive Evaluation as a process for describing current best practice and for developing a strategy for action amongst very senior administrators engaged in local government – an area that is often inaccessible. It also provides a link between human resource development and professional development that will be of interest to scholars in the field.

Statement of Significance

This research is significant in that it leads to four important outcomes: (1) the production of an operational strategy for the ongoing workplace and lifelong learning as part of The Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006); (2) providing District Directors with an understanding of how to meet their needs and to advance or protect their job interests; (3) the provision of workplace learning opportunities that will enable District Directors to develop their own learning organisations; (4) to make learning an integral part of the workplace. More generally, the research will assist in the professional development of municipality administrators.

The Context of the Study

A learning organisation needs to move towards substantial learning where fundamental values and culture not only shape employees but the organisation as a system (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Thus, the explosion of

knowledge and the innovation of technology have drastically changed the characteristics of the workplace. Learning becomes the most important factor in order to survive change in today's workplace. This study focuses on District Directors in order to become aware of their needs and interests and to ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge required to meet the continually changing environment in which they work.

The findings of this study will help the administration of the BMA better understand the interests and needs of District Directors in order to improve their job performance. This research will prove to be significant in that it leads to the following outcomes: the production of an operational strategy for the ongoing workplace and lifelong learning as part of The Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006); providing District Directors with an understanding of how to meet their needs and to advance or protect their job interests; the provision of workplace learning opportunities that will enable District Directors to develop their own learning organisations; to make learning an integral part of the workplace. This research will help develop the relationships between Executive and Subordinates to learn and understand each other and will assist the BMA in becoming a learning organisation.

Structure of the Thesis

In order to provide an overall perspective of this study, this section introduces each chapter. The dissertation is divided into eight chapters.

Chapter One provides an introduction to the study problem. This includes an overview of the study, its background and context, its objectives, and its significance.

Chapter Two reviews the literature associated with the theories and concepts applied in this research. Hence, the focus is on the nature of learning organisations, the professional development requirements for

meeting the needs of such an organisation, and the application of program evaluation in directing and sustaining change and innovation in an organisation such as the BMA.

Chapter Three describes the research design and methodology for this study. Details of the participants, and details of the data collection and data analysis methodologies are described.

Chapter Four reports on the interviews with executives of the BMA: conversations with the Permanent Secretary and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the BMA. It forms the first phase of the case study

Chapter Five reports the outcomes of the consensus of opinions of all fifty District Directors regarding their competency needs. It shows the results of data collected during the three rounds of the Delphi survey. It identifies seven skills and competencies as well as five professional development strategies that the fifty District Directors of the BMA believe they need in order to be more effective in their position.

Chapter Six draws together the findings of the nine District Directors responses to the semi-structured interviews. In this chapter, data reduction techniques, as suggested by Miles & Huberman (1994), are employed, The outcomes give an insight into the District Directors' perspectives of both the skills and competencies they need, and the professional development strategies that they believe are needed to carry out their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Chapter Seven proposes the development of a training policy that will assist District Directors of the BMA in improving their job performance. This policy will assist District Directors in coping with changing demands, particularly their managing the implementation of change and strategies to promote their knowledge and skills development.

Chapter Eight provides a reflection on the research project. The chapter addresses implications of this research and offers ideas for future investigation.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

In this chapter the theories and concepts that are related to the construction of this research are reviewed. The literature related to learning organisations assisted in the study of the skills and competencies required by District Directors in order to produce an operational strategy for workplace learning and improvement of work quality. The literature of professional development guided the design of professional development strategies required to promote these skills and competencies. The literature relating to sustaining change and innovation within the BMA was reviewed in order to identify the implications for a professional development program that aims to improve the job performance of District Directors and to help them better understand a learning organisation.

Generally, the literature that has been included in this review suggests that for the BMA to manage change, the skills and competencies of its' leaders – together with the professional development strategies required to deliver them – require constant review and updating; in other words, policy needs to be formulated, implemented and reviewed. Specifically, this literature review is concerned to provide a theoretical framework for the study. It focuses on the following: (a) the learning organisation, (b)

professional development; (c) program evaluation; (d) qualitative data analysis; and (e) policymaking.

Characteristics of a Learning Organisation

According to Senge (1990), a *learning organisation* is a place where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together. By establishing a learning organisation, Senge seeks a holistic solution to making an organisation more adaptable to change. More recently, Senge *et al.* (2000) and his colleagues have examined the learning organisation from a system theory perspective and have made the important distinction between *adaptive* and *generative* learning. The simpler adaptive learning is only the first stage of a learning organisation, that is, to adapt to environment changes. Generative learning involves creativity and innovation, going beyond just adapting to change but to bring ahead of and anticipating change.

Whiston (1996) sees a learning organisation as being closely linked to the social process within the organisation. He, like Senge, takes a holistic view: that interdisciplinary skills, interfunctional collaboration and strategic coherence should be involved in all departmental functions in an organisation. Kramlinger (1992), in similar vein, sees a learning organisation as a large body of aligned individuals whose members at all levels spontaneously learn and innovate in ways that promote the well-being and mission of the organisation. This research adopted the five disciplines of Senge (1990) – systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning as the starting point for an investigation of the personal development needs of District Directors in the BMA that would also explore the social needs (Whiston, 1996) and the well-being of an organisation (Kramlinger, 1992).

Giesecke & McNeil (2004, p. 55) explain, following Senge, that a learning organisation is:

> Skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and at modifying its' behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights. Without accompanying changes in the way that work gets done, only the potential for improvement exists. Learning organisations translate new knowledge into new ways of behaving. In a learning organisation, learning takes place at the individual, group, and organisational levels.

According to Karash (2002) a learning organisation is one in which people at all levels, individually and collectively are continually increasing their capacity to produce results they really care about. Skyrme (2002) suggests that the important points to note about this definition are that learning organisations are adaptive to their external environment, continually enhance their capacity to change/adapt, develop collective as well as individual learning and use the results of learning to achieve better results.

Liebowitz (2000) argues that social capital contributes significantly to organisational learning. Essential characteristics of organisational learning include: new skills, attitudes, values, behaviours and products created or acquired over time; what is learned becomes the property of some collective unit; and what is learned remains within the organisation or group even if individuals leave. A challenge for organisations is to enable transitions from personal learning to organisational learning so that it becomes possible to create a learning organisation or learning community.

Staptes (2001, p. 41) notes that a learning organisation is about more than just helping the individuals to learn within an organisational context. It is also about the collective learning of the organisation itself, as individuals build on the learning of others to which they now have access markets. (Argyris & Schön, 1969; Senge, 1990). An amalgamation of their views is contained in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1   CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEARNING ORGANISATION AND ASSOCIATED BEST PRACTICES

Characteristic	Definition	Associated Best Practice	Positive By-products
System thinking	The ability to see interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect; the ability to think in context and appreciate the consequences of actions on other parts of the system	1. Practicing self mastery 2. Possessing consistent mental models 3. Possessing a shared vision 4. Emphasis on team learning	Long term improvement or change; decreased organisational conflict; continuous learning among group members; revolutionary over evolutionary change
Personal mastery	The ability to honestly and openly see reality as it exists; to clarify one's personal vision.	1. Positive reinforcement from role models/mangers 2. Sharing experiences 3. More interaction time between supervisory levels 4. Emphasis on feedback 5. Balance work/non-work life	Greater commitment to the organisation and to work; less rationalisation of negative events; ability to face limitations and areas for improvement; ability to deal with change
Mental models	The ability to compare reality or personal vision with perceptions; reconciling both into a coherent understanding	1. Time for learning 2. Reflective openness 3. Habit of inquiry 4. Forgiveness of oneself 5. Flexibility/ adaptability	Less use of defensive routines in work; less reflexivity that leads to dysfunctional patterns of behaviour; less avoidance of difficult situations
Building shared vision	The ability of group of individuals to hold a shared picture of a mutually desirable future	1. Participative openness 2. Trust 3. Empathy towards others 4. Habit of dissemination 5. Emphasis on cooperation 6. A common language	Commitment over compliance, faster change, greater within group trust, less time spend on aligning interests; more effective communication flow
Team learning	The ability of a group of individuals to suspend personal assumptions about each other and engage in 'dialogue' rather than 'discussion'.	1. Practicing openness 2. Consensus building 3. Top-down and bottom up communication flows 4. Support over blame; 5. Creative thinking	Group self awareness; heightened collective learning' learning 'up and down' the hierarchy' greater cohesiveness; enhanced creativity

The literature of learning applied for use in this study is intended to better understand the needs of District Directors to both improve their job performance and benefit the BMA in the long term. Table 2.1 presents the characteristics that define the learning organisation and the positive results accruing to individuals and organisations or cultures as a whole when they are present.

The characteristics listed in Table 2.1 may be taken as general qualities that exist within a learning culture. There are concrete cognitive and behavioural tools, as well as specific types of social interaction and structural conditions, that improve the chances that these qualities are achieved and sustained over time. The four main categories arising from the listing of 'best practice' elements are communication and openness, inquiry and feedback, adequate time and mutual respect and support.

Models of a Learning Organisation

Marquardt & Reynolds (1994) illustrate a learning organisation model – shown in Figure 2.1 below – which captures the relationship and learning among individuals, the team and the organisation. This model illustrates a team's nature and the learning organisation as the union of individuals (the lower triangle) and organisations (the upper triangle). The key to this model is the overlap. This overlap is where teams function and it illustrates the benefits of learning organisations. The utilisation of the combined resources and energies of the individuals the team and the organisation is what creates the learning organisation. This model was used to illustrate the relationship of the group of District Directors and the BMA to reflect the skills and competencies needed by them to make change in accordance with new environments that will benefit the BMA.

FIGURE 2.1   LEARNING ORGANISATION ACTION IMPERATIVES

Organisation

Empower people
Integrate quality and
quality of work life
create free space for
learning

Team

Individuals

Promote inquiry

Create continuous
learning opportunities
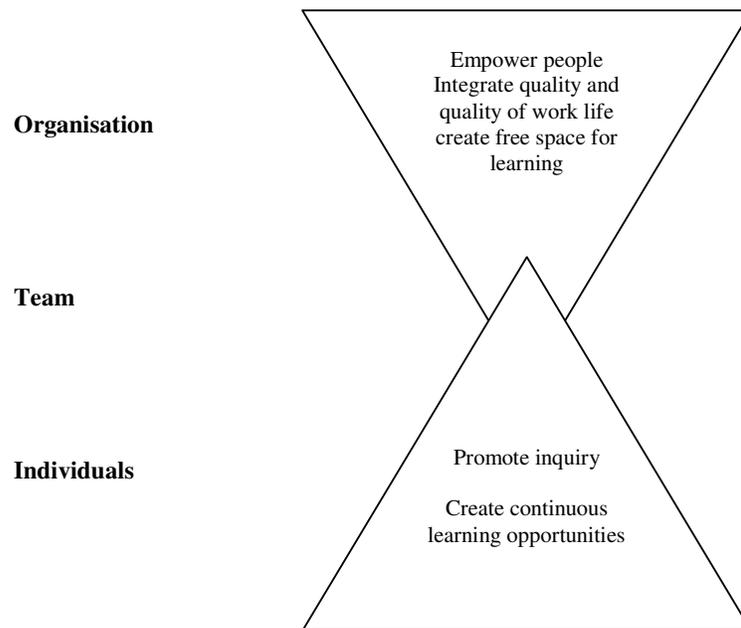
Learning Involves Change

Researchers in this stream view a learning organisation as the Prime Mover
of development of new knowledge or insights that have the potential to
influence behaviour. Learning has been stated as an adaptation,
improvement, innovation or a new understanding. Researchers who provide
insight in this stream include Arrow (1962), Shrivastava (1983), Fiol & Lyles
(1985), Stata (1989), Senge (1990),and Simon (1991). Figure 2.2 illustrates
the concepts in this stream.

Shrivastava (1983) states that organisational learning occurs through
the medium of individual members and involves the development of better
interpersonal skills. He proposes four approaches of organisational learning,
namely, adaptive learning, assumption sharing, development of knowledge
and institutionalised experience. Adaptive learning means organisations

FIGURE 2.2   LEARNING AND CHANGE
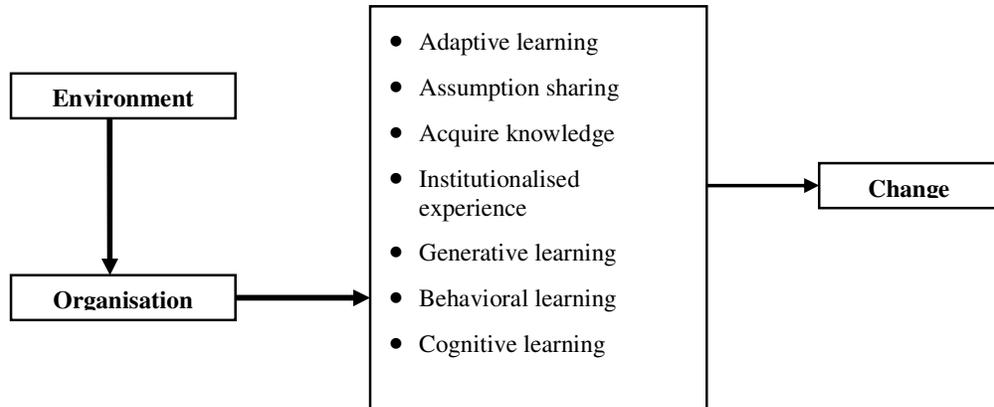
adapt to problems, opportunities and changes in the environment by adjusting goals, decisions and behaviours. Assumption sharing means organisations develop organisational theories-in-use which results from shared assumptions and values. Development of knowledge is the process of acquiring knowledge of the relationship between organisational actions and environmental outcomes. Institutionalised experience is an accumulation of efficiencies through experience and tradition.

Fiol & Lyles (1985) define two aspects of learning:. behavioural and cognitive learning are suggested. Behavioural learning relates to new responses, action or structures. Cognitive learning relates to the sharing of new understanding and conceptual schemes of organisation members. At the cognitive level, Simon (1991) points out that all learning takes place inside individual human heads. An organisation learns only either by the learning of its members or by ingesting new members who have knowledge the organisation did not previously have.

Senge (1990) suggests two kinds of learning: adaptive learning and generative learning. A learning organisation will enhance its capacity to create its future by joining adaptive learning with generative learning.

Adaptive learning is the most basic form of learning which occurs within a set of recognised and unrecognised constraints that reflect the organisation's assumptions about its environment and itself. The resulting learning boundary constrains organisational learning to the adaptive variety, which usually is sequential, incremental and focused on issues or opportunities that are within the traditional scope of the organisation's activities. Generative learning takes place when the organisation is willing to question long-held assumptions about its mission, customers, capabilities or strategy. It requires the development of a new way of looking at the world based on an understanding of the systems and relationships that link key issues and events. The systems' thinking disciplines enable the organisation to focus on interrelationships and dynamic processes of change rather then on linear cause-effect chains. According to Wolf (1996, p. 35), there are six principles of learning. These can be applied to establish the skills and competencies of District Directors that occur when environments change.

Six Principles of Learning

1. Learning is a process involving multiple personal changes.

2. Individual needs, emotions, and approaches to learning shape the learning experience.

3. Learning capacity is adequate for meeting life challenges.

4. The learner actively constructs the future.

5. Life experience is the foundation and resource for all learning.

6. Personal and social contexts affect learning.

These principles were helpful to this research throughout the entire process of preparing for interviewing and analysing the responses of executives of the BMA.

Muongmee (2002a) points out that the pressure of change of today can come from all directions:

1. Mentality

2. Political Problems

3. Social Problems

4. Organisational: top-down versus a flat organisation

5. Knowledge Problem – the means to get to an end. Not knowing how to do the job and reaching the goal.

The conclusions drawn from the points of view of Quality versus Change are displayed diagrammatically in Figure 2.3, below.

Higgins (1994) argues that change may be either internal or external and that change is constant and may appear to be more frenetic or rapid than it was 10 or 20 years ago. Whether this is actually the case, argues Higgins, the very fact of change, and the uncertainly that it brings, is a cause of new requirements, skills and structures. Managing change is now seen as one of the top managerial priorities, and the implementation of change is an area in which managers find their skills are too often lacking.

FIGURE 2.3   QUALITY PRESSURES THAT PRODUCE CHANGE
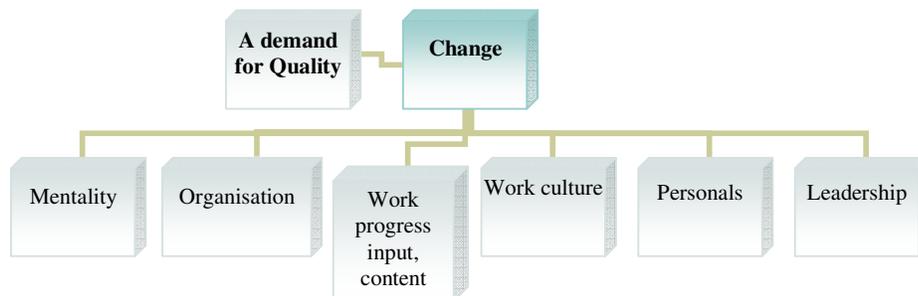
Leichenko (1999) argues that change occurs at the personal level as well as the level of the overall organisation. Management usually designs the change process and implements it at the organisational level and often gives little thought to the impact of proposed and actual changes on individuals and their responses to it. With this thought in mind, this research will be concerned with both individuals and the overall organisation.

Jason & Laurence (2000) indicate that the rate of change in today's world is constantly increasing. Everything that exists is getting old, wearing out and should be replaced:

> Revolutionary technologies, consolidation, well-funded new competition, unpredictable customers, and a quickening in the pace of change hurled unfamiliar conditions at management.

Lowe & Lewis (1994) point out that this is especially true of the effect of change on people, where any intervention is in danger of being too little, too late. Muongmee (2002b) argues that change does not result from the things that administrators do to people; rather, it results from helping people – individually and in work groups – to identify organisational problems and to solve them. These positions support the argument that learning must involve change.

Watkins & Drury (1994) suggest that there are four groups of strategies for the development of professionals over the next decade:

1. Developing a new mind set;

2. Learning to promote and market one's skills, networking and cultivating relationships;

3. Developing self-insight and taking personal change;

4. Developing a range of skills and competencies.

Overall, this literature suggests that, for the BMA to manage change, the skills and competencies of its leaders – together with the professional

development strategies required to deliver them – require constant review and updating.

Professional Development

Professional Development (PD) is considered to be an integrated process for 'people development'. It can be found in the vastness of Human Resource Development. PD is considered a very important factor in the change process, fulfilling many roles and contributing to effective implementation of each change. Guskey (2000) defines professional development as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students. In some cases it also involves learning how to redesign educational structures and cultures. He believes that professional development can no longer be seen simply in terms of individual improvement, but must be evaluated in terms of improvements in the capacity of the organisation to solve problems and renew itself.

Hoerner (1992) sees the role of PD in the effective implementation of change as being vital. He argues that PD needs to acknowledge the importance of changing the mindsets of people, as well as increasing their knowledge and skills. Thus, professional development is inexorably linked with Human Resource Development.

Human resource development

Human resource development(HRD) is concerned with adult human beings functioning in productive systems. The purpose of HRD is to focus on the resource that humans bring to the success equation for both personal and organisational success. The two core threads of HRD are (1) individual and organisational learning and (2) individual and organisational performance (Ruona, 2000). Human Resource Development is any process or activity that,

either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop adults work based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction whether for personal or group/team gain or for the benefit of an organisation, community, nation or ultimately, the whole of humanity (McLean & McLean, 2001).

According to Thomson & Mabey (1994), there are two ways in which HRD plays a central role in managing organisational change. The first is by responding to a succession of externally driven changes at an organisational level and subsequent shifts in strategic direction, each of which has significant effects on development orientated practices in the workplace. Secondly, HRD can and should have an influential role internally by developing and shaping the appropriate skills and competencies, practices and attitudes that will help the organisation deliver its products and services.

There is evidence that increasing numbers of people are, and will be, engaged in 'knowledge work' which requires judgment. In the case of vocational education and training staff, this often means a rethinking of some of their basic philosophical notions about their work. Creating the structures, skills and opportunities for more staff to independently generate and act on ideas for improvement is a major HRD challenge for organisations in the 21st Century. This research will accept such rethinking as being fundamental.

While professional development is assumed to be an integrated process for people development, Harris (1997) points out that PD initiatives that were planned and integrated within a planning process often aim to achieve an organisation's objectives, rather than being more effective in achieving long-term change in people. He points out that, in the case of successful organisational change, people development is not considered a separate activity and is often not referred to as PD. He suggests that PD should be more of an 'invisible activity', integrated into good management strategies aimed at achieving agreed goals. This research will explore the nature of these management strategies and what is required of leaders to incorporate them into their own repertoire of skills.

Rossett (1987), in considering the design of appropriate PD, sees the analysis of needs as the first most important step. Rossett argues that the reason is simple: all subsequent steps in preparing instruction stem from it. If needs are misidentified, then much time and money will be wasted in misdirected efforts. It is recognised that analysis of needs is truly the first and most critical stage in the design of any human resource development. The methodology to be used in this research in order to determine the PD needs of District Directors in the BMA will be described in the Methodology section. Rossett's views will underpin the importance of undertaking a needs assessment within an evaluative frame.

Lifelong learning

Buzz-words and phrases such as 'lifelong learning', 'multiskilling' and the need to 'work smarter' are frequently used. Underpinning each of these current life imperatives and ones like them is the increasing need for people to develop better levels of know how which Beckett & Hager (2002) define as 'a type of knowing what to do in practice that is evident in their various intentional actions.'

Beckett & Hager (2002) suggest that Lifelong Learning assumes it is up to each adult to identify and pursue opportunities for his or her own employability and that this may include formal studies (the old recurrent or continuing education ethos) and also informal experiences. Thorndike (1935) was a great believer that all adults could learn no matter their age. He also maintained that if a person thinks he should learn but does not learn it could be for a number of reasons other than age. For example, low interest level, bad timing, more important priorities, or other good reasons. One might continue even if not interested, in order to gain benefits of the learning of the subject, self-respect, or because of social pressure.

In *Succeeding with Standards*, Carr & Harris (2001) acknowledge that in a standard-based education system the focus of professional

development is on student learning as identified from performance data. Adult needs are not intended to expect to attempt to enhance knowledge and improve instructional skills. Huberman (1995) claims that disregarding individual needs underestimates the difficulties of instructional change.

Bellance (1995) has defined individual professional development as a commitment or a decision to expand one's repertoire of knowledge of skills. Burke (1997) describes professional development as a lifelong process whereby an individual strives to deepen their knowledge base, improve skills, sharpen judgment, keep abreast of current developments and experiment with innovations that may improve one's practice and that of one's colleagues.

It has been claimed (Oldroyd & Hall, 1997) that the needs and priorities for professional development should take into account the needs of individuals, groups and the whole school, as well as the need for compliance with government policies.

Burke (1997) argues that although many people use the terms 'professional development' or 'in-service' as it is now practiced does not encompass the long-term application and transfer of knowledge that professional development offers. Little (1993) argues that one of the best types of professional development is one of participation in special institutions or centres as they offer substantive depth and focus, adequate time to grapple with ideas and materials and give the sense of doing real work, rather than being 'talked at', as well as the opportunity to consult with peers and experts.

Frequently in the case of successful organisational change 'people development' was not considered a separate activity and was often not referred to as PD. Harris (1997) comments on the invisibility of PD when it is integrated into good management strategies. Konchalard (2002) thus links development with training, as follows:

Training:

1. Activities designed to provide learners with knowledge and skill needed for their present job;

2. A process whereby people acquire capabilities to aid in the achievement of organisational goals.

Development:

3. Learning that looks beyond the knowledge and skill needed for a present job;

4. Effects to improve employees' ability to handle a variety of assignments.

Training

Training approaches vary depending on the stage of competency development, e.g., beginner, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986) and the training site. The extent to which individuals should have exposure, experience and expertise for each competency domain at each level of training should be determined (Roberts et al., 1998). Training is most effective when it occurs in the context of a respectful and facilitative learning environment. Close mentoring relationships are the key (Johnson & Huwe, 2003; Prinstein & Patterson, 2003). Training should include a combination of didactic, experiential, and mentoring components. Critical instructional strategies in addition to appropriate didactic training include experiential projects, modelling, working alongside role models, role playing with feedback, vignettes, in-vivo experiences, supervised experience, and other applied real-world experiences. Work on training for capability, not just competency, highlights the importance of the extent to which psychologists can adapt to change, generate new knowledge, and continue to improve their performance (Fraser & Greenhalgh, 2001; Halpern, 1998).

Fraser & Greenhalgh (2001) argue that competency-based education is designed to ensure that the learner attains a predetermined and clearly articulated level of competence in a given domain or professional activity. It focuses not only on the acquisition of competence but also on the development of the capability to adapt to change; exhibit sound judgment and wise action in complex, unique, and uncertain situations involving conflicting values and ethical stances; generate new knowledge; and continue to improve performance.

'Competencies' are elements of competence (Kaslow et al., 2004) that are observable, measurable, containable, practical, derived by experts, and flexible (Stratford, 1994). They correlate with performance, can be evaluated against well accepted standards, and can be enhanced through training and development (Parry, 1996). Rodolfa suggests that the acquisition of speciality skills and competencies should be developed last in the training sequence and require more sophisticated credentialing. Speciality skills and competencies build on the broader and more general foundation and core competencies through application to distinctive practice parameter patterns that require relevant specialised or advanced knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Thus it was important to identify skills and competencies needed by District Directors to adapt to change and in accordance with their position, to be of value to the BMA in terms of professional practice.

Program Evaluation

Owen & Rogers (1999) define 'evaluation' in the context of the knowledge utilisation literature. They see evaluation as having instrumental use and refer to examples of evaluations as directly affecting the decision-making and in some cases actually influencing the program itself, e.g., by a change in the implementation of a program. The evaluator facilitates increased under-standing of a design and/or implementation of a program or how and organisation is working, which is consistent with an internal evaluator

working inside an organisation committed to learning about itself (Preskill & Caracelli, 1996). This is the position Patton (1997) takes in his well known utilisation-focused evaluation approach. Utilisation-focused evaluation involves users and decision-makers in questions, possibly data-collection, and certainly data-analysis that is responsive, thus keeping the users' needs in mind. A social justice perspective would add critical reference groups as the most important participants in utilisation (Patton, 1978).

Evaluators now need to expand their repertoire to keep pace with evaluation needs within modern organisations and agencies. An expanded perspective has evaluators performing a range of tasks and undertaking various roles, including:

1. Negotiation and planning of evaluations;

2. Paying attention to dissemination of findings;

3. Attending to ethical considerations and codes of behaviour; and

4. Working interactively and internally with clients to achieve effective change.

House (1993) suggests that evaluation consists of

> collecting data, including relevant variables and standards, resolving inconsistencies in the values, clarifying misunderstandings and misrepresentations, rectifying false facts and factual assumptions, distinguishing between wants and needs, identifying all relevant dimensions of merit, finding appropriate measures for these dimensions weighting the dimensions, validating the standards and arriving at an evaluative conclusion.

Consistent with House, evaluations may be described as the process of:

1. Negotiating an evaluation plan;

2. Collecting data and analysing evidence to produce evaluation finding; and

3. Dissemination to identified audiences for use in describing or understanding an devalued; or

4. Making judgments and/or decisions relating to that evaluation.

Proactive evaluation

According to Owen & Rogers (1999), proactive evaluation is concerned with the following:

1. The extent of the need among a defined population for a program in a given area of provision;

2. Synthesising what is known in the existing research and related literature about an identified issue or problem;

3. Critically reviewing ways in which an identified issue or problem has been solved through programs mounted in other locations.

The major purpose is to provide input to support decisions about how best to develop a program in advance of the planning stage. Proactive evaluation places the evaluator as an adviser, providing evidence about what is known about policy development, what format of program is needed or how an organisation may be changed to make it more effective (Owen & Rogers, 1999).

The essential features (after Owen & Rogers, 1999, p. 171) of Proactive Evaluation are summarised in Table 2.2 above, and indicate that the orientation or purpose of evaluation of the Proactive Form is to provide evidence to assist in the synthesis of programs.

A needs assessment was the key evaluative approach taken in this research. Witkin & Altschuld (1995) define needs assessment as a systematic set of procedures undertaken for the purpose of setting priorities and making decisions about programs or organisational improvements and allocation of

TABLE 2.2   SUMMARY OF PROACTIVE EVALUATION

Dimension	Properties
Orientation	Synthesis

Typical issues	Is there a need for the program?
	     What do we know about this problem that the program will address?
	     What is recognised as best practice in this area?
	     Have there been other attempts to find solutions to this problem?
	     What does the relevant research or conventional wisdom tell us about this problem?
	     What could we find out from external sources to rejuvenate an existing policy or problem?

State of problem	None
Major focus	Program context
Timing (vis-à-vis program delivery)	Before
Key Approaches	Needs assessment Research review Review of best practice (establishment of benchmarks)
Assembly of evidence	Questionnaire, review of documents and data bases, site visits and other interactive methods. Focus group, nominal groups and Delphi technique useful for needs assessments.

resources. The priorities are based on identified needs. Glorioso (1991) states that a needs assessment is a systematic examination of current job performance and a desired set of job skills. A needs assessment can assist in identifying deficiencies and introducing new procedures required on a job. A needs assessment can also be used to:

1. gain the support of top management;

2. identify training topics needed to improve job performance;

3. gather data for program evaluation;

4. develop competence in new operational procedures; and

5. develop cooperation from each segment of the force.

In order to carry out this proactive evaluation program, I used both a series of semi-structured interviews and a three-round Delphi survey.

Mixed Method Approach: Qualitative Data Analysis

Eisenhardt (1989, p. 538), in discussing the synergies of combining data types in case studies, makes the pertinent observation that

> Qualitative data is useful for understanding the rationale or theory underlying relationships revealed in the quantitative data.

This study uses a mixed method approach, involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques in parallel phases (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). By using a survey (in this research, a Delphi survey, background and details of which are contained in Chapter 3) to gather quantitative data and methods of collecting qualitative data through 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973), the fundamental principle that methods should be mixed in a way that has complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses is supported. Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people's real-life experiences, are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes and structures of their lives: 'their perceptions, assumptions, prejudgment, presuppositions' (Van Manen, 1977); and for associating these meanings with the social world around them.

Parlett & Hamilton (1976) point out that quantification of data is used in the context of 'progressive focussing' assisting the investigator to move through the overlapping and interrelating stages of observation, renewed inquiry, and explanation. The investigator considers that the quantification of selected data is necessary in shaping and focussing the qualitative analysis, and substantiating the research findings. This was the approach to be taken in this research. As a consequence, the qualitative data analysis in this research looked for repeated themes and issues, common threads of meaning, and shared assumptions, opinions and ideas, as well as significant differences in

these terms, among District Directors, following establishment of a consensus view on skills, skills and competencies and strategies via the use of a quantitative Delphi survey.

Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest that the researcher's decisions – which data chunks to code and which to pull out, which patterns best summarise number chunks, and which evolving story to tell – are all part of qualitative analytic choice. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and organises data in such a way that 'final' conclusions can be drawn and verified. As Tesch (1990) points out, it also can be seen as 'data condensing'.

Policymaking

A policy is a general guide to action, an overarching statement which includes a goal and guiding principles for an intervention. Policy is a guide to designs, implementation and evaluation in a particular area of action (Ling & Cotter, 2002). Kahn (1969) suggests that policies are 'standing plans'. Policies are guides to future decision-making that are intended to shape those decisions. Decisions must be consistent with a goal, an integral part of the policy documentation.

According to Dror (1973) policymaking, in the broadest sense of the term, includes three main stages: (a) meta-policymaking, that is policymaking on how to make policy; (b) policymaking in its usual sense, that is, making policy on substantive issues; and (c) re-policymaking, that is making changes in policy based on feedback from the executing of policies. A comprehensive optimal model must include these three stages, which are dynamically interrelated. The distinction between them is often relative, though it is real. The same stage may, from the point of view of a higher level, be an executing of policy, whereas, from the point of view of a lower level, it may be meta-policymaking. Therefore, even though a policymaking system involves many stages and levels, this triple-stage structure of the

model includes all of them. The meta policymaking phases manage the policymaking system as a whole or, at least, manages significant sections of it. They (a) identify problems, values and resources and allocate them to different policy-making units; (b) design, evaluate and redesign the policymaking system and (c) determine the main policymaking strategies. They are a very important part of the optimal model, especially as they are neglected in most normative models. Thanks to them (and to the feedback phases), the model can be used to analyse, evaluate and improve the policymaking system as a dynamic system, rather than as a collection of separate policymaking units and cases.

In this dissertation I used selected phases of the Optimal Model of Dror (1973), only, to establish a policy to improve professional development for District Directors in the BMA. These particular phases are described below.

Phase 6: Allocating problems, values and resources

The allocating of problems in public policymaking, according to Dror (1973, Phase 6, Optimal Model) is only one way to deal with social problems. Furthermore, solving social problems is only one of many activities; society must also execute policies, engage in religious, contemplative, artistic and recreational activities and carry out pure research.

The allocation of values requires, as most other phases do, both rational and extra rational components, knowing in advance which values are most likely to become involved in which case of policymaking and depends on both information and intuition. This phase must also have feedback processes to improve itself.

The allocation of resources is variable. Some resources are allocated to policymaking on a specific problem or set of programs; some to policymaking subsystems; some to other purpose, such as executing policies, pure research and cultural activities; and some resources to surveys of

knowledge to research and development and to evaluating and redesigning the public-policymaking system. This sub phase must also have both rational and extra rational components to enable foreseeing as far as possible what the payoffs of different allocations will be, and systematic arrangements for re-examining the way it makes allocations and for learning from feedback.

Phase 7: Determining policymaking strategy

This phase (Dror, 1973, Phase 7, Optimal Model) involves (a) determining the context to which pure-rationality policymaking is to be approximated in the areas where it is feasible; (b) establishing doctrines and methods such as sequential decision making and gaming, for dealing with uncertainly; (c) setting down basic premises, such as expected levels of economic activity and population that the various policymaking units are to reply on; (d) establishing other substantive and methodological instructions for policymaking (such as setting up a planning-programming-budgeting system). The significance of rational components in this phase depends on whether enough applicable knowledge, concepts and analytic frameworks, whose development is a central concern of policy science, are available.

Phase 9: Establishing operational goals, with some order priority

This phase of policymaking (Dror, 1973, Phase 9, Optimal Model) requires that goals be stated clearly and operationally (unless this would endanger basic values of the system, such as survival); that their consistency, both internal and with the other allocated problems and values, be explicitly examined; and that some order of priority, and some indication of how important achieving different degrees of the various goals is, be established.

Phase 12: Preparing reliable predictions of the significant benefits and costs of the various alternatives

This phase (Dror, 1973, Phase 12, Optimal Model) must meet two requirements to be optimal. First, the basic strategy choice between more innovative alternatives and more reliable predictions of benefits and costs (the more 'radical' approach and the more 'conservative' approach, respectively) should be made explicitly. Second, whatever strategy has been adopted, policymakers should try to construct as reliable a set of predictions as they can, within the limits set by economical allocation of resources, even if the predictions cannot be very reliable in any case. It should include four main sub elements for each alternative:

1. The foreseeable benefits and costs;

2. An indication of how valid are those predictions;

3. An indication of how probable it is that unpredictable consequences will occur;

4. A clear demarcation of the cut-off horizon.

This is an area in which significant advances have been made in the decision sciences, for example in developing methods for better predicting of results of research and development. These advances can be used to reduce uncertainly in policymaking, after suitable adjustments have been made to them (Glenman, 1965, cited in Thomas K.G. Jr., 1965, p. 184). The most important rational techniques for reducing uncertainly about prediction sets include the following:

1. Theoretical analysis leads to prediction by way of a theoretical understanding of the involved phenomena. In essence, such analysis requires a behavioural model of the involved phenomena, which can be qualitative ('theory'), quasi-quantitative, or sometimes quantitative (as in econometrics). These models allow

simulation of the alternative policies and lead to predictions whose validity depends on the quality and validity of the models.

2. Extrapolation from the past, insofar as conditions are similar enough that differences can be compensated for and insofar as the alternatives are conservative, is a usable basis for prediction, even when the involved phenomena are not understood, in which case their future states cannot be predicted by analysis.

3. Focused research is a powerful tool for reducing uncertainty, though it is often time-consuming. It may be directed at providing data and knowledge that will allow the other techniques to be used. It may also be directly aimed at providing predictions, as in collating intelligence about international relations, or in public-opinion research about public reactions.

4. Pilot testing alternative policies is always hard and often impossible but in many more situations than in which it has been used, it is the only feasible way to arrive at reasonably reliable predictions, particularly for complex, basic social issues where the time needed is available. Among such issues are birth control, housing patterns and traffic-control systems. Gaming belongs have as a weak form of pilot testing by analogy.

5. In sequential decision making, parallel approaches are adopted for as long as significant learning from them takes place. This is both a technique for reducing uncertainty that could be used as a component of this phase, and a basic strategy for dealing with uncertainly that could be set down in phase 7 (determining policymaking strategy).

6. An important method for making predictions that illustrates the possibilities for systematically using extra rational processes by means of explicit rational arrangements is by canvassing the intuition opinions and tacit knowledge of experts.

Phase 15: Motivating the execution of the policy

Motivating the execution of the policy is an essential post-policymaking action (Dror, 1973, Phase 15, Optimal Model). Since public policymaking is action-oriented, that is, since policies are intended to be executed, the probability that an alternative will receive the motivation it needs to be executed is one of its most important outputs and must be predicted when the alternative is evaluated during phase 12.

Phase 18: Communication and feedback channels inter-connecting all phases

This phase (Dror, 1973, Phase 18, Optimal Model) crosscuts and interconnects all the other phases, in terms of the conclusions and feedback resulting from it, which include: (1) immediate feedback about policy that is being executed and which is aimed at stimulating remarking of the policy; (2) immediate feedback about the policy that is being executed aimed and which is at stimulating changes in the way the policy is being executed, and (3) learning feedback, which is aimed at all the metapolicymaking, policymaking, and post-policymaking phases and intended to improve their future operation in the light of current experience. Since all these phases are dynamically interdependent and since most of them take place at the same time, policymaking must have highly elaborate and efficient communication and feedback channels and mechanisms in order to operate, especially to operate optimally.

The Dror Optimal Model provides valuable guidance by providing a framework that will be used to draw up a policy to improve the skills and for all the District Directors that might benefit the BMA in the future.

Summary

The selective review of the literature presented in this chapter was used to formulate the theoretical framework for this study. It has focused on (a) learning organisation, (b) professional development (c) program evaluation (d) qualitative data analysis and (d) policymaking.

Throughout the literature review, reference is made to the learning skills and competency needs of District Directors in the BMA. This study, ultimately addresses professional strategies for them to identify – by Delphi survey and semi-structured interviews – their needs in order to promote individual and team change that will ultimately have a beneficial effect on the BMA. Appropriate instruments for the comprehensive and integrative identification of skills and competencies needed and the professional development strategy across the professional life span have been identified are. Finally, the basis for the development of a professional development training policy that will bring these elements together has been described.

A fully-developed methodology that has been derived from this literature is presented in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

Introduction

The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation in order to: 1) establish the skills and competencies required by District Directors in the city of Bangkok; and 2), outline professional development strategies required to promote these skills and competencies. A discussion of the design and methodology of the study is recorded here.

This research is primarily aimed at studying the needs of these District Directors in order to produce an operational strategy for workplace learning and improvement in work quality. This study is exploratory and a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods is employed. This chapter details the procedures that were used in preparing the study and conducting the research.

Because of the close personal engagement and interaction of the researcher in this research, the methodology, data analysis and reflection that constitute the remainder of this dissertation is reported in the first person, active voice. In this way the 'voice' of the researcher, specifically, is heard (see Clandinin, 1983; Leonard, 1983; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988).

General Overview

The methodologies for this research are based on a Proactive Form of Evaluation (Owen & Rogers, 1999) and are focused on needs assessment. The principal research method is the application of a Delphi survey, followed by a series of semi-structured interviews. Owen & Rogers (1999, p. 170) suggest that a Proactive Evaluation might be employed to provide information in order to assist decisions about a future or projected program. Essentially, such an evaluation is normally concerned with the following:

1. the extent of the need among a defined population for a program in a given area of provision;

2. synthesising what is known in the existing research and related literature about an identified issue or problem;

3. critically reviewing ways in which an identified issue or problem has been solved through programs mounted in other locations.

In this research the skill and competency needs of District Directors were determined by undertaking a Delphi survey. I selected the Delphi survey as the research method for this study because such a survey is often used to obtain an informed or refined consensus from a group of participants. It is a methodology in which respondents work independently to pool their ideas about a relevant idea – in this case, the skills and competencies thought necessary for the role of District Director. The group of individuals involved in such a survey is commonly referred to as a panel; in this research, the panel consisted of the complete complement of fifty District Directors from the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), Bangkok, Thailand.

Delphi Survey

A Delphi survey may be characterised as a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem. (Linstone & Turoff, 2002). It consists of a series of interrogations of a group of individuals whose opinions are of interest, with interrogations continuing in 'rounds' where the anonymous responses of participants are submitted to the group as a whole for comment until consensus, divergence, or stasis of opinion is reached. Delphi is also an interdisciplinary, intersubjective, futures research technique that allows translation of qualitative data for quantitative analysis, and is particularly useful when the field of interest is too new to have adequate historical data for the use of other methods (Martino, 1972).

A Delphi survey is used to obtain individual opinions from a group of experts and systematically to obtain consensus (Lanford, 1969; Isaac & Michael, 1981; Ziglio, 1996). Martino, (1972) observes that a Delphi survey is a relatively efficient way of bringing people from various geographic locations and employment areas together. It provides them the opportunity to share knowledge and follow-up on the new ideas generated by the group response. This then creates a refined group perspective. This was an appropriate way of collecting data in this research as each of the participants came from a different district. At the same time, each had important perspectives and knowledge which, when compiled, enhanced the quality of the overall outcome. A Delphi survey was able to take into account the skills and competencies required by all fifty District Directors.

Delphi surveys have been used to develop a consensus to forecast future trends and make projections ensuring that all possible options are considered, for estimating technical or economic impact, examining consequences of options, or the desirability of options (Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Ziglio, 1996). They have also been used in technology forecasting and

developing major policies (Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Turoff, 1975). Other areas of use of the Delphi technique include social work, health care, new curriculum design, and political policy development (Turoff, 1975; Ziglio, 1996).

Delphi surveys have been used successfully as an alternative to collecting opinions in a face-to-face setting for over 40 years. Importantly, they allow for the involvement of geographically dispersed experts (Ziglio, 1996). Therefore, the technique allows a researcher to draw from a wide base of knowledge and experience without incurring the cost and time limitations in gathering together a diverse panel of experts, thereby avoiding the limitations of relying solely on localised experts (Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Rotondi & Gustafson, 1996; Ziglio, 1996). A Delphi survey allows for the collection of expert opinions on topics that may not be otherwise available. This strong support from the literature reinforced my decision to use such a method for obtaining consensus amongst the District Directors of the BMA.

Contrary to face-to-face meetings, a Delphi survey avoids the barriers encountered in face-to-face settings where one individual may dominate the conversation, persons are unwilling to take a position before knowing all the facts for fear of appearing inferior or contradicting superiors, or the bias of the committee creating a bandwagon effect (Lanford, 1969; Martino, 1972; Scheibe et al., 1975; Turoff, 1975; Isaac & Michael, 1981). By avoiding such barriers, the technique allows for focusing directly on the topic in question, bringing forth all possible options for consideration, and providing a framework and equal opportunity for each panellist to consider the impact and importance of the items (Linstone & Turoff, 1975; Ziglio, 1996).

Linstone & Turoff (1975, p. 3) describe the process as being useful for examining problems that have 'no history of adequate communication' or 'do not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis'. Scheele (1975, p. 59) indicates, 'A Delphi should not be undertaken to validate concepts which you have

already developed and refined'. Three features distinguishing a Delphi from other techniques are anonymity, controlled feedback, and statistical group response (Martino, 1972; Rotondi & Gustafson, 1996; Turoff & Hiltz, 1996; Ziglio, 1996).

The goal of the Delphi survey is to lead a targeted group of people towards predetermined outcomes, while giving the illusion of taking public input and under the pretext of being accountable to the public (Lynn, 1996). These are accomplished by the collection of opinions or responses through mail or e-mail in which the panellists may not know each other (Ziglio, 1996).

Finally a Delphi survey is a research methodology used to measure movement towards group consensus. The Delphi method has been variously described as 'a technique designed to elicit opinions from a group with the aim of generating a group response' (Brown et al., 1969); as a 'technique that elicits, refines, and draws upon the collective opinion and expertise of a panel of experts' (Gupta & Clarke, 1996); and as an attempt at creating a 'sort of collective human intelligence'(Linstone & Turoff, 1975). The Delphi technique could be described as a tool to collect opinions that are involved with geographically dispersed experts and to avoid face-to-face meeting or the bias of a 'bandwagon effect'. It is useful for exploring problems that have no history of adequate communication. The goal of the technique is to lead a group of people towards predetermined outcomes from a group consensus.

History of the Delphi method

The name 'Delphi' was coined by Kaplan (quoted in Woudenberg, 1991 p. 132), who headed a research program trying to improve the use of expert opinion in policy-making at the RAND Corporation following the Second World War. From Greek mythology, we know that the oracle at Delphi was consulted to forecast the future so that correct and timely decisions could be made before embarking upon a major course of action such as waging war.

Thus, Kaplan had the notion that subject-matter experts could be solicited for their opinions or expectations about the likelihood of future events or scenarios of interest to the RAND Corporation. Development of the Delphi method continued at the RAND Corporation into the 1950s and early 1960s when information about the Delphi method began to be published in the open literature (Woudenberg, 1991). From those beginnings, on military-related projects, the Delphi method has been used by many different disciplines and organisations.

Developed at the Rand Corporation in the early 1950s for the purpose of predicting the likely consequences of a widespread nuclear attack on the USA (Linstone and Turoff, 1975), the Delphi method has become a widely-used research tool with numerous applications and modifications (Passig, 1997).

Pamela (2004) observes it is interesting that in the 1950s, the Rand Corporation, in an Air Force-sponsored study, developed this technique (originally called Project Delphi) in an attempt to study future information to solicit social and technological forecasting using a systematic manner.

Main characteristics of the Delphi Method

Buckley (1995) states that the characteristics of the method are 'based on preference more than prediction'. The typical Delphi study is characterised by anonymity, iteration with researcher-controlled feedback after each questionnaire round, and the statistical summary of group responses after each round (Couper, 1984; Levine, 1984; Erffmeyer & Lane, 1986; Brunham, 1990; Miles et al., 1990; Lopopolo, 1999). Research projects employing the Delphi technique are fairly common in the doctoral literature and the term appears in hundreds of articles, books and technical reports (Hudson, 1974; Rand Corporation, 1974; Gupta and Clarke, 1996). The most frequently represented application of the method has been in forecasting trends and events (Koskiala & Huhtanen, 1989; Van Trier, 1992; Otto, 1982;

Kline, 1994; Weingand, 1980, 1986) and reaching consensus on policies or issues (Lundberg, 1981; Neuman, 1995; Millican & Wallace, 1992; Doyle, 1992; Marcoux, 1999).

Basically, the Delphi method has five major important characteristics:

1. The sample consists of a 'panel' of carefully selected experts representing a broad spectrum of opinion on the topic or issue being examined.

2. Participants are usually anonymous.

3. The 'moderator' (i.e., researcher) constructs a series of structured questionnaires and feedback reports for the panel over the course of the Delphi.

4. It is an iterative process often involving three to four iterations or 'rounds' of questionnaires and feedback reports.

5. There is an output typically in the form of a research report with the Delphi results, the forecasts, policy and program options with their strengths and weaknesses, recommendations to senior management and, possibly, action plans for developing and implementing the policies and programs.

A questionnaire is sent out to numbers of people asking their informed opinions on a subject. Replies are tabulated and the questionnaire is sent out again; this time all of the opinions are attached to the questionnaire. People read each other's ideas and answer the question again. This process might continue for three or four cycles; until, gradually, a consensus is formed. As information is exchanged, people incorporate each others' perspectives and information into their thinking and arrive at a fairly accurate understanding of the critical issues to consider in their decision making process. (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). In my research, as described in Chapter 5, the questionnaire was sent to participants over three rounds of a Delphi survey in order to receive a consensus of opinion.

TABLE 2.3   DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING A DELPHI STUDY

Designing a Delphi Study	Conducting a Delphi Study
1. **Problem definition**	Step to ensure that both the nature and scope of the problem or issue to be investigated, expected outcomes of the study as well as the appropriateness of the Delphi method to address the specific problem are all addressed.
2. **Panel selection**	Stratified random sampling to ensure the representativeness of desired stakeholder groups or opposing views as would probably be found in a policy Delphi.
3. **Determining the panel size**	The panel size should also take into account the complexity of the problem being studied, the range of expertise required to address the problem and the purposes or the study.
4. **Conducting the Delphi rounds**	A Delphi study usually involves three to four rounds or iterations, not just a one-short effort, thus the moderator is able to set up round one according to some strategy knowing that another two to three rounds could be conducted to achieve consensus or other goals.

Designing and conducting a Delphi study

As in all applied research, particular attention must be paid to the detailed planning and in turn the effective execution of the study. The aim is to progressively clarify and expand on issues, identify areas of agreement or disagreement and begin to establish priorities. According to Loo (2002), this process should focus on four key planning and execution activities. These activities are summarised in Table 2.3.

The method is iterative. In its application in this research, the first step was to obtain a broad range of opinions from the Executive of the BMA (see Chapter 4). In this research three iterations (rounds) of the Delphi survey were used. Martino (1972) and Turoff (1975) support utilising a three or four round sequence in the process. A three-round sequence was sufficient to obtain stability in the responses in this research. Numerous recent studies (e.g., Wells, 1992; Vacik, 1997; Stillwell, 1999; Woolwine, 1999) support the use of the three-round sequence. In the three-round sequence, the results of the initial survey are collated, summarised and then form the basis of a

second, follow-on questionnaire. Results from the second questionnaire are used in the production of the third and final questionnaire.

Phase 1

In Phase 1, prior to the Delphi survey, a preliminary set of skills and competencies were developed following interviews with the Permanent Secretary and a sample of two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of BMA.

Phase 2

In Phase 2 of the research, each respondent was given a copy of the collected ideas obtained in Phase 1; they were asked to assess the relative importance of each idea, using a pen-and-pencil survey. A total of three rounds of assessment were undertaken with a view to obtaining a consensus view of the importance of these ideas. The outcome was a rank-ordered listing of skill and competency needs that represent a consensus view of the District Directors of the BMA.

Phase 3

In Phase 3, amplification of details of the seven most important skill and competency needs items identified in the Delphi survey, together with a discussion of professional development strategies that promote these needs, were obtained from a series of semi-structured interviews of a representative sample of nine District Directors.

Phase 4

In Phase 4, the skills and competency needs and professional development strategies identified in Phase 3 were used as the basis for formulating a professional development policy for District Directors of the BMA.

Phase 1: Interview of the Permanent Secretary and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the BMA

The research method involved in Phase 1 comprised a semi-structured interview with the Permanent Secretary and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of BMA in order to establish what they believe to be the skills and competency needs of District Directors in the changing environment of their workplace. The principles of a collaborative intent interview, in which I aimed to persuade the interviewees to become collaborators, were applied to this discussion (Jean & Jean, 1996). The outcome of the interview was the identification of the following:

1. a set of skill and competencies aspired to by those people who were currently District Directors of the BMA;

2. a visualisation of the perspectives and ideas of the District directors that will assist subordinates in improving their job performance;

3. details related to those elements of continuous learning and development supported by the District Directors.

Research Population

The Permanent Secretary (female) and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries (both males) of the BMA took part in this phase. The relationship between Executive and District Directors is shown in the organisation chart contained in Appendix 12.

Procedure

In this phase, I devised, in English, a set of interview questions and these were approved by my supervisor. It took approximately one month to amend the questions to suit the research and to render them appropriate to the group

of participants. The interview questions were then translated into Thai and approved by my co-supervisor before meeting, individually, with the three interviewees.

Initially I sought, by letter, the permission and consent of the Permanent Secretary of the BMA for her and two of her Deputy Permanent Secretaries to be participants in the interviews associated with phase 1, as well as seeking permission to use the premises of the BMA for these interviews. In addition, the letter included an explanation of the study and provided an estimate of the time commitment for their participation. A copy of these documents is attached as Appendix 1.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

This phase, which took place over two months, was conducted via face-to-face interviews using a standard semi-structured interview protocol. I first interviewed Dr. Pongsak Semsan on the recommendation of the Permanent Secretary who was unavailable at that particular time owing to her heavy workload; I then interviewed Mr. Chaiyuth Nanakorn. Finally, I was able to arrange an interview with Mrs. Nathanon Thavisin, the Permanent Secretary. A narrative analysis of these interviews is presented in Chapter 4.

I asked each interviewee to talk, in general, about the skills and competencies that they saw as being important for the position of District Directors to raise the quality of their job performance. It was useful for me to meet senior civil servants to discuss their points of view relating to their subordinates. As they worked closely with all District Directors, they were able to see the skills and competencies required for improvement.

Each interview was audio-tape recorded with the permission of the participants; such a recording is a useful means of recording data and is a way of 'catching' conversations during discussion. Specifically, such recordings have the advantage of being able to capture conversations during a discussion session. I was then later able to transcribe these conversations as

accurately as I could. Meanwhile, I made descriptive notes during the interviews. The duration of each interview was, on average, 30 minutes. Normally, they were undertaken within the participants' offices with one taking place in an ante-room. I made transcripts of the interviews and subjected them to narrative analysis as soon as possible.

The data was analysed in the form of a case study, prepared as part of the narrative configuration outlined by Polkinghorne (1995). *Analysis of Narrative* (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 13), on the one hand, relies on an examination of the data to identify the particulars as instances of general notions or concepts. The result is generalised knowledge that is derived from a set of particular instances. *Narrative analysis,* (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15) on the other hand, results in an emplotted narrative which may be in the form of an historical account, a case study or an episode from an individual's life; this requires the researcher (in this instance, me)

> to develop or discover a plot that displays the linkage among the data
> elements as parts of an unfolding temporal development culminating in the
> denouement.

I subjected the data to narrative analysis used systematically to examine the conversations.

Qualitative data in the descriptions were used to provide the research evidence; and in this case this was restricted to descriptions and the identification of skills and competencies required by District Directors in order to be more effective executives. Subsequently, they were reported as case studies which are presented in Appendix 10: Phase 3 Interviews. The contribution of each person interviewed provided valuable information that was used to design the questionnaire for the Delphi survey in round one of Phase 2 of the research.

Phase 2: Delphi Survey

The major procedure applied in this research consisted of a three-round Delphi survey as recommended by Pfieffer (1968) who affirms that a three-round Delphi survey produces credible data and findings. It was carried out to establish a consensus of the skills and competencies required by District Directors.

Research Population

Linstone & Turoff (1975) suggest a panel size of anywhere from ten to fifty participants. The fifty District Directors of the BMA who participated in this phase comprised 5 females and 45 males. Thus, the total complement of the District Directors of the BMA was able to be surveyed.

Delphi Survey Methodology

The Delphi survey procedure used in this study consisted of three rounds, and the timescale to accomplish this phase was from 10 September to 26 November 2004. After each of these rounds, responses were analysed and summarised and then presented to the participants for further consideration. Hence, from the second round onwards, participants were given an opportunity to alter their prior estimates on the provided feedback. This procedure continued until round three after which a consensus of the participants' responses was obtained; consensus was accomplished through iterative rounds of individual responses and group synthesis.

In this research an accessible analytical approach is outlined using presentations of frequency and median ratings to identify what happens between rounds. For Delphi studies where the scale upon which District Directors were expressing their opinions can be considered to be interval, the median represents the group opinion whilst the standard interquartile

represents the level of agreement. In all three rounds of the Delphi survey, I received 100 per cent response from each of the fifty District Directors.

The Delphi survey

In order to design round one of the questionnaire I met with the Permanent Secretary and two of the Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the BMA to interview them. I translated the Thai transcript into English so that it could be used for the questionnaire and this was then approved by my supervisor. I then spent approximately one month refining this round of the questionnaire. Afterwards I had to translate the questionnaire into Thai so that it could be used for all of my participants and my Thai co-supervisor then approved it before use with them. A letter (Appendix 1) was sent to each participant, requesting an opportunity to conduct a Delphi survey. In the following sections, details of the three steps that were taken to achieve consensus – via a Delphi survey – are provided.

Step 1: Round 1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire in round one of the Delphi survey consisted of two parts: Part I: Personal Data comprising four questions; Part II: Questions concerning competency needs of all fifty District Directors comprises 13 questions. I asked them to circle (O) the number most appropriate to their opinions on a 10- point scale from low to high and to add their reasons for those selections. Pfeiffer (1968), outlining the basic Delphi procedure, supports the use of an open-ended questionnaire on the first round. I also provided space for them to add further items for consideration in the second round of the Delphi survey. They could add one or two additional items that were important to them, as they wished, and were then required to provide a reason why they would like these items to be included – together with letter of explanation and a consensus form. A copy of the round 1 questionnaire is attached as Appendix 3. At the same time I included a postage-paid return

envelope included in my invitation letter to both inform and motivate them in the return of their questionnaires in line with my requested timescale.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Delphi Round 1

Initially, I launched round one of the questionnaire on 10 September and asked the participants to return them by 17 September 2004 but, subsequently, this deadline had to be extended as all District Directors travelled abroad for 10 days. As I waited for the participants to return their questionnaires, I became concerned as this was the first round of my study and I was also aware that all participants were busy on their jobs. Eventually they started to return the questionnaires to me and follow-up phone calls were made to respondents who had not returned the questionnaire. I started my follow-up telephone calling around 20 September 2004 and found that all participants with whom I talked were nice, kind persons who were willing to answer my questionnaires despite their being so busy. For example, the District Director number 44 said:

> I must apologise for being late in returning your questionnaire. Your questions impressed me and so I wanted to take time to answer them all. I think that if we can achieve what the 10 numbers describe it will be good enough to make us look smart (laugh!). I have not added any items as I think all questions are complete. Anyway, please be assured that I think training is important for the position of District Director. Not a lot of money need be spent on training each time and I also think that training should take place for only a short time, two times per year – not longer than that as we are all extremely busy in our respective jobs.

The example, above, is a sample of our conversation on that day. However, during the period of my follow-up telephone calling, I found that some of the questionnaires had got lost while they were abroad – either by their staff or by themselves. I had to send them again and also asked them to return the outcomes by post. Some of the participants informed me that they returned the feedback to me and could tell me the date of posting. I then had

to make contact with the head of the postal staff to find out the reason for this delay – which turned out to be as a result of staffing problems. However he assured me that no letters had been lost and that all would be delivered.

All fifty questionnaires were eventually returned and the individual scores for each of the 13 items, as reported by the 50 respondents, were recorded in a MSExcel spreadsheet. The interquartile ranges for the responses on each item were then calculated and recorded (see Appendix 6). A summary of the reasons given for the ranking of each item was included alongside each item.

In addition from this round, I identified additional competency needs that had been recorded by the participants. These additional needs were included as additional items and included in the questionnaire for the second round.

Step 2: Round 2 Questionnaire

In the second round, all fifty District Directors received questionnaires with a letter containing a description of the purpose and requirements of the second round deadline and a postage paid return envelope. The questionnaire that they received was divided into 2 parts. Part I comprised the same 13 items from Round 1 together with the individual rankings and the interquartile ranges of the overall scores, together with the median (the second interquartile range). Part II comprised three additional competency items that were identified in Round 1. The directors were again asked to rate each items using a 10-point scale (1 = low to 10 = high).

In this round, the participants were able to see the overall response of their colleagues' to each of the items. They were thus able to change their ideas after reviewing the answers of their colleagues on the basis of the feedback provided. I asked them to circle (O) the number most appropriate to their opinions on a 10-point scale from low to high and to add their reasons

for these selections as provided by their colleagues in the first round (see Appendix 4).

Data Collection and Analysis of the Delphi Round 2

I spent approximately one month collecting the data associated with Round 2 of the Delphi survey. I launched the questionnaire on 18 October 2004 and received much of the feedback on 19 November 2004. Then, I made follow-up telephone calls to those participants who had not returned the questionnaires after two weeks had elapsed. Some of the questionnaires were lost in delivery and I had to re-send them. Some of the District Directors were busy, but they asked me to wait and promised to give their feedback to me. I had purposely left my cell phone number with all participants so that they could ask about my questionnaire anytime. I also received telephone calls from participants directly as they were not sure if I had received their feedback or not. Some of them called to me in order to ask me to explain how to rate their scores. I was appreciative of their feedback in that they could see value of this research study and that they had paid careful attention when providing their answers on the questionnaire.

After all completed questionnaires were received, the responses of individuals to each item were recorded using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (see Appendix 7). Individual responses from the survey were arranged and numbered by district and survey questions. The median and interquartile ranges were calculated for each item and the lowest to highest differential range were derived. The aggregate scores for each item were calculated and the items were then ranked in order from highest to lowest. This ranking was used in the presentation of the items to participants in the third and final round.

Step 3: Round 3 Questionnaire

In the final round, all fifty District Directors received questionnaires with 16 items, including the documents attached as provided in rounds one and two.

In this round, the items were given a final ranking according to their aggregate scores. Interquartile ranges, included the median, were calculated from data in round two and presented for each item (see Appendix 7). In this round they could review and rate the importance of their opinion of each item using a 10-point scale, considering the interquartile and median scores for each item one more. A copy of the round 3 questionnaire is attached as Appendix 5. They had the opportunity to change their scores in consideration of the group's responses, or their own, as they wished. It was done to help the respondents further refine their opinions and to assist in achieving consensus. The outcome was a rank-ordered listing of competency needs. This listing of items was taken as representing a consensus view of what District Directors need in order to improve their on-job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation. The ranking was summarised and assessed for the degree of consensus.

Data Collection and Analysis of the Delphi Round 3

In this round I spent approximately two weeks collecting data, from 22 November to 6 December 2004. I received the majority of the feedback less than 4 days after posting the questionnaires. When a feedback had not been received by the deadline, the participants were contacted again. I started follow-up calling to participants who did not return questionnaire to me after only one week in this round. Still there were problems with questionnaires getting lost, so they were re-sent to them once more. They were still keen to return the feedback despite being busy, but they asked that I wait. It was interesting to hear that some of them felt pleased about the items of competency that covered their overall needs in the questionnaires. In summary, I received feedback from all participants quicker than in other rounds as, by this time, they were more familiar with the scoring system and how to enhance their answers.

After I received all fifty questionnaires, I used Microsoft Excel to analyse the responses to each item. Individual responses from the survey

were arranged and numbered by district and survey questions (see Appendix 8). Again, the median and interquartile ranges were determined. Comments associated with the competency needs of each participant were also recorded. These responses provided an insight into individual participant's competency needs that each wished to improve.

This final set of results provided an important influence on the subsequent direction of the research study. Information gleaned from analysing the responses guided the formation of questions and prompts used in the individual semi-structured interview discussion. Good agreement in the final round was representative of the consensus. The outcome was a rank-ordered listing of seven skill and competency needs that represents a consensus view of the District Directors of the BMA. The seven items in the list fell in the fourth interquartile range (see Appendix 8). These items were selected for use in Phase 3.

Phase 3: Semi-structured Interviews

In Phase 3 of the research, follow-up interviews and associated observations relying on qualitative analysis (Hurworth, 2000) were undertaken. Amplification of details of the seven skills and competency needs items identified in the Delphi survey, together with a discussion of professional development strategies that were to promote these needs, were obtained from a series of semi-structured interviews of a representative sample of nine District Directors.

Research Population

A sample of nine District Directors was chosen on the basis of population: all respondents were male. Three District Directors, chosen from each size range, were invited to be participants in the interviews. Details of their

**TABLE 3.1   RESEARCH POPULATION FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED
INTERVIEWS**

Name of District Directors	Size of District Population	Educat-ional Qualifi-cation	Work Experience in each District	Characteristics
1. Mr. Fred	Small	Graduate Degree	Medium: 1 year	He had high confidence to speak and preferred a more business style of leadership.
2. Mr. Bill	Small	Graduate Degree	High: 4 years	He spoke with confidence and had a dream to be an ideal District Director of the people
3. Mr. Brad	Small	Graduate Degree	Low: 1 month	He spoke very confidently and wished his subordinates and people had more respect in terms of reliability and credibility.
4. Mr. Sam	Medium	Graduate Degree	High: 4 years	He was a quiet man who spoke in a soft voice but had good sense of humour. He also wished to be a good model for his staff.
5. Mr. Beckham	Medium	Graduate Degree	Low: 9 months	He looked a serious man but remained smiling. He wished to be good leader of his District.
6. Mr. John	Medium	Graduate Degree	Low: 9 months	He was a very courteous man and spoke with low and soft voice. He wished his local people to be proud of him as District Director.
7. Mr. George	Large	Graduate Degree	High: 3 years	He was a friendly man who maintained his smile. He looked more like a businessman and the atmosphere in his District was more like private organisation. He wished to be good model for his staff.
8. Mr. Ian	Large	Graduate Degree	High: 3 years	He had high confidence to speak. His behaviour was like that of a Thai Member of Parliament. He wished to be a good model for his staff, people and his colleagues.
9. Mr. Danny	Large	Graduate Degree	Low: 9 months	He spoke with a low voice, was shy and also very courteous. He wished to be a good model for his staff and people.

background and a brief observation of the characteristics of each noted as a
result of my contact with them, are contained in Table 3.1. The selected
District Directors had an average of 1 year 11 months of work experience in
each district. To protect the confidentiality of participants in the study,
pseudonyms were used for the real names of the District Directors.

Methodology

In phase 3, I carried out a set of individual semi-structured interviews of nine District Directors. These questions, contained in Appendix 10, were based on the outcomes of the Delphi study in the final round. In this phase, a stratified sample of nine District Directors was invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. The stratified sample was chosen on the basis of population: small (population less than 100 000), medium (population between 100 000 and 120 000), and large districts (population greater than 120 000) – the size range being determined following an analysis of population statistics (see Appendix 9).

Three District Directors were invited from each size range. They were asked to discuss the seven skills and competency needs as identified by the Delphi survey, giving their opinion as to why these needs were important to them, and how they saw them assisting them in their present and future positions. They were also asked to discuss professional development strategies that they believed would promote these needs. These interviews were audio-tape recorded, a transcript of each made, and a narrative analysis using standard qualitative data reduction techniques was then undertaken.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

In this phase, I collected data between 27 December 2004 and 10 January 2005. It was this data collection process that made me enthusiastic to meet my participants face to face. The duration of each interview was, on average, 30 minutes and took place within the participants' offices. These interviews were audio-tape recorded and later transcribed.

Nine District Directors were asked to discuss the seven skills and competency needs as identified by the Delphi survey, giving their opinion as to why these needs were important to them, and how they saw them assisting them in their present and future positions. I asked them to discuss

professional development strategies that they believe would promote these needs. These opinions and observation provided another source of evidence and gave me a broader understanding of their experience. Stake (1995) explains that qualitative researchers press for understanding the complex interrelationships among all that exists, and concepts that are closely related. The product was an articulation of how and why events occurred as they did. 'A good case study brings a phenomenon to life for readers and helps them understand its meaning' (Gall, 1996, p. 543). During each situation I observed and made special notes relating to their responses. Transcripts and corresponding observation notes were combined and used to develop a set of nine case studies; the outcome is attached as Appendix 11: Phase 3 Interviews. Huberman & Miles (1994) observe that in data reduction,

> the potential universe of data is reduced in an anticipatory way as the researcher chooses a conceptual framework of research questions, cases and instruments.

In this research, narrative analysis using standard qualitative data reduction survey was undertaken.

In this process, I utilised a large piece of stiff cardboard on to which I fitted all of the cells and responses. I looked for in both areas were key ideas, leading to key concepts and major themes. I established a data grid in which I consolidated first the key ideas. Interview questions were listed across the top of the grid; the names of the nine participants interviewed were listed down the left side of the grid. I identified what each of the nine District Directors said about item needs to improve their job performance – and both key ideas that they expressed and quotes of what they actually said. This provided an overview of the data collected so far and also provided me with the basis for establishing the needs and skills and competencies required by them. The detailed observations, descriptions and explanations given by participants in interview provided a deeper understanding of the professional development experience. Narrative analysis, involving the identification of identified

themes and interests emerging from the interviews, was the qualitative data reduction technique applied in this phase of the research.

Case Studies

In this process, I clarified the responses of opinions and ideas about competency needs of the nine District Directors. Even though a great deal has been written about case study analysis, as exemplified in Miles & Huberman (1994) and Hurworth (2000), the analysis of case study evidence was one of the least developed and most difficult aspect of doing case studies (Yin 1994) view remains true in terms of its systematic development. Qualitative analysis in this dissertation, followed up by semi-structured interviews and associated observations relied on qualitative analysis. I made the original transcript in Thai and then translated it into English as reported in the outcome on my dissertation. An audit of these translations was undertaken with my Thai co-supervisor. The complete set of these case studies is contained in Appendix 11.

Altheide & Johnson (1994) identify the need for researchers to report multivocality in establishing credibility:

> Multivocality refers to the fact that participants come to a situation from differing perspectives and do not necessarily articulate the same views. Regarding the case study, it will be useful if it enlightens the readers of the report. The more the researcher sets the context for the phenomena, the more complete will be the readers understanding of the case study.

Yin (1989) views using the qualitative methodology in case studies as being the preferred strategy for research studies dealing with contemporary phenomena within a real life context. The qualitative data analysis in this dissertation was like story-telling that sought understanding of the data details in each case. Rather than investigating the nature of a phenomenon, the way in which each aspect was seen, viewed or understood, was studied.

Phase 4: Policy Formulation

In Phase 4, the skills and competency needs and professional development strategies identified in Phase 3 were used as the basis for formulating a professional development policy for District Directors of the BMA.

Procedure

As a result of the findings of the Delphi survey and the narrative analysis of the semi structured interviews, I developed a profile of the skills and competency needs of District Directors of the BMA. These needs were matched against Senge's (1990) five disciplines of the learning organisation and the profile was used as the basis of a professional development policy document for District Directors of the BMA. This policy document included requirements to improve on-job performance, to assist District Directors to cope with changing demands in the organisation, and strategies to promote their knowledge and skill development. I anticipate that the results of the research will eventually be of value to the BMA.

Ethical Considerations

This dissertation was adapted to manage several ethical issues. Access to materials in the case study database was governed by confidentiality agreements with all interviewees. Various ethical considerations, including surveys details, audio-taping of interviews of the case studies and anonymity were all covered elsewhere in this chapter and are not repeated here. Essentially this means that third parties cannot view those materials without clearance from the Faculty Human Research Ethics Committee who gave approval for this research project HRETH FHD 135/03 to be undertaken between 20 May 2004 and 20 May 2006.

The research findings were reported anonymously in order to protect individuals, thereby strengthening the argument that District Directors would

feel free to speak openly and frankly without any fear of being identified. I thanked all those who participated in the whole study, as their willingness to respond by giving their views and opinions without payment or favour underscored their realisation and acceptance of the benefits to be obtained.

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the research methodologies for this study. I used the following approaches to conduct the four phases: semi-structured interviews of the Permanent Secretary and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the BMA a Delphi survey; semi-structured interviews of nine District Directors; and policy formulation. I have described the sample population of each of the phases, the procedures used for developing the instruments for each phase, and the qualitative and quantitative steps employed in analysing the data.

The methodology employed in this dissertation will assist in the undertaking a proactive evaluation that will have a bearing on the formulation of a policy for professional development that will improve job performance for all fifty District Directors in future. In all of these elements, I have remained an enthusiastic learner of the techniques involved in this proactive evaluation, and have gained valuable insights in to the outcomes and applications of each for use in future research.

CHAPTER 4

Phase 1: BMA Case Studies

Introduction

In this chapter, I report the responses of three BMA Executive as a series of case studies. These case studies were derived from a series of interviews in which I made inquiries about the skills and competencies required by District Directors in order to aspire to be Executive for the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). The information was collected from interviews with the Permanent Secretary and two Deputy Permanent Secretaries of the BMA. Filley & Hourse (1976) suggest that leaders, such as those in the BMA, must have the required skills; that subordinates must have favourable attitudes towards participation; and that the task is complex, non-routine and requires either a high quality decision or subordinate acceptance or both. The BMA executive interviews were held face-to-face to assist in identifying what these senior people regard as the important capacities for District Directors. The semi-structured interviews were also concerned with finding out how leaders might stimulate their subordinates to improve their skills and competencies to raise their work quality and further benefit the BMA.

In this chapter, I analyse the needs that will assist in reaching the establishment of a new policy in a clear and structured manner hoping, ultimately, to meet the training requirements of the District Directors relative to a new set of strategies expected of them in future senior roles.

Denzin (1994) states that interviewing is of paramount significance in sociology because interviewing is an interaction and sociology is the study of interaction. The Denzin view deepened my understanding of the interview results and generated potential lines of further investigation. Analysis of needs is the first and most important step in the establishment of a professional development plan. The outcome provided condensed, distilled data presented by and drawn from the full range of persons, events and processes under study. The analysis, during and after data collection, was linked to data with explanations in an attempt to understand why specific things happened that the senior executives thought their subordinates needed to improve their job performance. Communication is a two-way relationship, so I established an enabling environment for these senior executives of the BMA that would provide me with the information I needed.

Having established a plan of action, I began with the first step of arranging a meeting of three executives of the BMA: the Permanent Secretary and two of the Deputy Permanent Secretaries. It was important for me to meet some executives of the BMA as they were bosses of all fifty District Directors: they were working closely with all of these directors. As a result, I expected that they must have opinions about and would see some of the skills and competencies of their subordinates that needed to be improved. At first I had a schedule to meet the Permanent Secretary but the plan changed owing to her heavy workload. Then, I asked her to advise the Deputy Permanent Secretary and she suggested that I meet Dr. Pongsak and later he in turn suggested that I meet Mr. Chaiyuth and Khunying Nathanon, being the last person whom I met to interview.

At the start of each interview, respondents were given a consent form for their signature before starting our conversation, including the interview questions protocol. They then spoke, in broad terms, of their aspirations to improve the on-job performance of all District Directors. The responses provided general information related to the skills and competencies that this group of senior executives saw as being important for those wishing to fulfil

the role of District Director of the BMA. The Executive responses also offered insights into their opinions regarding appropriate professional development activities that might be undertaken to assist in achieving these skills and competencies. The interview protocol for these interviews is attached as Appendix 2.

The outcomes of the interviews with these three executives of the BMA were related to their individual aspirations for District Directors to improve their job performance in the changing environment of their districts. My intention was to use the skill and competency requirements suggested by the Executive, to design a questionnaire to be used in a Delphi survey. The outcomes of this survey will be described in the next chapter.

Interview with Deputy Permanent Secretary, BMA: Dr. Pongsak Semson,

Dr. Pongsak was the first participant I met to interview for my research. He had worked as the Deputy Permanent Secretary for approximately three years. I obtained permission to meet him at 07:00 hrs, on 31 June 2004. Even though my appointment to interview him was in the early morning, I still arrived in the BMA offices 30 minutes early. I had been told by his secretary that Dr. Pongsak always arrived in the BMA early every morning and worked until late everyday. Actually I had met him before and he had been so kind to provide information and books about the BMA that were useful for my research. He was always willing to provide information whenever I asked. This meant that I had to often collect them from his staff. It helped me to better understand the authority of the BMA and functions of District Directors. I therefore also felt familiar with his staff.

Despite my early arrival at his office, I saw that Dr Pongsak's secretary had arrived before me. Normally Dr Pongsak's team consists of six persons and they too arrive early at their work – at the same time as their boss. I greeted his secretary and was informed that Dr. Pongsak had not yet

arrived. We talked to each other for a while. As it was the first day of the collecting of my phase 1 research data, I was very excited. Having to wait for Dr Pongsak's arrival afforded me the opportunity to rehearse my interview questions and check my tape recorder. I tried to practice my questions as much as I could so that I could feel more confident to obtain information that would cover all of the required details.

Dr Pongsak arrived at 7:00 am precisely. He asked me to wait for 15 minutes so that he could worship his Buddha image – his usual practice before starting work. He explained that he always does this before starting work so that he is able to concentrate on his work properly everyday. Therefore, I had another opportunity to further rehearse my interview questions, but this time I could not concentrate as well as before, as I had to ensure I was ready to talk with him whenever he became available. At last he invited me into his room. Dr. Pongsak was courteous, polite, kind, alert and had a friendly smile. Despite his having a postgraduate degree, he still believes in lifelong learning. He held a high position that was different from other senior civil servants whom I had seen before. I was aware that he constantly strived to improve his knowledge and was always concerned about learning organisations to improve the skills and competencies of his subordinates. He had the style of an academic as well as that of an executive of the BMA. It seemed that he was interested to improve the quality of work for his staff to make them work more effectively. In the past he had often invited trainers to teach in classes for senior civil servants, arranged by the BMA. He suggested that we sit and talk around his table. I saw many documents covering his table but I had no choice than to put my tape recorder on some of them as there was no space left on his table at all. We spent approximately one hour discussing my research. There were also some light-hearted jovial moments during our conversation. Often we were interrupted by urgent calls on his cell phone and by his staff, with important work.

Initially, I informed him about the framework of my study and the objectives to be discussed for which I wanted him to contribute knowledge. As usual I informed him that the benefit of participating in the study was to raise awareness of his aspirations to improve the skills and competencies of District Directors in future. He showed his interest in my dissertation and also asked me to provide him with a completed version when it was complete. I was delighted at the idea of my research being of benefit to the BMA in the future. I began to ask him my first question and also tried to make him feel relaxed by saying that he could felt free to talk as openly as possible and for as long as he wished. He smiled so I then asked him to think about District Directors: Please talk to me about a memorable situation relating to the skills and competencies of District Directors. At first he looked at me and smiled. Probably he thought it would be easy for him to answer this question. Then he looked down and signed his name on some documents while talking with me at the same time:

> A District Director is a position of importance within the administrative structure of Bangkok City. This position relates with leaders of organisations and works closely with people to address all problems in their areas of responsibility. Nowadays people who would be District Directors or have authority in the District must have the requisite knowledge and understand their responsibilities well. According to the BMA laws and regulations, the District Directors have been authorised to perform roles and tasks relating to their duties in Bangkok. There are general laws and some other laws relating directly with other organisations in those areas. It can be said that a District Director cannot work alone. They must have collaboration from other organisations. Sometimes they must ask other people or other organisations help to solve problems for people to achieve success in their jobs. District Directors must be aware of problems in their areas. District Directors must be versatile in their position as a leader of Government officials and in command. They must be friendly people in order to coordinate and co-operate satisfactorily with others. By this I mean in their relationships both with people in their

location and in other government services. These are the primary qualifications of District Directors

Even though he signed his name on documents and talked with me at the same time, he seemed able to concentrate on my questions and gave me answers that made me more aware of the principle responsibilities of District Directors. His ways of answering reminded me of a lecturer in a classroom. By now I knew that he felt relaxed to talk with me, and so I asked more of his opinions about positive situations of District Directors.

> An example of a positive situation could be the District Directors' ability to solve problems of Bangkok's residents. Being the capital of Thailand, the problems are often more complicated. There are more problems than other organisations in Thailand experience. Bangkok residents expect high quality in everything. We have good communications. Bangkok residences have good qualities; the people have a variety of knowledge and (in the main) high education. I would like to be frank by saying that Bangkok residents are (in general) high quality people, so the ways to solve problems must be complicated and multiform. They must understand change and the environment. District Directors must have varied performance and understand the social and cultural needs of the Bangkok residents comprehensively in order to be effective in their job.

I was pleased to hear this valuable and interesting information from him, in that he could see the skills and competencies that District Directors must have to face and solve problems for their local people. From his answers, he indicated that he was concerned to improve skills and competencies for them in order to deal with environmental changes and agreed that they must have versatile performance. Later I asked him to talk to me about negative situations that he had experienced with his subordinates. I was aware that he did not hesitate to answer and yet was also able to open his mind to talk with me. I asked him: Is there was a negative situation that you could tell me about? His answer was detailed:

Yes – but to best describe it, I would like to divide it into two aspects.

Firstly – personal; District Directors' personality – they have to work hard in their own locations and as a result of having to solve many problems they lack time to improve themselves. Often they do not have enough time to follow up the detail of information given to them. It can be said that as they are too busy with the community, then they have little opportunity to learn new knowledge. This is a disadvantage for District Directors. I mean there are many level of data; level of collective social, Government's policy, Ministry of Interior or BMA and so on. District Directors must follow up changes in important policy all the time – but often they are too busy to do this effectively.

Secondly, in view of the situation described earlier, as a result of the BMA laws being restrictive, District Directors can do anything they want. They have many responsibilities and cannot always adhere strictly to the laws and rules. They have to use their own relationship to solve problems if they do not have direct authority. This is their negative situation.

Even though he was aware of his subordinates being busy with their work, he could see the importance of District Directors improving their job performance so that they might work more effectively. Then I asked him to think about special needs that he had seen emerging in recent months. Again, he gave me a long answer. He explained to me the physical problems of Bangkok being a complicated city that had many problems to be resolved.

To improve on the disadvantages I mentioned before – they must keep up with the world, must be close to the needs of the Bangkok resident and must have the ability to approach a variety of groups of people. Bangkok's society is varied in that most rich and poor Thai people live in Bangkok. There are many levels of people, such as rich people and the homeless that have their own individual and unique problems. It could be said that 'Coming to Bangkok is the same as going around Thailand'. This is an old saying and is still valid today! This is the basic structure of Thai society.

> So, good administrators of districts must be versatile, have up to date information, improve themselves and be prepared to face problems.

Additionally, he thought that they must improve themselves to keep pace with both new knowledge and technologies. Especially, he wanted his subordinates to better understand the peoples' needs and to provide good services to make them more satisfied.

> District Directors must improve their competencies, keep up with new technologies, and be aware of sociological changes in order to remain up to date with Bangkok's society. Bangkok's society is globally orientated, fast moving and in need of high quality. Time is important for Bangkok residents in that they want to spend little time doing things. They need high quality services and so they must be awakened to these things. If they work strictly in accordance with regulations and laws, this will not always provide a solution. Sometimes, working in accordance with regulations and laws does not satisfy people. District Directors must understand each individual situation.

The more I talked with him the more I was keen to ask more questions; I noticed that he was very willing to share his ideas and opinions with me. Then I asked him to think about special programs that exist to cover some or all of these needs. I asked him to describe them in detail. He laughed a bit and nodded his head before saying;

> Of course, the BMA is an organisation that realises the significance of improving the competency of all personnel. Actually we have a BMA training and development institute to oversee the improvement of competencies. There is training at every level, such as 'First Line Supervisor Training Program', 'The Intermediate Management Training Course', 'The Senior Executives Training Course' – which is a major curriculum in which all Government Officials have to be trained sequentially. They have to improve themselves during their term in office. If they are level 4, 5 and 6 they have to get train in ' First Line Supervisor Training Program' and 'The Intermediate Management training Course'

for level 6, 7 and 8 and 'The Senior Executives Training Course' for level 8 up to 9. Because many things changed, we provided new knowledge and new technologies to make them understand. We have a good training system. Further to our training, we also visit other countries or form close ties with other countries in terms of 'sister city' relationships. Sometimes they visit us and we also visit them. We place high significance on this. In my opinion, I think that Government officials in the BMA have developed their performance more than others in Thailand.

As I became more aware of the many training programs provided by the BMA for their staff, I asked his opinion on specific and existing training programs for District Directors and to give me an example of one that has worked really well. Again he signed his name while he replied to my question:

As I said before, all District Directors have to attend 'The Senior Executives Training Course'. We also send some District Directors to attend The Senior Executives Training Course by the Department of Local Administration Department, unless this training is provided directly by the BMA.

I then asked him to talk about what ways he believed these programs had benefits for the group of District Directors. He continued to sign his name on the many documents that were still on his table as he answered:

Firstly, knowledge and comprehension can improve their personality and ensure they are up to date at all times. These affect them directly.

Secondly, knowledge in the technique of practices such as information technology and how to use new technologies or to develop their job. For example, to improve the effectiveness of service systems for the people. I believe that service methods for people in each district are more effective than other government services. We have a service centre for people namely 'One Stop Service' that begins with the Executives. So, District Directors can bring their knowledge from training to be used in their job.

> To improve both their competency and knowledge, after their training they will have up to date knowledge. These are of benefit directly to themselves.

Then I asked him to think about new training programs that he would like to initiate for developing the skills and competencies of District Directors that do not currently exist. Dr. Pongsak said that every program was good enough and suitable for them to improve their skills and competencies.

> Actually we are always concerned to review and improve our curriculum continually. Feedback that we receive from training programs that we provide for staff is always used in the development of future curriculums in order to keep pace with the changing environment – such as 'First Line Supervisor Training Program', 'The Intermediate Management training Course', and 'The Senior Executives Training Course'.

To make sure, I asked him again to think about training programs for District Directors to improve their skills and competencies, apart from the three programs that he had previously mentioned. I asked him to think about new programs for developing the skills and competencies of District Directors that have never existed before. He smiled and looked at me this time before mentioning other programs that had been provided by the BMA:

> Oh yes – many! The three curriculums I mentioned are major curriculums but we also have other curriculums such as seminars, visits, hundreds of programs – too many to list! There are many seminars, meetings and visits to other countries during each year. The three major curriculums can be likened to like a school; primary school and a university. We also have a scholarship for all staff, including District Directors of the BMA.

Probably he could not recall other new programs at that time; however, I was pleased to learn that the BMA could see training programs being important for staff to improve their skills and competencies. He also kindly offered me all details of training programs if I wanted to see them. He

told me some detail of these programs but, because of space limitations, I have not included them in this dissertation. Afterwards, I asked him to again think about existing training programs for District Directors. I asked him which one of these programs he would rate as being the most important for their position. His response was incisive:

> The most important program for District Directors in my opinion is the one
> that services people, as service is the major function of each District
> Director. Nevertheless we always evaluate their job performance two times
> per year. Evaluation covers their knowledge and performance in their job.

Clearly, the main aim of District Directors is to provide good services for local people; what is more, they must be concerned about everyone. As he had not yet answered me satisfactorily, I brought him back to my original question by asking again which of one of these programs that he thought was most important for District Directors. Immediately he answered by saying:

> The senior Executives Training Course is most important and all District
> Directors must attend this program.

He also mentioned that attendance was compulsory.

> Yes, all District Directors have to attend this training program but there is
> no requirement that they all attend at the same time. Attendance will
> depend on their availability – but they ultimately must all attend.

At that time his cell phone rang and it seemed to be an important call – so I left his room to give him freedom to talk on telephone, as I felt this to be the polite thing to do. I waited for 10 minutes and then returned to his room when he had finished his call. Afterwards, I continued to ask him to think about existing training programs. How effective do you think these have been?

> They can improve their competencies more than before – especially it will
> help to develop our evaluation system.

Number one Curriculum – should improve in accordance with changes all the time. Should vary and not repeat every year.

Number two Policy – as improving the efficiency of staff is important for the BMA as a policy, we continually pay attention to the development of training programs.

and number three District Directors – they have to be interested in improving their competencies. In the event that they do not want to improve themselves – they will not be able to operate well enough to solve many problems that will arise.

It seemed to me that he fully understood these programs for he could explain, in detail, whether or not they had been effective. I then asked him to talk to me about elements that he would like to see changed to make the programs more effective. This time he paused to think a bit before speaking. He said that he would like to see a curriculum to improve English skills for his subordinates – a direct impact of globalisation:

In my opinion I think nowadays we inhabit an 'International World' as a direct result of globalisation. So District Directors now have to understand world systems and improve themselves to become more internationally orientated, as Bangkok society is not a local society any more – it is now an international society. Therefore District Directors must improve their English skill and must visit other countries to become more aware internationally.

Because Dr. Pongsak worked closely with his subordinates, I sensed that he might be more aware of feedback from them in respect of training programs in the past. I therefore asked him what had been the reaction of District Directors about the delivery, in general, of their training programs.

As I said, they all agree, as they must attend all major programs (he smiled).

I sensed, too, that he was very proud of the system of training programs that were provided by the BMA for District Directors. As District Directors had attended classes many times before, I asked his opinion as to how he thought they best learned in these programs. Again he did not hesitate, and replied:

> Number one: In attending training programs, they must follow the schedule. Number two: To learn – it might not be in a classroom. They can improve themselves by means of either informal or formal education. They keep up to date with the world and get more knowledge by studying. It can be said that they can do everything at the same time.

I asked him to think of the District Directors' learning in general. I asked him to give me his opinion about them in terms of their preferred ways of learning.

> I think that because of the demands of their day-to-day duties, District Directors prefer to learn by themselves. If they spend a few months in training classes it will render them less effective in their job. As they have a lot of responsibilities – a short schedule is the best in my opinion. Short, but frequent is best. Visiting other countries also is important, thereby improving their vision.

He seemed to understand his subordinates well, pointing out that, as they were busy with their work, needed to attend class in short, continuous sequences.

In a change of direction, I asked him to tell me about the budgeting process and budget allocations for training programs in the BMA. He indicated that the allocation had been 'quite sufficient' to meet past needs. I asked him to think about budgetary allocations that future programs might require.

> As training programs are important and supported by the BMA, further budget allocation should present no problem.

I then asked him to talk to me about the sequencing of training programs for District Directors. I asked his opinions on the sequencing of training that might be important for District Directors such as training before appointment, training early in the term, mid-term training, and so on.

> Before they are promoted to the position of District Director they have to work up through levels 3 to 7. A District Director's position is based on level 8. This means that they have to pass a lot of training programs such as the First Line Supervisor Training Program, the Intermediate Management Training Course, visits – indeed many programs. All these take place before they are promoted to District Directors. While they are in the position of District Director – they must attend meeting, seminars, all developing their competencies. They must attend major programs such as 'The senior Executives Training Course' and they can choose a time to attend either before appointment, training early in the term and mid-term training. They also have to improve themselves after midterm training. It does not stop after they have passed The Senior Executives Training Course. No indeed! They have to study further, train more, carry out visits, and attend academic meetings. A lot to do!

It was clear that Dr. Pongsak was very aware of what was necessary to continually improve the skills and competencies of his subordinates. I was interested that it was mandatory for the District Directors to attend the courses, provided by the BMA. There was an element of tight control evident.

I sought his opinions regarding what the thought was the most critical phase of a District Director's career. His response was incisive:

> Well…I think mid-term training because both work and learning can take place at the same time.

I asked him to talk about the venue, duration and appropriate time for District Directors to attend class to improve their skills and competencies. At first he thought that I was asking about all the details of training programs in

the past; as a consequence, he suggested that there was such a lot of detail attached to this and therefore too much to answer. Then he laughed a bit and made me laugh too. I had to explain my question again and asked him what he thought should be the pattern for the future.

> In the BMA, we also have a training centre in the Nongjok area. It can be said that we have our own college. If you are available, please visit there sometime.

It was kind of him to offer me a visit to the training centre belonging to the BMA, but this was a distraction. I was still keen to know whether or not the District Directors had their own training centre. He answered simply, and directly:

> No. It is for all curriculums. Everyone can use these places to set up training programs.

I asked Dr Pongsak to think more about training classes in future. I asked if there were any plans to change this thinking and, if so, what would the changes involve? He smiled before saying:

> I do not think so because it is a major institute. Actually there are many places where these programs can take place – for example visiting other provinces and countries as a change of location during the programs.

While I felt relaxed and was keen to learn more of his opinions that related to District Directors, I was aware that he had to attend an important meeting later; as a consequence, he had become restless. I therefore proceeded with my final question that related to the groups who deliver the training. I asked him to think about what he looked for in trainers, what he saw to be the necessary elements of a successful trainer working at this level and what, particularly, he looked for in selecting trainers for improving the skills and competencies of the District Directors. His opinion was unhesitatingly clear:

> There are external trainers such as instructors from University and including staff of the BMA, that is, first are Senior Executives such as Permanent Secretaries; second, are instructors from universities; third, are businessmen who have experience in management.

> They must be well known as experts in their job. A degree would not be necessary for a businessman to become a trainer. If the trainer was a government official – they should be a senior executive with vast experience.

He emphasised, in particular, the importance of applying information and communications technology in these programs:

> Anyway, there are lectures, presentations, visits and the use of PowerPoint.
> We use technology in these programs as appropriate to the training system.

At this point we had to terminate our conversation as he was in a hurry to go to his meeting – he said the he believed that he had answered all of my questions. He generously offered to give me more information – if I wished – at a later date, an offer which I appreciated and which I took up later.

Dr Pongsak had given me much useful information as well as providing me with an insight into his style of leadership. I sensed that he was a good leader as he was always concerned to improve his knowledge by constantly learning new things and also keen to motivate his subordinates to improve their skills and competencies to keep pace with environmental changes. It appeared to me that he was a good role-model for all of his staff: one which they could easily follow. During our conversation he had given me valuable information that enabled me easily to better understand the operation of the BMA.

He was well aware of the skills that District Directors needed to improve to become more internationally aware. His answers were useful and I could see that his obvious awareness would be of benefit to enable the District Directors to improve their job performance in future. I could see that Dr. Pongsak was concerned and interested in his subordinates and that he had a clear insight into the skills required to benefit and improve their knowledge – especially knowledge that would enable them to keep pace with an ever-changing world.

My concluding thought was that, clearly, Dr Pongsak wanted to improve the quality of the work of all BMA District Directors in order to enable them to provide better service for all Bangkok residents.

Interview with Deputy Permanent Secretary, BMA: Mr. Chaiyuth Nanakorn

On 9 July 2004, I met Mr. Chaiyuth, who had been recommended by Dr. Pongsak to be another of my participants. Mr. Chaiyuth had worked in this position for longer than two years. I had not met him before. My appointment to meet him had been set at 11:00 am. and I arrived at his office early, as usual. As I had never been to his building before, I was obliged to ask directions from passing Civil Servants. As one of the board members of the BMA, Mr. Chaiyuth was well-known to all staff. When I reached his office, I saw four staff sitting outside. There were all civil servants who worked for Mr. Chaiyuth as part of his team. I introduced myself and found that all of them were aware of my appointment with their boss ('boss' is the common term, in English, used in Thailand for superiors in organisations) as my name appeared in the appointment book for that day. At that point his secretary informed me that his boss had an urgent meeting with the Permanent Secretary and asked me to wait.

I waited for approximately 45 minutes. Meanwhile I noticed that Mr. Chaiyuth's staff were friendly and always kept smiling despite being busy.

Some of them came to talk with me from time to time; I was waiting alone and they were afraid that I would get bored. While I was waiting, I saw some members of staff who, in the past, had been subordinates of my mother – when she held the position of a Director of a School administered by the BMA. We greeted each other and I explained to them the reason for my visit. All were keen to offer me advice and information that would enhance my knowledge of the organisation as a whole. One of them introduced me to her boss – who was also a Deputy Permanent Secretary. I talked with this Deputy Permanent Secretary for ten minutes and then I had to leave to wait for Mr. Chaiyuth's return. During this time, I rehearsed my interview questions; the more I practiced the more relaxed I felt. In order to recognise him, I had searched for his photo on the BMA website prior to the interview. When he appeared, I recognised him immediately and promptly introduced myself. He apologised for making me wait. He looked younger than his picture and was polite and courteous; he struck me as being quite sophisticated. He invited me into his office, which was tidy and clean. His table was clear of documents; we sat around it for the interview.

At first he wondered why I had chosen him as one of my participants and he also said that he might not be a good interviewee; he gave an impression of humility. I told him that he had been recommended by Dr. Pongsak who was another of my participants. I encouraged him to give me any information relating to his ideas about the skills and competencies of District Directors and reassured him that there were no right or wrong answers. He smiled as I outlined the framework of my dissertation; we spent nearly 15 minutes discussing this. In this early encounter I observed Mr. Chaiyuth to be a quiet man who gave short answers – perhaps as he was afraid that they might be wrong or affect other people's feelings. I had to encourage him to speak and when he digressed, I had to bring him back to my original questions. He was unable to answer every question; he explained this by saying that certain issues were beyond his realm of experience. It transpired that the majority of his knowledge was concerned with public

works; he was able to contribute his knowledge to me in that subject very well, he said.

Initially I asked him to talk to me about a memorable situation relating to the skills and competencies of District Directors. At first I noticed that he was nervous and asked me to repeat my question, which I did. I continued smiling at him and encouraged him to talk freely. Suddenly, he seemed to relax and said:

> Number one: competencies of governance. Number two: competencies in the development of staff, the community and their areas. Actually District Directors come from many occupations such as educational supervisor, public works etc.

I asked him to talk to me more about his ideas relating to positive situations facing District Directors.

> I think that District Directors are concerned with governance. They have to realise their responsibility to offer welfare services for the people they serve. So development of District Directors to be of maximum benefit to the people should be their major goal.

He seemed to be aware of his subordinates' requirements to provide welfare services and good benefits for Bangkok residences as their primary aims. He spoke of the broad responsibilities that District Directors must have. As he was one of their bosses and had worked with them for a long time, I asked him: Is there a negative situation that you could tell me about?

> Yes, They have a negative situation as usual …

He gave me very a short answer and then went quiet; I sensed that he was reluctant to talk negatively about his staff. I asked him to elaborate on this point encouraging him to give me further details; again, his opinions was broad:

> It is in respect of their lacking in offering welfare services to the people, as required by the BMA. This is a major function of District Directors. If they lack this skill, it will affect their on-job performance.

It was obvious that he was aware that his subordinates were lacking in some areas but he did not want to mention this in detail. I sensed that he was very careful in his responses in case they might adversely affect his people.

I tried a different approach by asking him to think about new training programs that he would like to initiate for developing skills and competencies of District Directors that, currently, did not currently exist. He did not suggest specific training programs for his subordinates as he thought that this would be undertaken by another department.

> We have the BMA Training and Development Institute that could improve their competencies. There are training programs and workshops to maintain awareness of innovations, new technology and academic knowledge including keep up with the world of change.

I saw that he remained nervous and was still careful when giving his opinions. He appeared restless, so I did not want to force him to speak. Despite this, I continued to smile courteously and, once again, tried to encourage him to speak.

I encouraged him to respond by asking him to tell me about existing training programs for District Directors, also inviting him to give me an example of one that has worked really well. He replied in more detail:

> There are many programs for the general improvement of BMA staff. In terms of primary training – there are programs called 'The Intermediate Management training Course' and 'The Senior Executives Training Course'. All District Directors have to pass both of these training programs and I think The Senior Executives Training Course is most important for them. There is no need for them all to attend this class at the same time but they must find free time to attend this class as it is compulsory.

I asked his opinions about existing training programs that the BMA provided for District Directors: Do you think existing training programs work well for them?

> Yes – they can use some of the knowledge gained for their job. At the very least they can gain knowledge of administrative and practices for presentation, to practice new knowledge and planning methods necessary for Executives. These are all contained in the curriculums. They can bring these new-found skills into use, depending on the situation.

I observed that he felt better when he was able to talk about existing training programs that the BMA had provided for District Directors and of which he had had experience.

I brought him back to my earlier question by asking him to talk to me about new programs to cover some or all of their needs to improve skills and competencies that he had seen emerging in recent months.

> In my opinion, I think these should relate to organisational management and technology, as these change most rapidly.

It was another short answer; nevertheless, I could see that his thinking related to skills and skills and competencies that he wished to see in his subordinates. Then, he elaborated on the use of technology in these programs that he thought would be appropriate for District Directors. He told me of the methodologies that should be brought to the training classes in future.

> We should approach and involve the private sector to learn from their methods of decision-making skills, gathering of ideas and Information Technology Administration.

He also wanted to improve knowledge for District Directors in terms of technology by bringing it to use in their districts. He thought that they could improve their work to be more effective by using new technology. He had ideas that they should learn how to use two specific software programs:

> MIS and GIS will be used to gather and collect data to use in decision making and tax collection – although at the moment this is not common knowledge.

I asked him to elaborate on the meanings of MIS and GIS and also what ways he believed that these technologies would be of benefit for District Directors to learn. He gave a longer response:

> MIS is a Management Information System and GIS is a Geographic Information System that develops its information technology. The MIS system is designed on a three-level basis.

> Number one, Central: is a system of information that can be accessed and shared by all agencies under the BMA.

> Number two, Department: is a system of information that can be accessed and shared by members under that department.

> Number three, District: is a system of information that can be accessed and shared by members of that district.

> All of these levels can be directly connected to the database. In addition, the BMA brings in the latest technology – GIS – to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the city administration. It is used to gather and collect data to use in decision making for the policy makers such as city planning, infrastructure development and tax collection.

He smiled after sharing his information with me; it was obvious that he felt better and could speak more confidently on this issue. I asked him to think about which way his subordinates preferred to learn.

> They should get together by attending training programs so that they can gain new knowledge and also ask questions of the trainers in the classroom if they wished.

It seemed to me that the more he spoke the better he felt and this made our conversation easier.

I asked him to talk to me about the groups who might deliver the training, what he looked for in trainers, and what he saw as being the necessary elements of a successful trainer working at this level. In particular, I asked what he looked for in the selection of trainers for improving the skills and competencies of the District Directors.

> In the main, the BMA Training and Development Institute has the responsibility to seek trainers who have knowledge and experience in the required areas. We also ask some universities to set curriculums of training courses for us but these have to be approved by Executives of the BMA.

> … Actually we do invite expert external trainers such as successful businessmen and government officials who have a lot of experience. They would receive their knowledge from them including learning how to stay together and strengthen good friendships.

From my earlier encounter with his subordinates I had realised that Mr. Chaiyuth worked closely with them and that it was highly likely that he had been aware of their need for, and attitude to training programs over a long period. I therefore asked him to reflect on their attitude towards training programs in the past. He emphasised the importance of programs that could be applied in the workplace:

> The majority of them are satisfied with training programs arranged for them. Especially as they had to evaluate each training programs that they attended after each class so that we can realise their satisfactions or otherwise. We always try to tailor curriculums to the participants needs. I believe that they can use knowledge gained from the trainers to use in their workplaces.

I followed this question by asking him to think about existing training programs, and to comment on how effective he thought these had been. He appeared uncertain and paused to think before replying, once again, briefly:

> … I think programs for District Directors affect their work. They can use the knowledge from the training class in order to adapt to their job.

I sought his opinion on elements that he would like to see changed to make the programs more effective for the group of District Directors in future. Again, he showed his restlessness and a degree of embarrassment that mad me sense he could not answer this question fully:

> For me – it is difficult to give my opinion in this respect, as it is the BMA Training and Development Institute who have expert staff to design curriculums in order to improve government officials of the BMA and also for evaluation after training. They have more details than I do. I must apologise that I cannot tell you much.

I asked Mr. Chaiyuth about the budgeting process and budget allocations for training programs in the BMA. Again his answer was short:

> As we allocate a budget figure of two per cent of the BMA expenditure to training courses, we are aware of these things – then there are no budgetary problems at all.

I asked his opinion on the sequencing of training programs for District Directors – for example, training before appointment, training early in the term, mid-term training, and so on. His answer was interrupted by his cell phone ringing; after answering it, he continued:

> There are schedules of training courses undertaken by the BMA Training and Development Institute. Some Districts Director would like to train before appointment and some want mid-term training. Depending on their availability, there may be no need for all fifty District Directors to attend class at the same time.

I was pleased to notice that after this response he was more relaxed and so I asked him to talk to me about the schedule of training: when, where, for how long, and so on. This time he answered without hesitation:

> There are many possibilities such as within the BMA, Nongjok training
> centre, visiting other provinces and other countries as determined by the
> raining schedule of the BMA Training and Development Institute.

At this stage I indicated that this question ended our interview; I noticed that he looked relieved. Again, he apologised to me that he could not give details relating to all of my interview questions. He appeared embarrassed and said that he might not have provided the kind of information that I had expected. I responded by indicating that his answers would indeed be of benefit for my research and then thanked him for his contributions and giving me his valuable time for my interview session.

From this interview, I was able to extract some useful opinions and ideas. Clearly, he knew his subordinates well; he was guarded, however, in speaking specifically about them. He had been able to supply general opinions on his subordinates, had told me about what he saw in their work, and had spoken about the areas in which he expected them to improve their skills and competencies – especially those that would be of benefit for their position and workplace.

Mr. Chaiyuth was particularly aware of the importance of the application of new knowledge and new technologies; in order to make them more effective, he wanted his subordinates to use these in their work.

Interview with Permanent Secretary, BMA: Mrs Nathanon Thavisin

Mrs Nathanon, who bears the honorary title 'Khunying' – she is known as 'Khunying Nathanon', the equivalent of 'Lady Nathanon' – struck me as the

ideal leader of an organisation like the BMA. She frequently appears in the Thai media where she talks about her working life and personal lifestyle. She is extremely well known in Bangkok community, having won many 'Working Woman' awards from a variety of associations. I had looked forward to talking with her so much for such a long time; thus, it was an honour for me to meet her to discuss my research. Mrs. Nathanon had been a Permanent Secretary of the BMA for approximately three years, having been appointed in 2002. In the past she had worked in many positions for the BMA; it could be said that she has BMA blood in her veins!

As her routine was so busy and she frequently had to visit other countries as part of her job, we missed each other many times. Beginning on 1 June 2004, as the day of our first appointment, I woke up earlier than usual as I was excited and in order to rehearse my questions, prepared my documents including an audio-tape recorder for use during the interview. I found it to be inoperative – despite my trying a new cassette! I tried to fix the problem, without success. This made me feel nervous as it was nearly time for my appointment with her. Eventually I bought a new recorder from a shopping mall on the way to the BMA. I was relieved and drove quickly to the nominated place of our meeting: luckily, the roads were not busy. My unfortunate experience with the tape recorder taught me a valuable lesson in that if I had checked my equipment one or two days prior to the day of the meeting, I would have avoided the nervousness and had more time to resolve the problem.

When I arrived at Mrs Nathanon's office, her secretary informed me that she had not yet returned from an urgent meeting in The Electricity Company of Thailand and that she was to have dinner following the meeting. Mrs. Nathanon had asked me to call her cell phone at 21:00 hrs. I did as she had requested and she apologised for the interruptions to her plans for that day. She asked me to arrange a new time to meet her for the interview; she had instructed her secretary to organise this with me. Unfortunately this, and

three subsequent meetings were postponed: Mrs. Nathanon, indeed, was a very busy woman with national and international commitments.

My fifth attempt, 22 July 2004, proved to be more successful. Mrs. Nathanon kindly offered me the chance to meet her face-to-face to interview her at 16:00 hrs. As usual I arrived in the BMA earlier than our appointed time but had to wait for her for approximately 30 minutes until she was free. I took a seat and noticed that her staff worked so hard – non-stop! It seemed that everyone enjoyed their work so much. I noticed that they were able to retain a sense of humour despite their heavy workload. It seemed to be a great working atmosphere.

When Mrs Nathanon finished her meeting, she came back to her room. She looked younger than when I had seen her on TV. She was jovial and constantly smiled. She spoke in a very friendly manner to me. She apologised for making me wait many times, including that day also. I respond to her by saying that I understood her responsibilities. After pleasantries concerned with my doctoral research we proceeded with the interview.

I began by asking her my first question, which was to think about District Directors: Would you talk to me about a memorable situation relating to the skills and competencies of the directors? She paused to think and then gave me a short, sharp response:

> A District Director is an appointed leader of a district. They have a responsibility to offer welfare services to people in their district with populations of up to 150,000 persons. They are also coordinators that collaborate and meet to make important decisions. They are divided into 6 zones from 50 districts that have to collaborate with the administration and people and private sectors in to order to agree. They should administer the principles rapidly, impress with their service, administer clearly and be seen to be both moral and fair.

Her style of speaking was like that of a lecturer – and indeed she told me that she was often been invited to teach in class. I felt excited and sensed that this interview would provide extremely useful information; I was keen to ask more questions.

I asked her to talk about positive situations in which District Directors find themselves. She answered in general about the responsibilities of District Directors:

> District Directors have responsibilities in the administration section, community development, registration section, public works, public cleansing, and revenue collection. They are also able to understand laws, regulations, and the methods necessary to provide welfare to the people.

I then asked her to talk about negative situations relating to District Directors. She paused, then spoke about her subordinates:

> They have differing interests in various subjects. They have different competencies because they come from a variety of occupations. Some of them have an interest in alien labour's subject; on the other hand some of them are interested in problems associated with narcotics. In the past, they may not have wanted to improve their performance on their job as they had limited time but now they must accept change. They have to improve their performance. District Directors need to have objectives, visions, and must make plans to develop their district that will show improvement and to determine the methods necessary to achieve these aims.

She understood that her staff came from a variety of backgrounds. She thought that they should be more concerned about changes and improve their skills and competencies that would be important for their position and the BMA. I sensed that she kept herself aware of changes and wanted to motivate her subordinates to improve their skills and competencies to keep pace with the current environment.

I asked Mrs Nathanon to think about special programs that existed that could cover some or all of these needs at the present time, and invited

her to talk to me in detail about one or two of these training programs. Her response was comprehensive:

> Of course! We have many training programs for District Directors, such as The Intermediate Management Training Course, The Senior Executives Training Course, The Environment Training Course, The City Plan Program, The Security of Nation Program, The training program of the National Defence College of Thailand, The Training program of King Prajadhipok Institute, The Chief Executive Officer Program of integrated administrators. They will gain knowledge, comprehension of the management system, reform of government official and bureaucracy reform, build good management systems with sufficient capacity that will ensure effectiveness to be leaders of this changed, proactive management as well as a learning organisation with an effective administrative atmosphere that can be applied to their work.

She seemed to be fully conversant with the many existing programs and gave me information about each of them. I asked her if these programs were provided for the position of District Directors:

> Yes, these are either organised by the BMA and other organisations that we will select to provide training.

Her responses emphasised the importance that Executive of the BMA place on appropriate training programs designed to improve skills and competencies for staff.

I asked her opinion regarding the ways that she thought these programs might benefit the District Directors. She did not hesitate to answer me at all:

> Training programs that we organised have benefited the District Directors by improving their vision, to adapt to changes such as in economic, social and political, either domestic and international that benefits the bureaucratic administrators. They have also developed their idea of administration to be able to determine policy and therefore have more

effective command. District Directors have to improve their morality and

health, and also their coordination with other organisations and the BMA

in general. They will bring knowledge, skill and experience gained from

the training courses to increase the effectiveness of their job.

I was interested to hear of the benefits of training programs that had been provided by both the BMA and other organisations for District Directors. I noticed that she felt relaxed in discussing these issues with me – especially in that she talked positively about her subordinates and about her concerns to assist them to improve their job performance.

I asked her to think about new programs, currently available, that she wanted to initiate for developing the skills and competencies of District Directors. This time she gave me a short, abbreviated answer:

TQM for practice. Do you know TQM?

I confirmed that I understood the acronym, TQM (Total Quality Management); she smiled and continued to give me more details relating to training programs for the District Directors that she wished to see in future:

I would like District Directors to learn how to use TQM in their job – and

learn how to learn together. Total Quality Management improves staff

performance to become a better learning organisation. To be satisfactory

for the people as an objective, improvement of staff is important in an

organization to integrate development. Actually TQM is part of seven

management tools in bureaucracy – i.e., strategy, style, skill, staff, system,

structure and shared values. I want that they understand this theory in order

to apply it to their job.

I appreciated her expanding on the details of TQM, a training program that she thought would have a positive effect on her subordinates. She was concerned that if they could improve their performance, they would make people more satisfied with their services in the future.

I asked her to talk about the desired outcomes that such a training program might have for District Directors; she gave a comprehensive response:

> They will learn together and have a lifelong commitment to high quality working together to capitalise on group learning performance. They will have systematic thinking towards shared visions in order to be more effective in their job.

She wanted her subordinates to get together to improve the quality of their working lives by working collaboratively in the classroom, then, to expand this into their workplaces.

I asked her to think about existing training programs for District Directors, and also asked her to give me an example of one that has worked really well. She gave her warm and replied succinctly:

> All training programs are useful for their job.

She had great faith in the appropriateness of current programs; she, like Mr. Chaiyuth, emphasised the importance of their being applied in the workplace.

I asked her to describe specific training programs that were most important for District Directors; in particular, I asked her which one of the programs she would rate as being the most important for their position. She gave a long reply:

> This depends on the district. For example, some District Directors are interested in physical district revenue collection and methods of welfare for the people. Training programs will depend on geography and the needs of the people in that district. In districts where there is a lot of green land, the majority of residents work at farming – so agriculture is of more importance. District Directors should have knowledge of agricultural development in their area. They have to approach all people who can provide this knowledge. What I say is that they have differing needs, for example, in Phra Nakorn District compared with Sumpuntawong District.

> Sumpuntawong District has geography that looks like pan's curve or what some people describe as a dragon's head and tail. The majority of people who stay in the dragon head area have restaurant businesses. There are a lot of restaurants in that area. On the other hand, there are a lot of water pump shops in the dragon tail area. Moreover, there are many places to visit, so they have to think about how to develop their district to become geographically attractive for tourism. They have to consider their strengths, improve products in their district to become OTOP (One Tambon One Product) in order to increase the marketability and productivity of the community and to provide more opportunities for outside competition. In addition, they must also increase income for people in that area.

This long answer, did not tell me which was the most important training program for Mrs Nathanon's subordinates because she thought it would depend on geography and needs of the staff in each district. My perception was that, no matter which training program was organised for her subordinates, such a program must be concerned to improve the quality of life for local people: this was of paramount importance. It seemed to me that this principle was being used as the basis for training program policy.

I asked her more questions about existing training programs and how effective they had been.

> I think in this aspect it will depend on my subordinates. They will evaluate all programs after they are complete. Thus, District Directors must bring the knowledge gained to seek out and subsequently improve their strength and weakness. They have to be concerned about SWOT analysis for their district to solve problems and have vision to improve their districts.

I also asked her to talk about training programs that would make all the participants more effective. Again, she provided a long answer:

> Curriculum: I think we have to be concerned about new theories for training courses that are appropriate to each subject. They have to learn and practice in order to improve their performance and in learning that

applies to their job. They will learn to be more effective in their administration. We will have moral administrators, conventional, with a good attitude appropriate to their high position. Nowadays, each district concerns itself about organisational development. For example there is a lot of entertainment in Huay Kwang District, so they have to think how to develop them to be attractive for tourism but at the same time not destroying the environment.

As she and her team work closely with the District Directors she is ever-conscious of improving their skills and competencies. I asked her opinion regarding preferred styles of learning:

District Directors love to learn together, learn to develop and how to develop, develop a plan's framework, how to develop laws, and learn new technology to facilitate better communication. There are many private sectors, public sectors, schools, colleges and universities in each district that do not belong to the BMA but they have to know how to co-operate with them nevertheless. They would learn from their job and also learn from other District Director's experiences.

Co-operation, team learning, and collaboration were the essential skills and competencies to emerge from this response.

I asked Mrs Nathanon to talk about the budgeting process and budget allocations for training programs in the BMA and if the allocation had been sufficient to meet past needs; she was comprehensive in her response:

We have a department of Permanent Secretaries for the BMA that is responsible for the supervision of all permanent staff, personnel management and training, budgeting, legal etc. We are allocated a budget for training courses from the Government, so we have no problem in that respect. If we have no programs for District Directors, they can advise what they want to learn so that we can consider approval of a budget for them on a case by case basis. Their case will be strengthened if they suggest new subjects that will improve their future competencies. If District Directors are interested in similar topics, they can propose their

> ideas collectively by letter and they will be considered. They have to learn
> to offer welfare for people, so we can do what they request.

The many training programs for District Directors did not appear to suffer from budgetary restraints:. this was good for the staff working there. It seemed to me that Mrs Nathanon was a good leader who sought to improve the skills and competencies of her subordinates. She also wanted to receive feedback as to their needs so that she might provide training programs, suitable for them in future. I felt that is was quite visionary of her to realise the benefits of training programs for her subordinates, and that these benefits would affect each district and, ultimately, be of benefit to the BMA.

I asked her to expand on the sequencing of Training Programs for District Directors, e.g., training before appointment, training early in the term, mid-term training, and so on; her response came easily:

> Before they are promoted to become District Director, they have to pass
> 'The Intermediate Management Training Course'. While they are in the
> position of District Director, they have also to undergo training in 'The
> Senior Executive Training Course' but they can attend this class whenever
> they are available. They would not necessarily train at the same time.

It was clear from this response that those who were to be promoted to the post of District Director must attend compulsory training programs. As she was their boss, she needed to have an idea of the sequence of training programs that were regarded as being most important to all subordinates.

I asked what, in her opinion, was the most critical phase of District Directors training; her reply was informed and showed a deep understanding of the needs of her subordinates:

> I think training before appointment is most the important because District
> Directors should have knowledge of administration before they take up
> office. Thereafter, as they work as District Directors, they have to attend
> training courses often because we realise the importance of improvement

of the performance of staff in order for them to have knowledge, skill and good attitude towards ultimate effectiveness. District Directors have to be aware of methods of cheating, such as falsification of identification cards and registers etc.

I asked her, in respect of the scheduling of training, where should District Directors attend class:

> There are many locations; BMA, Phya Thai, Nong jog and in hotels for some training programs.

Clearly, she saw no difficulties in providing appropriate venues.

I asked her to give me her ideas regarding the length of training programs for District Directors. Her answer related to current practice:

> Two months for The Intermediate Management Training Course and The Senior Executives Training Course is of approximately three months duration.

The more I talked with Mrs Nathanon the more I became aware of her deep knowledge and understanding of the BMA.

I was also were keen to ask her to gain her opinion of the quality of the trainers who deliver the training. She talked about the calibre of trainers required for her subordinates, and the need for evaluation of them:

> We will invite the trainers who have experiences from a variety of occupations. We evaluate the trainer of each section before and after the course. We set standards of evaluation and if some get a low score or we are unsatisfied, we will not invite them again.

She explained that the BMA was always concerned to have good trainers for its classes. Participants are given an evaluation form to complete before and after each training program. Moreover, Mrs Nathanon told me about the

qualifications she looked for in selecting trainers to improve the skills and competencies of the District Directors:

> There are both senior government officers and businessman who have experience that is well known to us. We set the standard of a trainer's qualifications. Of particular importance is the fact that they must communicate well with District Directors to make them understand.

I asked her about the appropriateness of training methods used for the training of District Directors. She was quick to respond:

> They have to brainstorm and have workshops as AIC (Appreciation Influence Control)

At this point, she asked to be excused to return to work as she had urgent business to attend to; consequently, we terminated the interview rather abruptly and I thanked her for giving me some of her valuable time in support of my studies.

Before I departed, she kindly invited me to ask her follow-up questions if I wanted to. I sensed that she could see the benefits of my research and that it might be useful for her to understand her subordinates better and to provide training programs according to their needs. Such program assist District Directors to gain knowledge that will assist them to improve their own organisations; ultimately, this will benefit the BMA in the future.

Mrs Nathanon is a successful executive who thinks highly of her subordinates and who wants to motivate them to learn new knowledge and skills that will benefit their work in the BMA. She appeared to me to be a good leader in a new era that is concerned with the needs of the individual in order to improve their skills and competencies. She displays ready willingness to accept any request from her District Directors about their

needs to improve their job performance; she also seeks training programs that match these needs.

Summary of Discussions

The meetings enabled me to synthesise these views into a set of outcome statements that then became the set of items relating to the skills and skills and competencies skills that I needed to use in the questionnaire in Phase 2 of round one of the Delphi survey. There were thirteen key issues that emerged in these discussions:

1. Leading an organization

2. To have versatility in performance

3. To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents

4. To establish good human relationships

5. To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations

6. To mediate effectively between people and their organisations.

7. To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.

8. To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.

9. To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.

10. To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.

11. To lead a learning organisation as supports continuous learning and development.

12. To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.

13. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs

Summary

This chapter reports the requirements of three executives of the BMA in order to establish what they believe to be the professional development needs of District Directors in the changing environment of their workplace. The interviews made me understand the BMA system better and to better appreciate the significance of the District Directors' skills and competencies in terms of the value placed on learning and the importance of their being able to realign their assumptions about productive work to support learning and development. It was both valuable and satisfying during the process of the individual interviews to be able to stimulate these very senior executives to think about professional development for their subordinates' capabilities to improve workplace outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

Phase 2: Delphi Survey

Identifying the Competency Needs of District Directors

Introduction

In order for District Directors to alter the actions and interactions that they experience between each other and with their communities, they require experiences that affect their thinking; as Albert Einstein is reported as saying:

> The world is understood by our thinking. To change the world we have to
> change our thinking.

This chapter reports the results of Phase 2 of the research. This phase provide a means to understand and respond to the need to provide support for District Directors in developing appropriate skills and competencies.

To gain maximum input and a consensus of opinion among the group of District Directors, a Delphi survey was used consisting of three rounds of questionnaires integrating the opinions and ideas of all fifty District Directors. The fifty directors were asked to rate items, derived from the interviews with senior BMA officials, related to the skills and competencies

required to improve their job performance. As Loo (2002) points out, organisations should consider using a Delphi survey when tackling significant decision-making that will set their future directions.

Employing a Delphi survey was a viable research technique because of its potential for anonymity, ability to equalise participants, and ability to remove personality factors from the process. As Howze & Dalrymple (2004) point out, a Delphi survey warrants consideration and use as a research method regardless of the geographic location or heterogeneity of the participants.

I was able to use this Delphi survey in order to assess the knowledge and skill needs of these fifth District Directors. It provided a means of obtaining a variety of opinions by asking District Directors what they thought was important, as well as providing feedback without the necessity of meeting together, in order to gain a consensus view of these needs. With the knowledge and skills needs of the District Directors determined, a draft professional development training policy was able to be developed.

Three rounds of questionnaires were distributed to the fifty District Directors of the BMA with the intention of achieving, through refinement; a consensus view. In all rounds, there was a 100 per cent response rate. In the first round, a listing of competency needs items was distributed. These items were ranked by participants who also gave their reasons for the ranking. They were invited to add additional items, giving their reasons for doing so.

In the second round, the first round items were listed in rank order according to the findings of round one and, together with the reasons given, were re-submitted to the participants for the round two surveys. Again, the items were re-ranked and reasons for the ranking were given.

In the third and final round, the process for round two was repeated. All of the participants were asked to review and rate importance considering the frequency rating of 10 and median score for each item. Final responses of

the Delphi survey are recorded, analysed statistically, and summarised in this chapter.

Findings – Round 1

Development of the questionnaire for Round 1 was derived from the outcomes of the interviews with the three executives of the BMA reported in the previous chapter. Clear identification of the skills and competencies were required by District Directors in order for them to carry out their responsibilities as senior officials in the BMA. Open-ended questions were asked to let District Directors give their opinion related to the skills and competencies that they need to improve. In the first round questionnaire, all fifty District Directors received a 13-item checklist of skills and competency needs for improving job performance. In addition two spaces were provided for them to add further items.

The results of the first round are reported in two parts. First, the demographic Personal Data responses are presented in Tables 5.1 to 5.4. Second, the individual scores for each of the 13 items, as reported by the 50 respondents, were recorded in a MSExcel spreadsheet. The interquartile ranges for the responses on each item were then calculated and recorded (see Appendix 6). A summary of these competency needs is presented in Table 5.5.

Part I: Personal Data

The District Directors – five female (10 per cent) and forty-five male (90 per cent) – had graduated in either a Bachelor Degree or Master Degree. As shown in Table 5.1, the fifty District Directors had an average of age of 53 years old and an average of 1.8 years of work experience. Of the fifty

TABLE 5.1   GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Male	45	90
Female	5	10

TABLE 5.2   AGE OF PARTICIPANTS

Age Range	45-48 years old	49-52 years old	53-56 years old	57-60 years old
Number	4	18	20	8
Average age	53 years			

TABLE 5.3   EDUCATION LEVELS OF PARTICIPANTS

Education	Number	Percentage (%)
Bachelor Degree	7	14
Master Degree	43	86
Doctoral Degree	0	0

TABLE 5.4   EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPANTS

Experience	Number	Percentage (%)
1 month	3	6
2 months	1	2
3 months	1	2
8 months	1	2
9 months	10	20
10 months	6	12
1 year	5	10
2 years	7	14
3 years	7	14
4 years	9	18

District Directors, 90 per cent were male. The average age of the District Directors was 53 years; the age range was between 45 and 60 years (see Table 5.2).

As shown in Table 5.3, the majority of District Directors (86 per cent) had graduated with a Masters Degree; the remainder (14 per cent) had graduated with a Bachelor Degree. None had a doctoral degree.

The findings reported in table 5.4 indicate that of the fifty District Directors 10 per cent had less than 4 months' work experience in that position. Nearly half the respondents (44%) had less than one years' work experience in the position; surprisingly, the greatest proportion (20%) of respondents had only 9 months' experience, close to the median work experience of just 12 months. This group of relatively inexperienced directors was balanced by nearly a third (32%) who had more than two years' work experience in the position. Interestingly, no director had worked in the position for longer than 4 years. Approximately one-quarter (24%) had between one and two years' work experience in the position. These data suggest three groupings of District Directors that can be made in terms of length of service: low length of service (less than 1 year); medium (between 1-2 years); and high length of service (between 3-4 years).

Part II: Competency Needs of District Directors

Table 5.5 contains the frequency ratings of importance of the competencies required by District Directors. They were divided into three frequency rating groups: those of high, those of medium and those of low importance – first, by counting the frequency of the highest rating (10); second, by scanning the data to make a judgement as to where the cut-off points should be placed. The items that fell within these three sets of frequency ratings are discussed below.

TABLE 5.5   **RESULTS OF DELPHI SURVEY ROUND 1: RATING OF COMPETENCY NEEDS OF ALL DISTRICT DIRECTORS**

Item	Description	Frequency rating 10	Rating of Importance
1	**Leading an organisation**	34	High
7	**To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.**	31	High
8	**To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.**	30	High
4	**To establish good human relationships.**	29	High
5	**To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations.**	28	High
13	**Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.**	28	High
2	**To have versatility in performance**	26	Medium
10	**To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.**	26	Medium
6	**To mediate effectively between people and their organisations.**	23	Medium
11	**To lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning and development.**	20	Medium
3	**To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.**	18	Low
9	**To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.**	18	Low
12	**To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.**	15	Low

High frequency rating of importance

Item 1, 'Leading an organisation' clearly had the highest frequency rating suggesting that it is the principal function and therefore the most important need for their position. Thirty-four participants from the fifty District Directors gave this item the highest frequency rating. Item 7: 'To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service' was also highly rated (31 rating the item at 10). These two items are concerned with the system of good governance that enacts policies for all civil servants to provide effective service with transparency for the people. Four items – items 8, 4 5 and 13 – indicated that there was a high frequency rating for the development of relationships and interpersonal skills.

Medium frequency rating of importance

A second cluster of items (items 2 and 10: with 26 rating these items at 10; and item 6, with 23 rating this item at 10) indicated that there was medium importance directed to performance and output processes associated with people – versatility in performance, redefining what is involved in carrying out productive work, and mediating between individuals and the organisation, respectively.

Low frequency rating of importance

A third cluster of items were judged to be of lower importance. Item 11: 'To lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning and development' was rated at 10 by 20 respondents; items 3 and 9 were rated 10 by 18 respondents. Item 12, 'To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level, that will affect the BMA' was rated at 10 by 15 respondents. These results suggest that the concepts of a learning organisation, and focusing on change at the local and global levels were seen as being of lowest importance.

The District Directors were also asked to add more items that they thought important for their position. Nine of the District Directors provided valuable opinions but I had to focus only on aspects that related with the skill and competency areas and were approved by my Thai Co-supervisor so that I could use them to develop the questionnaire in round two. The findings of this study clearly indicated that there were three more items provided by some District Directors for which they wanted to improve their skills and competencies, as shown below:

1. Being mature;

2. The ability to establish networking among districts;

3. The ability to use information technology.

These three items were included in round two of the Delphi survey.

This second questionnaire was similar to the first round questionnaire except that the median and interquartile ranges were provided for each of the items, thus giving an indication of the frequency ratings of all the respondents.

Findings – Round 2

In this second round the fifty participants received a questionnaire consisting of 16 items presented in two parts. Part I of the questionnaire consisted of the original 13 items to be rated, again, in order of importance using a 10-point scale. This time, however, the interquartile ranks (see Appendix 6) of the overall scores that resulted from group responses to the first round were included for each item. This provided a measure of the group frequency rating for each of the items from Round 1: the highest and lowest rankings, and the median ranking. The purpose of this was to offer the respondents an opportunity to amend their ratings in view of the expressed attitude of their

TABLE 5.6   RESULT OF DELPHI SURVEY ROUND 2:
RATING OF COMPETENCY NEEDS OF ALL DISTRICT
DIRECTORS.

Rank	Item	Description	Frequency rating 10	Median rating	Rating of importance
1	1	**Leading an organisation**	39	10	High
2	4	**To establish good human relationships.**	37	10	High
3	14	**Being mature**	37	10	High
4	7	**To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.**	36	10	High
5	8	**To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.**	35	10	High
6	15	**The ability to establish network among districts**	34	9	High
7	13	**Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.**	33	10	High
8	5	**To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations.**	32	10	High
9	10	**To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.**	26	10	Medium
10	2	**To have versatility in performance**	24	9	Medium
11	6	**To mediate effectively between people and their organisations**	21	9	Medium
12	11	**To lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning and development.**	19	9	Low
13	9	**To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.**	18	9	Low
14	3	**To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.**	16	9	Low
15	16	**The ability in using information technology**	14	9	Low
16	12	**To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.**	12	8	Low

colleagues. Part II included the three new items arising from an analysis of responses to additional needs, as perceived by the respondents in Round 1. The responses for each of the 16 items were analysed as for Round 1. The responses are summarised in Table 5.6.

The respondents changed their ratings compared with Round 1. This was to be expected: the knowledge of results of Round 1 would have influenced their opinion; as well, there were three new items that they had to taken into account. The frequency of rating of 10 and the median rating of each item subsequently were used to develop the questionnaire in Round 3.

High frequency rating of importance

Items 1, 4, 14, 7, 8, 15, 13 and 5, in decreasing order, gained a high frequency rating of importance in Round 2. Item 1 retained the highest frequency rating; items 4 and 14 (a new item) displaced items 7 and 8; item 15 (a new item) moved ahead of 13 and 5, which changed order from Round 1. There was a much closer clustering of these items, with a range of 39 to 32 of respondents scoring these items at 10 on the scale of importance.

Medium frequency rating of importance

Three items (10, 2 and 6) retained the same order of importance as for Round 1. Compared with the items with a high frequency rating of importance, the median value of the importance of these three items dropped from 10 to 9; the number of respondents scoring these items at 10 was greater than 20.

Low frequency rating of importance

Three items (3, 9 and 12) retained their frequency rating – items 3 and 9 changed places in the ranking; item 11 moved from medium to low. This group of items all had a median of 9; however, fewer than 20 respondents

scored them at 10 on the scale of importance. Item 16, a new item, was rated second lowest.

Findings – Round 3

In the third round the fifty participants received a questionnaire consisting of 16 items that assimilated the responses of the previous round. This round provided the participants with a last opportunity to alter their rankings, For this round, the median score for each item from Round 2 was reported for each item; again, they responded to a ten-point rating scale of importance. The complete set of 16 items was rated as for Round 3, again in order of importance using a 10-point scale; similarly, the interquartile ranges (see Appendix 7) of the overall scores that resulted from group responses to the second round were included for each item.

The results of Round 3 are summarized in Table 5.7, below. In this final round there were many interesting details that differed from the previous round. The outcomes show the skills and competencies that District Directors rate as important for their improvement; these are discussed below.

High frequency rating of importance

In this final round of the Delphi survey, seven items (1, 7, 14, 4, 5, 8, and 13) were judged as having the highest frequency rating of importance: based both on the frequency of respondents rating these items at 10 on the scale of importance, and on the median score (10 in every case). There was a clear gap in the frequency rating of importance between these and the remaining eight items.

These seven items had previously emerged in Round 2 as having a high frequency rating of importance; however, the final order changed

TABLE 5.7   **RESULT OF DELPHI SURVEY ROUND 3:**
                    RATING OF COMPETENCY NEEDS OF ALL DISTRICT
                    DIRECTORS

Rank	Item	Description	Frequency rating 10	Median rating	Rating of importance
1	1	**Leading an organisation**	**50**	**10**	High
2	7	**To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service**	**39**	**10**	High
3	14	**Being mature**	**38**	**10**	High
4	4	**To establish good human relationships**	**37**	**10**	High
5	5	**To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations**	**36**	**10**	High
6	8	**To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality**	**36**	**10**	High
7	13	**Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.**	**36**	**10**	High
8	10	**To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.**	**33**	**10**	Medium
9	2	**To have versatility in performance**	**24**	**9**	Medium
10	6	**To mediate effectively between people and their organisations**	**22**	**9**	Medium
11	15	**The ability to establish networking among districts**	**21**	**9**	Medium
12	11	**To lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning and development.**	**20**	**9**	Medium
13	9	**To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.**	**17**	**9**	Low
14	3	**To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.**	**16**	**9**	Low
15	12	**To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.**	**12**	**8**	Low
16	16	**The ability in using information technology**	**12**	**9**	Low

significantly in Round 3 – with the exception of item 1 which consistently was ranked at number 1 throughout the survey. Leading the organisation retained the highest rank, and was joined by being able to provide an effective administration (item 7), A level of maturity (item 14), linked with strong interpersonal skills and a high level of moral integrity (items 4, 5, 8 and 13) produced a distinctive cluster of personal attributes that ranked highly.

The results indicate that all fifty District Directors (100%) were consistent in their consensus regarding the importance of item 1: 'Leading an organisation'. Respondents rated this item highest in every round of the Delphi survey. Again items 7 and 14 were also highly rated (39 and 38 respectively). These three items were concerned with ensuring job effectiveness.

Medium frequency rating of importance

Items 10, 2, 6, 15 and 11 were judged as being of medium importance on the basis of having 20 or more respondents rating these items at 10 on the scale of importance but with a median score of 9. Item 10, while having a median score of 10, had a medium frequency rating of 33 in Round 3. Items 10, 2 and 6 were thus consistently rated as being of medium importance throughout the survey; item 15 dropped from the high group in the final analysis; item 11 rose from the low group.

Generally, these items are broader and less specific than those with the highest frequency rating; they are more attitudinal in nature. Ability to develop a learning organisation (item 11), interestingly, may have significant impact on how District Directors go about leading their organisations.

Low frequency rating of importance

Items 9, 3, 12 and 16 were judged as being of low importance in Round 3. These items were consistently in the low group: 3, 9 and 12 from the outset

(they are concerned with regulatory and specific cultural issues related to the BMA and the citizens whom it administers) and joined by 16 after Round 2. Item 16, associated with facility in information technology, had the lowest frequency rating of all items.

This data analysis, revealed seven items that regularly fell into the third or fourth interquartile range of items having both a frequency rating and a median score of 10. The seven items, listed below, were taken as representing the consensus opinion of the skills and competencies that were agreed as being of most importance by the respondents in the further development of their careers in the BMA:

1. Leading an organisation

2. To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service

3. Being mature

4. To establish good human relationships

5. To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations

6. To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality

7. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.

These outcomes from the final round of the Delphi survey were used to compile the items to be discussed in the semi-structured interviews undertaken in Phase 3 and reported on in the next chapter. Nine District Directors, randomly selected, were asked to discuss all of the seven skills and needed and gave their opinions why these needs were important for their position. They included ideas of professional development strategies per the narrative described in Chapter 6.

Summary

The Delphi survey sought to identify the needs of District Directors to improve the skills and competencies that will affect their workplace in the future. All fifty District Directors' responses in each round of the study were presented and analysed in this chapter.

The Delphi survey of this study was a very versatile method for assessing these needs as, throughout the three rounds, a movement towards group consensus can be observed. The Delphi survey provided a dynamic modelling system for charting progressive movement toward consensus either of agreement or disagreement – the outcome of a series of iterations – that District Directors could actually see and interact with instead of having to rely on the persuasiveness of the opinions of senior BMA executives. In this chapter, the findings of a Delphi survey have been discussed and the implications outlined.

The findings of this Delphi survey were used in the development of a suitable instrument for the next phase, Phase 3, which involved using a semi-structured interview with nine District Directors that were chosen on the basis of population: small, medium and large districts. The results of Phase 3 are reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

Analysis of Case Study Outcomes

Introduction

This chapter draws from qualitative data collected from nine interviews that I audio-tape recorded during the period 27 December 2004 to 11 January 2005. I derived these case studies from responses to the questions contained in the semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix 10) and from the associated transcription of the District Directors' responses from which selected quotes have been included. In these interviews, I invited a stratified sample of nine District Directors to engage in individual semi-structured interview with me. The stratified sample was chosen on the basis of population: small, medium and large districts; the size range was determined following an analysis of population statistics of the fifty districts within the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA). Three District Directors were invited from each size range.

The key questions for each interview focused upon the seven elements that emerged as the consensus view of the skills that District Directors needed most in order to improve their on job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organization, as determined by the responses to the final round of the Delphi survey in which all had participated (see previous chapter). These seven elements were:

1. **Specialist skills in leading an organisation:** organisational leadership.

2. **Administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service:** effective and efficient service

3. **Improving competency in being emotionally mature:** emotional maturity.

4. **Establishing good human relationships:** interpersonal skills.

5. **Collaborating effectively with people and their organisations:** effective collaboration.

6. **To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality:** moral leadership.

7. **Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs:** empathetic understanding.

I showed the seven items in the list to the participants during our conversations. I asked them to discuss the seven skills and competency needs and to give their opinion of why these needs are important and how they see them assisting in their present and future positions. I also asked them to discuss professional development strategies that they believed would promote these needs – an outcome which comprised five sub-issues:

8. **Professional development strategies to promote the seven needs:** professional development strategies:

    8.1 improving skills and competencies;

    8.2 successful training;

    8.3 problems with training;

    8.4 duration of training programs;

    8.5 training venues.

The duration of each interview averaged 30 minutes. Interviews were normally undertaken within the participant's offices. I informed each participant that the study would assist me and those involved in the administration of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to better understand the interests and needs of District Directors in order to improve their job performance. I was attempting to establish a deeper understanding of what District Directors had indicated in the Delphi survey.

The participants were encouraged to speak freely and openly. I always tried to be charming and courteous, showing a pleasant smile and moderating my voice when some of participants digressed from the issue that I had raised. I would courteously then bring them back to my original question. This approach enabled me to understand the changes they wanted to propose. By carefully transcribing, verbatim, these responses, I was better situated to understand their ideas. Richard (1998) suggests that observations should involve attentively watching and systematically recording what is seen and heard; consequently, I observed and noted, where appropriate, their behaviour as they expressed their opinions. I made supplementary written notes as soon as practicable following each interview and usually within a few hours. These described the location, verbal and non-verbal presentation and the general atmosphere that existed.

The semi-structured questions generated prior to the interviews represent a synthesis of the responses to the Delphi study questionnaire reported in Chapter 4. The questions were developed in order to explore, in depth, underlying issues related to these generalisations and to identify any relationship to study issues and procedural details. Altogether, the qualitative data analysis of this dissertation is a story-telling or narrative discourse, which seeks understanding through discovery of details revealed in each case study. It looks for repeated themes and issues, common threads of meaning and shared assumptions, value and beliefs as well as significant differences in these terms.

Inspiration, cultural phenomena and behavioural patterns are complex and often difficult to perceive – and so, qualitative methodology makes them more readily accessible. Stake (1995) writes that the principal use of a case study is to obtain the descriptions and observations of others as the same event will not be seen in the same way by everyone. This chapter illustrates the learning outcomes of nine District Directors to better understand skills and competency needs in order to improve their on job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation, and focuses on the professional development strategies required to promote the knowledge and skill development of District Directors and skills and competencies required by them. This will facilitate their carrying out of their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

The case studies referred to in the previous chapter were undertaken to clarify the three research questions:

1. What do District Directors need in order to improve their on-job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation?

2. What professional development strategies are required to promote the knowledge and skill development of District Directors?

3. What skills and competencies are required by District Directors in order for them to carry out their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration?

Yin (1994) offers the following definition of case study:

> A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between [the] phenomenon and context are not clearly defined.

A case study approach was appropriate for, as Harrison (2002) indicates, case studies are best applied where the 'theory base is weak and the environment

under study is messy'. The case studies helped me to identify central issues, to establish connections and to supply appropriate evidence. But to do this required data reduction as the complete set of case studies, contained in Appendix 11, is simply too large to present in the body of this thesis which carries a 60,000 word limit.

Miles & Huberman (1994) point out that data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appears in write-up field notes or transcriptions. I prepared a large piece of stiff cardboard to include all cells and responses. What I looked for in both areas were key ideas, leading to key concepts and major themes. I established a data grid in which I consolidated, initially, the key ideas which corresponded to the seven skills and competencies identified in the Delphi survey, as discussed in Chapter 5:

1. Leading an organisation: **organisational leadership**;

2. To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service: **effective and efficient service**;

3. Being mature: emotional maturity;

4. To establish good human relationships: **interpersonal skills**;

5. To collaborate effectively with people and their organisations: **effective collaboration**;

6. To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality: **moral leadership**;

7. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs: **empathetic understanding**.

Interview questions, related to these skills and competencies, were shown across the top of the grid and down the left side of the grid was the list of those nine participants that were interviewed.

TABLE 6.1   **SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES RELATED TO SIZE OF DISTRICT**

Skills and Competencies	Size of District		
	Small	**Medium**	**Large**
Organisational leadership	My belief is that we must adopt more business-like working practices that are operated by the private sector so I can apply their methods of working to my leadership and visions. (Mr. Fred) If I have this new competency and skill, I will become the ideal District Directors – that, to date, the people have only dreamt of having. (Mr. Bill) Thus, the person in the position of leader of the administration should be acknowledged by his or her subordinates as important. This means that they must accept what is told to them and carry out their duties whenever they receive an assignment from me (Mr. Brad).	I must be a good model for my subordinates (Mr. Sam). District Director is a person who can make decisions, motivate, command and solve problems within this office (the staff) and outside my office (the population). I must also consider the direction in which the organisation is moving and my department's effectiveness in co-operating with other organisations etc. As I am a leader of the district, I must also have the necessary leadership skills in my job (Mr. John). It has always been my aim to become the best District Director in the whole of the BMA organisation. This is not just for my own self-gratification – but in order that I can provide the best possible service to the people whom I serve (Mr. Beckham).	Leading an organisation effectively is important to me. If I cannot control my Civil Servants nor have sufficient knowledge of management, it will give me problems (Mr. Danny). Nevertheless, leadership is an important skill for a District Director to be able to operate effectively. This can be of great benefit for my organisation and me. I can then use this skill to motivate others towards change (Mr. Ian). To that end I must improve all of my skills and competencies to become a more effective and efficient leader of my subordinates – as it is they who will ultimately resolve the problems and deliver the solutions (Mr. George).
Effective and efficient service	Actually we all have our respective job descriptions and I, as leader of the district, am always concerned about the responsibility of my position and also of my subordinates to operate effectively while performing a particular task before moving on to the next one (Mr. Fred). I need to administer clearly and quickly to ensure an effective service. I must provide effective service for all people. I am constantly trying to improve myself and also my subordinate's performance on job. I want to be able to provide service rapidly and transparently to people whenever I offer to solve their problems (Mr. Brad).	I have to lead the organisation to work in the same direction and to discharge their responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide the best possible service. I think I must improve myself to gain knowledge to improve better services and to use this skill to motivate others towards change (Mr. Sam). In this case, it reinforces my view that improvement of this competency will enhance my leadership attributes and enable me to better discharge my responsibilities and guidance, rapidly and more transparently, to the benefit of the people (Mr. John). I want to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently to provide effective services for people (Mr. Beckham).	I must naturally be seen to be operating in an efficient and effective manner as I will be ultimately accountable for my actions – to both the people I serve and the BMA (Mr. Danny). If I do not have sufficient authority then we cannot achieve success in management (Mr. Ian). Given the large size of my organisation I must ensure unity of action and thought in terms of us being able to satisfy the requirements of the people rapidly and transparently (Mr. George).
Emotional maturity	I am not sure that I have this maturity or not and also suspect that other civil servants lack this skill. I remind my subordinates about my responsibility in my position and that I am their leader. I have to achieve my aims in order to be a good model for them (Mr. Fred). Despite my many responsibilities and heavy workload I must at all times remain mature and often keep my feelings to myself in front of my staff, even if I am dissatisfied by things (Mr. Bill).	As I am the leader of the district, I must be concerned to show emotional intelligence to my staff and the people (Mr. Sam). Despite us having a heavy workload and at times finding it hard to control our emotions, we must show maturity (Mr. John). Regarding my use of the word 'mature' – as I have a lot of re-sponsibilities, I must be able to control my emotions sometime, despite the difficulties often against all odds (Mr. Beckham).	My aim is to reform them to become better Civil Servants than their predecessors. We must strive for more maturity in both our verbal and non-verbal communication (Mr. Danny). Therefore it is vital that I have a sufficiency of mature and emotional intelligence to be able to collaborate with other organisations if I am to effectively help the people. District Directors must have the proper level of performance and sufficient knowledge, including skill and personality (Mr. Ian).

Skills and Competencies	Size of District		
	Small	**Medium**	**Large**
	Having so much work on my shoulders, I must try to manage my work well. I must demonstrate and show maturity in my work principles in order that I can encourage my staff participation, to ensure that they accept and fully understand my advice and guidance – in order that they can operate effectively. (Mr. Brad.)		Emotional maturity is a very necessary attribute for me, and indeed for all District Directors to have. It is important that I have both the loyalty and respect of my staff – and I, in turn, will show loyalty and respect to them (Mr. George).
Interpersonal skills	Regarding this, I would like to say that between subordinates and myself, I am always concerned with equity and equality. I do have concerns about the job effectiveness of my civil servants (Mr. Fred). As a result I have to meet a wide variety of people and I therefore need to have good relationships with them all (Mr. Bill). I think that good human relationships between my staff and me are very important to make our work more effective (Mr. Brad).	One of my roles as leader of the District is to try to ensure loyalty of my staff – to the organisation, to the workplace and to me (Mr. Sam). We must foster good human relationships if we are to provide effective service to the people (Mr. John). I think a leader must have responsibility in performance in order to be professional. As I have many responsibilities to undertake, I think that good human relationships are important for me to work with both staff and the local people (Mr. Beckham).	Good human relationships are a very necessary part of my job. As I work closely with people I must always be aware of their requirements (Mr. Danny). Thus, human relationship is an important skill to get people's participation. I want to see their reaction when we get a good result (Mr. Ian). Establishing good human relationships is vital to me as I must work closely with approximately 1,000 Civil Servants and other employees. I also have to co-ordinate with other organisations in my area of responsibility. Therefore I should have good human relationship skills to be able to interact accordingly (Mr. George).
Effective collaboration	I find that by meeting with people or private organisations, as opposed to staying in my office all the time, I can better and more quickly resolve problems (Mr. Fred). I will mediate between people with problems to ensure smooth and effective collaboration (Mr. Bill). I meet a variety of people and, of course, they have many problems and I must provide welfare services to them (Mr. Brad).	It is a challenge to be enable to expand my capacity to embrace problems from collaborative partnerships, find creative solutions and explore beyond the questions that emerge from the process (Mr. Sam). As I am their leader, I must ensure that my subordinates undertake their responsibilities effectively. If they are made more aware of their duties and responsibilities, they can operate more efficiently (Mr. John). I believe that full collaboration with the people is necessary as a strategy (Mr. Beckham).	In our area we also have Private Companies and I must ensure good human relationships exist between them and us also. Indeed many times we ask each other for assistance in some matters relating to the provision of support of the people – so continuing good co-operation is vital and important to my position (Mr. Danny). With regard to improving performance and collaborating effectively with other people and organisations – absolutely, yes – if I am not smart enough to operate satisfactorily in this way I will not get the co-operation from others that is crucial to my success (Mr. Ian) My authority is not 'stand-alone' and so I must collaborate closely with other organisations that have an input to any given project. This collaboration is vital as we must make these organisations familiar with what we expect and are attempting to achieve – and also to provide them with any services that they may require so that they might, in turn, help us (Mr. George).

Skills and Competencies	Size of District		
	Small	**Medium**	**Large**
Moral leadership	There are communities where, as a result of lack of opportunities, slums have grown. We meet with members of these communities to discuss this problem, and then consider what we can do for the slum-dwellers (Mr. Fred). I must maintain moral leadership that is concerned with both equity and equality. I respect all of my subordinates but must ensure that I do not favour or discriminate (Mr. Bill). Of course I must improve my own skills and if I have a variety of knowledge, then I will be more confident to share my ideas with staff and this I am concerned about so much (Mr. Brad).	I think this skill is also important in that I must be able to guarantee that I can support their work to achieve our goals (Mr. Sam). I believe that control over emotions and intelligence are important attributes to display in order that I can provide moral leadership and administer with equity and equality (Mr. John). I have many subordinates to take care of; I have to provide moral leadership that concerns itself with equity and equality for them all (Mr. Beckham).	A good leader who is concerned with both equity and equality will very soon gain the respect of his subordinates by being seen to be fair in all aspects of his role. I try to provide moral leadership, concerned with equity and equality (Mr. Danny) As a leader of a district, I need to manage people involved with me with both equity and equality. These two things will help me work more successfully (Mr. Ian). There were many new theories to learn as to how to be good leaders and how to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. If I can enhance them, it will be advantageous to me as a good leader of my organization (Mr. George).
Empathetic understanding	When I ask myself if I understand the needs of the people – I would say that nobody knows their needs entirely. We are aware of our own needs – but not those of others. We will become more aware of their needs by meeting with them to discuss their issues (Mr. Fred). Of course I want to understand the people to satisfy their needs – but I wonder how this can be achieved most effectively (Mr. Bill). To understand my job, I must also understand what local people want. When I assign staff to deal with problems of the people, I must first ensure that they respect me in order that they perform correctly and well and in the interests of the people (Mr. Brad).	Therefore, my own approach is to some extent one of 'hands-on' in that I must be personally aware of problems in this District – such as inadequate garbage collection, power, canal and river and environmental problems etc. I must accept responsibility for these problems and ensure that a swift solution is reached (Mr. Sam). I believe strongly that I should understand the Bangkok residents – especially those who live in my district area so that I can improve their quality of life and improve security for their lives – including reinforcing the role of the family in reducing problems that may arise from family break-ups (Mr. John). In addition, if I can make myself aware of the reason for each problem and also understand the needs of the people, then I think that I can solve problems for them to their satisfaction (Mr. Beckham).	Another requirement is that I must understand the people themselves in order to be able to provide exactly what they want (Mr. Danny). I always want to know about the needs of people so that I can solve their problem (Mr. Ian). Without proper and effective understanding I cannot fulfil our role or duties… I have to be aware of their needs in order to satisfy their requirements where appropriate, in terms of any problems they may have. My actions, and the outcomes that flow, must be to the satisfaction of the people I serve (Mr. George).

Thus I set up the data as a basis for thinking about its meanings. Initially I set up the key point or points made by each respondent. Afterwards I clustered those key points taking account of similarities and differences. In this case my interpretation was established by drawing conclusions from the displayed data. Then I compared the responses across each of the three size populations; these findings are reported in Table 6.2, below. Finally, I highlighted the similarities and differences observed, to draw my

conclusions. This provided an overview of the data I had collected so far and also provided the basis for establishing the skills and competencies required by District Directors.

In order to help make some sense of the outcomes of the case studies, I clustered the key ideas – as represented by responses recorded in the interviews – in groups according to the size of their District (Small = population less than 100 000; Medium = population between 100 000 and 125 000; Large = population greater than 125 000). The participants in each group are identified by their pseudonyms: Mr Fred, Mr Bill, Mr Brad (Small District); Mr Sam, Mr John, Mr Beckham (Medium District); Mr Danny, Mr Ian, Mr George (Large District). Critical responses to interview questions related to the seven skills and competencies are shown in each of the columns of the grid. These data are contained in Table 6.1, above.

The detailed observations, descriptions and explanations provided by these participants in the interviews afforded a deeper understanding of the skills and competencies required in the position of District Director. The synthesis of these elements is discussed in the sections below.

Responses of the Nine Respondents to the Seven Levels

Organisational Leadership

The opinions of the small population group suggest that they only have the very broadest understanding of what organisational leadership involves. There are indications of an intention to be like leaders in the business sector, but in a very bureaucratic sense: amongst this group, the leader appears to be an autocrat. These skills seem to be more concerned with management rather than with leadership.

For the middle population group, being a model to subordinates appears at one level; service, in the sense of a 'servant leader' at another; leading *and* managing in a third. The duality of the role merges here.

For the large population group, being both an effective and an efficient leader emerges from this group – although there does appear to be confusion between leadership and management. There is a sense of a top-down leadership style, suggesting a bureaucratic approach.

Overall, all nine District Directors had similar opinions regarding the need to improve their skills of leadership as they could see it would be important for their position. They agreed that the skill of leading an organisation was very important in improving their leadership. Moreover, they wanted to be good leaders of their districts. They stated that if they have this competency they will be better able to motivate, command and solve problems for their staff and provide better and more effective service for the local people.

The responses confirmed that these Directors were lacking in some leadership skills and were also confused between leadership and management applicable to working in districts. It appeared that their current leadership style was more aligned to that of a being an autocrat rather than a democratic or laissez-faire manager.

Effective and Efficient Service

The data showed that the small population group took more seriously the need to provide services for all of the people with clarity, rapidity and transparency.

It was obvious that the medium population thought very deeply about – and believed very strongly in – good governance when working for the local people and also with rapidity and transparency.

The high population group was very concerned to provide effective and efficient service to the local people by the use of their existing comprehension of these concepts, so that they also must take action with rapidity and transparency.

Overall, the nine District Director from the three groups (small, medium and high district populations) had similar aims in wishing to improve their skills and competencies relative to those items that were concerned with the administering of their responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. They also wanted to improve their skills to bring their new-found knowledge to provide better services as transparently and effectively as possible in order to satisfy all of the people.

The data showed that size of district had no effect on their ideas, as all respondents emphasised the importance of benefits they could provide for the people. These District Directors were very concerned to provide good governance as well as being responsible for their overall management and to operate transparently and rapidly in order to improve the quality of the public services provided.

Emotional Maturity

The small population group of District Directors showed that they appeared to be autocratic administrators in their districts. The interviews suggested that they observed a lack of maturity in others while, at the same time, not being sure if they were sufficiently mature or not!

The medium population group demonstrated that they had an appreciation of the appropriate levels of emotional maturity skills – particularly related to non-verbal and verbal communication – to be used in collaborating with other people were important. They were also equally concerned to be better District Directors and be admired and respected by their staff.

The high population group showed that they were proud of their position of District Director but acknowledged that their emotional intelligence skills were in need of improvement.

Overall, all nine District Directors expressed similar needs related to improving their level of emotional maturity. They found it difficult to control their emotions when they had a heavy workload, but they accepted that they had to remain calm in front of both their staff and the local people. They were keen to get both participation and collaboration from their staff and to be good role models to encourage both their loyalty and respect. They realised that they must control both their verbal and non-verbal communication even if it did not suit them to do so, in order that they can encourage their staff to work more effectively.

It is clear that the District Directors must have a sound knowledge of emotional intelligence skills so that they will be able to find appropriate ways to suppress their feelings despite having a heavy workload. They need to learn how to work 'hard' and work 'smart' to be effective in their work.

Interpersonal Skills

The members of the small population group had interpreted 'interpersonal skills' as being only relevant to their staff. They simply saw this as being a way of making their staff work harder.

The medium population group indicated that they understood this skill to be of use only for communicating with staff to make them work more effectively for the benefit of the people in the District.

The high population group could understand and see the importance of communication with people in general; the staff, the local people and other organisations.

The findings suggest that all nine District Directors have similar ideas in improving their interpersonal skills – particularly those associated with

interpersonal relationships. They clearly indicated that fostering these was important if they were to become more effective in their position. It was evident that, if they were to ensure loyalty of their staff to the organisation and to the workplace and their superiors, they had to work with a variety of people and be aware of their various requirements. All of them wanted to improve these skills in order to provide better service for the people in future.

As their problems increase and social issues become more complex the District Directors realise that they cannot work alone. They know that they need to use both non-verbal and verbal communication to make contact with other people – staff, other organisations and the local people – to increase the effectiveness of their work.

Effective Collaboration

In the identification of their many problems, it was clear that the small population group found it difficult to work alone. There were many times when they had to ask for the assistance of other people or organisations.

In addition to obtaining collaboration from others, the medium population group expected to be able to make better contacts so that they can provide support for each other in future.

The higher population group recognised that they must become involved with others to obtain their support in arriving at solutions, to problems that are specific to their District's requirements.

In terms of the item of collaborating effectively with people and their organisation, overall, all nine District Directors from the three groups had similar ideas. They realise that it is necessary and important for them, in their position, to have appropriate team-leading skills. They must get collaboration from other people and other organisations to support them to solve problems for their local people. They are concerned to have effective collaboration competencies to achieve their aims.

The nine District Directors clearly showed similar opinions. They recognise that they have to meet a variety of people to resolve their problems. All were able to focus on the necessary skills that must be enhanced to enable them to embrace and solve their specific problems. They recognise the need to collaborate closely with other organisations to get full support in finding creative solutions so that they can provide support for the people, and continue providing good, effective co-operation.

It is clear that the District Directors recognise that they cannot work alone: they recognise the need to involve other people and other organisations in their work, as well as continually focusing on ways to help each other. They recognise that they must be concerned to use their collaborative skills to make contact with a variety of people in a variety of ways.

Moral Leadership

The small population group showed their concern to use their management skills to ensure equity and equality in their districts, in the hope that their staff would accept and respect them more.

The aspects of equity and equality were important to the medium population group – as also was the fact that they could not work alone. It was clear that they were concerned to obtain the collaboration of their subordinates in order to achieve good equity and equality outcomes.

The high population group realised that a good leader must have the attributes of equity and equality when dealing with their staff.

The three groups had similar opinions on the need to enhance their skills of providing moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. They all appreciated that this competency was important to their responsibility, in this position, to manage all staff equally and fairly.

Overall, the group recognised that this competency would make them more confident to share ideas with staff and to gain respect from their subordinates by being seen to be fair in all aspects of their role. It was interesting to note that they were concerned about administering with equity and equality and to show neither favour nor discrimination. They had to control their emotions and intelligence to ensure the support of their staff to work to achieve their goals. They could also see that this skill will improve them to be a better leader within the organisation to encourage staff to work more effectively. A similar trend was found in terms of equity and equality in that all of them indicated these two points as being important to make their staff work more effectively for them. They wanted their staff to respect their capabilities and knowledge to cope with any problems.

Empathetic Understanding

The small population group of District Directors were empathetic when problems were brought to them and encouraged their staff to become active – rather than have themselves taking the lead in establishing what problems existed and how to resolve them.

The approach of the medium population group similar to that of the small population group: to wait for the people to come to them with problems – as they were aware of only the most basic of utilitarian roles.

The high population group were more empathetic with local people when requested to identify problems and to provide services. They were able to show understanding, sympathy, and support when confronted with problems.

In terms of this competency, all nine District Directors from the three groups (small, medium and high population districts) sought better understanding of their local people in order to make them more satisfied with their services. They accepted that they had many and varied responsibilities and also many problems to solve – and so they needed to reach the desired

solutions swiftly. They wanted to understand the people to ensure their needs were satisfied. They also wanted to improve both the quality of life and security for the people.

A concluding perception related to the skills and competencies of a District Director is that all of the nine participants were concerned about the routine of their job. They would work for the people as it was required of them. It was difficult for them to directly approach other people to solve problems for them. It could be said that they lacked the skill to approach other people in terms of proactive work.

Responses of the Nine Respondents to the Professional Development Strategies

This section focuses on the professional development strategies required to promote the knowledge and skill development of District Directors and competencies required by them. These strategies will assist the District Directors in carrying out of their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

As for the previous section, I established a data grid in which, initially, I consolidated the key ideas which corresponded to the five professional development strategies to promote the seven skills and competencies:

1. Improving skills and competencies;

2. Successful training;

3. Problems with training;

4. Duration of training programs;

5. Training venues.

I identified the key points relating to professional development strategies made by each respondent. I then clustered those key points taking account of similarities and differences. In this case my interpretation was established by drawing conclusions from the displayed data, as was the procedure for analysing the skills and competencies required; my interpretation was established by drawing conclusions from the displayed data. I then compared the responses across each of three experience dimensions, based on time spent as a District Director. Finally, I highlighted the similarities and differences observed, to draw my conclusions. This provided an overview of the data I had collected and provided the basis for establishing the professional development strategies required to develop the group's skills and competencies.

In order to help make some sense of the outcomes of the case studies, I clustered the key ideas – as represented by responses recorded in the interviews – in groups according to the length of time they had spent as Director of their District (Short = less than one year; Medium = between one and three years; Long = between three and four years). The participants in each group are identified by their pseudonyms: Mr Brad, Mr John, Mr Danny (Short term); Mr Fred, Mr Beckham, Mr George (Medium term); Mr Bill, Mr Sam, Mr Ian (Long term). Critical responses to interview questions related to the five professional development strategies are shown in each of the rows of the grid. These data are contained in Table 6.2, below.

The detailed observations, descriptions and explanations provided by these participants in the interviews afforded me a deeper understanding of the skills and competencies required in the position of District Directors. The synthesis of these elements is discussed in subsequent sections.

Improving skills and competencies

The intent of the short length of service group of District Directors was to be effective leaders in their districts and so enhance the reputation of the BMA.

TABLE 6.2   PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES RELATED TO LENGTH OF SERVICE

Professional Development Strategies	Length of Service		
	Short (< 1 year)	**Medium** (1-2 years)	**Long** (3-4 years)
Improving skills and competencies	If I can improve all seven competencies, then my performance will be significantly affected and in turn that of the BMA (Mr. Brad). In order to become a 'New Generation' style of leader, I have to adapt to all environmental changes. I wish to be a good leader of staff and a role model for them. I also want my local residents to be proud of me as their District Director. When I learn new knowledge to improve my competencies and skill, this will have a beneficial effect on my job responsibilities. I think I can bring new ideas to improve my on-job performance that will influence my workplace in future (Mr. John). I do believe that if I can improve my competencies in terms of all seven items, they will help me develop my personal skills and have a beneficial effect on my workplace in the present and future (Mr. Danny).	I am always concerned to improve my performance on the job so that I can keep pace with the changing environment. I think that all of the seven items of needs outcome of your research would help me to improve myself and also have a beneficial effect on my organisation (Mr. Fred). As leader of a district, I need to have a learning organization that supports continuous learning and development for my staff and myself. Changes in a workplace, implemented properly, can be said to be good progress for that organization. I need to learn new knowledge to lead my organization as it realigns its assumptions about productive work (Mr. Beckham). I think I should have broad knowledge for my management in this district (Mr. George)	My position is that of leader of staff and the local people in this district. I represent the Civil Servants, Executives of the BMA and the Governor of the BMA. Thus, any improvement in my leadership will be important to our success in the present and future (Mr. Bill). I should be concerned about gaining new knowledge to lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning, organizational improvement and development (Mr. Sam). Actually, I am concerned to get new knowledge to improve my competencies and I think that I can use them whenever I work. A District Director is in the position of a leader of a district, thus I should improve my performance so that I can cope with problems both in the present and future (Mr. Ian).
Successful training	I would like to see trainers from other organisations but not teachers from university any more. They must be both expert in management and successful in their jobs. Also I want to have trainers coming from retired District Director groups, who will have the necessary knowledge and authority of the BMA to be my trainer (Mr. Brad) I think that trainers should come from both the Private and Public Sectors, such as Senior Governors, retired Governors from other provinces or successful businessmen etc…. I also think that some District Directors can be good trainers for my colleagues and me – especially those who have held that position for many years (Mr. John).	The trainer is the most important person to deliver information to us. I would like to see successful businessmen or civil servants who can give knowledge to me so that I can apply it to develop my district more successfully (Mr. Fred). I would like to see expert ex-District Directors (Mr. retired) and expert District Directors with field experience of at least 4 to 5 years return to provide this Training (Mr. Beckham). They should be experts in their field – and can come from any relevant organisation. I would like to see trainers who are experts in their field coming from other public sectors such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education or	I would like to see expert academic trainers who can share their experiences with us. Experience is a must – for, if they lack experience, they will have no understanding of the job and will also be unable to answer questions. I believe that persons selected from both the Public sectors and Private sectors and/or Politicians with the relevant experience and success in their field, will be suitable candidates for the position of trainers (Mr. Bill). I would like to see a trainer as being a professional person who is expert in academic areas. I would like to invite trainers who have sufficient knowledge and are successful in their field (Mr. Sam).

Professional Development Strategies	Length of Service		
	Short (< 1 year)	**Medium** (1-2 years)	**Long** (3-4 years)
	Ideally they should be retired Permanent Secretaries, previously employed by the BMA, or retired District Directors who have much knowledge and experience (Mr. that has never been documented) in our field (Mr. Danny).	Department of Local Administration (Mr. George).	I think they should be expert and have experiences in their working life such as Mr. Boonklee Plangsiri, Chief Executive of Sin Cooperation (Mr. Ian).
Problems with training	By contrast, in a training program that I attended recently (Mr. The Senior Executive Training Course), there were a variety of occupations as level 8 and 9 attended the class together. I could not get specific knowledge to use on my job because trainers talked too much about general topics. Trainers were academics from a university; they talked like University Lecturers! They spoke on many theories but had no idea how to solve problems in real life. We were all bored and could not take the program seriously (Mr. Brad). I think I do not want to mention it. It may not appropriate to mention it here. Perhaps I should not answer this question (Mr. John). I would not like to see an excess of academic study, including from books anymore. In the past, trainers always came from university and did not understand real problems of my position (Mr. Danny).	In the past I have been in conflict with some trainers as they were more theoretical – as opposed to me being a practical person. They preach theory but I need to know about practice (Mr. Fred). In the past we have never had such training. We have had training for many positions within the BMA but never for that of District Director (Mr. Beckham). In the past, they came from the BMA itself but they proved to have a lack of variety in their ideas. Trainers liked to read books aloud to us and this made me so bored (Mr. George).	We have many training programs in place but never before have we had one specifically for District Directors… We require appropriate time to hold this training program and not a short course such as provided by the BMA in the past (Mr. Bill). In the past we have had one-day courses that have not been very useful owing to the limit of time, as advised by the trainers. In these cases not all knowledge can be passed on. I am not sure that if more time were provided they would learn any more or just about the same (Mr. Sam). On the contrary, if trainers were teachers from university, as before, I would probably sleep because they always read books aloud to us. Especially, I have found that they lack experience in management skills (Mr. Ian).
Duration of training programs	If we have a training program for the 50 District Director to improve on-job performance, lasting for 4 months, by attending class for a half day in morning and returning to work in the afternoon, this would be better for me (Mr. Brad). Possibly it should be held last for approximately 7 days to improve all of the seven competencies (Mr. John). I think that a 3 day course on each of the seven items will be sufficient as the District Directors are already knowledgeable and	In summary – to make the training program appropriate to my needs, I think that training classes, relating to the outcomes of the questionnaire and its seven items, should last at least 15 days (Mr. Fred). I think we should consider a Training Program of one month's duration (Mr. Beckham). Perhaps a one month intensive course would be sufficient and appropriate – although I have some concern that this period of outage will have an effect on the management and	I believe that the course should last for 7 months in order to satisfactorily cover all the seven items deemed necessary to improve the competencies of the District Directors (Mr. Bill). In my opinion I see a one-week program for each of the seven items being sufficient, but on the strict understanding that all attend the course fully. In total we should therefore have seven courses for them to attend to improve our performance continuously (Mr. Sam). I believe that all seven items of your research should

Professional Development Strategies	Length of Service		
	Short (< 1 year)	**Medium** (1-2 years)	**Long** (3-4 years)
	an 'update' to this knowledge might be all that is necessary (Mr. Danny).	workplaces within the District area (Mr. George).	form the basis for a complete training course for 3 months (Mr. Ian).
Training venues	I am not concerned about the venue, as we have a training institute located in Bangkok that belongs to the BMA and which is located very conveniently (Mr. Brad). I have no preference as to the venue – as I can attend anywhere (Mr. John). As regards a location for these classes – I think it would be convenient to hold them anywhere in Bangkok, another Province or indeed another country (Mr. Danny).	I can attend class anywhere in Bangkok. I have attended classes that BMA provided before. It will be appropriate enough for me to attend class anywhere that the BMA would provide again (Mr. Fred). I suggest that using the existing Training Facility in Nongjok would obviate the cost of rental of another outside venue (Mr. Beckham). Thus, I think training program should take place as the BMA can provide (Mr. George).	Actually I can go anywhere either in Bangkok or to other provinces. We have many venues for such training classes – that the BMA can provide. If you asked me to choose, I would say that Bangkok would be appropriate for training programs (Mr. Bill). Training programs should take place any hotel in Bangkok or any other centre or institute of the BMA as appropriate (Mr. Sam). Actually we already have a Training Institute belonging to the BMA and it is suitable for use for training courses for District Directors. There is no need to rent a venue for training classes at all (Mr. Ian).

As a new generation style of leadership was emerging, the medium length of service group was more concerned to get support for continuous learning and development. The long length of service group was interested in gaining new competencies for their own improvement and to contribute more effectiveness to the BMA.

The nine District Directors in all three groups showed similar ideas. They demonstrated that it was important to improve their skills and to enhance their skills and competencies in terms of all seven items. They had a clearly defined intent to improve these skills and competencies to keep pace with the ever-changing environment, to gain new knowledge to lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning, organisational improvement and development and that realigns its assumptions about productive work. They also indicated that they wished to become new generation style of leaders, good leaders of staff, and role models, and that they wanted their people to be proud of them as District Directors. They believed that this would positively affect management, benefit job

responsibilities, cope with problems and have a significant, beneficial effect on the BMA.

Overall, in order to cope with complex problems in this era, they must be concerned with obtaining new skills and competencies. They need to gain knowledge to improve themselves and subordinates that will beneficially affect their work and in turn the BMA. Finally, the quality of work and productivity of their work would increase in the long term.

Successful training

The short length of service group was very keen to learn from the experiences of others who had been successful in their jobs. They wanted to see this attribute in their appointed trainers. The medium length of service group wanted to learn from the experiences of others to solve problems, so that they could use this new-found knowledge in their work. To that end, the participants in this group were interested in asking questions of the trainers in the classroom. The long length of service group aspired to be successful in their job in the same way as successful groups of people in the private and public sectors. They could see easy ways to adapt other people's proven ideas that could be applied to their work.

There were several, quite varied opinions from the District Directors about the group of trainers who they were keen to see in future training programs. They looked forward to seeing trainers come from other organisations – both private and public sectors – such as Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education or Department of Local Administration, Politicians, senior Governors, retired Governors, retired District Directors, existing District Directors with experience of at least 4 to 5 years, retired Permanent Secretaries, any civil servants who can provide knowledge for their position, expert academics or successful businessmen. In sum, they wanted to have expert trainers in their field and with sufficient and appropriate knowledge and experience to be their trainers.

Overall, the data indicated that all nine participants were keen to be successful in their job. They accepted that they must learn from expert groups who have both academic and practical experience so that they can bring this knowledge to use in their job and become good leaders in the future.

Problems with training

The short length of service group had high self-confidence in themselves and their abilities. They felt that, from past experience, they had more knowledge than the trainers – a factor that made the training ineffective and led them to feel very disgruntled. They especially wanted to be part of a class that included their own group. The medium length of service group had no confidence in the groups of trainers before and had attended only short courses with a variety of civil servants – which made them feel it was (to some extent) a waste of time. The long length of service group were proud of themselves in that they had a lot of experience, but the group of trainers who had come from university and other departments within the BMA in the past did not understand real problems and therefore were not appropriate to be their trainers.

When illustrating these problems with past training, all nine District Directors complained about two major aspects: trainers and training duration. They were concerned, through training, to enhance the managerial skills that they might use in their districts. They looked forward to having a group of trainers who could understand the real situation of their various problems and suggest to them ways to find solutions. They also wished to attend class with their peer group of District Directors so that they might improve their skills and competencies and thus work in the same direction for the benefit of both the local people and the BMA.

In summary, future trainers should be successful people drawn from both the private and public sectors. Importantly, the trainers must understand

the problems faced in the districts. The District Directors need to be able to share opinions and ideas and to work collaboratively with their peers so that they might adapt their combined knowledge and experience from each other in order to benefit their work.

Duration of Training Programs

The short length of service group had differing ideas on the appropriate duration of training programs – ranging from 15 days to between 4 and 7 months. The medium length of service group, probably as a result of their being bored and dissatisfied with previous training classes, were uncertain as to an appropriate duration. They finally suggested training periods up to one month. The long length of service group felt somewhat hesitant about attending classes; they suggested the duration of training programs should be between 1 and 3 months.

There was considerable variation in the responses – varying from one week, to one month, to three months. Some thought that they could gain sufficient new knowledge all of the seven items to improve their skills and competencies in a series of short training courses each of one week's duration, whereas others suggested a maximum time of one month.

These responses suggest that the length of a training program should be up to two months in duration in order to cover all of the seven items' needs. In particular, they need to make such training a high priority activity.

Training Venues

The short length of service group indicated that the venue did not matter to them: they would accept anywhere that the BMA provided. The medium length of service group was more concerned with budgetary matters; however, they, too, were willing to participate anywhere that the Executive decided on. The long length of service group was concerned about minimising costs and did not want the BMA to spend money to rent a venue.

All nine District Directors had similar ideas regarding the venue to attend classes: they did not specify or favour any venue in particular. I concluded that the venue issue did not matter to them, possibly as they were aware of many suitable venues owned by the BMA, all of which were conveniently placed for them to attend. They were happy that the final decision should depend on the Executive of the BMA.

In summary, it appeared that District Directors preferred to attend training classes in a Training Institute that belongs to the BMA such as in Nongjok, which is convenient and has the necessary facilities.

Training Implications

District Directors' perspectives on both skills and competency needs, and professional development strategies have been described in this chapter in order to determine the training implications that match these interests and needs. The skills and competency are summarised in Table 6.1, above; professional development strategies to improve their job performance of District Directors are summarised in Table 6.2, above.

Using a matrix, as suggested by John (2001), I sought to determine the training implications from both the skills and competency needs and the professional development strategies that had been identified by the nine District Directors. To record the major themes, I identified and then refined the salient points raised by the District Directors to produce a set of training implications arising from the skills and competency needs (see Table 6.3, below), and from the professional development strategies (see Table 6.4, below).

It is apparent from these findings that District Directors lack comprehensive leadership skills; these they need in order to provide good government while operating transparently and rapidly to improve the quality

TABLE 6.3   TRAINING IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM SKILLS AND COMPETENCY NEEDS

Skills and Competencies	Training Implications
Organisational leadership	The responses confirmed that these Directors were lacking in some leadership skills and were also confused between leadership and management applicable to working in districts. It appeared that their current leadership style was more aligned to that of a being an autocrat rather than a democratic or laissez-faire manager.
Effective and efficient service	The data showed that size of district had no bearing on their ideas, as all respondents emphasised the importance of benefits they could provide for the people. These District Directors were very concerned to provide good governance as well as being responsible for their overall management and to operate transparently and rapidly in order to improve the quality of the public services provided.
Emotional maturity	Summary shows that District Directors must have a sound knowledge of emotional intelligence quotients so that they will find correct ways to suppress their feelings despite having a heavy workload. They need to learn how to work hard and work 'smart' to be effective in their work.
Interpersonal skills	As problems increased and social issues become more complex, it was obvious that the District Directors realised they could not work alone. They know that they need to use both non-verbal and verbal communication to make contact with other people – staff, other organisations and the local people – to increase the effectiveness of their work.
Effective collaboration	It is clear that the District Directors could not work alone but always needed to involve other people and other organisations to continually help each other. Thus, they must be concerned to use their collaborative skills to make contact with a variety of people in different ways.
Moral leadership	A similar trend was found in terms of equity and equality in that all of them indicated these two points as being important to make their staff work more effectively for them. They wanted their staff to respect their capabilities and knowledge to cope with any problems.
Empathetic understanding	The responses suggest that all nine respondents were concerned about the routine of their job. They would work for the people as it was required of them. It was difficult for them to approach other people to solve problems for them without asking. It could be said that they lacked the skill to approach other people in terms of proactive work.

of public services. They are also concerned to improve their emotional intelligence quotients in order to improve the quality of contact with other people among staff, organization and local people. In terms of their responsibilities, they need to involve a range of people working collaboratively in order to solve problems in their districts; this involves a level of moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. Finally, they need to develop proactive approaches that will enable them to anticipate future problems that residents are likely to encounter, and to consider appropriate solutions to these problems.

**TABLE 6.4   TRAINING IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM PROFESSIONAL
                DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

Professional Development Strategies	Training Implications
Improving skills and competencies	In order to cope with complex problems in this era, they must be concerned with obtaining new knowledge and competencies. They will gain knowledge to improve themselves and subordinates that will beneficially affect their work and in turn the BMA. Finally, the quality of work and productivity must increase in the long term.
Successful training	The data indicated that all nine participants were keen to be successful in their job. They accept that they must learn from expert groups who have both academic and practical experience so that they can bring this knowledge to use in their job and become good leaders in the future.
Problems with training	In summary, the group of trainers in future should be successful people drawn from both the private and public sectors. Importantly, the trainers must understand the problems faced in the districts. The District Directors need to be able to share opinions and ideas and to work collaboratively with their peers so that they can adapt their combined knowledge and experience from each other in order to benefit their work.
Duration of training programs	These responses suggest that the length of a training program should be of the order of two months in total to cover all of the seven items' needs. They must be strict in attending all the classes: in other words, they need to make such training a high priority activity.
Training venues	In summary – it appears that they prefer to attend training classes in a Training Institute that belongs to the BMA such as in Nongjok, which is convenient and has the necessary facilities.

At the same time, the nine District Directors indicated the need for specific training in order to accomplish the professional development strategies identified in the Delphi survey. The District Directors had very strong belief in the importance of acquiring new skills and in order to improve themselves and their subordinates; these, they believed, would be beneficial to their work and, in turn, the BMA. Thus they are keen to meet with experts who have both academic and practical experience who, at the same time, must understand the problems faced in particular districts. They want to share their opinions and ideas in the solution of problems so that they can bring a broader perspective to the outcomes. They are keen to attend classes covering all of the seven skills and competencies, for periods of up to two months, at the Nongjok Training Institute.

Summary

In this chapter, I have summarised the findings from the semi-structured interviews held with nine District Directors. I have established the opinions and ideas that they believe would improve each of the seven skills and established in the Delphi survey.

The District Directors have indicated that they are lacking in leadership skills and that they need to learn how to provide an increased quality of public service. At the same time, they have indicated that an improvement in their emotional intelligence quotient is important for them in order to improve the quality of their interpersonal contacts with colleagues, particular as they encourage them to work together. They have recognised the need for moral leadership that encourages equity and equality for all of their staff so that they can work more effectively with them. They have indicated interest in being proactive regarding the problems of the people so that they can help to provide better services.

They have confirmed that appropriate training programs are important in terms of improving their skills and competencies. Expert trainers having both academic and practical experience are the attributes of the group of trainers that they want to see. They want such training to provide knowledge and permit them to share ideas towards solving problems during classes so that they can use this knowledge to solve the very real problems that they face within their individual districts. They suggest that training programs should take place for up to two months at Nongjok Training Institute. They are also concerned to improve their skills and competencies to reap the benefits for both their workplace and for the BMA.

These discussions provide important information for the policy making process for training programs that will support continuous learning and development of the BMA. These details will be discussed in Chapter 7,

where the findings will be used as the basis for a professional development training policy document for District Directors of the BMA.

CHAPTER 7

Policy Formulation

Introduction

In this chapter, I formulate a training policy for the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) to assist in improving the capacity of its District Directors in accordance with their needs and interests. I have chosen to focus on the notion of building a learning organisation that will deal with the needs and interests – job performance, professional development strategies and skills and competency needs – outlined in the previous chapter, in order to provide a program of learning of the highest quality. The focus will be very much on professional development of senior executives.

According to Senge (1990), the application of his 'Five Disciplines' should ensure that the BMA will know how District Directors think, what District Directors truly want, and how District Directors interact and learn with each other. Professional Development (PD) is a systematic process (Angle, 2002). A clear, systemic approach to PD, that considers the individual, is necessary for improvement. As a consequence, as part of this research, I have undertaken a Needs Analysis via a Delphi survey to analyse needs in order to develop a policy of training and development of District Directors within the BMA. In this research, I have identified a set of skills and competencies, together with appropriate professional development

strategies, that are required by District Directors of the BMA. These are summarised as a set of outcomes in the previous chapter.

Senge's (1990) concept of a learning organisation combines the essential elements of both strategic and personal development, and thus provides an excellent opportunity for people to achieve high-level administration or management skills. It values the scientific method of hypothesis development, testing and validation as well as the personal development pathway found in the concepts of 'personal mastery'. Teamwork should be based on common goals, enthusiasms, commitment and determination, backed by shared ideas, produce united effort and collect wisdom, or even genius, directed towards the achievement of the objectives. (Hunt, 2000).

As a result of my needs analysis, I propose a further application of the Senge model to suit the BMA: the inclusion of professional development strategies and learning which focus on groups of District Directors as shown in next paragraph. Such professional learning programs must confront the norm (Dalmau, 2002) in relation to most skill and competency needs, professional development strategies, organisational structures and social relations within the class. Professional learning must be similarly connected to a sustainable learning organisation process, if innovation or new environment and learning practices are to become the norm and accepted as cultural practice. Senge (1990), a leading proponent of the learning organisation, stresses the central importance of five disciplines in bringing about a learning organisation. The relationship between the learning competencies identified in this research and the five disciplines of Senge's learning organisation are discussed below, the key points of which are discussed below.

Systems Thinking

The outcomes from this research will influence key policy and program related decisions to be made by District Directors in their workplace.

At a systems level, the findings indicate that they need to improve their skills and competencies in the seven elements previously identified:

1. **Leading an organisation:** All fifty District Directors need to improve their democratic leadership skills and to develop a management style that helps them to make decisions by consulting their subordinates, while still maintaining control of the group. They must be concerned more to allow their staff to decide how the task will be tackled and who will perform which task.

2. **Administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service:** They need to improve their competency to realize and conform to the requirements of new public administration approaches. They also need to realise that they must change their style of work by implementing procedures for initiating disciplinary actions. They are keen to work with transparency, and rapidity, and equity for all of the people.

3. **Being emotionally mature:** They need to manage their work in a better way to balance their lives by thinking in a more 'result orientated' fashion. They recognise and accept their ability and potential and that of others. They need to be confident in handling job assignments without problems or that they can assign them to staff that have the necessary ability to complete the task. They need to think of better ways of working that lead to a similar satisfactory result and with an effective outcome

4. **Establishing good human relationships:** They need to focus on achieving a better way ahead in the future. This is a goal that will

146

move and motivate them in thought to action. They need to be aware of problems that require other people's participation as being an inevitable part of success.

5. **Collaborating effectively with people and their organisations:** They need to possess techniques and methods to gain acceptance and encourage staff to work to accomplish the team goal. They need to be able to present challenging ideas or opinions in opposition to other people to motivate them to agree and implement the ideas. In other words, they need to accomplish their ideas: first, by gaining people's acceptance and agreement; second, by being aware of different opinions and perspectives of good sources of new ideas from others so that they can find out the best ways of solving problems for the people.

6. **Providing moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality:** They need to seek help from their subordinates order to receive their willing cooperation. This will be an important factor in achieving their working goals. They need to be concerned to have new knowledge to make their staff accept new ideas. They also need to manage with equity and equality for all to ensure that the work they carry out in districts is successful.

7. **Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs:** They need to have a proactive understanding of people as a most important responsibility, so that they might solve problems promptly and effectively. It can be said that they need to be trusted by residents and to make them feel impressed by the effectiveness of services in future.

Developing as a learning organisation will become an integral part of the BMA. To achieve this, five professional development strategies will be required to promote and support their needs:

1. **Improving skills and competencies:** In the new world of change, everyone needs to improve their abilities. They need to realise that new knowledge is important for their position to promote better skills and competencies that accord with Bangkok residents' problems. Overall, these factors will improve the reputation of their districts and the BMA in the future.

2. **Successful training:** They need to realise that the group of trainers is important to encourage them to learn and develop their skills and competencies to make them more effective in their work. They need to know that they can improve both skills and competencies, and the resolution of problems by other people's experience. They need to have an expert, successful group of trainers from either the private or the public sector. Overall, they need a fast-track to improve their on-job performance.

3. **Problems with training:** The District Directors aired their dissatisfaction with training programs in the past and that they wish to avoid this in the future. Trainers need to understand District Directors' problems in work so that they can help them. In particular, they need to engage in active learning in the classroom.

4. **Duration of training programs:** The District Directors need to recognise the importance of working in training programs that run for up to two months. They need to focus on the seven skills and competencies elements. They need to work collaboratively in the classroom to develop these elements effectively.

5. **Training venues:** They need to recognise that there are many places for them to attend classes, such as the Nongjok Training Institute.

Personal Mastery

All fifty District Directors need to improve their on-job performance in the changing environments of their districts. There are seven personal mastery skills that they will need to gain in the future:

1. They will need to develop their competency of organisational leadership.

2. They will need to develop their competency of effective and efficient service.

3. They will need to develop their competency of emotional maturity.

4. They will need to develop their competency of interpersonal skills.

5. They will need to develop their competency of effective collaboration.

6. They will need to develop their competency of moral leadership.

7. They will need to develop their competency in empathetic understanding.

Mental Models

District Directors need to become more efficient at what they do currently, and to be more aware of an increase in variety in their functions. This requires the acquisition of appropriate habits, knowledge and attitudes that will enable each individual to make both personal and social adjustments. The BMA's policy for professional development needs to encourage District Directors to create something new and improved as well as bettering relationships amongst the groups at the individual level, as follows

Individual Level

1. Increased competency in leading an organisation.

2. Increased competency to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.

3. Increased competency to become more mature.

4. Increased competency to establish good human relationships.

5. Increased competency to collaborate effectively with people and their organisations.

6. Increased competency to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.

7. Increased competency to understand people in order to satisfy their needs.

8. Serving their needs.

9. Increased knowledge, skill and ability on job performance.

10. Increased sensitivity to the results gained from development efforts.

11. An increase in the quality of personnel.

12. High self-esteem and job satisfaction.

13. Feeling of empowerment and commitment.

14. Challenging work that provides variety.

15. Ability to see results and achievements.

16. Recognition both within the company and externally.

Building a Shared Vision

All fifty District Directors need to share visions that involve the skills of unearthing shared pictures of the future that will foster genuine commitment.

The alignment of personal ambition and personal behaviour can help to create inner peace, develop District Directors charisma and improve their credibility. The vision must be shared by both the BMA at an organisational level, and by the local people:

Organisational Level

1. Increased organisation efficiency.

2. Approach the objectives of the BMA.

3. Achieve the aims of each district.

4. Increased district profitability.

5. Increased business performance.

6. Enhance the reputation of the district and the BMA.

7. Increase the relationship between the BMA learning and its performance, linking the two together.

People Level

1. Increased people satisfaction.

2. Provide better services to the people with increased effectiveness and rapidity.

3. Increased skills and competencies, and needs to solve problems for the local people.

Team Learning

All fifty District Directors need to become democratic leaders, encouraging participation, delegating wisely and bearing the crucial responsibility of leadership. They need to value their staff and colleagues more in terms of discussion and input from their team; they need to be seen as drawing from a pool of their team members' strong points in order to obtain the best performance from them. They need to motivate their team by empowering

them to direct themselves and guide them with a looser rein. They need to reduce problems, and maintain good relations with staff and service personnel who will facilitate assistance and cooperation from others. They need to gain knowledge to help them to improve their professionalism so that they can better understand the range of their of responsibility and enable them to work effectively.

The outcome of this study is a declaration in the form of a policy that represents the personal beliefs, values and needs required to improve the skills and competencies required by District Directors. These skills and competencies are important and of value to these senior executives; as an appropriate training policy must be suitable for their needs. The policy must focus on the professional development of all District Directors. It is hoped that it will excite and motivate them to learn new knowledge, that the BMA will provide support for its implementation, and that the District Directors will realise that senior executives of the BMA Executive see the training policy as absolutely necessary and very much required to improve their on-job performance and to ensure that they feel proud to belong to their organisation.

Training Policy for the BMA

According to Hunt (2000), policy is 'a consistent set of principles, directed to the achievement of designed outcomes'. The outcomes from the previous chapter provide a strong driving force for developing a training policy for District Directors of the BMA. In the development of this policy, I have applied 'The Phases of the Optimal Model' (Dror, 1973, 1987) as a basis for the policy making process to meet the training interests and needs of the District Directors. This particular policymaking regarding the learning needs of District Directors comprises six of the 18 phases developed by Dror. The phases are discussed below and are summarised in Table 7.1.

**TABLE 7.1   POLICY STATEMENT OF THE IMPROVEMENT OF SKILLS
AND COMPETENCIES OF DISTRICT DIRECTORS**

The Phases of The Optimal Model	Elements Identified
Phase 6 **Allocating problems, values and resources**	I assessed the skills and competencies needed of District Directors to improve their on job performance by the use semi structured interviews, followed by three rounds of Delphi Survey. Then I became aware of the needs that were relevant to improving their ability to adapt to change in the organisation. They will improve their on-job performance in terms of the seven skills and competencies to improve their effectiveness of work and to cope with all problems for their residents. • Leading an organisation. • Administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. • Being emotionally mature. • Establishing good human relationships. • Collaborating effectively with people and their organisations. • To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. • Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.
Phase 7 **Determining policymaking strategy**	All fifty District Directors will undergo a training program which will be designed to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed for their present and future and for acquiring capabilities to aid in the achievement of the BMA goals: They will show their enthusiasm to learn new knowledge that they can adapt and apply to use in their workplace. They will be appreciative of attending classes with their peers and to be trained by an expert and successful group of trainers. They will assert that those kinds of people have to be qualified enough to be their trainer so that they will get worthwhile opportunities to share ideas in the classroom. They will devote time to attend classes for two months at a Training Institute such as the Nongjok Training Institute
Phase 9 **Establishing operational goals, with some order priority**	The goals of training programs are to improve the skills and competencies of District Directors to make them more effective in their position and create an atmosphere for continuous lifelong learning. They will also improve their leadership skills to improve their work quality so as to adapt with the ever-changing environment. They will enhance the peoples' quality of life and the city's environment in order to make Bangkok residents more satisfied with the effectiveness of the work carried out by District Directors.
Phase 12 **Preparing reliable predictions of the significant benefits and costs of the various alternatives**	This policy will be of direct benefit to the team of District Directors and eventually will have a positive 'knock-on' effect to both the BMA and the Bangkok residents. It is an attempt at determining what changes take place in the skills, knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of the District Directors. This leads to change within the BMA when the changes are beneficial to develop them at their own pace and to the best of their potential. • They will improve their organisational leadership • They will improve both the effectiveness and efficiency of their service

The Phases of The Optimal Model	Elements Identified
	• They will improve their emotional maturity • They will improve their interpersonal skills • They will improve their effective collaboration • They will improve their moral leadership • They will improve their empathetic understanding. My findings lead me to believe that it should embrace the outcomes as they will learn the vital elements of all facets of the BMA life and will be better able to cope with unprecedented environmental changes. They will also be able to respond to volatile circumstances as part of a learning organisation. The Executive of the BMA shall allocate a budget to support this training program to make it happen and to the benefit of District Directors learning that will affect both individuals and the BMA
Phase 15 **Motivating the execution of the policy**	The Executive of the BMA have acknowledged that there are needs within the organisation and that a specific training policy for the District Directors needs to be launched. The Executive of the BMA realise how important is the training program that accords with the needs and interests of District Directors to improve their job performance. Upon implementation of the new policy the District Directors will become immersed in improving their job performance as they will be obliged to implement change on a day-by-day basis. They will be also become more professional in their jobs. One of the most important outputs will be the feedback from them as to its effectiveness in the long term.
Phase 18 **Communication and feedback channels interconnecting all phases**	Evaluation, in the form of both an Interactive and, subsequently, an Outcomes Evaluation of this training program is necessary following implementation. The Interactive Evaluation will provide feedback about the policy that is being implemented and will be aimed at improving implementation of the policy. The Executive will be made immediately aware of the importance of building relationships, to practice and reflect, to monitor and evaluate and analyse to stimulate change in terms of the policy and to improve future training programs. Communication with and between District Directors will commence from the earliest phases and will be ongoing – in order to provide feedback for 'fine tuning' future training programs. Ultimately, an Outcomes Evaluation will need to be carried out in order to direct modifications to the policy that will, in turn, direct changes to the overall training program.

Dror (1973) points out that the optimal intensity – the degree to which each of the phases should optimally be developed – depends on the availability of inputs and on the stipulated outputs. Communication is an

important policy making process (Ling & Cotter, 2002). The aim of this Optimal Model is to apply a rational process be used to nominate resources and define appropriate future actions, that will achieve the desired outcomes. It is motivated by a desire to bring about improvements for all District Directors and the BMA.

Changes need to take place within the BMA so that the District Directors can take their place in the new environment and train to the Dror (1973) states that the optimal intensity (that is, the degree to which each of the phases should optimally be developed) depends on both the availability of inputs and on the stipulated outputs. Communication is an important

FIGURE 7.1   THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT CHAIN
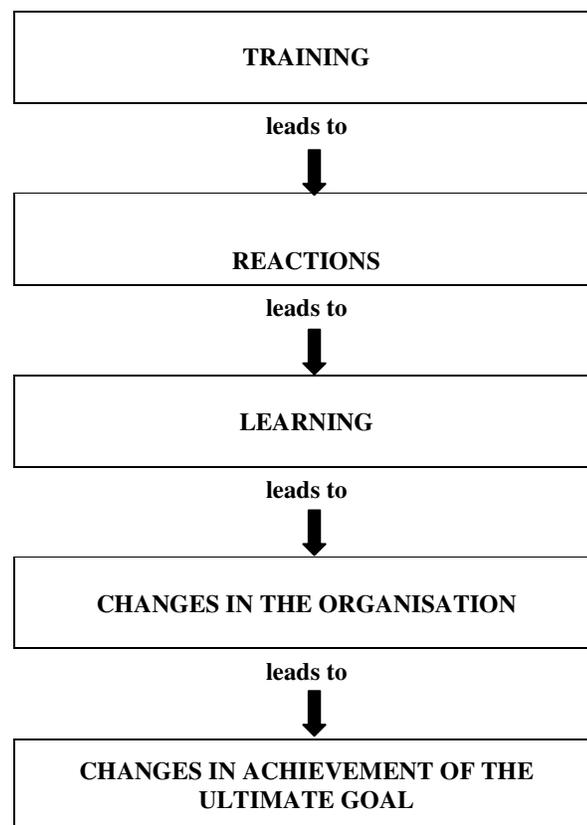
policy making process (Ling & Cotter, 2002). The aim of this Optimal Model is to apply a rational process to be used to nominate resources standards appropriate to the group. Real improvement will take place when the scheme is having a very real affect in raising their aspirations and achievements. This training program will offer a wide range of themes reflecting services that are vital to the peoples' quality of life. According to Muongmee (2002), change results from helping people – both individually and the work groups formed to identify organisational problems and how to solve them.

I conclude by referring to the relationship between training and learning as proposed by Hamblin (1993) in his book, Investing in People: Toward Corporate Capability, and shown in Figure 7.1, above. When this

FIGURE 7.2   POLICY SEQUENCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BMA DISTRICT DIRECTORS
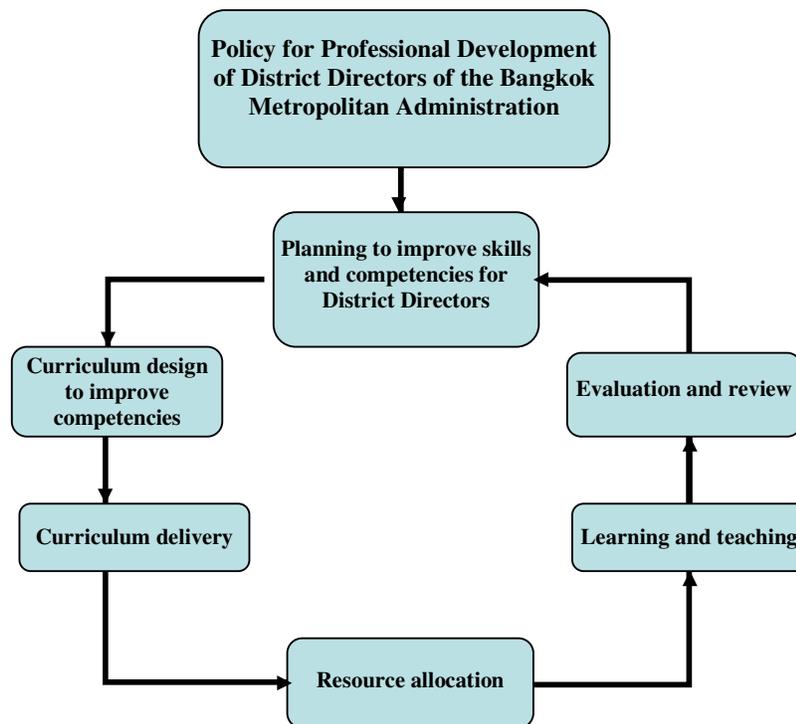
model is applied to the District Directors of the BMA, training and learning involves three levels such as District Directors, the Executive Group and the BMA as a whole. District Directors are not only presented with an opportunity to share information but also to develop a team sprit as well as helping each other to achieve long term goals.

Effective civil servant development and training would appear to be viewed with increasing importance in the present climate. Dyckman (1992, p. 88) sees 'systematic training and professional development of all staff' as a necessity for the District Directors profession. It can be said that to meet the challenges of the future, a much larger investment and organisational. The elements of this professional development policy are shown in Figure 7.2, above.

An improved approach towards District Director development needs to emphasise the learning organisation; it needs to be integrated with both operational and strategic planning and decision making. What must be considered is a Proactive Form of Evaluation to obtain data (Owen & Rogers, 1999); a qualitative approach to public policy making (Dror 1973, 1987); a systematic approach to organisational development (Senge 1990); and a learning competency being a characteristic that distinguishes a superior from a fully-successful learner (Rothwell, 2004).

The training policy will be used to guide the development of courses for all fifty District Directors who require these item needs to improve their job performance. The details of this policy are shown in Table 7.2, below. Training and development will be geared towards equipping District Directors with up-to-date knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes to effectively serve the public and to perform duties assigned in a manner consistent with the changing conditions. It will also develop their potential to give the country a competitive edge in the global arena. Such a training program will be a vital tool to strengthen knowledge, capability skills and

TABLE 7.2   TRAINING POLICY TO IMPROVE ON-JOB PERFORMANCE OF DISTRICT DIRECTORS OF THE BMA

Learner	Fifty District Directors of the BMA
Key skills and competencies required	Ability to perform job: • Organisational leadership • Effective and efficient service • Emotional maturity • Interpersonal skills • Effective collaboration • Moral leadership • Empathetic understanding
Objectives	• To become a new generation style of leader in their district by improvement of their leadership skills so as to adapt with the changing environment • To enable District Director to participate in and be responsible for public management as well as to promote rapidly and transparently and improve the quality of public services. • To establish a better way of working that leads to satisfactory results and to make them more effective by improving emotional intelligence. • To solve increasing problems and complex social issues by developing the personal skills, which in turn will benefit the BMA. • To encourage better performance of District Directors as well as to improve effective collaboration by gaining new knowledge that will have a beneficial effect on job responsibilities. • To work more efficiently, and effectively in terms of provision of quality by improving moral leadership with equity and equality • To gain new knowledge by improving strategies to understand local people to satisfy the public. • To improve the quality of work and productivity in the long term. • To lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning, organisational improvement and development
Groups of Trainers	• Expert group of trainers (academically and practically experienced) from both the public and private sectors, such as Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education or Department Local Administration
Training program duration	• Two months
Venue	• Training institute of the BMA at Nongjok
Course Evaluation	• Courses which will have value both to District Directors and the BMA • Interactive and Impact Evaluations
Finance	• Course supported by the BMA

competencies, appropriate to the attitudes and values of District Directors in the performance of their work in future. It will encourage an increase in the performance of senior officers and enable them to render services to the public at a faster pace.

Robbins (2001) points out that a leader should have the 'ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals' and in today's dynamic world, we need leaders to challenge the status quo, to create visions of the future and to inspire organisational members to want to achieve the visions. According to Table 7.2, above, District Directors will be encouraged to see the value and importance of human diversity and the ability to unleash the inherent power of that diversity so as to achieve the BMA goals. They need the skills and competencies that can be attained from a new leadership perspective. On the other hand, the BMA also requires District Directors to have strong people-management skills and must guarantee that it will not cut budgets in areas that will be necessary in providing their leaders with the skills necessary to go forward in the new world. Thus, the BMA must begin to evaluate their current training and development capabilities. The BMA must provide instructional materials that will enhance the performance and confidence of the group of District Directors. A training program that clearly addresses the needs of the changing environment should be maintained and programs should focus on developing new skills and competencies needed by all fifty District Directors. An old Chinese proverb says

> Provide fish for people, and they can eat for one day, teach people how to
> fish and they can feed themselves, help people learn how to learn and they
> can discover new ways to feed themselves and others (Rothwell, 2004).

In this way, the BMA will assist the District Directors to achieve their potential by means of delivering personal development programs that develop their needs and interests in order that will improve their job performance and that will have the potential to ensure they are appropriate roles model for their districts in a time of rapid change.

Summary

In this chapter, a training policy is provided that responds to the skills and competency needs, as well as the professional development requirements, of District Directors in the BMA. Such training will prepare them for the rapidly changing and increasingly demanding work environment in which they find themselves. Ideally, this will help to stimulate enjoyment, active participation and motivation for them all.

My research provides sufficient background detail to provide training opportunities that will improve the on-job performance of District Directors within the BMA, rendering them more efficient, effective and able to offer more reliable services to the people in their constituencies. Conclusions and recommendations regarding this research are addressed in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 8

Summary and Conclusions

Introduction

In this chapter, which concludes my project, the results of my research are summarised. The primary research question of this study was to determine the skills and competencies that District Directors require in order to improve their on-job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation. Within this research question were two sub-research questions:

1. What professional development strategies are required to promote the knowledge and skill development of District Directors?

2. What skills and competencies are required by District Directors in order for them to carry out their responsibilities as senior officials in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration?

The methodology used in this research was that of a proactive evaluation, via a needs assessment, to understand the skills and competencies and professional development strategies required by District Directors. The principal research methods were the application of a Delphi survey technique, followed by a series of semi-structured interviews that led to a set of nine case studies being developed. The Delphi survey and the case studies, together, led to the formulation of a training policy statement designed to improve their job performance.

The purpose of this research, then, was to establish the skills and competencies required by District Directors and outline professional development strategies required to promote these skills and competencies as well as a policy and training program that supports their needs of improvement. The application of a Delphi survey enabled me to achieve consensus between all fifty of the District Directors in the BMA that they needed to improve their skills and competencies in seven areas, namely:

1. Leading an organisation.

2. Administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.

3. Being emotionally mature.

4. Establishing good human relationships.

5. Collaborating effectively with people and their organisations.

6. Providing moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.

7. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.

The outcomes of the professional development strategies required to improve the seven needs comprised five elements.

1. Improving skills and competencies

2. Successful training

3. Problems with training

4. Duration of training program

5. Training venues

The results of this study should have a direct impact on the development of the BMA policies, programs and procedures to prevent or, at least, minimise

the distressful and potentially fatal effects of work-related stress and to provide timely and effective training and development in future.

This study has focused on the skills and competencies required by District Directors to make them more effective in their role. It is set in the context of District Directors as lifelong learners, each of whom had changing professional development needs. This, in turn, is set against the backdrop of the BMA as a learning organisation. The data analysis comprised both narrative analysis and qualitative data reduction techniques. The semi-structured interview protocols were intended to encourage the Executive of the BMA to look at what was important for their District Directors in order to improve their job performance.

The Delphi survey technique that was employed provided a means of a reaching a consensus view amongst the fifty District Directors of the BMA on what they thought were the key skills and competencies necessary to assist them in leading and managing their organisations. In addition to removing logistical barriers such as finding commonly acceptable meeting times, the survey facilitated avoidance of meeting face-to-face; as well, the respondents also had the opportunity to spend time to think and reflect during three rounds of the survey. It was a useful method of achieving a consensus of the skills and competencies needed by the group of District Directors. Semi-structured interviews of nine District Directors were then conducted, in order to obtain detailed opinions of what they believed were necessary to improve their skills and competencies, including professional development strategies to promote their needs in accordance with their own requirements and expectations.

The findings of the Delphi survey and the narrative analysis of the semi-structured interviews, enabled a profile of the skills and competency needs of District Directors to be developed. I found that they were keen to improve their performance to operate on-job in the following areas:

1. Organisational leadership

2. Effective and efficient service

3. Emotional maturity

4. Interpersonal skills

5. Effective collaboration

6. Moral leadership

7. Empathetic understanding

The training policy that was subsequently developed should meet the professional development needs of all District Directors; in particular, it should encourage and support training and development activities in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the District Directors. Training programs should be ongoing in order to increase the efficiency of service of the District Directors. It is expected that if this training program were to be implemented successfully, the quality of the work of District Directors would improve and that their morale would be raised accordingly.

Finally, this research leads to a recommendation that the BMA make a firm commitment to implement this new policy and to adopt training strategies in order to bring about an increase in the skills and competencies of all of the District Directors thus improving their on-job performance and encouraging them to be life-long learners.

Recommendations for Further Study

This research has established the training needs of District Directors in order to improve their job performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. The outcome has been an operational strategy, in the form of a training policy, for workplace learning and improvement of work quality.

Future research should focus on relationship development of District Director teams. Real change for the BMA is a long-term process that involves both the Executive and the District Directors. The District Directors need the support of their Executive to keep the momentum of change going.

The BMA is encouraged, as well, to undertake a formative and a summative evaluation of the training programs that result from the training policy. Such evaluations would be expected to improve such programs. Future research might involve an Interactive Evaluation that should focus on the improvement of actual training programs, followed by an Outcomes Evaluation that should focus on determining the effectiveness of the final training programs in the leadership development of District Directors. As well, the extent to which the District Directors take responsibility in their own professional development and monitoring of change processes should be explored. Methods such as peer coaching and the application of action research techniques that provide them with opportunities to develop a learning organisation should also be explored. Future research should focus on the implementation and effectiveness of self-monitoring and self-evaluation methods for District Directors.

This research suggests that the BMA should become a learning organisation involving both District Directors and the Executive of the BMA. It should focus on providing time for quality professional development. I believe and hope that this study has started a process that will lead to continuous improvement and life-long learning on the part of this group of District Directors of the BMA.

Conclusion

According to The Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006) (The BMA, 2001) and National Policy of His Excellency, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the Thai government now has a policy that covers a wide range of areas of urgent need: economic, agricultural, labour

development, communication, science and technology, nature and the environment, and general administration. Consistent with these plans and policies, the BMA has recognised the importance of systematic planning for the development of Bangkok since 1977 when the First BMA Development Plan started.

The Sixth BMA Development Plan (2002-2006) comprises eight individual plans, including a Plan for Human Resources and Social Development. The training policy developed as part of this research has identified a set of skills and competencies needed by District Directors in order to improve their on-job performance and their ability to adapt to change in the organisation. A consensus was achieved on seven skills and competencies to be developed via training programs to assist them to gain new knowledge to develop their job performance. These, and future District Directors will gain essential benefits from this training policy that will beneficially affect their job, as follows:

1. They will become a new-generation style of leader in their district by implementing their leadership skills so as to adapt to the changing environment.

2. They will be able to participate in and be responsible for public management as well as to promote rapidly and transparently improvements in the quality of public services.

3. They will be able to establish a better way of working that leads to satisfactory results and to make them more effective by improving their emotional intelligence.

4. They will be able to solve increasing problems and complex social issues by developing their personal skills, which in turn will benefit the BMA.

5. They will be able to encourage better performance as well as to improve effective collaboration by gaining new knowledge that will have a beneficial effect on their job responsibilities.

6. They will be able to work more efficiently and effectively in terms of provision of quality by improving moral leadership with equity and equality.

7. They will gain new knowledge by improving strategies to better understand the local people to increase public satisfaction.

8. They will be able to improve the quality of work and productivity in the long term.

9. They will be able to lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning, organisational improvement and development.

The training program that is developed from this training policy should involve all District Directors, regardless of their career stage, in a process that includes the BMA's values, goals and courses of action. A positive attitude towards District Director development, in which emphasis is placed on the learning organisation will assist in integrating operational and strategic planning, and in decision making. Training is the main key to support District Directors in the better understanding of their career and districts. Such a learning process involves communication at all three levels: the BMA, the group and the individuals. Such training and development will support organisational change and improvement in quality, thus ensuring that District Directors, and the BMA, operate more effectively.

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169

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Website addresses:

http://www.thailandoutlook.com/thailandoutlook1/Government+policy/the+9 th.htm.

http://www.ocsc.co.th.

Appendix 1:
Letters and Consent Forms

Letters and Consent Forms: Collection of Data in the BMA and Permission to Participate in Research Study

Victoria University of Technology
Consent to participate in a Research Study Titled
"A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director
to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration"

Researcher:

Ketsara Koetsuk, a candidate in the Doctor of Education program in partnership between Victoria University of Technology and Burapha University. (ph. 0-2552-8490)
I (name of potential participant)_____ have been invited to participate in an establish what I believe to be the professional development needs of District Directors in the changing environment of their workplace.

Aims:

The aim is to study the needs of these District Directors in order to produce an operational strategy for workplace learning and improvement of work quality. The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation to establish the professional development needs for District Directors in the city of Bangkok

Duration:

I understand that the questionnaire associated with this study will take me no more than one hour to complete, and that there may be a subsequent face-to-face interview that will take no more than one hour to complete.

Procedure:

I will be asked to answer questions about my points of view professional development of District Directors by means of questionnaire and/or interview.

Risks / Discomforts:

During the interview and or questionnaire participants will not have to talk about anything that they do not wish to discuss and are free to withdraw from study at anytime and unprocessed information already will not be used.

Benefits:

I understand that the benefits from participating in the study may be to help researchers and those involved in the administration of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration better understand the interests and needs of District Directors to improve their job performance. This research will be significant is that it will lead to the following outcomes: the production of an operational strategy for the ongoing workplace and lifelong learning as part of Human Development Planning of the 9th Five-Year Development Plan BE 2545-2549; providing District Directors with an understanding of how to meet their needs and to advance or protect their job interests; the provision of workplace learning opportunities that will enable District Directors to develop their own learning organisations; to make learning is an integral part of the workplace.

Confidentiality:

I understand that a research code number will be used to identify my responses from those of other participants and that my name, address, and other identifying information will not be directly associated with any information obtained from me. A master listing of persons participating in the study and their identifying information will be kept in a secure location under lock and key. When the results of this study are published, my name and other identifying information will not be used.

Payment:

I understand that I will not be paid for participating in this research study.

Right to withdraw:

I understand that I do not have to take part in this study, and my refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of rights to which I am entitled. I may withdraw from the study at any time without fear of losing any services or benefits to which I am entitled.

Signatures:

I have read this entire consent form and completely understand my rights as a potential research subject. I voluntarily consent to participate in this research. I have been informed that I will receive a copy of this consent, and should any queries arise about this study I may contact Miss. Ketsara Koetsuk, a student (ph. 0-2552-8490 email: : k_koetsuk@hotmail.com), her principal supervisor, Dr Ian M. Ling (ph. +61-3-9688-5024 email: i.ling@bigpond.com) or her co-supervisor, Dr Chalong Tubsree (ph. 0-3874-5900 email: chalongtubsree@hotmail.com). If I have any queries or complaints about the way I have been treated or to discuss my rights as a research subject, I can contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (ph. +61-3-9688-4710).

Should I need to seek counselling, I can contact the Counselling Service of Burapha University, Chonburi, Thailand (ph. 03-839-3528)

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

3/2243 Soi. Praholyothin 48

Arnusaowareechai, Bangkhen

Bangkok Thailand 10220

June 1, 2004

To: Permanent Secretary of the BMA

My name is Ketsara Koetsuk. I am a candidate in the Doctor of Education program in partnership between Victoria University of Technology and Burapha University. I am conducting a research study entitled *"A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration"* The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation to establish the professional development needs for District Directors in the city of Bangkok.

It will be appreciated if you are able to establish what you believe to the professional development needs of District Directors. The contribution of each respondent will make a valuable study. It is anticipated that the results of the research will be of value to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Ketsara Koetsuk

Researcher

3/2243 Soi. Praholyothin 48

Arnusaowareechai, Bangkhen

Bangkok Thailand 10220

June 1, 2004

To: Deputy Permanent Secretary of the BMA

My name is Ketsara Koetsuk. I am a candidate in the Doctor of Education program in partnership between Victoria University of Technology and Burapha University. I am conducting a research study entitled *"A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration"* The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation to establish the professional development needs for District Directors in the city of Bangkok.

It will be appreciated if you are able to establish what you believe to be the professional development needs of District Directors. The contribution of each respondent will make a valuable study. It is anticipated that the results of the research will be of value to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Ketsara Koetsuk

Researcher

3/2243 Soi. Praholyothin 48

Arnusaowareechai, Bangkhen

Bangkok Thailand 10220

September 10, 2004

To: _____District Director of _____

My name is Ketsara Koetsuk. I am a candidate in the Doctor of Education program in partnership between Victoria University of Technology and Burapha University. I am conducting a research study entitled *"A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration"* The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation to establish the professional development needs for District Directors in the city of Bangkok.

It will be appreciated if you would complete the enclosed questionnaire. The contribution of each respondent will make a valuable study. It is anticipated that the results of the research will be of value to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. Please complete all sections and return to me in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Thank you for your supporting this study.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Ketsara Koetsuk

Researcher

3/2243 Soi. Praholyothin 48
Arnusaowareechai, Bangkhen
Bangkok Thailand 10220

December 27 , 2004

To _____District Director of _____

My name is Ketsara Koetsuk. I am a candidate in the Doctor of Education program in partnership between Victoria University of Technology and Burapha University. I am conducting a research study entitled *"A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration"* The primary objective of this study is to undertake a Proactive Evaluation to establish the professional development needs for District Directors in the city of Bangkok.

It will be appreciated if you would establish what you believe to be the interest and needs to improve on your job performance. The contribution of each respondent will make a valuable study. It is anticipated that the results of the research will be of value to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Ketsara Koetsuk
Researcher

ที่ ศธ 0528.0913/157
20 กันยายน 2547

เรื่อง   ขอความอนุเคราะห์ขยายเวลาให้นิสิตปริญญาเอกเก็บข้อมูลเพื่อการวิจัย

เรียน ท่านปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร คุณหญิง ณฐนนท ทวีสิน

อ้างถึง หนังสือกรุงเทพมหานคร ที่ กท 0502 / 1609 ลงวันที่ 31 มีนาคม 2547

ตามหนังสือที่อ้างถึง กรุงเทพมหานครได้อนุญาตให้นางสาว เกศรา เกิดศุข นิสิตตามโครงการความร่วมมือทางวิชาการระหว่างมหาวิทยาลัยวิคทอเรีย ประเทศออสเตรเลีย และมหาวิทยาลัยบูรพา เข้าเก็บข้อมูลที่เป็นประโยชน์ทางวิชาการเพื่องานวิจัยวิทยานิพนธ์ เรื่อง "กรณีศึกษาความสนใจ และความต้องการของผู้อำนวยการเขตเพื่อที่จะพัฒนาศักยภาพในการทำงานใน กทม." โดยมีกลุ่มเป้าหมายคือ ปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร รองปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร และผู้อำนวยการเขต 50 ท่าน ในระหว่างวันที่ 8 มีนาคม — 30 กันยายน 2547นั้น

บัดนี้การเก็บข้อมูลดังกล่าวยังไม่ครบถ้วน   จึงขออนุญาตให้นิสิตดังกล่าวดำเนินการเก็บข้อมูลที่จะเป็นประโยชน์ทางวิชาการเพิ่มเติม ในระหว่างวันที่ 1 ตุลาคม 2547ถึงวันที่ 28 กุมภาพันธ์ 2548

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณา โครงการฯหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่า คงได้รับความร่วมมือด้วยดีจากและ ขอขอบคุณมา ณ โอกาสนี้

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(รองศาสตราจารย์ดร.ฉลอง ทับศรี)
คณะบดีคณะศึกษาศาสตร์
ผู้อำนวยการโครงการฯ

สำนักงานโครงการฯ
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กรุงเทพมหานคร

๑๗๓ ถนนดินสอ กทม. ๑๐๒๐๐

๑๔ ตุลาคม ๒๕๔๗

เรื่อง ขยายเวลาให้นิสิตปริญญาเอก (นางสาวเกศรา เกิดศุข) เก็บข้อมูลเพื่อการวิจัย

เรียน ผู้อำนวยการโครงการการศึกษาดุษฎีบัณฑิต หลักสูตรนานาชาติ

อ้างถึง หนังสือสำนักงานโครงการการศึกษาดุษฎีบัณฑิต หลักสูตรนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยบูรพา
ที่ ศธ ๐๕๒๘.๐� / ๑๕๗ ลงวันที่ ๒๐ กันยายน ๒๕๔๗

ตามหนังสือที่อ้างถึง สำนักงานโครงการการศึกษาดุษฎีบัณฑิต หลักสูตรนานาชาติ มหาวิทยาลัยบูรพา
โดยความร่วมมือทางวิชาการระหว่างมหาวิทยาลัยวิคทอเรีย ประเทศออสเตรเลีย และมหาวิทยาลัยบูรพา ได้ขอความ
อนุเคราะห์ขยายเวลาให้นางสาวเกศรา เกิดศุข นิสิตปริญญาเอก เก็บข้อมูลเพื่อการวิจัยวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่อง "กรณีศึกษา
ความสนใจ และความต้องการของผู้อำนวยการเขตเพื่อที่จะพัฒนาศักยภาพในการทำงานในกทม." โดยมีกลุ่มเป้าหมาย
คือ ปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร รองปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร และผู้อำนวยการเขต ๕๐ เขต ในระหว่างวันที่ ๑ ตุลาคม
๒๕๔๗ - ๒๘ กุมภาพันธ์ ๒๕๔๘ ดังความละเอียดแจ้งแล้ว นั้น

กรุงเทพมหานครพิจารณาแล้ว เห็นว่างานวิจัยนี้จะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการบริหารและพัฒนาบุคลากร
และหน่วยงานกรุงเทพมหานคร และเนื่องด้วยการวิจัยครั้งนี้ใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยที่ประกอบด้วยกระบวนการสัมภาษณ์และ
ประมวลผลหลายขั้นตอน ซึ่งต้องใช้เวลาในการดำเนินการมาก จึงขยายเวลาให้นางสาวเกศรา เกิดศุข นิสิต
ปริญญาเอก ดำเนินการเก็บข้อมูลเพื่อการวิจัยดังกล่าว ในระหว่างวันที่ ๑ ตุลาคม ๒๕๔๗ - ๒๘ กุมภาพันธ์ ๒๕๔๘
เพื่อประโยชน์ทางวิชาการและกรุงเทพมหานครต่อไป

จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดทราบ

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(นายพิชัย ไชยพจน์พานิช)
รองปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร
ปฏิบัติราชการแทนปลัดกรุงเทพมหานคร

สำนักนโยบายและแผนกรุงเทพมหานคร
กองนโยบายและแผนรวม
โทร. ๐ ๒๒๒๔ ๔๙๗๒
โทรสาร ๐ ๒๒๒๔ ๔๙๗๒

Appendix 2:
Interview Protocol Used for Phase I

Interviews of Permanent Secretary and
Deputy Permanent Secretary of the BMA

> **INTERVIEW**
>
>
> **A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration**

1. **In thinking about Bangkok District Directors, can you talk to me about a memorable situation relating to the competencies of directors? Feel free to talk as openly as possible, and for as long as you wish.**

    1.1 Is there another positive situation that you could tell me about?

    1.2 Is there a negative situation that you could tell me about?

2. **In thinking about Bangkok District Directors, can you talk to me about any special needs that you have seen emerging in recent months? Please be as open and as comprehensive as you wish.**

    2.1 What special programs exit to cover some or all of these needs at the present time? Can you tell me, in details, about one or two of these?

    2.2 In what ways do you see that these programs have benefited the District Directors?

    2.3 What new programs would you like to initiate for developing the competencies of District Directors that do not currently exist?

3. **In thinking about the new training program in '…………….' (from 2.3, above), what would you see as being its main purpose?**

    3.1 So, what would you say would be the desired outcomes of this training program?

4. **In thinking about existing training programs for District Directors, please give me an example of one that has worked really well.**

    4.1 Which one of these programs would you rate as being the most important for their position?

    4.2 Will you please tell me why this program is so important?

5. **In thinking about existing training programs, how effective do you think these programs have been?**

    5.1 What would you say is the key element that makes these training programs effective?

    5.2 What elements would you like to see changed to make the programs more effective?

    5.3 What has been the response of District Directors to these programs?

    5.4 How do you think District Directors best learn in these programs?

    5.5 What have you heard from District Directors about the delivery, in general, of their training programs?

    5.6 What do you think is their preferred way of learning?

6. **Please tell me something about budgeting process and budget allocations for training programs in the BMA?**

    6.1 Has the allocation been sufficient to meet past needs?

    6.2 Are you able to say something about meeting future needs?

7. **Would you please talk to me about the sequencing of training Programs for District Directors-for example, training before Appointment, training early in the term, mid-term training, and so on**

    7.1 Which, in your opinion, is the most critical phase of District Directors training?

    7.2 Why do you think this is so?

8. **Please talk to me about the scheduling of training: when, where, for how long, and so on**

    8.1 What do you think should be the pattern in the future?

9. **Please talk to me about the groups who deliver the training. What do you look for in trainers? What do you see are the necessary elements of a successful trainer working at this level?**

    9.1 What, particularly, would you be looking for in selecting trainers for improving the competencies of the District Directors?

    9.2 Would you talk to me about the appropriateness of training methods used for the training of District Directors

    9.3 What do you think are the most suitable methods for the current cohort?

10. **Please talk to me about your preferred locations for District Directors training programs**

    10.1 Are there any plans to change this thinking? If so, what will

    the changes involve?

11. **In thinking about District Directors training programs, please talk to me about the use of technology in these programs.**

    11.1 What is likely to change in this regard in the future.

APPENDIX 3:
QUESTIONNAIRE ROUND I

PHASE II Delphi Survey

QUESTIONNAIRE

A Case Study of the Interests and Needs of the District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This questionnaire is intended for use by all District Directors, in round one of Delphi survey. It consists of 2 parts

   Part I: Personal Data

   Part II: Questions concerning competency needs of District Directors

2. Please circle (O) the number most appropriate to your opinion on a 10-point scale from low to high and add your reasons for this selection.

   Space has been provided for you to add further items for consideration in later rounds of the Delphi survey. Please add one if you wish, or two additional items that are important to you and, once again, provide a reason why you would like these items to be included.

PART I: PERSONAL DATA

Please tick ✓ the box thus ☐, where appropriate and add your own ideas on the blank line.

1. **Gender**

   ☐ (1) Male   ☐ (2) Female

2. **Age**

   ☐ (1) 45-48   ☐ (2) 49-52

   ☐ (3) 53-56   ☐ (4) 57-60

3. **Education**

   ☐ (1) Bachelor Degree   ☐ (2) Master Degree

   ☐ (3) Doctoral Degree   ☐ (4) Other…………….

4. **How long have you been a District Director?** ……………….

PART II: QUESTIONS CONCERNING COMPETENCY
NEEDS OF DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Please consider the following sentences and put ○ around the appropriate number that ranks your opinion on a 1-10 scale (1= low, 10 = high), the importance that you would place on each of the competencies listed below and add your own reasons as appropriate.

	Competency required by a District Director	**Rating of Importance**
1	**Leading an organization**	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____ _____	
2	**To have versatility in performance**	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	
3	**To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.**	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	
4	**To establish good human relationships.**	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	
5	**To collaborate effectively with people and their organizations.**	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*

	Competency required by a District Director	Rating of Importance
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____ _____	
6	To mediate effectively between people and their organizations. *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
7	To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
8	To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
9	To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA. *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
10	To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work. *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
11	To lead a learning organisation as supports continuous learning and development.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*

	Competency required by a District Director	Rating of Importance
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	
12	**To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.**	**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10** *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	
13	**Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.**	**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10** *low* *high*
	Reason for your rating: _____ _____ _____	

Please add one or two additional items, if you wish, that are important to you and, once again, provide a reason why you would like these items to be included.

1	*Additional Item:* *Reason for inclusion:* _____ _____
2	*Additional Item:* *Reason for inclusion:* _____ _____

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 4:
Questionnaire Round 2

PHASE II Delphi Survey

Questionnaire Round 2

A Case Study of the Interests and needs of District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is intended for use by all fifty District Directors, in round two of Delphi survey. It consists of 2 parts

Part I:

Please kindly review your answers to change or to confirm after aware of other opinions. Please ✓ the number most appropriate to your opinions in case you would like to change your answers. Please also give reasons, in case you have your own different opinions from most of group.

  ● = Your opinions in questionnaire in round one
  ✸ = Median of other District Directors' opinion
 | = | Interquartile of District Directors' opinion

Remarks

The **median** is the middle of a distribution: half the scores are above the median and half are below the median.

The **interquartile range** (IQR) is the distance between the 75th percentile and the 25th percentile. The IQR is essentially the range of the middle 50% of the data. Because it uses the middle 50%, the IQR is not affected by outliers or extreme values.

Part II:

There are competencies required by District Directors that added items from their opinions in Delphi survey round one

 Please circle (O) the number most appropriate to your opinion on a 10-point scale from low to high (1= low important, 10= high important) and add your reasons for this selection.

Appendix 4

Part I

Please consider your opinions by compare between your own answer and group that gained from answers in recently round in below. Please review your answer that want to change or confirm. Please ✓ the number most appropriate to your opinion in case you would like to change your answer. Please also give reasons, in case your own opinion as different from most of group.

Items	Rating of importance										Reason
	1 low	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 high	
1. Leading an organization											
2. To have versatility in performance											
3. To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.											
4. To establish good human relationships.											
5. To collaborate effectively with people and their organizations.											
6. To mediate effectively between people and their organizations.											
7. To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.											
8. To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.											
9. To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.											
10. To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.											
12. To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.											
13. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.											

208

Part II

Please consider the following sentences and put○ around the appropriate number that ranks your opinion on a 1-10 scale (1= low, 10= high), the importance that you would place on each of the competencies listed below and add your own reasons as appropriate.

	Competency required by a District Director	Rating of Importance
1	*Being mature* *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
2	*The ability to establish network among districts* *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*
3	*The ability in using information technology* *Reason for your rating:* _____ _____ _____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *low* *high*

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 5:
Questionnaire Round 3

PHASE II Delphi Survey

Questionnaire Round 3

A Case Study of the Interests and needs of District Director to Improve Job Performance in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is intended for use by all fifty District Directors in round three (final round) of the Delphi survey.

Please kindly review your answers to change or to confirm after making yourselves aware of other opinions. Please tick (✓) the number most appropriate to your opinions in the event that you would like to change your answers.

Please also give reasons if you have your own different opinions from the majority of the group.

Note
    1= low importance,   10= high importance

       ●   =   Your opinions in questionnaire in round one
       ✱   =   Median of other District Directors' opinion
  | | =   Interquartile of District Directors' opinion

Remarks

The **median** is the middle of a distribution: half the scores are above the median and half are below the median.

The **interquartile range** (IQR) is the distance between the 75th percentile and the 25th percentile. The IQR is essentially the range of the middle 50% of the data. As it uses the middle 50%, the IQR it is not affected by outliers or extreme values.
       Please consider your opinions by comparing your answers with the rest of the group obtained from answers obtained in recently round, below. Please review the answers that you either want to change or confirm. Please tick (✓) the number most appropriate to your opinion if you would like to change your answer. Please also give the reason, if your opinion is different from the majority of the group.

Round 3 Questionnaire

Items	Rating of importance										Reason
	1 low	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 high	
1. Leading an organization											
2. To have versatility in performance											
3. To understand the social and cultural life of Bangkok residents.											
4. To establish good human relationships.											
5. To collaborate effectively with people and their organizations.											
6. To mediate effectively between people and their organizations.											
7. To administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service.											
8. To provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality.											
9. To be able to apply the laws and regulations that are relevant to the operation of BMA.											
10. To lead the organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.											
12. To accommodate economic, social, technological and political changes – at both domestic and international level – that will affect the BMA.											
13. Understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.											
14. Being mature											
15. The ability to establish network among districts											
16. The ability in using information technology											

Thank you for contributing all of data and also for providing your valuable opinions.

Appendix 6:
Findings – Round 1

Individual Rankings

Appendix 6

Outcomes of Delphi Survey, Round One

Individual Rankings

N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
2	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
3	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
6	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
7	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
13	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
14	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
16	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
17	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
18	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
19	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10
20	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10
21	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
22	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
23	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
24	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
25	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
26	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
27	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10
28	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10
29	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	9
30	10	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	9
31	10	9	8	9	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	8	9
32	10	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9
33	10	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9
34	10	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	8	8	9
35	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	8	8	9
36	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	8	8	9
37	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	8	7	9
38	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	8	9	8	7	8
39	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	8	8	8	7	8
40	9	8	8	8	8	7	9	9	8	8	8	7	8
41	9	8	8	8	8	7	8	9	8	8	7	7	7
42	9	8	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	8	7	6	7
43	9	8	7	8	8	7	8	8	8	8	7	6	7
44	8	8	7	8	8	6	8	8	7	8	7	6	7
45	8	7	7	8	8	5	8	8	7	8	7	6	5
46	8	7	6	8	7	5	8	8	7	7	6	5	5
47	8	7	5	8	6	5	8	7	7	7	6	5	2
48	7	6	3	8	5	4	7	6	6	5	4	4	2
49	6	4	3	7	5	4	7	5	3	5	4	3	1
50	1	4	1	5	4	3	5	2	1	3	2	1	1
Q0	1	4	1	5	4	3	5	2	1	3	2	1	1
Q1	9	8.25	8	9	8.25	8	9	9	8	9	8	7	8.25
Q2	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10
Q3	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Q4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Appendix 7:
Findings – Round 2

Individual Rankings

Interquartile Ranges

Frequency Count

Outcomes of Delphi Survey, Round Two

Individual Rankings

N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
2	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
3	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
6	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
7	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
13	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10
14	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10
15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
16	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
17	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
18	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
19	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
20	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	9	10	10	10	9
21	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	10	9
22	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	10	9
23	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	10	9
24	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	10	9
25	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
26	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
27	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
28	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
29	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
30	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
31	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
32	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
33	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
34	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	9
35	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	9
36	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	8
37	10	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	8
38	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
39	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
40	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
41	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
42	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
43	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	8
44	9	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	8
45	9	8	8	9	8	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	9	9	8	8
46	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7
47	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	7
48	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	7
49	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	8	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	6
50	8	8	3	9	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	1	8	7	6

Interquartile Ranges

8	8	3	9	8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	1	8	7	6
10	9	8.25	9.25	9	9	9	9	8.25	9	9	8	9	9.25	9	8
10	9	9	10	9	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Round 2: Frequency Count

Rank	Item	Frequency										
1	1	39	10	1								
2	4	37	13									
3	14	37	8	5								
4	7	36	13	1								
5	8	35	13	2								
6	15	34	18	7	1							
7	13	33	11	5								1
8	5	32	12	6								
9	10	26	19	5	1							
10	2	24	19	8								
11	6	21	24	5								
12	11	19	35	5	1							
13	9	18	19	12	1							
14	3	16	21	12						1		
15	16	14	21	10	3	2						
16	12	12	8	26	4							

IQR0	12
IQR1	19
IQR2	29
IQR3	35
IQR4	39

Appendix 8:
Findings – Round 3

Individual Rankings

Interquartile Ranges

Frequency Count

Outcomes of Delphi Survey, Round Three

Individual Rankings

N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
2	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
3	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
6	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
7	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
8	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
13	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
14	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
15	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
16	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
17	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
18	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
19	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
20	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
21	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	10	9
22	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
23	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
24	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
25	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
26	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
27	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
28	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
29	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
30	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
31	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
32	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
33	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
34	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
35	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
36	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	9	9	8	10	10	9	9
37	10	9	9	10	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	8
38	10	9	9	9	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	8
39	10	9	9	9	9	9	10	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
40	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
41	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
42	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
43	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
44	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
45	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
46	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
47	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
48	10	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	8
49	10	9	8	9	9	8	9	9	8	9	8	8	9	9	9	7
50	10	9	3	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	8	8	7	9	7	6

Interquartile Ranges

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Q0	10	9	3	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	8	8	7	9	7	6
Q1	10	9	9	9.3	9	9	10	9	9	9	9	8	9	10	9	8
Q2	10	9	9	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9	8	10	10	9	9
Q3	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	9
Q4	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

Round 3: Frequency Count

Rank	Item	Frequency									
		10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	1	50									
2	7	39	11								
3	14	38	12								
4	4	37	13								
5	5	36	13	1							
6	8	36	13	1							
7	13	36	13		1						
8	10	33	17								
9	2	24	9								
10	6	22	26	2							
11	15	21	28		1						
12	11	20	18	2							
13	9	17	21	12							
14	3	16	23						1		
15	12	12	8	30							
16	16	12	14	12	1	1					

Interquartile Ranges

IQR0	12
IQR1	19
IQR2	29
IQR3	36
IQR4	50

Appendix 9:
Population Ratings

Listing of BMA Districts in Order of
Population: Largest to Smallest

Rank	Number and Name of District	Population/ N	Population Rating
1	40. Bang Kae	183 809	**HIGH** (N>125 000)
2	05. Bang Khen	178 864	
3	30. Chatuchak	176 501	
4	15. Thon Buri	175 768	
5	35. Chom Thong	173 133	
6	42. Saimai	160 170	
7	29. Bang Sue	158 079	
8	36. Don Mueang	157 643	
9	26. Dindang	155 766	
10	20. Bangkok Noi	152 867	
11	02. Dusit	150 365	
12	06. Bangkapi	149 747	
13	27. Bueng Kum	141 465	
14	22. Phasicharoen	140 051	
15	32. Prawet	135 549	
16	33. Khong Toei	133 131	
17	11. Latkrabang	132 027	
18	21. Bang Khunthian	123 525	**MEDIUM** (100 000<N<125 000)
19	23. Nongkhaem	123 045	
20	41. Lak Si	121 815	
21	46. Khlong Samwa	117 060	
22	34. Suan Luang	116 961	
23	25. Bang Phlat	116 271	
24	38. Latphrao	115 656	
25	31. Bang Kholaem	113 781	
26	10. Minburi	112 734	
27	45. Wangthonglang	111 978	
28	03. Nongchok	109 789	
29	18. Khong San	107 150	
30	28. Sathon	106 333	
31	19. Taling Chan	104 254	
32	47. Bang Na	102 777	
33	37. Ratchatawi	101 892	
34	09. Phra Khanong	101 370	
35	49. Thung Kru	101 254	
36	07. Pathumwan	975 33	**LOW** (N<100 000)
37	24. Rat Burana	972 73	
38	12. Yannawa	921 10	
39	14. Phaya Thai	905 57	
40	50. Bang Bon	891 40	
41	16. Bangkok Yai	850 75	
42	39. Vadhana	825 82	
43	43. Kan Na Yao	825 73	
44	44. Saphan Sung	799 74	
45	17. Huaikhwang	799 16	
46	01. Phra Nakhon	762 03	
47	8. Pomprap Sattruphai	720 40	
48	48. Thawi Wattana	611 77	
49	04. Bang Rak	603 00	
50	13. Samphanthawong	355 47	
		5 844 580	

Appendix 10:
Phase 3 Interviews

Semi-structured Interviews

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. **In terms of the competencies listed; in thinking about these all seven items of skills and competencies, why are these needs are important for your position of District Director?**

2. **In thinking about the competencies required to improve your job performance, how can you see them assisting in your present and future position?**

3. **In thinking about the competencies required, would you please talk to me about professional development strategies required to promote your knowledge and skills development?**

4. **Would you please talk to me about the sequencing of training programs for District Directors - for example, training before appointment, training early in term, mid term training and so on.**

    4.1 What, in your opinion, is the most critical phase of a District Directors training?

5. **What do you think should be the pattern of training in future?**

    5.1 Would you talk to me about the appropriateness of training methods for the training program?

    5.2 Please talk to me about the scheduling of training: when, where, for how long, and so on.

6. **Please talk to me about the groups who deliver the training. What do you look for in trainers? What do you see are the necessary elements of a successful trainer working at this level?**

    6.1 What, particularly, would you be looking for in selecting trainers for improving the competencies of the District Directors?

Appendix 11:
District Directors' Competency Needs – Nine Case Studies

Case Studies

Mr. Fred's Narrative

This district is a highly desirable and sought-after location for many and varied businesses. It is located in central Bangkok, has good facilities such as big shopping Malls and a university located nearby, and has a variety of transportation that makes it conveniently accessible. It was also prosperous as Mr Fred was keen to tell me this during part of his interview.

Mr Fred is the District Director of a small district and has worked there for approximately one year. In respect of the Delphi survey phase He was one of the participants I had to chase for the return of all three rounds of my questionnaire, as they were overdue. In the first round of the questionnaire, he told me by telephone that he was so busy but said that he was willing to answer and asked me to wait for his response. In rounds two and round three of the questionnaire I phoned to ask for his feedback, only to find that he had not received them. Possibly they were lost during the delivery process. His staff tried their best to locate them, to no avail. Eventually I had to re-send them with revised deadlines. It meant that I had to wait longer than anticipated to collect the Delphi survey data. He was so kind and also kept his promise to return them to me every time I called. He took seriously his answers to all of my questions and gave reasons for his rankings. The extended time taken was worth the wait.

Mr. Fred was the first person with whom I undertook a semi-structured interview. I was therefore very excited. I took care to rehearse my questions. To ensure the interview went smoothly, I bought a new tape recorder, cassette, and battery. This district office was located in building in the process of being renovated and on a small plot of land. As a result, no car parking facilities were available. I researched beforehand, the location of his office by visiting the area and by asking locals of its whereabouts.

Our appointment to meet was at 14:00 hrs on 27 December 2004 and I arrived there early. Mr Fred had not returned to his office when I arrived

but was aware of our appointment, one of his secretaries told me. He has two polite male secretaries and we talked for a while whilst waiting for him to return.

Mr. Fred arrived on time and I saw that his staff stood up in a formal manner to greet him. It seemed everyone respected him so much. He gave me a welcoming smile and then invited me into his room. He seemed to be an active, nice and kind man. He apologised for making me wait and then we talked to each other about general things at first. Even though he was such a busy man but I could see that he was a friendly and happy person who seemed to enjoy his work so much. We had our conversation around his table, which I found to be tidy and clean. During the interview his cell phone rang three times, interrupting our conversation: as well, we also had to stop talking and recording from time to time. Possibly he had another appointment after our interview. He mentioned that he needed time to see some other people and that he had many actions awaiting his attention. His room was large but silent, so it was ideal in which to have our conversation.

This semi-structured interview took approximately 55 minutes to complete. Mr Fred concentrated on and listened to my questions carefully. If at first he did not understand, he always asked me to repeat the question. I explained the aims and framework of my research study and clarified the ethics of my interview. I asked him to speak freely and for as long as he wished. I told him that there were no right or wrong opinions. We then looked at the outcomes of the consensus of District Director needs to improve their skills and competencies that I had copied for him on paper so that we could discuss them jointly. I asked Mr Fred's opinion as representative of District Director that in thinking about these all seven items of skills and competencies, why these needs were important for his position and how he saw them assisting in his present and future position. Suddenly his mobile phone rang and I had to stop recording for a short period.

Organisational Leadership

After Mr Fred finished talking, he answered me and I soon became aware that he was trying to maintain a business style approach to his work to improve his skills and in developing his workplace. He likes to collaborate with people, become friendly with them so that he can better understand their problems and eventually reach a mutually acceptable solution. His opinions and style differed from other District Directors in that he seemed to want to apply his ideas and leadership in a more business like fashion.

> Regarding to the leadership of an organisation, I may have different ideas from other District Directors. In my opinion, I believe that a good leader must change a system or rule if these are found to be less than effective. My belief is that we must adopt the more business-like working practices that are operated by the private sector so I can apply their methods of working to my leadership and visions. In my experience I have found that leaders within the private sector are more willing to accept change and improvements in working practices. Although my subordinates have graduated from university, I am aware that they rarely bring their knowledge to work, perhaps as they lack ideas and experience. Therefore, as I am their superior, I have invited successful businessman to contribute knowledge for my subordinates and me in the past. Entrepreneurs and businessmen who were involved with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and are still running their businesses are particularly useful to me in that they can advise us how they operated when the economic crisis was affecting their businesses. I asked them to demonstrate how their methods and ideas might improve my own organisation.

Mr Fred showed me that he tried to adapt to change by following the private sector trend. At the same time, he indicated to me that he collaborated with all of his staff in an attempt to make them more personally responsible and to have good feelings about the workplace in general. He was aware that his ideas might not be the same as those of other District Directors, but he believed his district to be the most modern and forward-thinking within the BMA areas.

> Public sectors are still weaker than the private sector, in my opinion. So, I want to reduce the gap between the private sector and public sectors. I must attempt to bring their style of private sector working practices to bear on my organisation by (firstly) evaluating the effectiveness of Civil Servants who work with me.

Mr. Fred was confident and kept eye contact with me during our discussion. His ideas to improve the quality of his subordinates made me more interested to learn about the methodology of his evaluation. After he gave me a broad outline of the process, I asked him to further clarify details of methods of evaluation of staff within his district.

> I have already asked heads of sections to report their working practices and proposals to me but at the moment I am too busy to follow them up. Those staff who consistently arrive late in the office are required to compile a diary to record what they do during their working day. I, or my assistant if I am too busy, will read these diaries on a daily basis in an attempt to evaluate their job performance. My leadership style is one of participation in that I believe collaboration to be of paramount importance. Dictatorial leadership cannot work alone. If my staff and I can discuss and collaborate in our ideas, it will improve the attitude towards working in the organisation.

Mr Fred showed an 'open' style of leadership when wanting to improve his own competencies and also when encouraging his staff to develop their on-job performance. His style of working shows concern towards the involvement of his staff.

Effective and Efficient Service

I asked Mr Fred to speak more about the need for improvement in administering responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service – and for his opinion as to why this need was important for him. He spoke at some length about the importance of monitoring the

performance of his senior staff, while remaining accessible to all staff to discuss problems associated with their work:

> Actually we all have our respective job descriptions and I, as the leader of the district, am always concerned about the responsibility of my position and also of my subordinates to operate effectively while performing a particular task before moving on to the next one. I always judge the quantity and quality of work or follow up work in progress to ensure its effectiveness. In addition, I always monitor heads of sections to satisfy myself that their administration is being carried out to best effect. I will not monitor lower ranks as they have their own heads of department to whom they are responsible.

> Nevertheless, I am available to anyone who has legitimate and relevant questions that relate to laws and regulations etc. In case anybody has questions, they can meet with me and I am open to everyone to talk about their problem in working such as laws and regulations. It is vital that they understand we work for the people in general and not just for individuals.

Mr Fred seemed to have an open mind to listen to everything that involves his work. He showed a new and refreshing style of leadership that differed from that of other Civil Servants in high positions and with whom I was familiar. This was a style that I had rarely seen before.

Being Emotionally Mature

I then asked Mr Fred his opinion about the need to improve competencies to be more mature. He remained silent and so I then explained to him that my question related to emotions. He continued to ponder the issue before responding:

> I am not sure that I have this maturity or not and also suspect that other civil servants lack this skill. I remind my subordinates about my responsibility in my position and that I am their leader. I have to achieve my aims in order to be a good role model for them. For example, if I

under-perform and cannot achieve success in my work, my subordinates will think that I lack leadership skills. Thus, whatever I do, I am always concerned about my performance in being their boss. I try to be a good role model for them in terms of dress code for work, on time arrival to and departure from work etc. My performance, discipline and behaviour must be impeccable in order to set a good example to my subordinates – as they might follow my bad example. If I cannot practice what I preach, I should not blame others. If we cannot maintain our own clean and tidy working environment, we cannot expect the population of our District to be fastidious in this respect – as we set them a bad example. When our office looks good, clean and tidy, our staff will feel better about working and visitors will also be impressed. I also collaborate with the private sectors by selling my ideas and also ask what they want so that we can work together. This is my preferred style of working.

Clearly, Mr Fred intended to be a good role model for both his subordinates and the local people.

Interpersonal Skills

From the outset, it was obvious that Mr Fred wanted to foster good human relationships with other people and also that he aimed to improve his skills and competencies. I asked him why he wanted to establish good human relationships. He looked at me, smiled, and then told me about his relationship with his subordinates and how he manages it.

Regarding this, I would like to say that between subordinates and myself, I am always concerned with equity and equality. I do have concerns about the job effectiveness of my civil servants. If their work standards fall, I will remind them of the relevant rules (to assist them) as opposed to punishment. I prefer to advise them wherever I can. I also observe them at work. They can drink water, coffee or milk during normal 00 to 100 hrs working but not chew gum etc. If I see anyone disobey, I will take the appropriate action as we must be seen to be providing not only effective but also attentive service to the people – and must not be seen to eat snacks

or clean nails, etc., in front of them. These things must not be done. I also do not permit them to wear slippers because it is not a department store. It is important that we are always neat and tidy. I see Civil Servants as leaders of people. If they misbehave, how can the people accept them? I think that all of these things need to improve.

My observation was that Mr Fred was a strict leader who wants his office to look tidy and clean. He is most concerned about his subordinates, a concern that includes their workload and work quality. His overriding concern is to provide total satisfaction for his workforce.

Effective Collaboration

Mr Fred gave me a number of examples of his style of work when collaborating with people and other organisations. He likes to visit others in their offices so that he can arrive at a compromise solution in solving problems. He had a problem with dirty areas within his district and tried to resolve this in a way that would raise the cleanliness factor of his district from number 46 of 50 to somewhere between numbers and 20. His hard working aims were clear to see and he told me of his ambitions to be successful. He was very serious about working with good intent:

> Regarding public cleaning – a second-hand market in my district is owned by a local university, who had responsibility for the cleanliness of this market in the past. This market was evaluated by the BMA Department of Public Cleansing and was assessed as being number 46 out of 50 in a league table of cleanliness. This rating was unacceptable and so I convened a meeting with my employees in order to have them achieve a standard of cleanliness within the to 20 range. From this February onwards we will hand over the duties of cleaning to them. I find that by meeting with people or private organisations, as opposed to staying in my office all the time, I can better and more quickly resolve problems.

Moral Leadership

When I asked Mr Fred to think about improvement of competencies to provide moral leadership in particular – as it was concerned with equity and equality – he smiled a little and then spoke with pride about his district:

> My District is more prosperous than others – and possibly the most prosperous in Thailand. I never force staff and people to comply only with my ideas. I collaborate with nominated representatives of both the private and public sectors if I want to improve safety, footpaths and views, etc. Since I was promoted to become District Director, many things have changed in a business-like way and we feel more responsible than before as told to me by my staff. At the moment, I am collaborating with a public sector organisation to develop a view in a local road. An architect, with the intention that it lasts for a long time, has designed this.

> There are communities where, as a result of lack of opportunities, slums have grown. We meet with members of these communities to discuss this problem, and then what we can do for the slum-dwellers. They can request what they want during these meeting so that I can help them to solve their problems. If I cannot help directly, I will ask the other 1communities to share their ideas to help the community with the problems. This describes my style of working between the private and my public sector.

This suggests that Mr Fred has good connections with other organisations and that he is genuinely concerned about benefiting the people in his district. He was a good all-round developer who acknowledges the need to use his skill of human relationships with other people in order to get people to participate in his ideals.

As far as I was concerned, Mr Fred had not quite answered my question. He had only described his style of working with his subordinates and how to collaborate with other organisations to ask them to help in solving problems. I brought him back to my original question and asked his

opinion again – to elaborate on the need to improve competency or to provide moral leadership, concerned with equity and equality.

> I am like a father to my subordinates and I also love them all. I believe in 'forgive and forget' in the case of subordinates who have under-performed in the past. I give them the chance to start afresh and show that they can learn new skills and perform to my satisfaction in the future. Then they must make themselves aware of the needs of the organisation so that they can achieve the necessary goals. I can forget their poor past performance if they can improve themselves. If I get a chance to improve this skill, it will help me to be more effective in the management of my staff so that they can improve their efficiency. I love everyone equally and want them to feel relaxed to talk about problems so that I can help to solve them which, in turn, will reflect well on the organisation.

Empathetic Understanding

Mr. Fred spoke with confidence and convinced me of his commitment to reach his goals. He also said that he may initially have problems with the residents in setting up the new system for cleaning their area as they had abandoned hope a long time ago. He would attempt to make people understand and participate. I could sense his determination to make this work. When I asked him to talk about the need to improve the understanding of the people in order to satisfy their needs, he stressed the importance of understanding, as well as possible, the needs of all people with whom he was in contact:

> When I ask myself if I understand the needs of the people – I would say that nobody knows their needs entirely. We are aware of our own needs – but not those of others. We will become more aware of their needs by meeting with them to discuss their issues. I invite local businessman to become members of a development committee in this district and to meet with us in order that they can tell us what the people want. They were representative of other local people. Out of this we will then establish the necessary co-operation. Thus, I need to understand people so that I can

give them services to make them satisfied. I am aware that it is difficult to make all people satisfied but it is my duty to offer them service. I always try my best.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

In order to clarify professional development strategies, Mr Fred gave me his opinion on how he sees improvement in his skills and competencies assisting him in his present and future position.

I am always concerned to improve my performance on the job so that I can keep pace with the changing environment. I think that all of the seven items of needs outcome of your research would help me to improve myself and also have a beneficial effect on my organisation. If I can improve my competencies, it will enhance my knowledge to be a good leader of my district. They would help me improve my leadership skill that will most benefit my position.

Mr Fred confirmed that he works hard to improve his personal job performance. He stated that a good District Director should be concerned about the direction of development for the future but in a practical rather than a fancy way. He further confirmed the importance of him making people more aware of the geography of his District, as he was aware that few people knew the District sufficiently well – something that I had suspected. He accepted that most people are aware of the popular shopping areas but not of the less well visited areas. Good leadership should show creative thinking, he said. He continued to give examples of the private sector working as a role model. He said that in the business area, they have to enhance their image by improving their products or expanding their product range in order to increase their overall success.

Later on, during our conversation, Mr Fred said that he would like to see all District Directors change their style of working by adapting to changes in the same way as do private organisations in order to keep pace with the changing environment.

> Administrators must also change to both modernise and improve their organisation. We have to open our minds to new knowledge and must improve our skills all the time. We should not think that what we have done is ever good enough. We have to be continually creative to be more effective.

It seemed to me that Mr. Fred was keen to improve his working life by following the private sector ways; at the same time he still wanted his group of District Directors to change their management style in order to improve their effectiveness of working in the same way as private organisations. I appreciated hearing that he could open his mind to learn new knowledge that would benefit his organisation in future.

I asked Mr Fred's opinion on professional development strategies that he believed would promote these needs. Again, he spoke confidently. He still took training programs seriously in order to benefit from classroom training that might have an effect on his district. In particular, he wanted to bring new knowledge to apply to his job so that he would be able to reach the required aims of the BMA in the future.

> Actually there are many ways of learning, such as training programs, learning in university or by seminar. Of course, I think we should have a training course to learn all of the seven items that we need to improve our on-job performance. I think a training course in the classroom would be appropriate for us – especially we should get together and also strictly provide time to attend classes. I think that a training program can provide us with knowledge and skill needs for our present job. It will also be of benefit in acquiring the capability of achieving the goals of the BMA.

As he had extensive experience of previous training classes, I asked him to think about the methodology that he wished to see in his future training programs. I then told him to describe a typical training class that he thinks would be appropriate for his position and would enable him to improve his competencies as his needs dictate.

> I think we have wide experience of problems in our workplace, so we can share them together within our group. Trainers should list each item individually, such as improving the competency to be a leading organisation and discuss them with us, and so on. Trainers should encourage District Directors to share ideas together and let us ask questions if we have any. I want to carry out fact-finding to see where other organisations are successful, particularly in the private sector.

Successful Training

Mr. Fred commented on the group of trainers that he wants to see taking training classes in future. He also talked to me about the necessary elements of successful trainers, appropriate to his level.

> The trainer is the most important person to deliver information to us. I would like to see successful businessmen or civil servants who can give knowledge to me so that I can apply it to develop my district more successfully. Thus, I should maintain my awareness of problems both within my own organisation and also of outside organisations – particularly in the field of international improvement. Therefore, I need expert trainers who can bring knowledge to improve my district area appropriate to their environment. This is my aspiration.

I was particularly interested to hear Mr Fred's aspirations with regard to trainers in future. It seemed that he wanted to express his feelings about his experiences of trainers whom he had seen in training classes before. He told that he was dissatisfied with them all while attending class and related a story pertaining to the quality of trainers in the past.

> In fact I made comment about trainers before. In the past, some trainers were not good speakers. Some had only academic experience. Others were experienced practically but were not good on the practical side. Some were only good communicators. This all made us very confused! For example, I once attended a training class about the subject 'Wealth of a Nation'. The trainer was good in theory, but all he did was to read the book for us throughout the whole training class. We could all could do this for ourselves! (laugh) In fact he should have told us how to practice what was written in the book, how to confront and solve problems mentioned and also should share his experiences with us. However, he never mentioned any of this at all.

I could sense that Mr Fred had felt uncomfortable attending training courses in the past. Then, he described to me the group of trainers who he wishes to see as his dream for the future.

> I would like to have trainers who are experts in both theory and practice and also have knowledge to pass on to us. I think that a person who has all these attributes might be difficult to find but this is what I would like to see in my trainer for future programs.

Problems with Training

It was useful detail for my research to hear Mr. Fred express his feelings about problems with trainers in the past. Despite him speaking seriously about some of his experiences in training classes, he remained smiling throughout. This helped to make us both feel relaxed as we continued our discussion. He gave me his opinion of trainers in the past and he told me that the people whom he had seen were not qualified enough to be his trainers. He wishes to have trainers who can understand both theoretical and practical matters - and can provide information and answer questions that he might ask. He accepted that there were many problems in his district and it would be appreciated if trainers could guide him towards resolutions of these problems. He said that trainers must be executives and know how to manage

in their organisations so that they can share their experiences with him. He believed that this would be of benefit to his job rather than listening to only theory from them. Otherwise, he stated that he wanted to bring new knowledge to adapt to solve problems so that local people would be satisfied with his services.

> In the past I have been in conflict with some trainers as they were more theoretical – as opposed to me being a practical person. They preach theory but I need to know about practice. For example, Civil Servants cannot misinterpret laws and regulations and so they should be clear and unambiguous. Many times my staff have brought me papers to read as they were unsure how to interpret the content – and did not want to be dishonest by 'inventing' their own interpretation. In my opinion, we must solve all problems to make the people satisfied. So I think that we should have flexibility to work as appropriate.

Duration of Training Programs

I asked Mr Fred to talk to me about the duration of training programs that he felt was appropriate to him. At first he did not want to be precise about the duration of class attendance. I then asked that he give me his opinion on the duration of the necessary training, appropriate to his position. I suggested that he alone would know best about this and that he could pass on his opinions to executives of the BMA for their consideration in the future. He smiled and answered frankly and extensively:

> As all District Directors have different levels of knowledge, I think we should all learn individually. I do not want to restrict the duration of training programs in case they might be more beneficial than I imagine. I may want to study a subject for six months, one year or even two years – or whatever is necessary to make the training successful for the organisation. So, time is not important for me and I am willing to learn also. In summary – to make the training program appropriate to my needs, I think that training classes, relating to the outcomes of the questionnaire and its seven items, should last at least 15 days.

Additionally, Mr Fred thought that training courses were important and that all District Directors must attend classes continuously. I was interested to hear this and that he was keen to improve his performance to the continual benefit of his organisation. Also, he had experienced problems of comprehension on the part of individual District Directors and felt that they needed to get together so that they might share their understandings of common matters of concern. I felt that he had many things on his mind and wanted to express his feelings to me again. I, as the researcher and a good listener, encouraged him to elucidate on these:

> Since everything changes – even laws, regulations, environment etc. – we should keep ourselves up to date all of the time. Regarding some aspects that may be difficult for me to accept; I have no choice but to open my mind to accept new things. If all District Directors can adapt to changes and accept them, it will be better all round. It is a fact that we can read the same law but have different interpretations of it when putting it into practice in the 50 Districts. I suggest that there should be a plan for working support by BMA whenever new laws or regulations are launched to District Directors. A full explanation of the new regulations should be given in order that they all understand and implement it in the same way. It will reduce problems if we can get this training on any new legislation etc. – perhaps lasting a half day or one day as appropriate.

Mr Fred then told me of his belief that if he attends training classes with his group of District Directors, he could bring new knowledge and methodology to be implemented in his District in future.

> I think we should be educated on all new and relevant knowledge that will apply to our work and also in accordance with new laws and methodology.

Training Venues

I asked Mr Fred's opinion about possible venues as well as when he wished to attend training classes. Initially, he did not want to be specific, but then he changed his mind and gave this opinion:

> I can attend class anywhere in Bangkok. I have attended classes that BMA provided before. It will be appropriate enough for me to attend class anywhere that the BMA would provide again. We have many places to set up training classes for Civil Servants employed by the BMA. I can also attend class anytime – depending on the instructions of the Executives of the BMA.

Reflection

I noticed that Mr Fred was very serious when answering all of my questions. At the same time, he remained smiling. Clearly, he was both relaxed and was enjoying his discussion with me on this subject. I was interested to know his opinions and ideas of training classes that he thought might be appropriate and that he would like to see in the future.

I felt that Mr Fred had been particularly open with me, and that he had felt free to ensure that I had seen his point of views in thinking about his desire to improve his job performance in the future. He is a District Director who is concerned about change, preferring a private sector style of working and never giving up on problems. At the same time, he seeks new knowledge and solutions to cope with problems. He believes in training programs that can help him to improve his skills and competency needs – and, in particular, he sees the need to attend classes at the same time as his group of District Directors so that he and his colleagues can understand the same things together. i.e. that they should learn collaboratively and cooperatively.

Mr Fred confirmed with me that he looked forward to having training classes in the future in order to improve his on-job performance. He sought the support of the Executive of the BMA to look favourably upon his requests and to provide the necessary support.

Mr. Bill's Narrative

Mr. Bill has worked in this district for years. He was a representative District Director of a small district, established following an analysis of population statistics. As this district office was located on small area of land, it had no car park available for visitors. The buildings reminded me of many old schools that used to belong to the BMA. Despite the age of this district, I was afforded the same welcoming smile from the Civil Servants who worked there. I had been aware of this district for a long time as it was on the way home for me when I used to return to my old home when I was young. Mr. Bill returned all of his three rounds of the questionnaires to me before the deadline, listing the professional development needs in regard to managing and maintaining his current and future position. I never had to phone to him to ask him to return them to me, but he did phone to me to ask for more clarification of the instructions to fill in the questionnaire in round This proved to me that he spent his time taking seriously his answers for my research. I was also very appreciative of what he said and his opinions given on this research.

Upon receiving the completed questionnaires (rounds) from all of the fifty District Directors, nine were randomly selected thereafter – and Mr Bill was one who accepted my invitation to be interviewed. I was very pleased and excited to meet him because he demonstrated his intention to improve skills and competencies by giving the highest scores on the scale (1-10) on my questionnaires previously. He also told me that he had a strong belief in improving his on job performance. With regard to this survey, he was so serious about it that he never changed his ideas throughout – from the responses he gave in the rounds up until now. He obviously has always had fixed and firm views of the subject – having given it such thought from the outset. He was so satisfied with the completeness and thoroughness of the

questionnaire that he did not feel the need to suggest alterations or additions to it.

I had a late appointment to meet Mr Bill in his office that day – at 16:00 hrs – as he was so busy. I arrived there early, as it was convenient for me to do so. Although he was still busy when I arrived, he permitted me to meet with him for the interview, after his secretary informed him about my arrival. He kindly did not keep me waiting despite the fact I had arrived there early. It was obvious by his unkempt hair and rolled-up shirt-sleeves that he was still working, rolling them down upon commencement of our conversation. Possibly he was working overtime. He gave me a warm smile and said he was glad to meet me. He was nice and obviously felt confident to answer my interview questions. He revealed his high aspirations to improve his skills and competencies. He always spoke frankly with me and gave me his own firm opinions, including his hopes to make his dream come true. This was a relaxed interview because of his open mind and willingness to talk about himself. I commenced by outlining the framework of my research and the anticipated benefits of this research and how his participation may help the administrators of the BMA better understand the interests and needs of all District Directors to improve their job performance. He was very much interested in my research study. Then he said 'I answered all three rounds of your questionnaires honestly and hope they will be of benefit for your research'. I was impressed by what he said as took time to collect the data for all rounds of the survey – yet he still remembered this project. I then thanked him for his contributing of all of the data and also for providing his valuable opinions. We talked for a while both before and after the interview and I was told many things by him that he requested I do not include in this paper. He asked me to bring the completed dissertation to him so that he can learn what other colleagues thought and see the opinions given in this project.

Mr Bill and I spent 45 minutes interviewing without interruptions from either his staff or the telephone. His room was very quiet and he did not switch his walkie-talkie on at all, as did other District Directors whom I had

interviewed before. As he was still working, I saw many documents awaiting his signature. Since our appointment to meet was late, I asked his permission to interview by also using audiotape to record his voice while we were discussing the subject. To commence the interview, I informed him about the aims and objectives of this study, the strict confidentiality of his responses and that there was no right or wrong opinions. I asked him to open his mind and feel free to speak with me. I then gave him a set of semi-structured interviews that shows the consensus of the opinions of the District Directors, that Mr. Bill and his colleagues believe are needed to improve their skills and competencies as identified by the seven items of the Delphi survey. I asked him to discuss the seven items of professional development needs and to give me his opinion as to why these needs were important to him. I asked that he discuss each item and for as long as he wanted.

Organisational Leadership

Mr Bill seemed to listen to each question carefully. Although he was smiling, he did not hesitate to assure me of the need to improve his skills and competencies. He was very enthusiastic and told me of his dream to improve those competencies that will help in future. He hopes the BMA will help him to improve the skills and competencies that he requires. He aspires to be a good District Director that people dream about – and expanded on this by saying:

> If I have this new competency and skill, I will become the ideal District Directors – that, to date, the people have only dreamt of having. It is important that we improve as many of our needs as we are able to. That is my aim. Our success in improving our performance and knowledge for present and future District Directors will in part depend on us getting the necessary support and direction from the BMA. It seems that there is indeed room for improvement in these areas of skill and competency in order to raise the standards of District Directors. My aspirations are to improve all of them in terms of the seven items listed. The answers given

to you in your questionnaire were in this spirit. Indeed if we do have all of these new-found attributes we will finally be the District Directors that, to date, the people have only dreamt of having! It is therefore vital that we do improve ourselves in terms of the seven items whether we personally believe in them or not.

I smiled and thought what brilliant ideas he had! He proved that he wanted to be an ideal District Director for his residents by speaking confidently. Later he mentioned that all these needs were important to him and he thought that his colleagues had the same ideas as he did, generally. He also thought that everyone responded to my questionnaires in exactly the same way. So I informed him that they answered my questionnaire in a variety of ways in all of three rounds of the Delphi survey. The majority of the District Directors had given a consensus of their opinions to improve their skills and competencies as shown in the set of semi-structured interviews that I had given him. Some District Directors had their own independent ideas that differed from the others. Mr. Bill again confirmed that all these needs were important for the District Directors to have in order to make the local people satisfied by their performance. Of course, it was nice to hear that he seemed to be concerned about people under his responsibility all the time.

Of course – but overall, these competencies are what are needed in order to fulfil the dreams of both our people and those of the District Directors themselves.

Effective and Efficient Service

Mr. Bill showed his enthusiasm to me while giving me his opinions about each item to improve his competency to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service which would be of benefit to his position and for the local people in future. He was concerned to

provide better services to his residents. He also wanted to have knowledge to improve his staff to work more effectively in this regard.

> I need to administer clearly and quickly to ensure the provision of an effective service. I must provide effective service for all people. In this regard, I want to have more knowledge and learn techniques to improve myself how to provide quicker and more effective services to them whenever they have problems. I am concerned about the 'service mind' that my staff and I need to have- no matter how many jobs we undertake. I told my staff to remain 'service minded' even when they have a lot of work to do each day. I want the people to be impressed with our services and trust us that we can help them to solve their problems.

Emotional Maturity

Mr. Bill revealed that it was not easy to control his emotions – especially as he is so busy every day. He wanted to improve his skill so that his working hard will not affect his emotions. He can see this item being necessary for himself so that he can confront any problems and solve them effectively. At that time he appeared serious before saying:

> Despite my many responsibilities and heavy workload I must at all times remain mature and often keep my feelings to myself in front of my staff, even if I am dissatisfied by something. Perhaps I will reprimand a member of staff who is underperforming. Often it is not easy to control my emotion but I must try. Despite this, I must always try to maintain a good working relationship with my staff and the people.

Interpersonal Skills

Mr. Bill began by outlining his general responsibilities in order that his specific function would be clearer to me. He smiled from time to time during our discussion. It was of immense value to me to hear his opinion that he needs to improve his skills and competencies to improve his on-job

performance. He also gave me his valued opinions and reasons as to why he needs to improve his skill to establish good human relationships.

> As a result I have to meet a wide variety of people and I therefore need to have good relationships with them all. Whenever any of them have problems they come to me for a solution. I may not help them directly, but I will delegate my responsibility to the appropriate member of staff. That is to say – if they have a problem relating to the Environment or Sanitation, I will direct them to that particular department. Nevertheless, I also must have good a human relationship with my staff so that they can help me to work and also to solve problems for the people. They must provided good service to them all equally.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. Bill used the term 'people participation' to describe his working style. This means that through personal interaction he can learn from them. It was good that he could use his skill to strengthen collaboration with local people to solve problems together. He also attempts to help them and improve their lives. Yet, to his credit, he still aspires to further improve his skill and competencies to better deal with problems. He believes in lifelong learning and wants to implement the operational strategy assigned by The Governor.

> I shall mediate between people with problems to ensure smooth and effective collaboration. We must depend on each other, as I need their input to help me solve problems by advising on available resources etc. It could be said that I need people participation. For example, when we are presented with drug problems – they can inform me of the place of manufacture of these drugs, if known.

Moral Leadership

Later, Mr. Bill explained to me why he needs to improve his skill in the item of providing moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. His

answers proved to me that he was a District Director who was concerned about his subordinates and to be fair to everyone. He tried to understand them without bias.

> I must maintain moral leadership that is concerned with both equity and equality. I respect all of my subordinates but must ensure that I neither favour nor discriminate. I always give them a second chance if their work has not been to my satisfaction. I also cannot deny that their heavy workload might contribute to mistakes being made.

Empathetic Understanding

Mr. Bill seemed to be concerned about his local people in that he considers the offering of welfare services to be part of his duty. He wanted to ensure their satisfaction with the services that he provides. Then, he told me about the aspects of his work that needs to be improved in terms of the competencies so that he can use the new knowledge to become more understanding of the local people's needs in future. He indicated that his style of working in getting the people's participation would help him to become more aware and solve problems more effectively.

> Of course I want to understand the people to satisfy their needs – but I wonder how this can be most effectively achieved. Naturally I am made aware of people problems when they come to our offices and I can then meet them. However, I cannot always wait in my office for them to come to me – so I must go out to meet them in their own environment. This makes the need for continuous learning greater – in order that their problems can be solved on an ongoing basis. I think I should learn more about the social and cultural lives of the Bangkok residents – especially in my own district – so that I can attempt to improve their quality of life, improve security and provide them with a more comfortable life.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

Mr Bill's answers interested me and I felt every pleased that this research may help him to improve his needs in future. He did show his willingness to change to become a better leader for both his subordinates and the people. He also wanted to administer more effectively his Executive assignments. He has a lot of responsibilities and needs to develop his competencies to support his work. Then I courteously brought him back to my original question. 'Can you tell how all these competency needs are important for your position in both the present and future?' As all of these items were important for him, he then commented comprehensively on all of the competencies.

> A District Director is principally a leader of a district. I therefore think that the requirements of all seven items must be satisfied, as they are vital to our improvement. My aspirations are to improve all of them in terms of the seven items listed. My position is that of a leader of staff and the local people in this district. I represent the Civil Servants, Executives of the BMA and the Governor of the BMA. Thus, any improvement in my leadership will be important to our success in the present and future. I have many responsibilities in the workplace such as in local Government, community development, public cleaning, revenue collection etc. In fact my District is divided into 10 sections, and we must take care of the local people.

Mr Bill gave an example of his efforts that had failed in the past, owing to the lack of service mind skills of his staff. He thought that they needed a better understanding of their remit and that a training program may help them to improve their on job performance. I then asked him to think about professional development strategies that he believes are necessary to improve his needs.

As I said, I must be supported, via Training Programs, by the BMA because I believe it can improve my on job performance. I believe that all of the District Directors should attend 7 training courses – one for each of the items. Improvements in these 7 areas are necessary from time to time so that the new knowledge gained can be put to best effect in future. To that end, a Training program is very important. If suitable Training Programs can be provided, I believe that we can improve our skills and competencies to the benefit of the workplace and in turn the local population.

Successful Training

I was still smiling because of his confirming that he could see benefits arising from my research. As having effective trainers is important for all trainees, I asked Mr Bill his opinion on the selection of trainers to improve his skills and competencies. He has had experience of training programs in the past, and could therefore share his ideas as to how best select trainers for him in future. He seemed serious when mentioning this group of people as he was unsatisfied with training programs in the past. Since he has a nice nature he thinks deeply about the local people and how he should learn about them in depth – in order that he can provide services to their entire satisfaction. Later he told me his opinions on the selection of trainers for improving the competencies in particular.

I would like to see expert academic trainers who can share their experiences with us. Experience is a must – as if they lack experience they will have no understanding of the job and will also be unable to answer questions. I believe that persons selected from both the Public and Private sectors and/or Politicians with the relevant experience and success in their field, will be suitable candidates for the position of Trainers. Perhaps there is no need for them to be qualified to degree standard as their experience with working in the public arena will more than make up for this and enable them to adequately share their experiences. They could advise on the history of the area and the localisation of the people. Believe it or not –

> despite there being many training programs, none include reference to local history or localisation of the people.

It is vital that we know as much about the people as possible in order that we can better understand them and deal with their problems accordingly.

He then suggested that this topic be added to the training program to improve his competencies in future. He thought that all District Directors should learn about the history and localisation of Bangkok, including the history of the whole central region. We discussed this for a while. Then I asked his opinion about appropriateness of the training methods to be used for training programs for him in future.

> Perhaps we can glean knowledge from Case Studies, such as of those of my District. As I am the District Director of this district I can share my experiences with them. I want to have relationships with my neighbouring districts. Of course trainers must provide academic knowledge and we can then share our ideas as a workshop. Trainers should give us assignments so that we can present our work in front of the class. If we can improve our knowledge and skills in terms of the Training Program by learning together in class – we will feel closer to our colleagues and therefore relationships will also improve.

Problems with Training

The more Mr Bill and I spoke, the more he showed his resolve to develop his competencies – as his aspiration. He wanted the training class for District Directors to be on the same lines as that of The National Defence course, provided by the National Defence College of Thailand. I asked him to clarify why he prefers to have a long training course to improve his competencies and how he felt that would be appropriate to himself and his career. I then asked – 'Please talk to me about the reasons why you need the training on all seven items to last for 7 to 8 months'.

> We have many training programs in place but never before have we had one specifically for District Directors. Many District Directors have attended, and passed, the Senior Executives Training Course, although this was specifically designed for any level 8 Civil Servants. It was held over a period of to months but in my opinion this was not a broad enough spread. It should have been over a period of 7 months, as is the training program for the National Defence College of Thailand. We require appropriate time to hold this training program and not a short course such as provided by the BMA in the past. Upon conclusion of this course I think we will reach the desired levels of competence.

Mr. Bill gave me useful information that may be of benefit for my research and help the BMA understand him and his subordinates better. He gave me brief details of his experiences of working when he felt awkward about tasks provided by the BMA previously, for which no training programs had been implemented for his subordinates prior to them starting work. That is what makes people unsatisfied by their poor services. The he reconfirmed the training program as being important to make District Directors work more effectively.

> In the past, whenever we are assigned a task by the BMA we were never provided with training, thereby reducing our potential for success. We have a new system in place called 'One stop service', but this still does not provide the success we want as often staff do not understand their job and cannot concentrate on their work. As a result we are often criticised by the people for our poor service. It is therefore necessary that they improve their knowledge and skills to better understand the job and work more efficiently together.

Duration of Training Programs

As Mr Bill was a busy man with many responsibilities to undertake, I was uncertain that he could attend a training course of such long duration. I then repeated my question relating to the class duration but he still re-confirmed

his answer as he though it necessary for his position. In thinking of the Training Course for the seven items, how long do you feel should be the course duration?

> I made a comparison between the National Defence College of Thailand and the Senior Executive Training Program. I believe that a course of an overall duration of 7 months will suffice in order to satisfactorily cover all the seven items deemed necessary to improve the competencies of the District Directors. In the past the Senior Executive Training program lasted for only months. I see attendance at the new course to be at least 7 months to ensure that the necessary competencies are improved.

He appeared dissatisfied if someone suggested that District Directors have no time to attend class. His intent and aim is to improve his efficiency such that he can more easily and effectively carry out the Governor's Assignments. He obviously believed that the training program to improve his skills and competencies could achieve the goals of The Governor. He has two Assistant District Directors to supervise the workplace and carry out his duties while he is away. He also indicated that there should be training programs for them so that they can also improve their competencies. He also gave an example of a 'real situation'. I asked him to clarify further his views on the Training Program.

> I have often heard it said that whilst District Directors have many responsibilities, they have no time for Training Programs. This is not good. We need a Training Program to change this – which will relate to the work assigned by the Director of the BMA. For example, the BMA Governor has established an operational strategy for the BMA organisation. As each District Directors have different ideas, they will also have their own directions in which to go in order to implement the policy of the Governor. I would ask, 'do we have Assistant District Directors?' The answer is 'yes' – and so we can delegate work to them while I am away. This will also provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their performance when working without my influence. I think that we must implement a Training Course to become more knowledgeable in terms of the seven items – but

supported by a strategic policy of the BMA. In fact, they should also attend the Training Course for District Directors as they work for me and therefore perform similar duties. I would like to give you an example, in that I can understand English but my staff cannot. This means that I have no people who work for me who can communicate in English. Another benefit would be that teamwork would improve as both District Directors and their Assistants would attend identical courses – with the result that they will all be pulling in the same direction to produce maximum benefits.

In addition, Mr Bill mentioned that his assistants should attend the training program in preparation for their promotion to District Director in future. I appreciated his admiration of my research in that it appears to show benefit for him and his organisation. He wanted to see this training program set up for the group of District Directors as soon as possible. Then he came up with the idea that he wanted the BMA to arrange training programs for candidates for the position of District Director so that they can prepare themselves prior to their promotion. I then let him speak freely without interruption so that he could reflect on his ideas that will benefit his Executive in future. I could almost touch his feeling that he realised the importance of training programs for District Directors, in that they would learn how to be good leaders within the organisation.

> We should have as many Training Courses as is deemed necessary. A program should be initiated to prepare Assistant District Directors to become full District Directors – and also one for District Directors themselves. District Directors come from a variety of occupations and have different degrees. Indeed anyone can be promoted to the position of District Director. Some of them have no idea about the function or responsibilities of a District Director as they had come from different backgrounds in their previous jobs. This is a good example of how a Training Course of 7 months would be of benefit to them. In fact your research to establish training needs of District Directors is similar to that of the SWOT analysis used to survey the marketing needs used in the Private Sector. We should do likewise. The needs of District Directors to improve

their job performance should be set against the Training Program after their appointment – as the need is for them to have time to attend the class, understand the subject and finally bring their new-found skills and knowledge to the benefit of their job.

Training Venues

It was so late for Mr Bill and I now had to consider his return to work. So – finally I asked his opinion about the venue of the training programs in future. He seemed to think that the venue did not matter because he was more concerned about the class for his training. Eventually, he told me that because of a general lacking in teamwork skills, it will be appropriate to get training and stay overnight together so that relationships among his group of District Director can strengthen.

> Actually I can go anywhere either in Bangkok or to other provinces. We have many venues for such training classes – that the BMA can provide. If you asked me to choose, I would say that Bangkok would be appropriate for training programs. Then we should go to other provinces on fact finding missions. We need to learn with each other as a learning participation exercise. The whole class should stay overnight together. We must keep an accurate register of those who attend and those who are absent. I think if we need to improve our competencies, then we must be strict on attendance also. Absenteeism cannot be avoided completely, but we should aim for no less than 80% attendance in class over the duration of the program. I would like to say that more that teamwork is strongly considered as part of the BMA improvement scheme – as this skill is currently lacking. Then the theory of building of this teamwork can be learned, also supported by Academic Training.

Reflection

Mr Bill showed his keenness to have training courses for his colleagues. He also told me that if everyone attends the class at the same time, relationships

between his groups would strengthen. In addition to this, he said that he wanted to see training classes supported by the BMA as soon as possible. He wanted to have continuous training courses and re-confirmed that he wanted the local people to feel proud of him in that he can discharge his responsibilities effectively. During the interview, I noticed that Mr. Bill was always very concerned both about his subordinates and the local people. He had a strong belief in improving his on job performance and to become a good leader of his district. He kindly told me about problems in his workplace and how he could cope with them. We discussed this for a while. Then he continued by saying that his idea of a strategy by the use of a training program, covering the needs of competencies to the benefit of the District Directors, would be important and also necessary. After I switched off my audiotape, we talked more about his job – his likes and dislikes. I soon realised that he did not want me to show his feelings on my research and asked me not to do so. I gave him morale to continue with his good work so that he will achieve his goal in future.

Mr. Brad's Narrative

This was another day I looked forward to so much, as I was at last to meet Mr Brad, a District Director with whom I had spoken twice on the telephone regarding the processes of the Delphi Survey – and so I felt that I knew him already. As there was a delay in the return of the Delphi Survey round one data collection from him, I was obliged to call to him to establish the reason for this. By coincidence, he was working on my questionnaire when he answered my call. Mr. Brad apologised that he could not return my questionnaire on time as he was so busy and also that he did not initially receive it. Nevertheless he was very willing to answer. Another reason he gave for not returning it to me on time was that he preferred to take time to think carefully about every item and that research of this nature will benefit his position in both the present and future. He was able to tell me there and

then that it would be returned to me very soon. As had happened before, he had not received round two of my questionnaire – so I had to re-send it to him. Later he called to me to discuss some aspects of his answers to the round one survey and in particular the principles of Quartiles and Medians, as referenced in round two of the survey. He felt that he had made a mistake in this area and wanted to revise his answers after I had clarified it to him. He told me he thought that I wanted the competencies ranked from most to least important. I explained to him about the process of the Delphi survey and that he should not worry about his answer at this stage as he can review and revise his answers in rounds two and three later. We talked on the telephone for approximately 30 minutes until he was clear about the questionnaire. During the same call I asked when he thought he might finish the questionnaire and return it to me. He said that he wanted to complete it after our call and also that it was easy to do. Then I would get his feedback by post two days later. As he already had the round three questionnaire, he would be able to return it to me on time. Mr. Brad was a nice, talkative and kind man. From his accent I could easily tell that he came from another province – later to be confirmed to me by him. He opened his mind while we talked and I felt honoured to realise that he took seriously all of the rounds of my questionnaire. He was so kind to permit me to contact him if I had problems with his answers.

Mr Brad was representative of a small sample district established by a population survey. He had worked in this district for approximately three months. On 28 December 2004, we made an appointment to meet for this semi-structured interview and I was excited to meet him face to face. That same day, I was to meet Mr. Sam first and intended to meet Mr. Brad at 14:00 hrs as previously arranged. I received a telephone call from Mr. Brad's secretary to inform me that he could not meet me at the appointed time as he had urgent work to which he had to attend. I replied by advising that I had just finished my interview with Mr. Sam and could go to his office earlier. He agreed to this and so I immediately drove to his office and arrived there at

11:00 hrs. When I arrived there Mr. Brad was still meeting with his subordinates – so his secretary asked me to wait. I waited for approximately 30 minutes. This district is located on the way to the southern provinces of Thailand. As I had already established the directions to this district, it was easy for me to find my way there. As I waited for Mr. Brad, I noticed that the staff who worked outside of his room were busy but happy in their work. They were familiar with my name, as they had seen it often in connection with my sending of the questionnaires.

Finally I was able to meet Mr. Brad after his meeting finished. He was surprised when he saw me for the first time as he thought I looked much younger than he had expected. He said that, as far as he was concerned, people who study for a Doctoral Degree looked much older and wore glasses! We laughed about this for a while. I naturally thanked him for his admiration. The atmosphere was relaxed and I very much enjoyed discussing my research study with him. We laughed from time to time, which made for a much more light-hearted interview. Nevertheless, he took seriously his answers to all of my interview questions. His answers were open and honest and will hopefully benefit my dissertation and also in turn the BMA. We spent approximately hour for the interview. There were many interruptions by telephone while we were talking but as he was enjoying our interview so much, he ignored them! I saw many documents on his desk awaiting his signature but he still made space for my tape recorder and papers etc. Our conversation took place around this desk. Prior to commencement of the interview, I explained the framework of this dissertation and then asked permission to record his voice. I also asked him to speak freely and for as long as he wanted. We discussed his work in general, until I observed that he was beginning to relax more and then I started to ask the same questions that I had put to other District Directors previously.

Organisational Leadership

Mr Brad gave his opinions as to why the skills and competencies of leading an organisation, as identified by the Delphi survey, were important to him and his personal improvement. He spoke to me very confidentially about the overall picture regarding his needs. His answers related more to the skills and competencies that should be improved in order that his staff have more respect for him in terms of his reliability.

> A District Director is a leader of a district. There are 10 sections in the district. Therefore, there are a variety of jobs in the district office. My staff have specific skills and knowledge of each of their disciplines. Thus, the person in the position of leader of the administration should be acknowledged by his or her subordinates as important. This means that they must accept what is told to them and carry out their duties whenever they receive an assignment from me. I, as leader, should have my own ideas and be mature in the principles of work to render them acceptable when I provide information, so that they can easily understand what is required of them.

Effective and Efficient Service

Mr. Brad told me that he wanted to provide effective service for all people rapidly and transparently, when I asked his opinion as to why he needs to improve skills per item At that time he spoke like a lecturer in a classroom, but kept smiling all the time.

> I am constantly trying to improve myself and also my subordinates' performance on job. I want to be able to provide service rapidly and transparently to people whenever I offer to solve their problems. I try to improve my staff so that they can provide effective service to the people. As I have limited time and many problems to address each day, I have found that this also gives us a problem in attempting to suit everyone. I think that this I something we need to improve. If I notice staff

ineffectiveness I always bring this to their attention. I monitor their work-in-progress and especially those who have been under-performing. As the leader of the organisation, I must be trusted by my subordinates – in that I will perform in accordance with the rules and laws. As their boss, I must maintain credibility and be seen to be obeying the laws and regulations in order that I can gain their trust and ensure their participation with me. At present, anyone can be promoted to District Director – not just those who have graduated in law and administration faculty – as was the case in the past. In addition, I have a variety of responsibilities as well as being an administrator of the district – in that I must make contact with many people outside my organisation. In Bangkok we have an excellent communications system whereby my bosses can monitor me in the event of an accident or bad event in my district – and how I react and respond.

Emotional Maturity

Mr. Brad still mentioned that he wanted his subordinates to accept his advice and follow him. Then he said that he had many responsibilities and sometimes he could not complete his job alone and this made him feel irritable. So he was concerned about controlling his emotions while communicating with other people to get their collaboration. He spoke confidently and with a loud voice while giving his opinions to me in respect of this competency.

> Having so much work on my shoulders, I must to manage my work well. I must demonstrate and show maturity in my work principles in order that I can encourage my staff participation, to ensure that they accept and fully understand my advice and guidance – in order that they can operate effectively. Actually, the attribute of being mature is necessary for me to have as I have a lot of work to do each day. I must control my emotions, which is difficult to do – but I have to remain calm when speaking with my staff or people in other organisations to explain problems and ask them to collaborate to help to solve them. I want to be a good role model for my staff to follow.

Interpersonal Skills

Later, Mr Brad also told me what he had changed within the workplace to make his subordinates collaborate to work and improve their human relationships together. He proved that he was a true Executive and was concerned about leadership to make them provide more effective service.

> I think that good human relationship between my staff and me is very important to make our work more effective. Before I took charge of this district they rarely held meetings. Nor did they involve each other or co-operate with each other effectively. To address this, I implemented a system of weekly meetings, held every Tuesday, so that they could better understand what was going on in the department and with each other's jobs. This appears to have been successful in that some heads of section have been promoted to Assistant District Director, after becoming more aware of their duties, and may eventually be promoted to full District Director in the future. So, they should be aware of problems in order to assess what training is necessary. Should they be aware of only their own function, we will discuss general problems at these meetings, in much the same way as at a training class. They can learn to advise people who have problems of losing their residence registration. Then my staff can recommend which documents to bring to replace the registration. It can also be said that then training and knowledge given at these meetings will stand them in good stead when transferring to another position or being promoted etc. Participants can exchange ideas and experiences during these meetings – including me too!

Effective Collaboration

Mr. Brad continuously told me that he had many problems in his district and also he said that he must be versatile to solve those problems. I let him speak freely without interruption to make him feel relaxed. He gave me many examples of problems that had happened in his real life. A very long conversation followed. Whilst he continued telling me his stories, I noticed that he kept smiling. He showed his enthusiasm to work and resolve each

problem. It was such a good conversation that he opened his mind to me – and soon I became aware of his style of working and how he collaborates more with others. I selected some parts of the conversation to illustrate as appropriate.

> I meet a variety of people and of course, they have many problems and I must provide welfare services to them. I need to be aware of the problems of each community – such as drugs and those communities with problems of stagnant, polluted water that can transmit disease. I then visit them to discuss and hopefully solve their problems. In fact I should not wait for them to inform me. I must look around regularly to see where these water-borne problems exist and then I can take the appropriate action before the health problems develop. There are many construction sites such as those in the process of building a new bridge over a canal. Removal and re-deposition of soil caused pools of water to appear as drainage was affected. This in turn resulted in the water becoming polluted and we then saw an increase in the number of people contracting hemorrhagic fever. They were given pills to counteract this fever. However, a more long-term solution had to be found. It was our belief that the Striped Mosquito, living in the stagnant water, caused this problem. Frequent water changes were seen as the way forward – as we believed that this would prevent 90% of the cases of fever. This was a very real problem that we had. You know… there are two canals in my district. In October and November, during the rainy season, staff always close every drainage door. At that time I became aware that there was an increase of 2in people contracting hemorrhagic fever in this district.

Later Mr Brad gave me more detail relating to his concerns in collaboration with other people and organisations to solve problems for his residents. At that time, he showed his pleasure to tell me his story in that at last he could solve problems for the people.

> Since I was aware of this problem I did not ignore it. I then arranged a joint meeting so that we could solve this problem together. I suggested to them that they should drain the water off. I also made them see my analogy with high tide and ebb tide. They responded to me by saying that if it was

raining with the drainage doors open at the same time, we may get flooding. Immediately I told them that hemorrhagic fever could kill people but nobody has died because of flooding. Especially as the water takes time to rise, we can then close the doors in time. Since they followed my suggestions, we have found that the number of patients who get hemorrhagic fever has decreased to 6 persons. It proved that my recommendation was correct. This is just example of how I collaborate with my staff (and the people) to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions to solve problems.

Moral Leadership

I appreciated hearing Mr Brad's story about his work experiences when he had collaborated with other people – especially as he could illustrate to me his advice in solving problems for the people. Then I asked him to give me his opinions on why he needs to improve his competency per item 5: to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. He was a good District Director who was always concerned about his subordinates by monitoring their work and is also happy to become involved their work by giving his advice to make jobs successful.

> I am always concerned about my subordinates and other people's feelings – not so those who misbehave! Those who have bad behaviour must be punished in some way – but that would depend on the gravity of their misdemeanour. I must maintain moral leadership without discrimination. Even though I have many staff working for me, I always monitor their work and am concerned to improve their on-job performance to increase their work effectiveness. I would love to give them advice to improve their success on their jobs with equity and equality. Of course I must improve my own skills and if I have variety of knowledge, then I will be more confident to share my ideas with staff and this I am concerned about so much.

Empathetic Understanding

Mr. Brad proved that he was a good leader who was very willing to improve his job performance, especially to the benefit of the people and that would significantly affect the BMA. He was very serious in giving me answers when I asked him to discuss item 7 of understanding the people in order to satisfy their needs. Can you tell me why this competency important to you?

> To understand my job, I must also understand what local people want. When I assign staff to deal with problems of the people, I must first ensure that they respect me in order that they perform correctly and well and in the interests of the people. We often hold staff meetings to air our grievances and establish our mutual understanding. At these meetings I can offer them advice and guidance as required. Therefore I should improve my own competencies and skills so that I can help them to work more effectively and thereby increase the satisfaction of the people.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

Mr Brad gave me his useful opinion on the needs to improve the 7 skills and competencies as required by the consensus of the fifty District Directors. I appreciated so much his comments. It proved that he was a good leader who was very willing to improve his on-job performance, to the benefit of the people. Later he gave me his opinion as to how thinks that competency needs will assist him in his present and future position.

> I often solve problems by using my own experiences, but I am aware that I still lack skills – that need to be improved. If I can improve all 7 competencies, then my performance will be significantly affected and in turn that of the BMA. I want to talk with my subordinates, providing them with vision and getting them to perform at a level that civil servants did not think possible. Then I would simply leave them alone to do their job! I

want to have more confidence to substantially increase productivity and job satisfaction and substantially decrease tardiness and grievances etc….

He was exceptionally kind to illustrate other examples of problem solving, such as building a temporary flyover for the local people to use whilst waiting for the new one to be completed. He employs his competencies of good human relationships to collaborate with other organisations to ensure the safety of the people. By his smile I could see that Mr. Brad was keen to improve his competencies for his on-job performance, which will affect his present and future position. He kept an open mind all the time and this impressed me. His telephone rang many times while we were talking but he did not answer, as he preferred to continue our discussion. Possibly as a result of him being distracted by the telephone ringing, when I asked him talk to me about professional development strategy that he believed will promote these seven items needs, he spoke confidently but his answers did not relate to my question. He confirmed his interests in new knowledge and then gave me an example of his problems faced at work and solutions to solve them. I did not interrupt in case he lost his self-confidence. I felt that he gave me much of his valuable time to tell me more about his style of working.

> I am always keen to continue learning new knowledge as part of improving my on-job performance that will affect my present and future position. As regards the strategy to get all the 7 needs, I think this will depend to a large extent on the problems in each individual district – such as environmental problems that people rarely care about. In the past we have had much public green areas and fields etc. but not now – as development of house projects, roads and expressways have taken place. As a result, we have a greater problem with pollution. My partial solution to this problem was to have the plans amended to include green areas and free space under the expressways. Of course I could only have achieved this with the support of and collaboration with other organisations. In order to gain their collaboration, I had to have good public relations with them and invite them to meetings to discuss my revised plans. These meetings

took place both in their offices and also in our own office. We had a good

relationship indeed!

Often Mr Brad would digress and, while laughing, would give me more examples of his problems – which I have not included in this research paper. Naturally I allowed him to speak freely but when the time was right I would bring him back to my original questions. Then I had to repeat my original question (at his request) as he had forgotten it! At first his answer related more to his subordinates in that he thought they should undergo a needs assessment to get a training program to improve their on-job performance. Possibly he was so concerned about them and wanted them to become more efficient and effective in their work. I then reminded him to think only of the group of District Directors; in terms of professional development strategies that he believes will promote the seven items needs. He gave his opinion to me with enthusiasm!

> I think that a training program is a most important strategy to help me get
> the knowledge necessary to improve my competencies and skills that will
> affect my on-job performance. But we (District Directors) cannot set a
> training course by ourselves as we already have a BMA Training and
> Development Institute that provides programs of learning for us. I have
> never had a training course with all of my colleagues before – I mean all
> District Directors have never together attended a training program in the
> same class – ever!

Mr Brad kindly explained more of his thoughts by continuing to tell me about previous training classes, provided by the BMA, which he had attended in the past.

> Actually there are training programs for civil servants, provided by the
> BMA, such as 'First Line Supervisor Training Course', 'The intermediate
> Management Training Course', and 'The Senior Executives Training
> Course'. The Senior Executives Training Course is for level 8 and 9 civil
> servants and I have passed it already. In my opinion I think it was not a

good program because, as a variety of occupations are level 8, the trainers told us only general things. In fact we should have specific training classes for District Directors only and Doctors should also have their own training programs. We all have our own differing problems; problems of doctors and nurses are different from mine. In my opinion, I think people who can share experiences should have the same field of experience. It would be better for us if the trainees were all of the same discipline – so that we could share our problems and help each other to solve them. Many District Directors have a lot of experience as they have been in their position for a long time. I would like to learn from them.

Mr Brad was concerned about his skills and competencies that need to be improved so that he can bring his knowledge to talk and assign jobs to his subordinates. He believes that a training program can help him to explore his own potential for creativity. By his answers and from the way he spoke I think that he was so serious about his job and this made me proud to talk with him.

I must have a wide variety of knowledge. If I assign a job to the Environment and Sanitation Section, I should have knowledge in this field and if I assign a job to Public Cleansing and Public Park Section, I should have this knowledge too. I attempt to resolve problems whenever they are presented to me – but my preference and aim is to prevent the problems from occurring in the first place, by the employment of 'Protective Management'. The important thing is that I have to improve my skills and competencies and I think all seven items needs, per your research, will be useful for me if I can attend an appropriate training program in future. I do not want to learn by mistakes as I do not want anyone to present a petition to me. Especially when, at the moment, it is easy to present a petition. If any civil servants misbehave, people can sue via the Administrative Court. As I said, I do not want to make mistakes in my job; therefore I need to have a good curriculum for a training program for only the position of District Director.

Successful Training

Mr Brad gave me his opinion on the benefits for the BMA by improving training programs in future. As he wanted to give more details of his work experiences, he kindly told me how District Director had problems in their work from time to time. He said that although some of them used to work in the district previously they never had experience of working in other organisations within the BMA before. Once they were promoted to become a District Director, they had problems about documents relating to their work – how to write them etc! They just signed their name on them! He knew this was the wrong thing to do and, in addition, they did not know how to ask for assistance from others. He told me many stories that he had seen and of situations that had happened in real life. Despite him telling me many tales of his experiences and me becoming (as a result) more aware of his attitude, he would not permit me to include them in my research. Then I asked him to talk to me about the groups who will deliver the training in future – and what he looks for in them. I also asked his opinion about the trainer and what he feels are the necessary attributes of a successful trainer operating at his level.

> I would like to see trainers from other organisations but not teachers from university any more. They must be both expert in management and successful in their jobs. Also I want to have trainers coming from retired District Director groups, who will have the necessary knowledge and authority of the BMA to be my trainer. They will have a lot of experience in the position of District Director before, so I can learn from their experiences and believe it will be very useful in my job.

Problems with Training

It was very useful information for me to hear of Mr Brad's attitudes towards unsuccessful training programs that he had experienced in the past. He told me how he felt unsatisfied about the methods and groups of trainers he had experienced before. I think his opinion would be great feedback for future

training programs about which the Executive of the BMA should be more concerned.

> By contrast, in a training program that I attended recently (The Senior Executive Training Course), there were a variety of occupations as level 8 and 9 attended the class together. I could not get specific knowledge to use on my job because trainers talked too much about general topics. Trainers were academics from a university; they talked like University Lecturers! They spoke on many theories but had no idea how to solve problems in real life. We were all bored and could not take the training program seriously.

Duration of Training Programs

Again I smiled as Mr Brad mentioned that my research might benefit his skill improvement in future. I can say that I felt he really wanted so much to improve his performance on job via a training program, with his group of fellow District Directors. He demonstrated to me that he wanted to be a good District Director and a role model for his staff and especially good for the local people. Again his telephone rang but he ignored it as was still enjoying talking. He told me that he had never known of a training program among groups of District Directors before. He smiled and said to me that he hopes his dream will be come true, in that he would get benefit from a training session soon. I was also delighted to hear his opinions and him talking to me freely and opening his mind. I was also aware that he was a good Executive who was concerned to improve his skills and competencies continuously. Afterwards, I then asked him to think about the duration of the training program; how long he wants to attend a class, appropriate to his position. He had experience of training classes many times before, and was very open in telling me his reasons why training classes were not successful in the past.

> Actually District Directors have a variety jobs and responsibilities. If we were away from our work for too long a time, I would be concerned that Assistants District Directors could not make important decisions. The

National Defence Course provided by National Defence College of Thailand allows for trainees to return to their work for a half day, every day. If we have a training program for the 50 District Director to improve on-job performance, lasting for months, by attending class for a half day in morning and returning to work in the afternoon, this would be better for me. I can then return to work and continue until approximately 100 hrs to 20:00 hrs, as I must sign many documents that the staff of each section prepares after 100 hrs everyday. Possibly I can bring new knowledge from the class to use in my workplace at the same time. I would like to attend class with my group of District Directors in the same way as do organisations in other provinces. They were all administrators. It can be said that as they have same job function, they can also share experiences among their group.

I asked Mr Brad to give me his opinion about the style of training in classroom and the appropriateness of training methods used for the training of District Directors.

Actually we have attended and passed many training courses in the past. Trainers themselves should have their own methods of training us and ensure that they have the necessary competencies and knowledge specific to improvement in the leading of an organisation. Trainers should be good communicators to make it easy for us to understand and not talk too much theory! I want the training program to be like a seminar. Trainers should use PowerPoint and provide handouts so that I can follow them during study. Trainees can illustrate problems themselves and share experiences and opinions together. We should split into groups of District Directors and the trainer can then give case studies to us so that we can find solutions, share ideas to solve them and then they can present them in front of the class. I believe that we would get benefit by sharing experiences as, although we may have similar problems, we may come up with different solutions.

Training Venues

I was happy and I smiled to hear Mr Brad's valuable opinion that will be useful for his training program in future. Another time when his telephone rang, I paused in case he changed his mind and wanted to answer it. However, he did not, and kept talking with me. Then his subordinate (possibly an Assistant District Director) opened the door, perhaps as he might have wondered why his boss did not answer the telephone. Mr. Brad just ignored him! Then I asked his opinion about the scheduling of training and where he wants to attend classes for future training programs.

> I am not concerned about the venue, as we have a training institute located in Bangkok that belongs to the BMA and which is located very conveniently. We all have our own cars or we can use the transfer van or bus provided by the BMA to take us to the training institute. I foresee no problems regarding the venue and transportation, if the training class is held for a half day in Bangkok. If the training is provided in another province, I suppose I will not be able to return to work, thereby wasting my working time. I think if District Directors have to get together for training for months without working, it will be impractical. I think nobody will agree if the course is scheduled to last that length of time.

As Mr Brad kept talking a lot, he often digressed from the main issues. I then had to bring him back courteously. Once more another of his subordinates (a lady) opened the door this time. She looked at me and probably wondered why I talked with her boss for such a long time and especially as he was late for lunch already. Mr. Brad looked at her but said nothing. He still kept talking with me. I felt really considerate of him and of those people who were waiting him and were depending on him. Of course, I was enjoying talking with him and appreciating his valuable time in giving his opinions to me. Furthermore, he confirmed that he could attend class at any time as instructed by the Executive of BMA. Also, he showed his enthusiasm at the prospect of the BMA following-up on this research. Our

conversation showed that he thoroughly approves of being part of a learning organisation.

> I will be very appreciative if I get this training program based on the consensus of the opinions of the 50 District Directors and followed up by your research, if it can be provided by the BMA any time in the future – and assigned to us by the Executives. I think that all fifty District Directors should attend training courses continuously. Afterwards, we should get together to discuss the experiences amongst our group as appropriate. This will enhance the quality of our work. It is no good letting District Directors work alone and making mistakes as a result of lack of competencies and management knowledge. We all work in the position of District Directors and face both good and bad experiences and work associated problems. Some of us can arrive at solutions to problems better than others, depending on background and experience. I want to learn from this so that I can use them to solve problems in our workplace at a later date. I think the BMA should investigate the needs of District Directors, based on your research, at least once per year because of the many changing events that will have occurred during the preceding year. Many things will have happened, so we should update our knowledge and competencies accordingly – in order to deal with them.

Reflection

Additionally, Mr Brad still gave examples of new jobs that had been decentralised from the BMA to his district, thereby increasing his responsibilities. It resulted in his having an increased workload but with no additional staff provided to cope with this. The exception to this was when a fire-fighting unit came under his control – and staff were transferred in this case. His concern was then how he would be able to accommodate this additional workload utilising his existing staff. He indicated that the only way a member of his existing staff could deal with this would be to undergo training – unless they had previous experience of the new job. He gave me an example of people who work in the administration section having more work

to do to handle the work of the Funeral Organisation, transferred by the BMA. He said that he had such a variety of jobs that he had to prioritise accordingly. He wants to improve every section and organisation under his control to be more effective in their work to the benefit of the people as much as possible. In my observation, he works hard, never gives up and also enjoys his work. I smiled when I heard of his ambition and also made me want to give him morale at the same time. He has a good relationship with his staff and also permits his subordinates to talk to him at any time. I noticed that his staff felt relaxed talking with him. He confirmed to me that he prefers to work with them like brothers rather than a boss/subordinate relationship. He believes in lifelong learning and he is very willing to improve his skills and competencies. He told me that he wanted to be a smart and reliable Executive that his staff will respect more. He was keen to give me as much detail as possible to make this research complete and also to help me understand his authority more – so he then gave me many examples. Often he would digress from the issues but I was able to bring him back to the subject under discussion. He likes to work by approaching people to find out their problems and solve them by collaborating with other organisations to promote participation so that local people will feel comfortable with his style of working. Since he was promoted to be a District Director, he had never made any mistakes in giving orders. By now I realised he was so late for his lunch and also I had been told by his secretary before the interview that he had to go out after our discussions concluded. Coincidentally, his secretary came into his room with urgent papers for him to sign. I took my chance to thank him for contributing all of the data and also for providing his valuable opinions. Later, the head of Public Cleansing and Public Park Section came into his room to invite him for lunch in his section, to celebrate New Year and the cessation of work for that semester. He accepted this invitation and was kind enough to invite me too, but I declined, as I had to return to my work.

Mr. Sam's Narrative

Mr. Sam has been in his position of District Director for approximately 1 year. He was a representative of a Medium size District. We had never met before. He was one of the District Directors who did not return my questionnaires in round one on schedule and I had to follow it up by calling to him to urge its return to me. Luckily, he was still working in his office, so I got a chance to talk with him. He gave me a commitment that he would provide the feedback I required and this pleased me. Afterwards, I got his questionnaire returned during the following week. Regarding the questionnaires covering rounds two and three – he received them on time and was then able to rank them in order of importance according to the aggregate scores and also gave the reasons given for his ranking as appropriate. He returned them to me by my requested deadlines.

On 28 December 2004, I met him at 10:00 hrs in his office. We had 30 minutes to discuss the semi-structured interview in this session. I was very keen to meet him as he seemed genuinely interested in my dissertation and showed this by providing additional items that he wished to have included per round one of the Delphi Survey. Afterwards, he returned the other two rounds of my questionnaires on time and also asked his secretary to phone me to confirm that I had received them. I was pleased to learn that he was serious about being one of my participants and giving his valued opinions to me via the questionnaires. Otherwise, I was also keen to collect as much data by the year-end and he was number three of nine participants whom I met during the year of 2004. Although his office was located in a business area, I was able to meet with him on time. The buildings of this district looked new and modern because of recent renovation. Staff there impressed me by their smiling welcome. He was still ensconced with his subordinates when I arrived in his office – assigning tasks etc. His secretary know me well as we had talked previously on the telephone about the feedback of questionnaires that her boss provided for me. When she saw me, she asked me to wait for 10

minutes. The door of Mr. Sam's room opened, and I observed that he kept smiling while talking with his subordinates all the time. It could be said that Mr. Sam was a friendly boss when collaborating with his staff. She informed her boss about my arrival. He welcomed me warmly and invited me into his room. I immediately noticed that his desk was very untidy as a result of there being many papers requiring his signature. Our discussion took place around his research table.

Mr. Sam was a quiet man and spoke in a soft voice. However, his humour showed through from time-to-time. One disadvantage was that he left his walkie-talkie switched on all the time. This obviously distracted him as he often spoke aimlessly! I had to ask him to speak louder sometimes, but when he forgot and his voice dropped, I had to listen more closely and concentrate more on what he was saying. At times he appeared to have difficulty answering my academic questions – perhaps being aware that his responses and the resulting outcomes might affect his position. In an attempt to reassure him I confirmed that his responses would be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that there was no right or wrong answers. I also encouraged him to speak as freely and openly as he wished and for as long as he wanted. Prior to the commencement of the interview I explained the objectives and issues to be discussed during the meeting. As usual, I informed Mr. Sam that the benefits of participating in the study will help the administration of the BMA and researchers better understand his interests and needs as a representative of District directors (in a group from a medium size of district) to improve his job performance. I suggested to him that this research might provide him with an understanding of how to meet his needs to advance and also protect his job interests .He smiled with pleasure to hear my information. We started by discussing the general functions of his position, to provide a more relaxed atmosphere. Before we started the interview, I asked his permission to use audiotape. I then informed him that a consensus opinion of the District Directors of the BMA showed that they were keen to improve their skills and competencies as identified by the

Delphi Survey, in terms of the 7 listed items and also gave him a set of the semi structured questions.

Organisational Leadership

I asked Mr. Sam why improving his competency in leading an organisation is important to him and how he sees this being of benefit for his position. He smiled before giving me opinions and I now present some extracts from this.

> I must be a good model for my subordinates. As regards the organisation chart for the BMA – it is structurally divided into two parts, 1) Administration Departments, and 2) Districts. The District is the first point of contact that will offer welfare services for the local population – from birth to death. This is where they will come to register births, deaths, identification cards and to generally make themselves aware of what we offer in terms of offering support as dictated by our responsibilities to them.

Effective and Efficient Service

Mr. Sam was concerned to provide and administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to offer effective services to people. However, he gave his useful reasons for improving his skill and competency to be a good model for his staff to follow his guidance in providing the best services to local people. During this conversation, he had to pause from time to time to sign some important documents.

> I have to lead the organisation to work in the same direction and to discharge their responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide the best possible service. I think I must improve myself to gain knowledge to improve better services and to use this skill to motivate others towards change. Effective transformations take time to learn from problems and to 'play around' with alternative solutions as far as I am concerned. I want to focus on making my staff more aware of their personal strengths and weakness and help them become more aware and

definitive in every aspect of their working lives. They must be concerned to solve problems rapidly and transparently to suit each individual need.

Emotional Maturity

Later, Mr. Sam gave me an example of his general problems in attempting to provide satisfaction to the people. I did not record the details here as he told such a very long story. He was serious about gaining new knowledge for his personal improvement and also that will have a better effect in his district. Then he gave me his opinions on how the item of competency in becoming emotionally mature will assist him in his work in future.

> As I am a leader of district, then I must be concerned in showing emotional intelligence to my staff and the people. Although I have a variety of responsibilities, I must at all times control my emotions. I cannot deny that I have felt uncomfortable when I was busy and had to talk or answer the questions of other people. I want my staff to act as I do – by controlling their emotions and I will monitor this as they work. I always tell them to be service minded while providing effective services to the people at the same time. I am concerned that employees to be promoted to District Directors show the requisite maturity, with a variety of experience and can demonstrate control in terms of both verbal and non-verbal communication.

Interpersonal Skills

Based on his response so far and my observation that he was still deep in thought, I believed Mr Sam had more ideas about a strategy to improve his performance. So – I asked him for his point of view on how to develop skills and competencies in line with his needs. He provided this based on his ideas and experience of leadership of an organisation. Then the noise from his walkie talkie drowned out his voice – and so I asked him to speak louder again. Possibly he was distracted from my original question, as his answer

related to his management in terms of his desire that subordinates concentrate on their work.

> One of my roles as leader of the District is to try to ensure loyalty of my staff – to the organisation, the workplace and to me. They can ask me if they cannot understand my commands. We should have good teamwork. I want my staff to achieve good outcomes and benefits for the people. They must have faith in my leadership and judgments in order to concentrate fully on their work. When they do well they receive praise – but if they under perform they are dealt with accordingly. It is hoped that this will be one of the driving forces behind their commitment, concentration and loyalty.

Effective Collaboration

By his responses, it proved that Mr. Sam soaks his mind on jobs and that he also wanted his subordinates to concentrate on work to make them more effective. Later he mentioned about his responsibilities and the many problems he has to solve. He had a lot of staff under his command and he was concerned to make them work together – especially to show them how to collaborate with other people to achieve set goals. Nevertheless, all of his actions and activities and goals were channelled towards providing satisfaction for the local people.

> It is a challenge to be enable to expand my capacity to embrace problems from collaborative partnerships, find creative solutions and explore not only the questions that emerge from the process. I also have to demonstrate how to collaborate effectively with other organisations and Utility providers (Water and Power etc.) The responsibility I carry in this respect involves some 500-600 persons. I must use my position and skills to ensure that they work well together. My own bosses and I must also maintain a good and close working relationship in order that I can rely on their support towards my goals. Development will be continuous in our overall attempts to satisfy the people to whom we have responsibilities.

Moral Leadership

Mr. Sam gave many opinions that were useful for my research and the Executive of the BMA. As far as I was concerned, he had a strong desire to improve his competencies. He was still speaking in a soft and low tone of voice while giving examples of his work experiences in solving problems in attempting to provide satisfaction for the people. Again, he continued to sign his name on documents from time to time whilst speaking.

> If I hear grievances that roads are in need of upgrading, or street lighting has to be improved or excessive pollution etc. – I must ensure that my staff are capable of acting swiftly and effectively to obtain the necessary powers and financial resources in order to proceed towards a resolution of the problem. I am in overall control of all of these tasks and it is therefore my responsibility to assure the populace that we will achieve our objectives. I do not want my staff to make mistakes; by contrast they must provide effective performance in solving problems. I think that if I provide leadership with equity and equality, my staff will feel comfortable to talk and ask me questions. I think this skill is also important in that I must be able to guarantee that I can support their work to achieve our goals. By the way, if I see someone misbehave, I must punish them by use of my authority.

Empathetic Understanding

Since we started our discussion, Mr. Sam gave me opinions that related with his local people to solve their problems so that they can be satisfied with his services. He gave his opinions that he needs to improve his skill to understand people better and at the same time, he gave examples of his attempts to solve their problems, including improving public utility and public support.

> Therefore, my own approach is to some extent one of 'hands-on' in that I must be personally aware of problems in this District – such as inadequate garbage collection, power, canal and river and environmental problems

etc. I must accept responsibility for these problems and ensure that a swift solution is reached. For example – in the past we had problems with inadequate garbage collection. This has been addressed and resolved by simply raising the frequency of collections.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

Mr Sam showed obvious willing to improve his skills as he sees this as a beneficial step at present and in the future. He stated how he was serious to gain new knowledge for his improvement both of himself and to good effect in the workplace. This time I asked him to speak louder whilst answering. He outlined his concern in responding clearly and seriously to the questionnaire by saying:

> (looking at me) I should be concerned about gaining new knowledge to lead a learning organisation that supports continuous learning, organisational improvement and development. I put a lot of thought into my responses and scoring 1-10 in your questionnaires in all three rounds as I think it important to the Training Programs for the future. I would like to think that some of the courses I attend could include some of my own input – from my aspirations. I have therefore added more information that I feel useful for improving the efficiency of District Directors.

I smiled while listening to Mr Sam's excellent opinions that will be useful for this research and the Executive of the BMA, so that they can provide appropriate training courses in future. As he showed his desire to improve competencies, I asked him to outline Professional Development strategies that he believes will improve these needs. He mentioned evaluation of this district by feedback from the local people's satisfaction. I was aware of his willingness to develop by listening to the people's requests to provide better services. He was sufficiently confident to say:

> Actually we already have a policy in place – established by the BMA – that we believe will satisfy the needs of the people in the areas of responsibility of the District Directors. A questionnaire has been launched by the BMA to ascertain the level of satisfaction of our services. From the results of this we will be able to see clearly where improvements need to be made. A 'league table' will then show which Districts provide the most to the least satisfaction. From this table we can directly pinpoint those Districts in need of attention – that will raise their levels of job performance and population satisfaction.

I did not interrupt while Mr Sam spoke in case he became nervous. On the other hand, I paid attention to him to remain aware of his attitude. He also touched on the qualities necessary to become a good District Director.

> I am aware that all individuals are eligible to be promoted to the position of District Director. Their success, of course, will depend on the attitude and effectiveness of the individual to work in accordance with BMA policy. They are encouraged to spend their time and intelligence in bringing novel ideas and technologies to the attention of Management in each District.

Eventually, Mr. Sam told me that he was keen to have a training program that he thought would improve his performance in respect of the seven items, but only involving his group of fifty District Directors. Moreover, he told me of his preferred style of training in classroom. Meanwhile he smiled and maintained eye contact while he said:

> (smiling) I believe that a Workshop style of training in the class room will be most beneficial – as opposed to only theoretical. The majority of the District Directors are graduates in Masters Degrees and are suitably well versed in theory – but this cannot always be related to their present function. I therefore think that a training program in classroom for all District Directors is necessary.

Since Mr Sam was reluctant to say which style of training program he really wanted, I asked him to clarify his ideas on a Learning Workshop and to give me more detail. He also re-confirmed to me that he wanted to see all fifty District Directors attend class at the same time to share experiences and contribute knowledge together.

> I think that learning can be by relating to case studies. Problems (and therefore solutions) of each district vary. Often when a problem is the same – different District Directors will find a different solution. However – the goal remains the same – to satisfy the people. The diversity of ideas and wealth of experiences (relating to the above seven items) are sufficient such that we can share them with each other – to our (and that of the people's) mutual benefit.

Successful Training

As I was aware of his limited of time for this interview, I asked him to talk about what particularly he looks for in selecting trainers to improve all 7 of the competency needs as appropriate.

> I would like to see a trainer as being a professional person who is expert in academic areas. I would like to invite trainers who have sufficient knowledge and are successful in their field. My belief is that if we can employ this calibre of trainer we will improve ourselves so much and it will undoubtedly be to our benefit.

Problems with Training

He also related his experiences with training classes in the past with which he was not satisfied at all.

> In the past we have had one-day courses that have not been very useful owing to limit of time, as advised by the trainers. In these cases not all knowledge can be passed on. I am not sure that if more time were provided they would learn any more or just about the same (laugh!)

Duration of Training Programs

Mr. Sam was still laughing and that made me laugh too! It was interesting to hear his opinion that he had been dissatisfied with training programs in the past but could still retain his humour. When it came to discussing the duration of the Training Course he seemed unable to give me a definitive answer. He indicated that a committee would decide it. They will prepare a curriculum to cover all necessary aspects of the Training Course. He was very aware of his own availability to attend – and also that of others. I then pursued the point regarding his ideas on future Training Programs that he would like to see in place, and asked that he be open in his response to me. He laughed a bit before saying:

> In my opinion I see a one-week program for each of the seven items being
> sufficient, but on the strict understanding that all attend the course fully. In
> total we should therefore have 7 courses for them to attend to improve our
> performance continuously. We have many responsibilities in our day-to-
> day jobs with a variety of tasks to undertake. The course should therefore
> be neither too long nor too short.

I appreciated learning that Mr Sam was concerned continuously to improve his performance on job and also had no desire to be away from his work for an extended period. He wished to attend class for only a short duration but continuously. Furthermore, he told me that he had never had a curriculum for his position before. Then he suggested that the BMA should have a training program for candidates for the position of District Directors before they are promoted and also to have continuing training courses after they are promoted.

> A District Director is an important position in that they have responsibility
> to manage a District and also have to supervise many staff. I think that
> training prior to appointment is vital and then again at the mid-term (of
> office) stage. Training must be given before an appointment but it is
> equally important that mid-term training is also provided to keep pace with
> changes in working practices, needs and regulations etc. It will, to a large

extent, depend on the actual course – as to whether it need be a short, medium or long program. Whatever decision is reached – it must be taken seriously.

Training Venues

I was by now aware of our limit of time – and so I asked him finally where he thought the Training Classes should be held.

Training programs should take place in any hotel in Bangkok or any other centre or institute of the BMA as appropriate. I also can attend class at anytime as Executives of the BMA dictate.

Reflection

Immediately, Mr Sam expressed his feeling to me that if Executive of BMA realised the benefits of training programs to improve all District Directors in their on-job performance, it will be most beneficial for his position. He also said that he was willing to attend class anywhere as BMA dictates. From my observation, I could touch his strong aspirations to improve his skills and competencies to adapt with environmental changes. It was interesting and exciting to know that he wanted to bring his knowledge to inspire his subordinates with clear visions of how things can be done better. It can be said that he wants to have new ideas and articulate a vision that inspires others to act. Then I indicated to him that this research might be of benefit for his bosses to understand the needs of all District Directors so that they can provide the style of learning that he and his colleagues really wanted. He showed his delight while I spoke. At the same time as Mr. Sam spoke with me, he was signing his name on documents and I thought that I should go. Before I left his office, I asked him to sign his name on my consent form to confirm his participation in this research. He immediately joked by saying, 'Do you want to resign your job?' I paused briefly before realising his

humour and then we both laughed a lot. Finally, I thanked him for his valuable time to be my participant and to discuss my research with me.

Mr. John's Narrative

This could be described as a 'funny day' for me! On 30 December 200I had an appointment to meet Mr John at 10:00 hrs but I arrived 5 minutes late owing to me making a mistake. I always establish the location of a district office in advance – and this time was no exception. However, that same day I also had an appointment to meet Mr Danny at 14:00 hrs, but I became confused and mixed up the appointments. Perhaps it was that the last telephone call I made was to Mr Danny's secretary and I still had her office location on my mind. Laughing at myself I soon realised that I still had enough time to make the appointment with Mr John despite having to negotiate the busy traffic of Bangkok.

I arrived at Mr. John's office only 5 minutes late and although this was the first time I had been late for an appointment to interview participants in this phase, I was still ashamed of myself. Luck was on my side as I was able to find a parking space easily, despite having been told by his staff that parking was difficult around his office area. Anyway, when I arrived at his office I discovered that Mr John was still busy working. There appeared to be a meeting in progress, as there were many people in his room. I saw this from the waiting area, through the glass door. I waited there for approximately 30 more minutes whilst he concluded his business. Meanwhile, I noticed that his secretary and some staff had serious faces as they rarely smiled. I also saw another member of staff from another section, with documents in her hand, waiting for her boss. Despite them working under the same roof, they did not appear to know each other and they spoke like strangers. It could be said that there was an absence of good relationship among the staff who work there. At one point when Mr. John saw me, he came out to say hello and offer me an apology for keeping me waiting – with an explanation that he had some

urgent and unexpected work to which he had to attend. I of course said that I understood completely about his busy working life and that I was happy to wait until he became available.

Mr John was a nice, courteous, kind and quiet man and spoke with a soft voice. We had never met each other before – only talked on the telephone when I asked for his return of the round two questionnaire. As I could not get his feedback on time, I had to follow up by phoning him, only to discover that he had never received it in the first place! Then I had to re-send round two of the questionnaire to him and give a revised date to return it to me. Later on, during the process of completion of the questionnaire in round 3, he rang me to ask my explanation in case he was on the wrong track. I explained to him until it was clear so that he could complete it and give me the necessary feedback. We have now spoken twice on the telephone. I found that he was kind and took serious his answers on all rounds of the questionnaires.

Mr. John has worked in this district for approximately 9 months and was a District Director who represented a medium sized district. At one point he referred to a metaphor used by a moralist in some Pali, when he was describing his work to me during the interview. This was easy for me to understand, as I too am interested in this subject. Despite this being a relaxing interview for me as usual, I noticed that he was embarrassed to speak with me sometimes. My interview with him will benefit me as a researcher in that it will clarify for me the thoughts and feelings of his need to improve competencies in his workplace.

I noticed that I was able to make him feel relaxed. Prior to starting the interview, I outlined the objectives and issues for discussion. I asked him to open his mind and feel free to discuss things with me. I also informed him that the benefits of his participation in my study might help the Executive of the BMA better understand his interests and also those of his colleagues, to improve job performance. I also gave him a set of the semi-structured

questions prior to commencement of the interview. During our discussion we were interrupted three times by his telephone. The duration of the interview was approximately 50 minutes, including many things said off the record. I also obtained his permission to tape record the interview. I started by establishing – per the consensus of opinions of the District Directors, results that they were keen to improve their skills and competencies as identified by Delphi survey with him first.

Organisational Leadership

As Mr John was their representative, I asked his opinion as to why he needs to improve their competencies in future training programs and how he saw this assisting in his present and future position. Initially, he showed his reluctance to give answers to this first question. He moved nervously as he was perhaps afraid that his answers might be wrong. Then, I assured him that there were no rights or wrongs. Despite this, he still requested that I stop tape recording and asked me to elaborate on my question. I repeated my question, maintaining my smile. He then became more relaxed and spoke more freely by answering in whole.

> A District Director is a person who can make decisions, motivate, command and solve problems within this office (the staff) and outside my office (the population). I must also consider the direction in which the organisation is moving and my department's effectiveness in co-operating with other organisations etc. As I am a leader of the district, I must also have the necessary leadership skills in my job. It seems that many people in positions of authority also have this concern. No two persons are the same in that some lack these skills of leadership – to differing degrees. It all depends on the individual and the management. With regard to the consensus of opinion that we need to improve our skills and competencies, it seems to me that all seven items relate to leadership skills.

Effective and Efficient Service

I then told Mr John that all of the competencies, that were the consensus of all of the District Directors in Delphi survey, can improve leadership skills for them. He started smiling to me again when I agreed with him and still retained his soft voice as he spoke. I then asked his opinion about the item needs to improve administering responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. He looked at the semi-structured interview questions before answering me thus:

> In this case, it reinforces my view that improvement of this competency will enhance my leadership attributes and enable me to better discharge my responsibilities and guidance, rapidly and more transparently, to the benefit of the people. I want to provide good service for all the people who ask for my help. They must get effective services from us. I believe it vital that we are seen to administer our responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. To that end, we must examine and adjust our rules and virtues, as needs dictate. Nowadays, in these times of Globalisation, we have to be transparent and open in all that we do – as if we are not – we leave ourselves open to being sued in the Administrative Court.

Emotional Maturity

Mr John also gave an example of a real situation of how he was so busy in his workplace and at the same time had to also answer questions, asked by the people, with willingness. He illustrated his aim to increase effectiveness in his work and administer his responsibilities rapidly and transparently. He was devoting considerable effort towards achieving good corporate governance as a way of achieving both his objectives and community satisfaction. To illustrate his stories, he often related real life experiences. He kept smiling and spoke with soft voice, saying:

Despite us having a heavy workload and at times finding it hard to control our emotions, we must show maturity. Often we were asked for advice when we were very busy – when (for example) people could not understand something properly. These were times when we had to control our emotions and attempt to resolve the issue until they were satisfied. So – we must ensure effective governance as a basic principle and decide exactly what we should and should not do.

Interpersonal Skills

Mr John uses 'good governance' as his process for continuous improvement and refinement that supports organisations and communities that need continuously to be engaged. I was delighted to hear his opinions and ideas about organisations and local people. He can provide ideas and precedents, which have been useful to others and adapt and develop them to meet his own individual's needs and those of the community. Yet, he still extols the virtues of morality in his work. In that conversation, he also used Pali words to explain to me about his work. As we had a long conversation, I chose to use some appropriate parts of it in this paragraph. At that time, he spoke with low, soft voice but was often interrupted by his cell phone. He stopped talking with me in order that he could answer his telephone. Afterwards, our conversation continued.

We must foster good human relationships if we are to provide effective service to the people. I think that a good human relationship with everyone is most important because it will lead to effective collaboration with both local people and my staff. It also strengthens two way communications between executives and staff so that I can obtain useful feedback that will be of benefit for our work. I utilise the four virtuous inclinations and code of five precepts as applicable in my job. I am able to provide information to those who request it. I have arranged meetings with various people and organisations to establish their needs and problems in order that I can provide assistance. A leader should have a virtuous administration and not be seen to favour one individual or organisation over another. If my

working practices are transparent, then my staff will be happier to work for me. Four virtuous inclinations of morality (the tools to reach the ultimate Goal – Buddhism) are necessary for me to work with equity and equality. I have approximately 500 to 600 in total working for me and I must therefore provide moral leadership that is concerned with both equity and equality.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. John gave me an example of a real situation, illustrating his opinions of his working style in relation to his subordinates. He would like to standardise working practices for – to ensure all of the people can be satisfied.

> As I am their leader, I must ensure that my subordinates undertake their responsibilities effectively. If they are made more aware of their duties and responsibilities, they can operate more efficiently. I cannot be expected to tell them what to do step-by-step – so they must analyse and solve problems themselves, to the satisfaction of the people whom they serve. We have to deal with the people in a courteous and friendly manner, maintaining a smiling attitude whilst dealing with them, so that they feel more impressed by our service. I also want them to extend this effective service improvement to enhance their skills when collaborating with other staff. Standardisation of service in the workplace is my goal, in that we can solve similar problems with similar solutions. For example, when people are distressed if they come to register their home but forget their ID card, or residence registration etc. – then we can easily and calmly advise them which level of Civil Servant or Village Head Man or Chief or Parliamentary Officer can sign for them. Clarity is of the utmost importance when dealing with people – in order that they understand our process.

Moral Leadership

Mr John referred to his responsibilities in his district in that he works hard but also had to control his emotions. He also wanted to be a good leader who manages staff with equity and equality. He was concerned to improve his on-job performance for his present and future position. He soaked in his mind to have good human relationships to get staff and people participation that will be beneficial for his organisation.

> I believe that control over emotions and intelligence is important an attribute to display in order that I can provide moral leadership and administer with equity and equality. Versatility in performance on my part will help to ensure that I deliver effective service to the satisfaction of the people. A good leader must have systematic thinking in order to manage effectively. I am also concerned about my present and future position – in that if I can improve my skills and competencies I will enhance my techniques and 'art' of management to better myself in man-management techniques and in the general development of the workplace.

Empathetic Understanding

Mr John could obviously see the need for effectiveness in the workplace – that will benefit people and provide them with better job satisfaction in the future. Mr. John was very concerned with providing vision and direction for his district. He also wanted to provide influence, inspiration and motivation of his staff in future. He demonstrated his leadership qualities to me in that he wanted to bring his knowledge to improve the quality of life and services for the people in his workplace that will satisfy their requirements.

> Looking at myself I realise that if I can improve my competencies it will result in me being able to bring my new found knowledge to my staff – like a sort-of 'chain reaction'. Couple this to more effective management and it will have a knock-on effect to the people in terms of improved services. Regarding Item 7, 'understanding people in order to satisfy their

needs', I believe strongly that I should understand the Bangkok residents – especially those who live in my district area so that I can improve their quality of life and improve security for their lives – including reinforcing the role of the family in reducing problems that may arise from family break-ups.

Mr John's attitude and words proved to me that he was genuinely concerned about the provision of good service to the people – which will meet their needs. He then gave me an example of providing this assistance in helping people resolve problems, based on a previous experience.

> I evaluate the performance of my staff constantly in terms of what will have a bearing on any future promotion they may seek. I have to understand people in order to satisfy their needs – such as those who have problems with traffic jams and poor road surfaces etc. Then we must concentrate our minds on how best to address these issues to their satisfaction. Another working example was over a concern about dust. I had to collaborate with a company producing dust as a by-product of their labour – and advise that they use a water spray to dampen down the dust and so prevent airborne spread.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

Mr John illustrated his aims to improve his skills and competencies in accordance with the ever-changing environment. He talked to me more about his competency needs assisting him in his present and future position. By this time he was speaking a bit louder with a much more enthusiastic voice. I could touch his feeling that he was extremely keen to improve his on-job performance.

> In order to become a 'New Generation' style of leader, I have to adapt to all environmental changes. I wish to be a good leader of staff and a role

model for them. I also want my local residents to be proud of me as their District Director. When I learn new knowledge to improve my competencies and skill, this will have a beneficial effect on my job responsibilities. I think I can bring new ideas to improve my on-job performance that will influence my workplace in future. All of the seven items referenced on your research (he looked at the sheet of semi-structured interview questions that showed him all the seven item needs of District Directors) will be important for my present and future performance. I can bring new knowledge to apply to my job as appropriate. I want to improve staff performance to make them more effective in their job and to have good teamwork.

As Mr John was concerned about keeping his subordinates informed, he told me that he holds meetings with them every week, lasting approximately hours, to contribute new knowledge to them and to introduce new policies to them. He would then be able to monitor progress. He also mentioned a training course for them to improve their on job performance. I then asked him to think about the consensus of opinions of the District Directors that they believe necessary to improve their skills and competencies. I asked for his ideas on professional development strategies that he believes are necessary to promote his needs in future.

The BMA Training and Development Institute has allocated a budget and provided a training program for Civil Servants already. In my opinion we should have a Training Program for District Directors every year. To date – we have never had a curriculum for training District Directors. On the other hand, we have had Training Programs for First Line Supervisors, Intermediate Management and Senior Executives. When the Civil Servant passes the first line supervisor course they will thereafter attend the Intermediate Management Training Course. District Directors, Assistant District Directors and Level 8 up to 9 Civil Servants can attend the Senior Executives Training Course. These are the three steps of training that currently exist within the BMA but as yet we have no Training Programs for District Directors at all. I think it necessary that we improve our job performance by having an annual Training Course to attend. I believe a

> Training program to be vital in the promotion of all these needs as described in the seven items of Professional Development Strategy.

Again, at that point Mr John's voice became a bit louder, as he felt excited to mention about his needs to improve competencies in future. I also asked him to think about training programs, and his opinion about his preferred style and methodology to be used in the training programs.

> I confirm that a Training Program is appropriate for me – and my preferred way of learning. In a classroom environment we can share our ideas together and present them in front of the class. We can also choose an actual case study for presentation to the group so that we can familiarise ourselves with the knowledge and solution.

Mr John also told me that two of his assistant District Directors can take care of the business of the district while he is away. Another benefit of this will be that he can judge their work and establish their ability to perform in his absence. If a training program can be set up, he would prefer to attend class outside work. He obviously considers attendance at these classes of paramount importance – as evidenced in his following comments.

> If I get a chance to improve my competencies and skills via a Training Program provided by the BMA, I want to take it very seriously and attend the class 100% of the time, for its duration, without also having to be concerned about my work. My assistants can deal with matters in my absence. This will be a good opportunity for them to demonstrate their abilities and performance to me. If this Training comes about then I believe I will get benefit from it as the consensus of opinion that led to the seven items came from District Directors themselves.

Successful Training

I asked Mr John to think about the quality of trainers for the future. I asked him to talk about the group who he saw most able to deliver the training and what he looks for in trainers. I also asked his opinion about the necessary

elements of successful trainers working at his level. He grinned and gave his useful opinions on training course in future by saying:

> (smiling) I think that trainers should come from both the Private and Public Sectors, such as Senior Governors, retired Governors from other provinces or successful businessmen etc. These are the calibre of people I see as being able to deliver satisfactory training in the seven items. They should be able to contribute theory that can also be applied in a practical sense. I also think that some District Directors can be good trainers for my colleagues and me – especially those who have held that position for many years. They can suggest problem-solving specific to their (and our) position. As I want to see improved relationships amongst my colleagues, I prefer to learn by sharing ideas, visions and experiences with them. I firmly believe that we will get best benefit from such an approach. The training group should also stay together for the whole duration of the course. Thereafter we can travel together to other countries on a fact-finding mission to learn how their administrations operate and how adoption of their ideas, if appropriate, might benefit Bangkok.

Problems with Training

Later, I discussed with Mr John his experiences in previous training courses. He seemed to be concerned about trainers as he then told me that trainers in the past were not satisfactory to him. I asked him to clarify about trainers who made him unsatisfied in the past. He refused to answer. Then, I realised that he might think his answer would affect his job if he gave his opinions to me. I did not insist that he talk. He felt awkward before saying:

> … I think I do not want to mention it (smiling). It may not appropriate to mention it here. Perhaps I should not answer this question.

Duration of Training Programs

I nodded my head and smiled to make Mr John feel comfortable and said that he had the right not to answer if he did not want to. Meanwhile his cell phone

rang for a second time; possibly he had another appointment soon. I decided at that point to finish the interview so that would be available for his next task. So – I finally asked for his thoughts on the duration of his future training program.

> Possibly it should be held to last for approximately 7 days to improve all
> of the 7 competencies. I think that will be enough for us to gain the
> required knowledge

Training Venues

I asked Mr. John to think about a venue for training classes in future. 'Please let me know your ideas on the duration of training courses appropriate to you and where should these classes are held?' He had no fixed ideas about any particular venue as a place to attend class. He confidently said:

> I have no preference as to the venue – as I can attend anywhere.

Mr John showed his keenness to improve his on-job performance by mentioning about the time for the training classes. He wanted to have a training program every year to improve the skills and competencies for all of the District Directors.

> I think it necessary to improve these 7 competencies for all of the District
> Directors within the next 1months – on the assumption that the BMA will
> provide the training program. It will certainly be of benefit to us if the
> BMA will incorporate the competency needs into the curriculum for the
> Training Program. On the other hand, we should continue learning by
> ourselves and also have a refresher class every year.

Reflection

By the way Mr John spoke and by the sound of his voice, I was aware of his keenness to have the Executive of the BMA set up training programs as he requested. He showed his enthusiasm so much while we were discussing

together. He also said that he wished to have a survey of his needs to improve his on-job performance undertaken every year, as he was aware of the benefits of my research. He would like the BMA to launch a survey for him and his District Directors before they set up each and every training program, as he was interested in changes brought about by the environment. I smiled with delight to hear his opinion and how he sees the benefits of my research. I then said thank you to him and also told him that the Executive of the BMA may understand his interests and needs better from this research, in a way like a 'pilot project'. He said that hoped the BMA would provide training programs as necessary, very soon. He confirmed again to me about his desire to attend class with only his group of District Directors and that it was also necessary to have appropriately qualified and experienced trainers. Mr. John was kind to me by saying that he was willing to give me more opinions or ideas if I wanted. We then talked more about his work experiences – similar to those stories related above in this research. He seemed want to see change in his workplace so much, I observed from our discussion. He told me that he looked forward to having training classes provided by the BMA to improve his job performance as soon as possible. Meanwhile, I saw his other his guests were waiting for him outside his room. I then thanked him for providing useful data for my research, that might be of benefit to the BMA in future.

Mr Beckham's Narrative

Mr. Beckham was invited to participate in a semi-structured interview as a representative District Director chosen on the basis of population in a medium sized district. He had worked in this district for approximately 9 months. This was the day that I made a mistake by mixing up the appointment times between Mr Beckham and Mr. John. I arrived at his office earlier than the appointment time and then found that I made a mistake. Then I had to rush to meet Mr. John first. As I had been talking so much to Mr

Beckham's secretary – I made this mistake of going to her office first! Luckily, when I arrived at her office she reminded me of the interview with her boss in the afternoon. She also very kindly offered to change the time for the interview her boss if I wanted too. I had to decline because I had already made appointments with Mr. John in the morning and Mr. Beckham in the afternoon, on 30 January 2004. I could feel the nice, warm welcome from the staff of this district and I also believed that the District Director of this district would be a kind man too.

After I finished interviewing Mr. John, I then went to my interview with Mr. Beckham We had an appointment to interview at 14:00 hrs and I arrived there early, as usual. As I walked around his office I noticed that it was a small building but convenient to park my car as it was adjacent to the building complex. I received the customary welcoming smiles when the staff became aware of my appointment to meet their boss. I saw many people waiting to have their variety of problems solved but when I finished the interview; the queue had reduced to only It was an indication that this district could provide quick service to the people. The secretary told her boss of my arrival, and he then invited me into his room. It was obvious that he was still busy as I saw many documents on his desk and work surfaces. Then he invited me to sit and conduct my interview on the sofa. My observation was that he worked hard and was a believer in lifelong learning. When I first saw him, he looked a quiet and serious man. All the while we were talking, he remained smiling. Whilst he tried to answer all of my questions, he gave me the impression that his replies might affect his position. I had to make him feel relaxed by saying that a research code number would be used to identify his responses from those of other participants and that his name, address and other identifying information will not be directly associated with any information obtained from him at all. He felt relieved to learn this and then became more relaxed to give me his opinions on each of my questions afterwards.

Regarding the phases of the Delphi survey relating to Mr Beckham, he received questionnaires for rounds one and three but not for round two as it seemed to have been lost in the post. I re-sent it to him by post again and offered him another deadline to return it to me later. Owing to the delay in giving me his feedback, I followed him up by telephone for all of three rounds of my questionnaire. I managed to talk with him via his cell phone to ask for the return of the round one questionnaire. He was a nice, kind man and as he was particularly keen to answer all questions, he asked me to wait longer. I also tried to contact him on his office telephone to follow up on rounds two and three. However, we did not talk with each other and he left messages with his secretary to pass to me to confirm that he was willing to answer them and to ask me wait again as he needed time to read and formulate his answers. It was kind of him to consider me in this way and overall I waited approximately 2-weeks for the return of each round. It was worth the wait to get all of the questionnaires returned to me from my participants. Before we started the interview, I reminded Mr. Beckham about the questionnaires of all three rounds and he was able to remember them well. He told me that even though he could not reply to the questionnaires on time, as he was busy, he always took them seriously and eventually answered all of them. I appreciated what he said and also understood. I found that he had his own ideas, which were different from other participants in some ways.

The interview with Mr Beckham lasted for 30 minutes and was twice interrupted by his cell phone. There was no sound from his walkie-talkie as he had switched it off. In the event of an emergency his staff could notify him directly. However, nothing untoward happened during our conversation. We laughed from time to time while we were talking. He proved to me that he was interested in international news, as he always watched both the BBC and CNN Television channels. He reads books for approximately hours per day, as part of his learning discipline, so that he could bring new knowledge to his working position as self-directed learning. Later, at an appropriate

time, I began to inform him about the framework of my research and that the aim was to study the needs of these District Directors in order to produce an operational strategy for workplace learning and improvement of work quality. The benefits from his participating in my study may be to help researchers and those involved in the administration of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration better understand the interests and needs of District Directors to improve his job performance. As he appeared reluctant to answer, I told him that there were no rights or wrong opinions. I gave him a set of semi-structured interviews to show the consensus of the opinions of the District Directors that he and his colleagues felt necessary to improve their skills and competencies as identified by Delphi survey in each of the final rounds. I asked him question number one but then he asked me to stop recording, as he was still not sure enough to answer me correctly, in terms that I would accept. He asked me to clarify my question, and then I asked him again to give his opinion as to why the competency of leading an organisation was important for him. So he started by outlining his many responsibilities to me.

> I would like to compare the position of District Directors in my District with that of District Officers in other Provinces. We have responsibilities under the BMA Laws and Regulations – and also to the Permanent Secretary and Governor of BMA, who are responsible for assigning duties. My authority extends to cover main areas – those of, 1) providing service to the people, 2) offering Welfare Services to the people in terms of solving problems relating to Floods and Fire etc – and 3) general improvements such as to roads and lighting.

> I have approximately 1,000 persons working for me in my District Area – such as Civil Servants, Teachers and other sundry employees. Of those – approximately 120 are Civil Servants – 200 are Teachers and 600 to 700 are other employee's, for example waste collectors and sewerage workers.

Organisational Leadership

Perhaps he was nervous to give me an answer or he still did not understand that particular question. Nevertheless, I kept smiling and courteously brought him back to my original question so that I could get more details from him as to the reason why he needs to improve his skills and competencies in terms of leading an organisation, of which I had to remind him. I also asked him to speak freely and for as long as he wished. He seemed to understand my question better and at the same time he looked at me while discussing to observe my reaction in case he answered wrongly. He continued to compare his position and responsibilities with District Directors in other provinces.

> It has always been my aim to become the best District Director in the whole of the BMA organisation. This is not just for my own self-gratification – but in order that I can provide the best possible service to the people whom I serve. People have a variety of problems and they see the District Director as being able to solve these problems. A District Director has the same responsibilities as a District Officer in other Provinces. They would ask a District Director for help in the same way as they would ask a Police Officer.

Effective and Efficient Service

I noticed that Mr. Beckham felt more relaxed to talk with me and so I kept smiling to make him feel comfortable. With regard to the needs to improve his competency in terms of administering responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service, he gave his useful opinions to me that also reflected his style of working.

> I want to administer responsibilities rapid and transparently to provide effective services for people. My principle is that I am working for people to satisfy their needs and concerns – and so I also encourage my staff to think in this way If people have problems, I always find solutions to solve

301

them rapidly or as best as I can. I have always encouraged my staff to be service minded and I believe that development of my own competencies will have a beneficial 'knock-on' effect to my subordinates. This in turn will help them to better – and more rapidly – handle heavy workloads by increasing their own efficiencies. The end result will most certainly be better service for the people.

Emotional Maturity

Mr. Beckham gave his point of view on improving his competency to be more mature and said that it was difficult to control his emotions sometimes. He wanted to know techniques and how to control it when faced with difficult situations arising from training programs.

> Regarding my use of the word 'mature' – as I have a lot of responsibilities, I must be able to control my emotions sometimes, despite the difficulties and often against all odds! This is not always easy to achieve but it may be that a Training Program can improve and develop this skill and so it will be useful for me in the future. Hopefully I can learn techniques in exercising control in difficult situations and can apply this to my work.

Interpersonal Skills

Again I wanted to know more of Mr Beckham's opinions and ideas that related to my question. As he had already mentioned some of the competencies, I was very interested to hear more of his opinions. I then asked him to discuss more about the other items of skills and competencies. He told me of the benefits to be had after improvement of these kinds of competencies and this time his answers did indeed relate to my question and therefore made me better understand his needs and interests.

> I think a leader must have responsibility in performance in order to be professional. As I have many responsibilities to undertake, I think that good human relationships are important for me to work with both staff and

the local people. I need to have the people participating to solve problems together. I mean that they can give me ideas as to how to solve problems. It should be in line with the strategies assigned by the Interior Minister. A District Director has a position of Coordinator, Manager and Administrator – and so we must be able to visit the people as often as is necessary. We must collaborate with people and other organisations as needs dictate – or when I am invited to attend their meetings. I rarely decline as it affords me the chance to become more aware of their problems. It also gives them the opportunity to talk to me personally about their problems – such as habit-forming drugs and homelessness etc. in their areas.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. Beckham told me more about collaboration with other people. He also related a real-life working situation from the past. It proved to me that he was interested and still had a strong desire to improve this competency to make other people more willing whenever he asked for their participation. At the same time he kept smiling while giving me his reasons.

I believe that full collaboration with the people is necessary as a strategy. I must get to know the people in my District and in particular the Leaders of each community. There are 38 Communities that act as one – and they have set up committees to address the needs of each street in the District. The majority of people in this District knows each other well and are both keen and willing to develop the area around their homes. I also instruct my staff to look for implements – such as hoes, spades, water pumps etc. to give to the people to help them improve their community and therefore feel more comfortable in the acceptance of our organisation. As I am concerned about collaboration with people and organisations, I both encourage and take part in the joining together in activities with other organisations, such as the Ordnance Department, Directorate of Military Operations etc. I now enjoy a good relationship with them all.

Moral Leadership

Then I asked Mr Beckham to think about the remaining competency needs about which he was concerned. At that time I observed that he felt more relaxed and enthusiastic to fulfil his endeavours to improve his job performance. I was pleased to hear his useful views that were always concerned about his subordinates and the provision of better services to the local people.

> I have many subordinates to take care of; I have to provide moral leadership that concerns itself with equity and equality for them all. I always give chances to everyone who work with me to operate freely but they have to return good outcomes to me and I warned them of this in the event that someone misbehaves or is unsatisfied with their work. I always tell them to be concerned to solve problems for people. I rarely become involved in their process of working but I am concerned to get good and effective outcomes from them.

Empathetic Understanding

In addition, Mr. Beckham always needs to be aware of the problems of the people so that he can understand and help to make them more satisfied. He also wanted them to trust him and to be confident about asking for his help. It proved that he was a good District director who was concerned to provide solutions to solve problems for his residents.

> In addition, if I can make myself aware of the reason for each problem and also understand the needs of the people, then I think that I can solve problems for them to their satisfaction. We should ensure that they trust us and have faith in us. On the occasions that they ask for our help – and we can provide this help – it will assist in cementing that trust. In my experience, if I can help the people and instil in them this faith in us – it will make them feel better about us and be more able to accept the authority of our organisation.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

I noticed that Mr Beckham felt relaxed and more free to speak with me. In addition, he could see the needs to develop his on-job performance assisting him in his present and future position. He mentioned that the competency needs must apply to his working life. The most important thing that he mentioned was to ensure satisfaction with the services that the district provides for local people. He spoke with much enthusiasm to fulfil his endeavours.

> All of the seven items are important needs of District Directors and will benefit both my present and future position. As leader of a district, I need to have a learning organisation that supports continuous learning and development for my staff and myself. Changes in a workplace, implemented properly, can be said to be good progress for that organisation. I need to learn new knowledge to lead my organisation as it realigns its assumptions about productive work.

Mr Beckham also gave me an example of what had once happened to him in his office. It was an illustration of how his staff lack the skill of having a service mind. He learned from that situation and tried to improve their service to satisfy the people. He stated that the BMA launched a policy of one-stop-service but had never trained civil servants in this practice. The result was that they did not know how to provide service to the people to make them satisfied. It can also be said that as they had no idea how to work in the new way, they (naturally) continued to work in their old way. Otherwise, he believed that the training program could help them to improve their skill so that they can learn how to work and to provide better and more effective services to people – especially how to make the people impressed by the services.

It was during one of these sessions that I once got to know a man whom I had never met before. I discovered that he was very knowledgeable and highly intelligent – more so than me! He graduated with a Doctor's Degree and had just returned from the USA. My first encounter with this man was when I heard and saw him having a disagreement with some of my staff. I spoke to him to establish his problem and found that he was offended by poor service in that he had been kept waiting 15 minutes for what was to be a 10 minute meeting – and was still waiting! I accept that some of my staff are lacking in the skills of providing good service and I believe that the Training Program will address these problems and thus increase their effectiveness in this area.

Even though Mr Beckham was relating the problems in his workplace to me, he was still smiling whilst talking. Perhaps he was aware of the facts surrounding the problems and had learned lessons from his experiences. He believes that a training program can help his staff understand their responsibilities and to provided better services overall.

I believe that the One-Stop-Service policy of the BMA is a good system but many of my subordinates do not know how to apply this to the satisfaction of the end-user. They seem to want to continue in the ways of the old Civil Service. Thus – I need to employ novel techniques to improve their skills and to change their way of thinking to keep pace with the changing environment. I believe that the Training Program will be an excellent arena for gaining this knowledge and imparting it to others and, as a result, will increase the efficiency in the workplace.

Mr Beckham started to appear restless and looked more at me. I then realised that he had nothing more to say. I was delighted to hear of his attitude towards training programs in that they can enhance knowledge and skills fundamental to staff. Then I did not hesitate to ask more questions about professional development strategies that he believed were necessary to promote these 7 needs. He normally solves problems by himself or by asking others to contribute. He could not think of other methodologies at first or

possibly he was used to working in the old ways. However, he told me his strategy of working. Moreover, he mentioned reading books so that the knowledge gleaned be adapted and assist in improving his competencies and needs.

> I am aware that people do not read books as much as they should. However, I would like to suggest that reading a book on (say) Management, for at least hours per day would keep them in touch with the ever changing world. We must also maintain awareness of new laws and regulations. All District Directors must get together periodically to discuss and keep themselves up-to-date with these changes.

Mr Beckham mentioned a get-together of all District Directors. I asked for more details on this. I also asked him think again about other strategies to improve his needs and competencies of all seven items that will affect professional development. He was quiet for a while. I did not want to make him embarrassed, so I repeated my question to ask him to think more about his needs to improve all seven items and pointed to the transcript he was holding. I asked him what methodology he will employ to improve his job performance. He smiled and said 'Aha' and then mentioned a training program as a means of gaining knowledge that can help him to improve performance on job in a beneficial way for both present and future positions. He also indicated that other District Directors have never had the benefit of a training program before. By this time his enthusiasm was more obvious and he said that he wanted the BMA to support training programs for all of them to get together. He mentioned his needs to improve competencies to be mature again. It proved that he was indeed serious about this subject. His statement on his thoughts of strategies to improve his on-job performance as follows:

> Training courses are essential for the position of District Director. I believe that if the BMA supports our needs in terms of improving competencies all seven items, it will lead to an increase in maturity and efficiency in terms of administering our responsibilities more rapidly and transparently – thus

providing a more effective service. I would like to see and implement a Training Program covering the subjects that are relevant to my position and covering the outcomes of the consensus needs of the District Directors. This will improve our job performance. Training programs can also provide what we need to improve our personal skills and competencies.

Mr. Beckham said that he has never attended a training course for only District Directors before, but had passed many training programs provided by the BMA or other organisations in the past. As it was possible he had much experience of training classes, I asked him about his preferred way and methods to be used for training programs that he would like to see in future training courses.

First of all I would like to see all of the District Directors attending training programs together. With regard to the seven items of needs, one course will be sufficient. Our District Directors come from a variety of occupations and this means that some of my colleagues are experts in their field, having worked in their position for many years. We can share our experiences together. I want to learn by case studies so that we can discuss problems and solutions. We should get chances to ask questions if we have them. Of course I am keen to learn new theories that can be applied to my work. The trainers should teach us theories, giving examples of problems and suggestions as to how to solve them.

Successful Training

Mr Beckham made me smile while he mentioned trainers because, coincidentally, I had intended to ask his opinion about them. I asked him to talk to me about the group who will deliver the training. I asked him for his views on the attributes necessary for successful trainers working at his level

I would like to see expert ex-District Directors (retired) and expert District Directors with field experience of at least to 5 years return to provide this Training. They should have good skills and a lot of experience to be my

Trainers and to have an input to future Training Programs. They should also possess knowledge of Management, Law and Regulations etc. They should advise us of the strengths and weaknesses in the Districts where they have worked before and suggest what and what not to do.

Problems with Training

In addition, Mr. Beckham mentioned his attendance in classes in the past. He preferred, and looked forward to, having training programs for his group of District Directors. He can see the value of and benefits to be gained in attending classes to further his career.

In the past we have never had such training. We have had training for many positions within the BMA but never for that of District Director. It will also be useful from each individual District Director's personal point of view. There should be a separate curriculum for only the position of District Director in my opinion.

Duration of Training Programs

I noticed that Mr Beckham started answering me in short sentences and often looked at my feedback from time to time, in case he could not relate to the question. I then told him to feel free to mention any ideas or opinions as appropriate that may be of benefit to the BMA in helping him improve his competencies and that might be good for his work in future. I asked him to talk about the scheduling of this training – how long should be the class duration appropriate for him and when he wants this training program to take place.

I think we should consider a Training Program of one month's duration. During these times Assistant District Directors can assume control. We should be both devoted and committed to attending class and refrain from carrying out our normal duties completely at that time. I think that we should continue the training program, non-stop – until completion. Training classes could be held twice per year and it should be compulsory

in that all District Directors attend. I cannot answer when we should hold training classes. I think that will depend on the BMA.

Training Venues

In that regard, I asked Mr Beckham to think about the venue for the training program – where he wants to attend this class in future, or where he thought this training session should take place in future. At the same time he mentioned about trips to other countries to provide an opportunity to get all District Directors together. Then he reflected on his ideas that he would get benefits by improving relationships among the group of District Director if all of them attended class at the same time.

> I suggest that using the existing Training Facility in Nongjok would obviate the cost of rental of another outside venue. Attendance should be treated seriously and all District Directors should stay overnight together as one group for the duration of the Training. Actually all fifty District Directors have been to Australia for 7 days on a sightseeing trip in the past. This was seen as a useful trip as it gave us the opportunity to bond together and share ideas and experiences. If our meetings and Training sessions are held more frequently, it would provide more opportunity to update our knowledge, thereby improving our skills and competencies. I would like to get the chance to hold this training course together and if that can be arranged, I think that we will improve relationships among the District Directors.

Reflection

Mr Beckham also said that he wanted to see training programs take place every year continuously and especially that they should be provided by the BMA. He also considered it vital that future candidates for the position of District Directors should have training before carrying out their responsibilities by the use of items from this research. I then told him that possibly the BMA should evaluate their needs and interests in a similar way,

but as a separate project, to the research being conducted now – as they may have their own ideas as to what is necessary. They may have different ideas from existing District Directors. He accepted what I said by nodding his head. He reaffirmed all he had said with enthusiasm and by saying that he wanted the BMA to set up training programs to improve his competencies so that he can enhance his on job performance.

This summarises Mr. Beckham's point of view. From the interview, he agreed that training programs could improve his competencies and make him more knowledgeable in connection with his work. He still believes that reading books is another way to gain knowledge to improve his skills and competencies. He thought that if training programs are implemented, he could get together with his colleagues to discuss the position and responsibilities more seriously. In addition, he was still concerned as to the benefits of training programs, in that he and his colleagues must look at the direction in which they must move to improve their work strategies. He wanted them to pull together – in the same direction – to be assured of success.

Mr. Danny's Narrative

On 10 January 2005, I met Mr. Danny in his office, which was not far from my home. It was easy for me to go there even 'though I had never been there before. I just followed a map to find my way there. He was representative of a large district that had been chosen from population statistics. Although many of our population live in this district, their building looked similar to a city hall I had seen in other undeveloped provinces – which surprised me. Many local people were waiting for help with matters such as ID Cards, home registrations and many other problems and there were no seats available for them. I was directed by Civil Servants to another room which reminded me of an old Pharmacy Shop. Soon they will relocate to new and more modern premises near to the main road and easier to find. People in this

district will feel more comfortable than before and they will be able to offer better service given the new facilities.

We made an appointment to interview at 14:00 hrs and I arrived there early again, as usual. That day, all fifty District Directors had to go to the BMA because this was the first day to register a candidate for an election in Bangkok. As a result, he returned to his office late by 10 minutes for our appointment. It was obvious that there was still some 'distance' between this District Director and his subordinates in that they showed their respect for him by standing up and saluting whenever he arrived. They also discontinued conversations when he entered the room.

Mr Danny was tall, with white skin, wearing glasses and had on a Civil Servant uniform and I immediately knew that he was a model District Director. I introduced myself and observed that he was a nice, courteous, dignified, neat and clean man. Even though he will retire next year he still looked younger than his years. He maintained a friendly smile and tried not to be serious despite his hectic lifestyle. Then, with a welcoming smile, he invited me into his room.

This was going to be a relaxed interview. I anticipated – and received – humorous asides and there was much laughter even 'though we had only met for the first time. The interview lasted for 30 minutes. There were many things said that were not part of the formal interview. He was expert on the five elements of Chinese belief and I am interested in this also. So, we had a good discussion on that subject afterwards. I could 'touch' his warm heart and willingness to be my participant. To my surprise, he told me that he felt honoured to participate in my dissertation. I too felt pleased to have met him and to be given so much of his valuable time for my interview – which will very much benefit my study. To make it clear what my interview was about, before I asked him questions, I informed him about the framework of my research study and told him that the list of the seven items was based on a consensus view of what District Directors believe they need to improve on-

job performance. I also explained the objectives, the issues to be discussed, the strict confidentiality of responses and that there are no right or wrong opinions – and to be clear about the ethics of interviewing. He showed embarrassment and asked me to be brief in my questioning so that he could understand and more feel confident to speak. I encourage him to feel free to talk as appropriate and for as long as he wishes. As a tape recorder was probably the most useful piece of equipment for my studying, I asked his permission to record his voice while we had our conversation. I told him that this was the best way of dealing with the data. I informed him that the benefits of participating in the study may be to help myself and those involved in the administration of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration better understand the interests and needs of District Directors to improve their job performance. Then I started to outline my questions.

I refreshed his memory in terms of the three rounds of the assessment analysis that had been carried out previously. He acknowledged this by concentrating on what I was saying and by nodding his head in agreement. The outcomes reflected all that District Directors would like to improve their skill and competencies as identified by the Delphi survey for leading an organisation. That is - to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service, being mature, to establish good human relationships, to collaborate effectively with people and their organisations, to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality, understanding people in order to satisfy their needs.

Organisational Leadership

As Mr Danny was their representative, I needed to know why theses needs were important to him. He told me that he was concerned about all of the competencies, but in particular items 2, 4, 6, and 7 (see Appendix 5) were more important than the others were. As a researcher, I must listen to his opinion. Possibly he scored these items highly when surveyed by

questionnaire previously. Later he demonstrated his lack of leadership skill and the need to improve this skill. I was aware of his embarrassment as he spoke in a lower voice at this time – and also glanced down regularly at the sheets of semi-structured interview questions.

> Regarding Item 1, leading an organisation effectively is important to me. If I cannot control my Civil Servants nor have sufficient knowledge of management, it will give me problems. I must have knowledge of laws and practices. A leader of an organisation must be seen to be fair to all employees. I told them to pay close attention to their work and to keep in the forefront of their minds the fact that we must deliver good service to the people. Duties of a District Director involve many and varied tasks and I must have a full understanding of each of them. I work closely with people when offering welfare services. I would like to be given the opportunity to gain new knowledge and techniques appropriate to my job.

Effective and Efficient Service

I noticed that Mr Danny felt better and gave his useful opinions to me that related to the competencies he needs to improve. He was keen to improve his performance so that he can use his skills and in turn show his staff how to provide more effective services in the workplace.

> I must naturally be seen to be operating in an efficient and effective manner as I will be ultimately accountable for my actions – to both the people I serve and the BMA. To that end I must improve my competencies in order that my own staff can be directed clearly and swiftly. This in turn will demonstrate to them – via 'leading by example' that my instructions are to be acted upon immediately and as openly as possible. I have to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently to ensure total satisfaction in the effectiveness of our services.

Emotional Maturity

Later, Mr. Danny told me about general problems relating to his work and his ways of solving them in the past. Afterwards, he appeared to think deeply to give me his views of improving the competency to become more emotionally mature, necessary for his position. He smiled and told me;

> I tell my subordinates to keep smiling and maintain a happy disposition even when they might be feeling bad themselves! They must not show their personal emotions to the public. My aim is to reform them to become better Civil Servants than their predecessors. We must strive for more maturity in both our verbal and non-verbal communication. It is important that I show my emotional maturity with them initially and indeed at all times. It is vital that I have and demonstrate this emotional maturity in order to be able to address and resolve problems in a swift and competent manner – in order to satisfy the people I serve.

Interpersonal Skills

Mr Danny's enthusiasm to gain new knowledge and improve his skills and competencies were obvious to me by this time. He also confirmed his intention to further develop his skills. I then asked him to speak freely about other items.

> Good human relationships are a very necessary part of my job. As I work closely with people I must always be aware of their requirements. Whenever people have problems they can petition me to resolve their issues and satisfy their needs. In addition to being a leader I also see myself in a pivotal role as co-ordinator and go-between when dealing with many and differing bodies of people. For example – I must liaise with other organisations in the Private Sector if I need their support in a particular project. I must also listen to the everyday people whom I serve. I also must co-ordinate work with my own staff and report on my progress regularly to my own superiors in the BMA.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. Danny could not deny that some work can only be carried out by collaboration with others. This includes everyone who has a stake in the outcome and creation of solutions. He wants to ensure good teamwork to solve problems for people. I was happy to hear his brilliant opinions and ideas to improve his competency for himself, which will benefit his district in future.

> There is a phrase 'no man is an island'. This is so true – as we all depend on each other. This is the reason for, and the basis of, teamwork. It does not matter if the other 'team members' are members of the public (whom we serve), my own staff, and our collaborators in the Private Sector or our superiors in the BMA. When addressing a common problem we are all part of the same team and should be pulling together in the same direction to achieve our goals and resolve the problem. In our area we also have Private Companies and I must ensure good human relationships exist between them and us also. Indeed many times we ask each other for assistance in some matters relating to the provision of support of the people – so continuing good co-operation is vital and important to my position.

Moral Leadership

At that time Mr Danny felt restless and appeared nervous as he looked at me. I was aware that he may have had no more things to say. Then I asked him to think about improvements in competency to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. He looked down at the questions I gave to him before continuing with our conversation again:

> A good leader who is concerned with both equity and equality will very soon gain the respect of his subordinates by being seen to be fair in all aspects of his role. I try to provide moral leadership, concerned with equity and equality. I can at any time delegate any of my responsibilities to my Assistant District Directors or heads of sections within my district.

Depending on the problem or issue, they can then follow up towards a satisfactory resolution. In my experiences I see that this is good for my staff in that they are more able to answer questions when we collaborate with the people and other organisations. This in turn leads to clearer and more rapid provision of effective service. However, the fairness must also extend to situations where subordinates do not perform as expected. There may be a good reason for this and perhaps giving them a second chance (if appropriate) will demonstrate this equity and equality. Conversely, if a reprimand is required to be given, then this must also be seen to be fair, reasonable and deserved. This too would demonstrate that equity and equality can be applied in different ways – depending on the situation.

Empathetic Understanding

I was glad to hear that Mr Danny could give me useful opinions and eventually seemed to feel better and relaxed to talk again. Then he also mentioned the last competency that he needs to improve so that he can provide effective services for his local people to make them feel impressed and satisfied.

Another requirement is that I must understand the people themselves in order to be able to provide exactly what they want. If I do not know the people, but do understand their needs, I may not be providing as good a service as I otherwise might – and so they might be reluctant to ask for my help. My aim is to foster peace, harmony and satisfaction in my area of responsibility. Despite the fact that the local people in this area, whilst living in standard villages, have a good quality of life – we must still take care of the needs of the different communities.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

Despite his pausing, it was obvious that Mr Danny was still thinking deeply. I then asked him to provide me with as much detail as he wished. He detailed the generalities of his day-to-day routine and in particular what he has done to both solve problems within his district and also to improve services. He also confirmed his views that he sees all seven items of needs improvement being necessary for his present and future position. I asked him if there was anything else that he wanted to say. He replied thus:

> In our role as District Directors we meet a wide variety of people, as part of our wide-ranging responsibility. They come to us with many different problems such as ID card registration, civil registration, to present petitions about sewage problems and pollution etc. We have to solve many problems to satisfy them all. I do believe that if I can improve my competencies in terms of all seven items, they will help me develop my personal skills and have a beneficial effect on my workplace in the present and future. As a leader of this district, I can see how important it is to improve skills and competencies and to ensure my subordinates accept this.

By the way he spoke, I could see his aims to gain knowledge to improve his performance on job. I smiled, as I was pleased to be aware of his opinions that related to my research. He showed that he possessed a participation leadership style. I then asked him to think about the needs of the District Directors to improve their skills and competencies. I asked what professional development strategies does he believe in that will promote these needs. At first he could not understand my question. It was then necessary that I repeat my question to ask him to think about and relate to me his ideas on how to achieve all the competencies resulting from the outcomes

of the Delphi Survey. Afterwards I noticed that he understood better by nodding his head and saying:

> Of course I think that a Training Program is important for us as we will gain new knowledge of leadership and improve our competencies so that we can administer our organisation more efficiently. As I said before, all of the listed items are important for District Directors in our positions of responsibility. Believe it or not, we have never had a training curriculum for District Directors before! In the event that the BMA can set a program to improve our competencies, I believe that this will be useful for existing District Directors and those who will succeed them in future.

I noticed that the more Mr Danny spoke the more he was confident to give me ideas and opinions. He could clearly appreciate how training programs will be beneficial to him and his colleagues. Then he outlined his desired outcomes of the training program.

> When we get this new knowledge from the Training Courses we will better understand each other and the needs of the people. It will also lead to a better relationship amongst the District Directors.

> I believe it necessary that all 50 District Directors attend the classes at the same time, studying the same subject, so that we can work more effectively when we return to our respective workplaces.

Successful Training

Mr Danny's smiling demeanour showed me that he was delighted to talk with me on this subject. His hopes were high that training programs that will satisfy his needs will be forthcoming in the near future. I asked him to talk to me about the persons who would deliver the training. What does he see are the necessary attributes of successful trainers working at this level? He then gave me his opinion about the group of people who would be appropriate for his position, who could deliver the necessary knowledge.

Ideally they should be retired Permanent Secretaries, previously employed by the BMA, or retired District Directors who have much knowledge and experience (that has never been documented) in our field. When they are presented with problems, they will know what the best techniques to resolve the issues are. Thereby we can learn from their experiences in the past. Also, these people should always update their knowledge on an ongoing basis. If they meet these criteria I believe they will make for the best possible trainers in future.

Problems with Training

In addition, Mr. Danny mentioned training programs that he had attended in the past. It was useful information from him to make me aware of what he did not like and does not want to see in the training class again. On the other hand, he was able to tell me the style of training methods that he wished to see in future.

I would not like to see an excess of academic study, including from books anymore. In the past, trainers always came from university and did not understand real problems of my position. The method I favour would be based on a workshop to share ideas with the other members of the group and by using presentations such as Power Point.

Duration of Training Programs

By now Mr Danny was showing his willingness to improve his performance and was keen to see his colleagues learn together. I then asked him his opinion on a schedule for the training in future. "Please talk to me about the schedule of training. How long should be the duration of the class – in consideration of the District Directors' needs."

I think that a day course on each of the seven items will be sufficient as the District Directors are already knowledgeable and an 'update' to this knowledge might be all that is necessary. The training program should be about alerting us to new ideas and new theories etc. – in order to increase

our on-job effectiveness. I would like to be made aware of only the main points within each of the seven items – so I think that there is no need for a long course (or courses). I am convinced that days per item will be adequate.

He gave me his views on the continuous training program. He said that all 7 of the competencies are important for his position, to learn creative skills and talents that can be developed through practice. Mr. Danny mentioned that Assistant District Directors should also attend the same training programs prior to commencing their work. It can be said that he was concerned to have in place a curriculum for training District Directors before they are appointed. He thinks that all of the 7 needs are relevant to an appropriate curriculum for them. I was very pleased to hear his opinions. Meanwhile he gave his opinions and ideas on how to improve on-job performance as follows.

> We should be efficient and knowledgeable as good models for our subordinates. The Training Program should also be continuous. Prior to appointment this training should be given and also updated by ongoing training courses annually. Assistant District Directors who may be promoted in future should also be given this training. The training classes will enlighten us as to the latest innovations and give us the chance to share our ideas and experiences with the rest of the group. If we assemble all 50 District Directors, it is likely that we will get a spread of 50 differing ideas arising out of the variety of experience – such as problems in the workplace, problems of management, awareness of peoples' problems etc. We will then be in a better position to solve these problems collectively.

Although he explained his views on the style of training he would like to see and also on the training programs themselves, I still wanted more clarification – so that he could tell me about which methods of learning he was most concerned about. I then asked him which methods or style he would prefer to learn in future. He also referred to new technology that he sees as being important to him in his position. I was both surprised and

impressed by this as rarely senior people or those in high positions embrace or want to know about new technology, in my experience.

> I prefer to learn by brainstorming – to share ideas amongst careers. Perhaps trainers can bring case studies to the class for discussion purposes, as we would then be learning about real issues and how the solutions to those particular problems were reached. It should be real problems that occurred in some district recently. I think that globalisation makes everything change. The trainers must be aware of new technologies to use in training classes where appropriate in order that I can apply this to my job.

Training Venues

Later, Mr Danny wondered if the BMA would support his idea in future or not. I explained that this dissertation will help the administrators of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration better understand the interests and needs of District Directors to improve their job performance in future. It also will provide him with an understanding of how to meet his needs and to advance or protect his job interests. Otherwise, I asked his opinion as to where the classes should be held in future. He seemed very interested in what I asked. Then he said that if he can arrange this training class with all his colleagues, it will be of benefit to them – especially as we can then learn what is necessary. A very good idea, he said!

> As regards a location for these classes – I think it would be convenient to hold them anywhere in Bangkok, another Province or indeed another country. We can all delegate our responsibilities to our Assistants while we are away. Also, as I said before, a short course will minimise any adverse effect of us being away.

Reflection

During our conversation I noticed that Mr Danny felt relaxed and always spoke confidently. He was also motivated by his own aspirations to create the ways of learning by himself. He always spoke gently. He tried to answer by always giving opinions and ideas to me. He showed great enthusiasm when mentioning the groups of trainers who can elevate his potential to better fulfil the requirements of the BMA. I appreciated hearing his opinions and observed by his behaviour that he was very keen to improve his job performance. Later, he mentioned his experiences of training classes in the past and how they were unacceptable to him – but he did not permit me to include this in my research. We then discussed the five elements. This was our favourite subject and so we had many laughs! We also talked more in general about his work experiences. I also noticed that he was willing to adapt to environmental changes in this era. Furthermore, he intends to improve the on-job performance of his subordinates to make them enjoy their work more. In particular, they should provide better services to local people, he said. He wanted to gain new knowledge, applicable to his work. Later, his subordinate came into his room with urgent documents to be signed. I decided this was an appropriate time for me to go. Finally, he re-confirmed to me that he looks forward to having a training class, per his requirements, based on this research. Gazing at him encouragingly, I hoped that he would develop his competencies in future.

Mr Ian's Narrative

I would like to call this district a 'Warm Welcome District' as I really felt this way. As I drove my car past the office, I immediately saw that the sign was well designed and attractively decorated. It looked more like a resort than an office! It conveyed to me a feeling of relaxation and good atmosphere. It seemed different from other districts I had previously visited. I

could not believe how wonderful it was and it made me want to talk to the person who designed it. This district office was located in a road well known by Bangkok residents. It was easy and convenient for me to go there, as I was already aware of the district office location. I was able to park my car in the district office car park.

Our appointment to interview was at 10:00 hrs on 10 January 2005 but as it was the first day of registration of candidates for Parliament, Mr. Ian had to go to the BMA urgently that morning. As my mobile phone had been switched off I was unable to be contacted to be told of this. The result was that when I arrived there, his secretary told me about that his boss had re-scheduled our appointment for later that afternoon. I therefore had to return at 17:00 hrs to interview Mr. Ian. When I arrived there at the re-scheduled time, he was still meeting with his staff to advise them of the new policy dictated by The Governor. I then had to wait for a further 30 minutes before our interview could proceed.

With regard to the collection of data in the Delphi survey, I did not receive his completed questionnaire for rounds one and two returns by my deadline. Upon investigation I discovered that he had not received them at all. Despite his staff conducting a careful search, they could not be found. Possibly they had been lost in the post – as had happened before – and also with documents sent from the BMA. I was therefore obliged to re-send them and give him revised deadlines. As regards the round three questionnaire, after I posted it to him, I called and found that he had received it. He was clearly enthusiastic to answer my questions in all three rounds as he could see the benefits that in future may improve his on-job performance. When his meeting was over, he and two of his subordinates came out together. As I had never met him face to face before, it was difficult for me to know which person was the District Director – especially as all men wore uniforms. I smiled at them and was immediately surprised when Mr. Ian came over to me and saluted (Wai) me first. (At the time I wanted to run to look in the mirror to see how old I looked – and laugh at myself). His behaviour was so much

like a Thai Member of Parliament. I avoided embarrassment by immediately introducing myself to him. He apologised for the morning cancellation and re-scheduling of the interview and also for making me wait longer in afternoon. I told him that I understood he was extremely busy and that I was only too delighted to be able to meet him at all – in support of my research study. We talked generally for a while and I found him to be a nice, kind and friendly man. He invited me to sit on a comfortable sofa in his room. As soon as I entered his office I noticed that his furniture had been arranged in accordance with the Chinese Feng Shui principle. He told me that his friends had designed the layout for him. It was obvious that, because of his overall behaviour, he had good relationships and friendships with many people and also they loved him too.

Mr. Ian had worked in this district for years. He was a District Director representative of a large district. Our conversation lasted for approximately hour. I was happy to interview him as he was so nice to talk with and he appeared to enjoy talking with me too. He told me that he was honoured to be my participant in both the phases of Delphi survey and in the semi-structured interview. He also asked why I had selected his district (smiled). I then explained about stratified sampling being chosen on the basis of population. Despite many interruptions caused by the ringing of his mobile 'phone – we carried on. It was such a relaxed interview that many times he digressed and so I had to bring him back to my original questions. He opened my eyes to the big picture of his ideas to improve on-job performance. I could easily tell by his vision and comments that he was a supporter of lifelong learning and was also willing to improve his skills and competencies that might benefit his job. He was so kind to answer all of my questions and, where appropriate, would give me examples to make his answers clearer to me. As usual I informed him of the detail of my research and told him that there were no right or wrong opinions. He understood the detail, and so I started to ask him the first question. He seemed nervous and perhaps afraid that he might give me the wrong answers, so he asked me to stop the tape

recording. He then asked me to repeat the question, making it more clear for him. I reassured him before I started to ask questions again and to tape record the interview.

I asked Mr Ian to discuss with me the seven items of his needs that he believes were necessary to improve skills and competencies as identified by the Delphi survey. He advised me of his reasons as to why there was a need to improve competencies – which in turn will lead to organisational improvement – and also on other related items. He also explained to me how he sees improvement in the leading of an organisation being able to assist in his workplace.

> All Bangkok districts can achieve success in their projects. We are all front line organisations working directly with the people. Therefore, decentralisation from BMA should be considered so that all District Directors can work more closely with the people and provide more effective care for the residents of the District. Accomplishments arise from a combination of input and output and these are important elements. If we cannot achieve these, I believe that the work we carry out will not satisfy the residents in my opinion. Administrators should have high standards and good leadership skills in order to improve the performance of District Directors. the BMA assign more and more work to each district but do not increase the budget accordingly. As a result a good outcome cannot be achieved. They should decentralise to each district and give us the necessary powers to increase staff and allocate money appropriate to each task and the needs of the people. I meet a variety of people both in our own organisation and in the private sector. As we all have to work closely together it is important that I collaborate and have the necessary skills to provide the desired outcome. If I am lacking skill in this area, possibly I cannot reach the goal I want.

Organisational Leadership

Mr Ian also told me more about how he views decentralisation as being important to him. He was concerned that a good leader should command to

resolve problems immediately and encourage subordinates to change their style of working within the district. In addition, he stated that he wants to have more knowledge to make his staff and people more willing to act on his requests.

> Decentralisation, to each individual district, from the BMA has not been of great benefit to me. All that has happened was that work and responsibilities increased but with no additional manpower provided. I need to have sufficient staff of the correct calibre to be able to operate effectively. Nevertheless, leadership is an important skill for a District Director to be able to operate effectively. This can be of great benefit for my organisation and me. I can then use this skill to motivate others towards change. I need to know how to command, as that is the most powerful tool for dealing with them to achieve extraordinary results. Or it can be said that I wish to know how to influence people to get things done to an appropriate standard and quality and to do it willingly.

Effective and Efficient Service

As Mr Ian talked, he looked at the copies of the semi-structured interview questions that showed the outcome of the District Directors findings – needed to improve their competencies into the seven items. He also looked at me to observe my body language in an attempt to establish whether or not he was giving the correct answers. I maintained a smile, nodded my head from time to time and listened without interruption, as I wanted him to feel relaxed talking to me. I then asked him to think about item 2: to administer responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective service. He opened his mind and appeared to speak freely with me and in long sentences. As appropriate, some things that were said have not been recorded in this document.

> If I do not have sufficient authority then we cannot achieve success in management. Therefore, it is vital that the leader has sufficient power, staff and finance in order to satisfactorily resolve the problems for district

residents. In Bangkok, there are 50 Districts and all 50 District Directors must be able to work effectively to get good outcomes and benefits for our local people. Resolutions of these problems should be supported by a policy established by The Bangkok Governor. If we do not have this support we cannot provide effective service. If you look at the organisation chart of the BMA, you can see that all District Directors come under the direct control of The Permanent Secretary for the BMA and the Bangkok Governor. This means that they can assign projects to us directly and we can then solve the problems of the people in the shortest possible time. That way, she can assign jobs to us directly so that we can work better for the people. I try to do what I can help people. When local people in my district bring problems to me, I always try to find a quick solution. For example, today people came to me with a complaint that they had not been advised of an election outside our district. They needed this information in advance in order that they could return to their home area for registration purposes. In fact the Office of the Election Commission of Thailand is responsible for all aspects of the election campaign but they were not aware of this. I believe I should have this responsibility in order that I can make people in my district properly aware of all aspects of the election campaigns.

Emotional Maturity

Mr. Ian was always concerned about his local people and how to provide better services for them if he can improve his competencies. He suddenly mentioned that emotional maturity was important for his position in asking for other people's help to solve problems.

Therefore it is vital that I have a sufficiency of mature and emotional intelligence to be able to collaborate with other organisations if I am to effectively help the people. District Directors must have the proper level of performance and sufficient knowledge, including skill and personality. I must embrace my leadership skills in order to take care of the local people in the way that they want. If I am to develop my district in accordance with the needs of the local people, maturity and good human relationships are

important attributes to have. Thus, the skill of showing maturity can encourage people to participate.

Interpersonal Skills

Mr. Ian then commented on his need of skills to establish good human relationships. He explained to me about his position in that he needs to use this skill a lot to contact with both his staff and other organisations. I noticed that he felt confident to speak and remained smiling. He also mentioned about the consensus of his career that he also wants to improve this competency. Before he answered, he went away to check the air conditioning as he was beginning to sweat. He found that it had been switched off at o'clock to comply with the policy of the saving of electricity campaign and apologised if I felt it stuffy. I answered that I felt fine and was used to it already – and then we both laughed!

> Anyway, it was good that they had the same ideas as me to improve. I use my interpersonal skill, leader of district and good human relationships in order to collaborate with people and organisations. Otherwise, it would be impossible for me to work alone to solve these problems. I must make contact with people to make these projects happen. Thus, human relationship is an important skill to get people's participation. I want to see their reaction when we get a good result.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. Ian talked about the sufficiency of authority to apply management rapidly and transparently to provide effective service to the people and that was a matter he was very concerned about. He appeared to enjoy talking freely and did not want to stop! Suddenly, his mobile phone rang and I had to stop the tape recorder. He answered quickly and then returned to me. I then asked his opinion as to what other skills and performances he wanted to see improved. I asked him to think about the need for improvement in

performance relating to collaboration with people and other organisations. His initial opinion was to say that we should establish good human relationships and to be mature at the same time. He again repeated his problems of management as a result of the limitations imposed on his authority by the BMA. He felt strongly that he could not allocate budgets to resolve problems or provide effective service at times. At times he had to rely on his personal connections with other organisations and people to solve problems. During the interview he showed his enthusiasm in wanting to improve skills and performance in order to resolve problems and to satisfy the local population in terms of their needs and problems.

> (Smiling) With regard to improving performance and collaborating effectively with other people and organisations – absolutely, yes – if I am not smart enough to operate satisfactorily in this way I will not get the co-operation from others that is crucial to my success. I am always friendly and smiling with people when offering them welfare service. I must always remember that I am a representative of my district and, in a way, like a symbol of my district. I must therefore, have the ability to cooperate and collaborate effectively. Often I have to use my private connections to solve some problems. I have to rely on my human relationship skills with people in order to collaborate with them effectively.

Mr Ian also gave me examples that demonstrated he had good human relationships with other people and organisations. This proved to me that he had good relationships with the people in the past and was able to solve problems for them effectively and to make them satisfied. He gave me some examples of problems he had to deal with in his district – such as the village being untidy, opportunist thieves asking for money to look after parked cars, noise pollution from customers leaving restaurants and bars and also the music coming from these bars. All these have an adverse effect on the environment. Residents of that village want to live peacefully, do not want to pay for car parking and also want to see attractive public gardens. He instructed that surveys be carried out in that area in an attempt to improve the

view, but required 8 million Baht for this development. He told me that he did not has sufficient resources in terms of budget and skills to be able to resolve these problems for the people despite the fact that they had come to meet him with an awareness of his responsibilities in this regard. The responsibility does not solely lie with only his district. He had a joint responsibility with the Police and Water Supply organisations to solve these problems. He described his method of working to solve problem by using his human relationship skills. I let him tell me his story freely. Meanwhile I could become aware of his confidence to do his job and his style of working.

> My approach to solving these problems was to arrange meetings to talk with the people concerned. Luckily, some of the local people had held high office and had since retired. Indeed one of them was a retired Governor. I outlined my problems to them and told them of my proposals for a solution to these problems. I was obliged to tell them that I did not have sufficient financial resources to address and resolve all of these problems but I was able to supply manpower, machinery and some materials i.e. bricks for decorating nice Public Parks. We had fruitful discussions and achieved the necessary participation. Some of the participants were able to donate money and others to donate trees for Public Park. Finally I had the cooperation of the local people which was a very important step. The main thing was, however, that the actions made the local people feel like owners of their own area. Had my department resolved all issues, the people would have assumed that the district had to take care of the land in the future. Now we are like joint owners in that we must all be responsible for what we have achieved together. From this it is clear good leadership, personality and good human relationships go well together in achieving success.

Moral Leadership

Although Mr Ian is faced with many problems and has nobody to give him advice, he tries to solve them anyway. He gets some ideas as to how to solve problems of crisis management from his favourite book 'Reinventing

Government', as it is appropriate to his job. It shows that he is interested in learning and loves to read books to enhance his skills. We had discussion on his experiences and also obstacles in his working life for around 10 minutes. We had many laughs while talking because he was enjoying talking about his job experiences and thus he was contributing knowledge to the benefit of my research. I realised that I still had many questions to ask him, so I had to bring him back to my questions. I was aware that he still wanted to mention other skills and performance. Otherwise, I asked him to talk about the need for improvement, re. item 6: to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. He still kept smiling and said:

> I think this item is concerned with management. If we are concerned about Good Governance, we will become more aware of equity and its effect on my management within my organisation and this will benefit local people. Let me tell you about my background and how I feel about people who work for the district. In the past when I was young and I had to make contact with the district, I did not like to go there at all because I have seen that Civil Servants always seem to shout at people. This did not present a good image for them. In the past I thought that if I was ever promoted to become a District Director, I might turn out like them! Then I thought that if I wanted to change the attitude of people to have good feeling with staff in the district, what should I do? I thought back to find reasons why people had these bad feelings with the district and I became aware that it was because of poor services previously provided. Therefore, they should change their way of working to become more effective. Possibly they had followed other peoples' bad behaviour in the past. I think that they can change their behaviour to become more concerned about providing good service to people. As a leader of a district, I need to manage people involved with me with both equity and equality. These two things will help me work more successfully.

Mr. Ian also referred to the differences between Civil Servants and staff working in the private sector. He said that he could easily recognise Civil Servants by their old-fashioned appearance. He also indicated that

district buildings were rarely renovated and this was an area that he wanted to improve. Initially he instructed his subordinates to change their attitude towards the public by smiling more and remaining polite at all times. He established a new system whereby unnecessary tasks were reduced to a minimum or removed altogether. This would free-up staff to provide better all round service. He was obliged to do whatever people requested. He told me of his idea to design a new entrance gate to the District complex. In fact I had seen this new gate when I arrived and was so impressed it felt as if I was entering a holiday resort! It was very beautiful and decorative indeed. (Mr. Ian laughed a lot). Furthermore, he confirmed to me that 'he likes to make people feel comfortable to be here'. Of course I agreed with him and confirmed that I really felt that way myself. He was also concerned about his staff and to help them enjoy their work. Wherever I am promoted to be a District Director, I like to develop those places, he said. His desire was to change both the working environment and attitude of Civil Servants by way of a 're-engineering' of the part of the organisation under his control. He received feedback from people as to their satisfaction with new environments provided by him. He also welcomes comment and wants to improve himself to have better relationships. Later, he told me about his style of his working with his subordinates to demonstrate how he manages.

> I permit my subordinates to give me suggestions on anything they know better than I do. I am willing to improve myself and follow their recommendations. We enjoy working together like brother and sister because it makes for a more effective working performance. You know…sometimes I can find a solution to solve problems by the ideas of a street sweeper, as he sweeps streets everyday. So, he is aware of problems but has no power to solve them. He gives me suggestions while we discuss the problem. Of course I cannot ignore ideas and recommendation given by other people and often I have had a successful project as a result of ideas from staff and bottom line management many times – believe it or not! Sometimes I cannot get good advice from bosses when problems arise, but I can solve them by staff participation when they can offer me

ideas and suggestions. Now we need good, effective management and not just administrators within our organisation. This is part of my working style but does not mean that I am 100% successful, as sometimes I am still faced with many obstacles to my work. I still want to improve my job performance.

Empathetic Understanding

I noticed that Mr Ian was proud of himself in achieving success in this job. Despite his obvious good human relationship skills he still acknowledged that there was room for improvement in this area. In addition, he told me of his plans to improve the main roads in his district and this is still an ongoing project. From my observation I could see that he was always concerned about improvement to satisfy the local population. He also worked hard to request collaboration from other people and organisations. Again he told me another plan to develop a nearby main road in the future and his attempts to succeed. He also outlined the steps of his proposed solutions in developing some other projects.

> I always want to know about the needs of people so that I can solve their problems. At the same time I must examine their problems and provided solutions to solve them to improve quality for local people – not just to wait for their requests. My plan is to improve a road in my district that is very popular and well-used by the local people. For some time I have been of the belief that the local people and drivers have felt the main roads to be unsafe. My aim is to improve this road but a lot of money will be required to do so. In talking with higher management of one of our local companies, located on one of these main roads, I found out that they had the same idea as myself and were possibly prepared to maintain the road in front of their company premises. We agreed that our ideas where the same and I said that I would like to see all drivers who use this road to be safe. We then discussed ideas. Subsequent to this I established the necessary action by carrying out surveys. As there are many large companies located in this

district and I need a large amount of money, I thought it might be possible that they would be willing to contribute something.

Mr Ian seemed to enjoy talking and told me his ideas on how to collaborate with people and other organisations. I let him speak without interruption so that he could feel relaxed and more able to make me aware of his personal style of work. He explained each step of his solutions and how he uses his skill of human relationship with other people to get their participation.

> Initially, I talk with heads of companies located in my district. As mentioned before, I want to solve problems by developing a new view of this main road, find solutions to solve problems in the environment around that road, solve problems of water pollution and solve problems of inconvenience of that road, as people find it difficult to walk on. I incorporate these aspects into an agenda for my meeting so that I can get people to participate in solving these problems. My concern is especially directed at those people who will take care of that area in future. We have had development projects in the past many times but these have failed, as there was nobody to maintain them. If we want staff to maintain this project, we would need money to manage an organisation that will be set up for this purpose. I give these examples of my work so that you can see how I use competency to collaborate with people and organisations to get their participation.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills.

Mr Ian then illustrated his ideas as to how he saw all of the seven items of competency needs assisting him in his present and future position. Later, he considered the skill of human relationship as being important for his position to obtain people participation.

> You can see why I need to improve my competencies to get new knowledge so that I can use them for my present job. Actually, I am concerned to get new knowledge to improve my competencies and I think that I can use them whenever I work. A District Director is in the position of a leader of a district, thus I should improve my performance so that I can cope with problems both in the present and future

I was enjoying listening about Mr Ian's work experiences and also I was able to understand his style of his working better and especially as he seemed to open his mind to me. He was friendly and concerned about his subordinates and local people to make them participate with all projects, or as much as he could. He always put local people first to make them satisfied with the service provided by the staff in his district. He never gives up on problems. By contrast he tries to resolve them to the satisfaction of the local people. Although he was a leader of district, he did not just command others but he used his good relationships with his subordinates well enough to be able to enjoy success in his projects. I can tell by his answers and also my observation that he believed in life long learning and this made me very keen to ask him my questions. I then asked him about professional development strategy to improve his performance on job as required by the seven items needs. Again his mobile phone rang and he asked me to wait. When he returned he felt reluctant to answer because could not understand my question enough to reply. So he asked me to explain more about it again. Possibly he could not understand the question and yet, his answers still demonstrated his concern for his subordinates' improvement. I let him speak freely for a while and I soon became more aware of his working style in that he wanted to build teamwork by understanding each other before commencing operations.

> I always meet with my staff to impart my knowledge to them as they often lack knowledge of new technology. As usual they come to the district to work on their job and leave the office at o'clock, without ever seeking new skill or knowledge. I use PowerPoint during meetings to collaborate their

idea to solve problems and also to give them knowledge at the same time. For example, I inform them of new policies that are established by The Bangkok Governor because it is important to get their responses to ensure projects proceed successfully. Whenever I am informed of anything by the Executives of BMA, I always tell them everything so that they can understand and function to achieve good outcomes. After that I follow up the progress of their work with the head of the section responsible.

I felt happy to hear Mr Ian's style of working but I needed to bring him back to my original question by asking him again to think about professional development strategy appropriate to himself so that he can improve his performance on job. I also asked that he please specific to only that group of District Directors participating in this research. He looked at me with embarrassment and smiled at the same time as he was aware that his answers did not relate to the questions. He then paused briefly and eventually was able to continue with his ideas – and said:

> You know…when I discuss what I say with you to my colleagues (District Directors), I am aware that many of them cannot understand at all. They cannot understand why I have embarked on so many projects and how I can do this. Thus, I think that training programs will be important for us in order to improve academic knowledge, even for me. Because we are all so busy, it would be impossible to ask them to learn by themselves. We are different because I can find time to read books and want to improve my performance. On the other hand, I also accept that it is difficult to perform self-directed learning with books. District Directors should learn new knowledge and skills to improve their job performance. Especially as all of the seven items are important for my position and it will be good if BMA provide training programs for all District Directors together. We have never had a training program among our group at all. I think that the Executives of BMA should establish a policy to improve skills and performance for us by following up this research for our improvement in future.

Successful Training

Trainers are important to motivate trainees to learn in a classroom environment. Trainers and participants would benefit from using the training area as a rehearsal room, to experiment, to try new approaches with clear and direct feedback in a safe environment. Continuously improving performance of District Directors will be of benefit to them in the longer term. Mr. Ian may have his own ideas and opinions that he wants to see in a training program suitable for him in future. I then asked him talk to me about the groups who deliver the training. What does he look for in trainers? What does he see are the necessary elements of a successful trainer working at his level? Suddenly he answered me by giving a name of a trainer who he wanted to see in the classroom. This man is popular in the field of Chief Executive Organization (CEO) in Thailand. I think probably his knowledge, competencies and performance on job impressed him for a long time. It can be said that he had a good trainer in his mind and that is why did not hesitate to answer this question.

> I think they should be expert and have experiences in their working life such as Mr. Boonklee Plangsiri as a Chief Executive of the Sin Cooperation. If the BMA invites him to be trainer, we will benefit greatly from his valuable knowledge. I want to see groups of trainers who have good communication skills and can deliver their experiences to us in the classroom. I mean that they can tell of their experiences to solve each problem for us and also be able to answer our questions. Because they have been faced with a variety of problems, they can talk about them and discuss them with us. I think I will get both knowledge and skill from their experiences and it will make it easier for me to apply them to my job whenever we face problems.

Problems with Training

At the same time Mr Ian gave me his opinion on the group of trainers of whom he had experience of in the past – that were not adequately qualified

and were therefore not appropriate to be his trainers – and that he does not want it to happen in future.

> On the contrary, if trainers were teachers from university, as before, I would probably sleep because they always read books aloud to us. Especially, I have found that they lack experience in management skills.

Duration of Training Program

I felt glad to hear that Mr Ian wanted the BMA to follow up my research to provide training programs for only District Directors. Of course, he was aware of the benefits that he would get; especially as he had similar ideas to those of his colleagues whom I had interviewed previously. He smiled a lot while we were discussing this question and I smiled too. Possibly he could visualise in his mind his attendance in the classroom in future. He continued to show his enthusiasm to get a training program established for his group of District Directors, supported by the BMA. I did not hesitate to ask his opinion about the duration of the class. He answered immediately and with enthusiasm.

> I think a training program should last for no more than months. I believe that all seven items of your research should form the basis for the whole training course for months. I also feel strongly about having a strict and serious training class with my colleagues. By that I mean we should both attend class and stay overnight together. At that time we can empower our Assistants to take care of business for us. If the BMA can provide this training program, it will improve our job performance and enhance our skills – so that we can bring our new-found knowledge to our management within the workplace.

I smiled and was pleased to hear Mr Ian's opinion, in that he wants to take the training program seriously. Although he had attended training classes in the past – none had involved his fellow District Directors. I then asked him to think about the appropriateness of training methods to be used

for the training both for him and his colleagues in future. It was important that he tell me his preferred style of learning. This would ensure that the emphasis of the training could be on his weaker points or where he lacked knowledge. He believed that the BMA should improve on the quality of past training class performances. As he was an avid reader, he felt that there was still a place for learning from books.

> We are all getting old, so I think that a training program in the classroom as part of overall learning will be good and thus enhance our skills and competencies. We should also learn by going on fact-finding missions to other organisations as these too can be important for our position. As our classroom training will be purely theoretical, it is vital that we have discussions amongst ourselves to share knowledge and ideas etc. Getting the chance to learn from other experiences is important and valuable to hear so that I can bring them to use in connection with my job. Trainers should use PowerPoint and other programs to present because they make for better understanding while trainers are talking. Also, by using all available tools to grip the trainees' attention, the message is transmitted more effectively. They should provide handouts for trainees so that we can follow the training as we go along. Of course, they may give or introduce us to books so that we can read by ourselves after class or whenever we want to enhance our knowledge as another way of learning.

Mr Ian and I discussed the semi-structured interviews until quite late, and by this time I was starting to feel I should consider him more, despite the fact that I still had two more questions to ask. Although he was tired, I got the impression that he would still enjoy discussing more with me as he kept smiling all the time while talking. He also expanded more on his opinions and ideas about learning programs relevant to his position. I asked him when would be an appropriate time to attend class He could not tell me when he should get this training as it would not matter (to him) when! He just said that it should be as soon as possible. In this part he showed his keenness to improve his job performance. He was also concerned that candidates for

future District Director positions should get a chance to undergo training prior to them commencing work in their new position.

> I think we should have a continuous training program for all 50 District Directors. We cannot stop learning. Indeed I need to improve my competencies to learn new knowledge so that I can use it in my job. If training on these 7 needs of competencies can come to pass, I want to attend class as soon as possible. Also I think that all of the seven items of competencies, being the consensus of the District Directors are important for my position. I would like to see candidates for new District Directors get training before they are appointed so that they can be efficient and knowledgeable for their future subordinates. I also think that the BMA training and Development Institute should evaluate the needs of District Directors to improve their job performance every year or set up a training program appropriate to changing situations.

Training Venue

In my last question, I asked Mr Ian to concern himself about the scheduling of training programs, as his ideas and opinions will be of benefit for himself and the BMA in future. He gave me big smile and a short answer because can attend class anywhere that his bosses assign. He does not want the BMA to waste money to rent a venue for training programs. Moreover he told me that he will feel happy and appreciative if this training course to improve his job performance can happen in the near future. I then asked him where he wanted to attend class.

> Actually we already have a Training Institute belonging to the BMA and it is suitable for use for training courses for District Directors. There is no need to rent a venue for training classes at all. I can attend class anytime – depending on the Executive of the BMA.

Reflection

I felt very honoured to meet Mr Ian to discuss my research as he always opened his mind to speak freely with me. This will be of great value to my study and to his training in future. The more I talked with him, the more I became aware that he really was concerned so much about learning to improve his job performance. I was aware that it was so late for him and especially as he had to return to work to sign many documents that lay on his table. I stopped the tape recorder, but he continued to talk more about his work experiences by way of long stories, although he did not permit these to be included in my dissertation. I can say that Mr. Ian is a good District Director who never gives up on any problems. He always solves them by himself or asks other people and other organisations to help by using his good human relationship skills. Despite Mr. Ian enjoying success on many projects, he was aware that he lacked certain skills and competencies needed to improve his on-job performance and he was still very keen to learn more competencies. We had a lot of laughs as usual and I was enjoying listening to him speaking, as he was nice to talk with. He had a broad mind and never seems to give up on any problems. He told me that he enjoyed to work – which was already so obvious to me! He told me his home was also located in the same district as his workplace. It can be said that he too was a local inhabitant of that district and makes him want to improve this area as much as he can. To encourage him to return to work, I thanked him for his time and valuable answers. He responded by saying that he was happy and willing to answer and also kindly offered to give me more of his opinions if I wanted. As he walked me to the lift we continued our conversation, but on more general matters. Finally I thanked him again and 'wai'd him first – as a mark of respect for his seniority and position. (He smiled!)

Mr. George's Narrative

This was a memorable day for me as I was to meet with Mr George, the last of the nine District Directors - and thus reach the end of collecting data by semi-structured interviews. I was particularly pleased to be meeting with Mr George, as his responses to the three rounds of the questionnaires impressed me so much. He took my research seriously, answered all of my questions and in addition gave his opinion on every question. He always returned my Delphi Survey questionnaires on time. Mr. George has been in his position as District Director for years. He was representative of a sample from a large district population and his office location is not far from my old primary school, so it was convenient to meet him on the morning of that day. Our appointment to meet was at 10:00 hrs. on 1 January 2005. I arrived there earlier than the appointed time and had to wait approximately 15 minutes for his return from an urgent task outside his office. Meanwhile, I talked with his secretary and learned that Mr George was a very busy man indeed. Eventually I heard noise of people talking and laughing outside the room. The secretary informed me that this was his boss returning. Mr. George apologised to me for being late as soon as he arrived in his room. Then his telephone rang and he asked me wait for another 10 minutes. Meanwhile I observed that his workplace was somewhat untidy and that he seemed to never stop working or take rests, despite the fact that he had just returned to his office.

It was also obvious that Mr George was able to maintain a friendly and smiling attitude despite him being so busy all the time. His subordinates could also speak informally with him and they had many laughs together. His behaviour was different from other District Directors and general Civil Servants as he looked more like a businessman and the atmosphere within his office was more like that of a private company to me. That was another thing which impressed me so much. That day he wore a shirt with tie – and slacks.

When he was ready, he invited me to have the conversation sitting on the sofa in his office, as this would be more comfortable. Again he asked me to wait because his cell phone rang and this time it was one of his bosses calling to instruct that some emergency work be undertaken. He was able to complete this task quickly and return to me. Upon commencement of our meeting he thanked me for inviting him to be a participant. He also made reference to his answers given on the questionnaire relating to all of rounds again. He asked me why I needed to use three rounds of the Delphi survey. I then briefed him about the framework and gave my reasons for using this methodology. We discussed this phase for a while and then I began to ask him my interview questions. I first gave him a set of the semi-structured questions (Appendix 10) so that we could look at them together. I also asked his permission to use tape-recording during the interview.

We had a good conversation and I enjoyed talking with Mr George. Our discussion lasted only 30 minutes, approximately, as he had to go out of his office to undertake some external work. We had many laughs during our discussion. Mr. George's ideas and opinions to improve performance on job were useful for my research and some of his ideas were very different from those of his peers. I started to talk with him in general terms about his position – until I saw that he felt relaxed and ready for my formal interview. I also reminded him about my research topic again. Afterwards I said that I had established, by considering a consensus of the opinions of the District Directors, that they were keen to improve their skills and competencies as identified by the Delphi survey.

Organisational Leadership

I commenced by asking why competency needs to be leading an organisation were important to him. He moved nervously and asked me to repeat the questions and to stop taping temporarily so that he could rehearse before the audiotape started again. Because what he said related to my question and I

wanted him to feel confident, I said 'you can speak freely; there are no rights and wrongs in terms of your opinions'. Afterwards I noticed that he felt better and asked if he could answer all these items as a whole.

> A District Director's function is to be in charge of the administration of a District. All Districts are under the umbrella of the BMA, who work closely with the people. The main responsibility of the BMA, and therefore of the District Directors, is to service the needs of the people, using our skills and competencies mentioned before. To that end I must improve all of my skills and competencies to become a more effective and efficient leader of my subordinates – as it is they who will ultimately resolve the problems and deliver the solutions. My guidance and instruction is necessary in this respect insofar as I must be a good leader for them and instruct and advise as and when necessary.

Effective and Efficient Service

Mr. George became more relaxed when giving me his opinions when I asked him to talk about any remaining competencies that he needs to improve. He was concerned about the large size of the district where he must discharge his responsibilities rapidly and transparently in order to provide effective services for people.

> Given the large size of my organisation, I must ensure unity of action and thought in terms of us being able to satisfy the requirements of the people rapidly and transparently. If I am lacking in authority then the result will be that I cannot provide the necessary service. The fact that my staff may have a heavy workload can be considered – but must not be used as an excuse for inactivity or putting off the resolution of new problems. the BMA will not tolerate this attitude and neither will the people. If we can demonstrate that what we do is 'transparent' then we will have no worries in the event that our activities are audited or our actions are called into question.

Emotional Maturity

Again Mr. George gave his useful ideas to me. He wanted to improve his skills to make his staff more loyal and show respect to him as a good leader. On the other hand, he wanted them follow his style while they work. He smiled at me before stating:

> Emotional maturity is a very necessary attribute for me, and indeed for all District Directors to have. It is important that I have both the loyalty and respect of my staff – and I in turn will show loyalty and respect to them. However, as I am their leader, it is I who must show my emotional maturity at all times – without wavering. This is necessary as my staff will look to me for guidance and advice and if I do not show the appropriate characteristics of a good leader I might lose their respect to some extent – which could easily undermine my authority. It is not always easy to control my emotions as my workload is such that I am often frustrated and sometimes angry! At these times I must be strong in maintaining my dignity and maturity. If this means bottling up my feelings – then so be it – in the best interests of the job!

Interpersonal Skills

Regarding the item needs to improve competency to establish good human relationships – at first I was not sure that Mr George could answer this question because I saw he already had good relationships with his staff while I was waiting to interview him. Otherwise, I felt happy that his subordinates had a good leader like him, which was clear from his answers. Even though he already had this skill, he was still keen to improve and this was his intention for future. Meanwhile he continued smiling and answered me as follows.

> I am a leader of a District – which is part of a larger organisation. Establishing good human relationships is vital to me as I must work closely with approximately 1,000 Civil Servants and other employees. I also have to co-ordinate with other organisations in my area of

responsibility. Therefore I should have good human relationship skills to be able to interact accordingly. So – as you can see – I am obliged to deal with a variety of people at different levels of the social structure. It is therefore essential that, not only am I well versed and practiced in Interpersonal Skills, I am able to adapt and adjust these skills as needs dictate.

Effective Collaboration

Mr. George realised that his skill to encourage people to participate was important to increase his job effectiveness in solving problems for his residents. He was aware of his limited authority and so he wanted to use his skill to cement good friendship with other people and make them more willing to help. He was concerned to gain knowledge and techniques to improve contact with a variety of people who were different from each other.

> My authority is not 'stand-alone' and so I must collaborate closely with other organisations that have an input to any given project. This collaboration is vital as we must make these organisations familiar with what we expect and are attempting to achieve – and also to provide them with any services that they may require to, in turn, help us. I meet a variety of people, so I need to use different skills of my human relationships to approach them – depending on the individual or group. Or it can be said that I must employ new techniques of how to contact people to improve participation. Some problems I cannot solve by myself because of my limited authority, so I must consult them to find solutions to solve problems together. All of these competencies and skills can help me to collaborate with people and organisations effectively.

Moral Leadership

I appreciated hearing Mr George's brilliant ideas and quickly became aware of his keenness to improve his job performance and to improve the efficiency of his organisation. I easily recognised his leadership style. He could see the

benefits of enhancing his competencies. He showed his enthusiasm to answer in respect of this item of competency.

> There were many new theories to learn as to how to have good leadership and how to provide moral leadership that is concerned with equity and equality. If I can enhance them, it will be advantageous to me as a good leader of my organisation. As I said, I always work closely with people and other organisations. I must be seen to be fair; otherwise his (or her) morality might be called into question. This is particularly so if the leader shows favouritism or does not lead by good example. In this respect it is the twin attributes of equity and equality that are important – not only to have – but to be seen to have!

Empathetic Understanding

Afterwards, I asked Mr. George to think about his own competency needs in improving his understanding of people in order to satisfy their needs. He did not hesitate to answer because he was always concerned about his local people and to make them satisfied with the services he provided. He must always be aware of the needs of the people first, so that he can achieve the objectives of solving problems to make them satisfied.

> Without proper and effective understanding I cannot fulfil our role or duties. The way ahead for me is by means of a 'hands on' approach in that I will go out to meet the people rather than wait for them to come to me. I have to be aware of the needs of the people, to satisfy their requirements where appropriate, in terms of any problems they may have. My actions and their outcomes must be to the satisfaction of the people I serve.

Professional Development Strategies

Improving Competencies and Skills

While Mr George was talking, he looked at me and seemed to be more confident to speak. He spoke frankly and considered carefully each opinion he gave to me. His answers were short and sharp. He needs to improve his competencies so that he can satisfy the people and provide good services to them all. He was also concerned about 'people participation' in solving problems. Before I could ask my next question, he gave me his opinion as to how he sees all the competency needs assisting him in his present and future position. Once more, he gave me his idea as whole.

> I think I should have broad knowledge for my management in this district. The overall consensus of opinion of us all, which appears in your outcome of the Delphi survey, is important to my position. I need to improve my skills and competencies, whenever I have the time that will benefit my job. I am concerned to improve my skills to gain more knowledge to ask other people's help to solve problems. It can be said that I want to have people participation to solve problems for local people to satisfy their requirements as appropriate. All of these skills will benefit me in the long term.

Mr. George seemed to feel more relaxed to talk with me. His behaviour seemed like a new generation of Executive because he likes to improve himself. His attempts at lifelong learning will benefit his position both in the present and future. He can see the benefits of enhancing his competencies to improve his performance on job. To make the conversation flow smoothly, I asked his opinion of professional development strategies in terms of what he believes are necessary to promote these needs. This time his answers did not relate to my question, but I did not interrupt, in case he felt nervous. I just listened while he said:

The initial strategy is to collate data relating to the base information – such as; population, community, information about local organisations and the needs of the people I serve. This will allow me to both plan and decide on the direction of my work.

Secondly, I must strongly emphasise the need for good relationships between the people in both public and private sectors. This will facilitate better working relationships in order that we can work more efficiently together. People must be made aware of my responsibilities and what the District Administrators have to do in order that they can understand us – what we do – and how we do it – in their best interests.

Thirdly, I must stress the need for us to act swiftly when dealing with the problems and needs of the people, especially when it relates to matters of poverty. I should have the ability to deal with and solve any problem or petition as soon as they are presented to me, from whatever community or organisation is in need of our service.

I noticed that Mr George started to feel nervous again. I smiled in an attempt to help him remain calm and tried to encourage him to relate his ideas as best as he could. He was concerned that his subordinates improve their skills and so his answers were also relevant to them – and to the relationship between them and the Executive.

Is there anything else that you are concerned about?

Training is necessary for organisational development. My plans to develop my District are initially reached by 'Brainstorming'. This allows all parties to freely express their opinions and views and to have open minds.

The outcomes I look for are – 1) We will be very well acquainted with our career, 2) Executives will be more aware of the needs of their subordinates, 3) Good relationships are established between executives and District Directors.

I was becoming more aware that Mr George's ideas to develop his staff on job performance will be necessary for him and as I did not want to interrupt his speaking, I let him elaborate on his ideas. Then I had to focus on the position of District Director by asking questions in respect of the seven items outlining the needs of District Directors to improve job performance. i.e. Please let me know your opinion about training for only the District Directors position.

> I believe that this training program is very important and necessary for my career. We have never had a training program for District Directors and we have had no dedicated training centre either! Until now, we have been trained by the BMA Training and Development Institute. Everyone is instructed by the Executive for BMA to attend class. We have not yet properly established training for District Directors, or for Assistant District Directors. There is also a Senior Executives Training Course that District Directors can attend. Level eight executives from a variety of organisations can attend this course. However, at present only or 5 District Directors attend – not the whole group

Successful Training

Again Mr George was interrupted by an urgent telephone call, so we had to stop for a while. When he returned, he apologised for making me wait so many times. I smiled and accepted his apologies. I still wanted to listen to more of his opinion about the standard of trainers he was looking for. Afterwards I asked him to think about the groups who deliver the training. What does he look for in trainers? What does he see are the necessary attributes of a successful trainer working at this level?

> They should be experts in their field – and can come from any relevant organisation. I would like to see trainers who are experts in their field coming from other public sectors such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education or Department of Local Administration. I see them as being the major contributors of knowledge for me.

Problems with Training

Immediately Mr. George continued by telling me about the groups of trainers who he had seen in the past and had made him unsatisfied.

> In the past, they came from the BMA itself but they proved to have a lack
> of variety in their ideas. Trainers liked to read books aloud to us and this
> made me so bored.

Since our time was limited, I looked at my watch and was aware that it was nearly time to stop the interview, as he had another engagement. I then asked him to talk to me about appropriate methods that trainers should use for his training program and that can make him more interested to attend class. I encouraged him to open his mind to what he wants to see in future training classes.

> I would like to see all District Directors get together and brainstorm as to
> how to solve each problem of each case study. The trainer should behave
> like a conductor in class and give us real case studies and let us think how
> to solve these problems. Then we can offer our solutions to each problem
> by the use of PowerPoint in class, so that we can learn the solutions to
> solve them together. Some of us do not know how to use this Power Point
> program and it will be good if this is also demonstrated to us. This will
> collectively improve our skills by doing something that affects our
> workplace performance in future. I also still want to learn new knowledge
> and new technologies that are concerned with meeting all of these items
> needs. I also believed that a bonus for the District Directors would be to
> learn how to present in front of a class, simply by watching and listening to
> the style of the trainers in the actual class itself.

Duration of Training Programs

I was interested and amused to hear Mr George's answer because I hoped that his valued opinion would affect his training courses in future and that his dream will come true. Then I was keen to ask him more about the scheduling

of training – i.e. how long should be the class duration, appropriate to District Directors?

> As we have many responsibilities to undertake, it is impossible to attend class for long periods. I do however accept that training in some form is necessary. Perhaps a one month intensive course would be sufficient and appropriate – although I have some concern that this period of outage will have an adverse effect on the management and workplaces within the District area.

Although Mr George was interested in training programs as a strategy to promote his needs, he was also concerned about his work and did not want to be absent for long periods. He seemed to be enthusiastic and told me more about his point of view regarding the scheduling of training programs in future.

> If we can establish an ongoing training program of say a half-day, every day and in the morning – it would mean that the District Directors would be able to return to work after mid-day. This would minimise any adverse effects of training.

Training Venues

Mr George also thinks that if he got a chance to improve his skills and competency needs of all seven items, he would want to see a Drama and etiquette workshop such as meditation to improve physical, mental and emotional health, lasting approximately one week. It could take the form of a camp and also include fact finding missions to other Provinces and countries if this is deemed to be beneficial. He wanted a combined training program covering the seven items needs. I asked his opinion about where this training program should take place.

> The Workshop can take place within this training program but for 5 days only – from Monday to Friday, where all District Directors can stay together. Therefore, I think the training program should take place

anywhere that he BMA can provide. The benefit of having the Workshop in another Province is that it will provide us with an insight as to how others work, achieve success and relate their work to their curriculum. If we want worldwide knowledge then it would naturally be necessary that we visit another country. However, this may be a waste of resources. Perhaps a compromise would be to go on a fact finding mission to another Asian country – but I believe our first priority to be fact finding missions to other Provinces within Thailand.

Mr George was clearly happy to talk and said that he really wants to see training programs, as described, established for District Directors. He reconfirmed that if a training program was established for all District Directors at the same time, it would foster good teamwork. I was impressed so much by his ideas. In my last question, I asked him to think about when he wanted to attend class and the sequencing of training programs for District Directors, appropriate to his position. He thinks that the BMA should set training programs for all District Directors continuously.

Regarding to when we should have these training programs, I think whenever we have sufficient time or the Executives of the BMA instruct that these training programs take place. I am willing to attend class anytime if so assigned. Actually, people who are promoted to the position of District Directors are not necessarily graduates of Law or Political Science etc. We have a variety of experience and come from many areas within the BMA – such as construction (public work), income department, and finance department and so on. Therefore we need a working knowledge of the administrative district and the tasks and responsibilities of District Directors. I think that we should have continuous training programs for all of us every year. Also the BMA should follow your research by investigating the needs of District Directors to keep pace with advancements in knowledge and technologies. We need to learn new things to hone our management strategies and leadership skills and make the people more happy with our service.

Mr George then gave his opinion on those persons who will become District Directors in future and he said how necessary it would be to improve all these competency needs so that they can become qualified and appropriately informed prior to their appointment. He said:

> My aim is to ensure that the BMA provides the training necessary for those who aspire to the position of District Directors. I see there as being two aspects to this – 1) In the case of anyone promoted to District Director, we should have a one month training period (covering the seven items) prior to us taking up our position. Perhaps there will be 10 to 20 persons attending this class. Training should be provided for Assistant District Directors who may in the future be promoted to full District Director – or indeed select from any other department within the BMA where an employee is likely to want to become a District Director in future. It may be that we will set up a District Directors training school whereby candidates compete for places on the basis of an examination. Ultimately the candidate with the highest score of the class would fill the position of District Director. We would nevertheless have to make our choice very carefully.

Reflection

Mr George used this interview opportunity to reveal the character of his personality, that demonstrated good leadership and to illustrate some of his own ideas that had arisen during his working life. These ideas should be instrumental in improving recruitment of future District Directors, provided they are also supported by the BMA. I enjoyed having this conversation with him. If he had more free time, I believe that he would like to expand more on his opinions. His answers proved that he still wanted to learn new knowledge to use in his workplace and make people satisfied with his services, even when he was busy. Moreover he wants to have training classes with all District directors as he is aware of the benefits this can bring to his group. He can learn from them and they can share experiences together. Many times he

mentioned his staff and his plans to improve their capabilities of doing better. He told me about some of his work that made him feel uncomfortable, but asked that I do not include it in my research notes. He reinforced his interest and needs to improve his skills and thought that if he gets a chance to improve all these competency needs, he can improve his job performance so much. He wants to be a good District Director for both his subordinates and the people. Although by now it was time to finish the interview, he appeared to want to talk more. He told me more about his style of work, in that he wants to achieve people participation. I agreed with what he said. Then he asked me when this training class could be set up, as he felt enthusiastic to learn with his colleagues. I said that I needed to complete the whole dissertation first and then I can submit it to the Executive of BMA to consider. He gave a big smile of hope to me! Finally, I thanked him for giving me his valuable time and opinions that will be of benefit to me and also to the Executive of BMA.

**Appendix 12:
Organisation Chart**

**Organisation Chart of the Bangkok
Metropolitan Administration**

ORGANIZATION CHART OF THE BANGKOK METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION

The Bangkok Metropolitan Council

Governor

Deputy Governor for Administration

Deputy Governor for Education

Deputy Governor for Public Health

Deputy Governor for Public Works

Permanent Secretary for the BMA

Office of the Secretary to the Bangkok Metropolitan Council

Office of the Secretary to the Governor of Bangkok

The BMA Civil Services Commission

Office of the BMA Civil Services Commissioon

Department of Permanent Secretary for the BMA

Department of Policy & Planning

Department of Medical Services

Department of Health

Department of Education

Department of Finance

Department of Public Works

Department of Drainage and Sewerage

Department of Public Cleaning

Department of Social Welfare

Department of Law Enforcement

Department of Community Development

Department of Traffic And Transportation

Department of City Planning

432 Compulsory Schools

50 District Offices

50 District Councils