



**How Do Enterprises Emerge From the 'Gig Economy'? An Exploration of
Pathways from Freelancing to Business Development**

Claire Toomey (Student ID: 2733549)

University of Stirling

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Abstract

This thesis explores the connection between mechanisms of career development for freelancers in the gig economy, and pathways to entrepreneurship/business development in gig economy contexts. The gig economy can be viewed as a complex and contested concept. Discord in academic and public debate frames it either as the 'future of work' (Shaw et al. 2022; Vallas and Schor 2020; Graham et al. 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Malik 2016; Kacher and Weiler 2017), or as exploitative and insecure work requiring regulation (van Doorn et al. 2022; Anwar and Graham 2020; Anwar and Graham 2021; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Kelly 2020; Bates et al. 2020; Garden 2017). While workers in the gig economy are a growing global workforce, the gig economy is not new, historically covering more conventional notions such as freelancing and entrepreneurship (Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019; Barrios et al. 2022). However, there is scant research addressing entrepreneurial intentions, or how self-employed freelancers, gig workers and enterprises emerge from these marketplaces (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) and adapt to challenges as the business grows.

From a Social Constructionist perspective, this thesis provides an analysis of key informant interviews utilising two core qualitative data sets comprising: A large firm that has contracted gig workers and operates in an industry (the construction industry) where this is commonplace (Data Set 1); and a selection of self-employed freelancers and gig workers working in gig economy contexts (Data Set 2). Data Set 2 is further divided into two sub-sets: Data Set 2A includes, self-employed freelancers, and gig workers, including sole traders, university tutors and individuals working in precarious employment, across various settings; Whereas Data Set 2B includes data from two participants that have worked as both freelancers and digital gig workers and are jointly involved in the creation of a new start-up.

Analysis of (twenty) in-depth semi-structured interviews and policy and procedure documents evidence that: the gig economy facilitates entrepreneurship and helps workforces scale flexibly; 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies mediate 'organisational change' (across the Data Sets); and increased digitalisation of work practices level the playing field for smaller businesses relative to established competition. Professional freelancers and gig workers expressed 'entrepreneurial intentions', supporting and extending previous research from service sectors of the gig economy (Usman and Sun 2022; Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) to professional gig economy settings. 'Shared competencies' (gig workers and employees) were identified, supporting the general assumptions of the 'New Work' model (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021), extending research to gig economy contexts. This corroborates findings

that digitalisation and automation present unique challenges for the 'future of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017).

The thesis concludes by proposing a novel model conceptualising the 'stages' and 'reflective cycles' of enterprise development in the gig economy and pathways to business development from the gig economy. Finally, potential applications of the model are discussed in the context of current academic debates, focusing on the benefits for established organisations (represented by Data Set 1) versus newly formed, or smaller enterprises in gig economy contexts (represented by Data Set 2). Future research examining how economic sectors rely on each other and how the 'new world' of work will impact those dynamics, may further elucidate current debate. While this research may be limited in its generalisability to wider populations (Akhter 2022), conclusions are tentatively drawn regarding 'generational differences' relative to the extant literature.

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Declaration of Authorship

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the topic, providing: 1) a brief summary of the literature that informs the research area; 2) the aims, objectives, and research questions; and 3) a guide to the structure of thesis and a brief summary of each chapter. Section 1.1 provides a summary of the literature introducing the background literature and research area. Section 1.2 outlines the research aims, objectives and research questions. The final section, Section 1.3, provides an outline of the structure of the thesis, with a short summary provided for the contents of each chapter.

Section 1.1: Background Literature and Research Area

The gig economy can be viewed as a complex and contested concept (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). There is a lack of consensus in current literature regarding definitive definitions of the gig economy (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016) with some suggesting it may not hold up to scrutiny as a concept, relative to broader understanding of ‘precarious work’ due to ‘definitional borders which overlap neighbouring concepts’ (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021). However, both precarity (in work) and technology are generally considered to be important components of the concept (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Healy et al. 2017; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Hušek and Širec 2023; Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017). Discord in academic and public debate frames it either as the ‘future of work’ (Shaw et al. 2022; Vallas and Schor 2020; Graham et al. 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Malik 2016; Kacher and Weiler 2017), or as exploitative and requiring regulation (van Doorn et al. 2022; Anwar and Graham 2020; Anwar and Graham 2021; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Kelly 2020; Bates et al. 2020; Garden 2017). The gig economy is not new (Kuhn 2016; Sutherland and Jerrahi 2017), and historically insecure work was considered the norm (Flanagan 2019), with more conventional iterations, such as freelancing (Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019) and entrepreneurship (Barrios et al. 2022), stemming from the pre-digital transformation era.

Workers in the gig economy are a growing global workforce (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Gupta and Gupta 2023). Nevertheless, there is scant research addressing entrepreneurial intentions (Lahm 2020), or how self-employed freelancers, gig workers and enterprises emerge from these marketplaces (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) and importantly adapt to challenges as the business grows. This thesis explores the conceptual connection between mechanisms of career development for freelancers in the gig economy, as described in Reilly’s

(2017) 'Layered Career model', and pathways to entrepreneurship/business development in gig economy contexts. This provides a useful framework to explore this phenomenon- with a particular focus on how it plays out for professional freelancers in gig economy settings; how it intersects with traditional definitions around the scale of 'enterprise' (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015); the new world of work (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Watson et al. 2021; Morales-Perez et al. 2022); along with how trends in communication and technology (and digitalisation of workplace practices) influence workers in the gig economy, and across all sectors of the economy (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020).

The changing nature of work, communication and technology strategies and pathways to business development are also interrogated through examination of organisational change management literature (relative to pathways to entrepreneurship and new business formation), which identifies the importance of: 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies (Fest et al. 2021; Anwar and Graham 2020; Ludwig et al. 2022), how knowledge exchange occurs (Barlage et al. 2019) and how organisations, individuals and teams combine their capacities to answer problems related to organisations and the 'changing nature of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). The aim of this research is to address key gaps in current literature utilising key informant interviews to draw out comparisons between two different settings: a formal (structured) large organisation operating in the construction industry (where freelancing is commonplace), compared with individuals engaged with more precarious/informal (unstructured) freelancing environments and new business development. Comparison of data across these settings facilitates analysis of variability in communication strategies, technology and digitalisation of workplace practices and how these factors influence the (hidden) inner working of teams, including pathways to business development in these contexts. As such, Data Set 1 comprises interviews with members of a large firm that has contracted gig workers and operates in an industry where this is commonplace; and Data Set 2 includes interviews with: a selection of self-employed freelancers and gig workers (Data Set 2A) and freelancers engaged in a new business start-up (Data Set 2B). The following section introduces the aim, objectives and research questions.

Section 1.2: Aim, Objectives, and Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to examine how enterprises emerge from the 'gig economy', including pathways from freelancing to business development, in addition to how enterprises navigate

challenges and opportunities and develop cohesive teams and networks. The thesis takes a 'social constructionist' perspective, with a focus on evaluating communication strategies and new ways of working, including technology and digitalisation of traditional workplace practices. The study adopts key informant interview methodology (utilising two core data sets). The first data set represents data sourced from a large firm that operates in the construction industry where gig work and freelancing is commonplace. Data Set 1 included semi-structured interviews with the organisation's team members (including graduate scheme employees, HR representatives, freelancers, contractors, and directors of the company). The second data set represents data sourced from self-employed freelancers and gig workers operating in gig economy contexts. This involved semi-structured interviews with self-employed freelancers and gig workers including self-employed sole traders, university tutors (in insecure contracts), digital gig workers, and 'freelancers' in the creative industries and across various sectors (Data set 2A); in addition to data sourced from two participants that were jointly involved in a new business 'start-up' (Data set 2B). Figure 1-1 below outlines the main research objectives and research questions.

Research Objectives:

- To explore how businesses emerge as cohesive entities from the 'gig economy', including pathways from freelancing to business development. In addition to how new and established organisations adapt to the 'changing nature of work' in the 'digital era'. This takes a particular focus on communication strategies, use of technology and digitalisation of workplace practices.
- To explore the experiences of business leaders, workers, and the barriers and enablers of operating in the 'gig economy' versus 'traditional economy' settings (acknowledging the role of technology and digitalisation of workplace practices).
- To explore experiences of and differences in approaches used by self-employed freelancers, gig workers as compared to employees and leaders of a large firm to evaluate interpersonal relationships ('informal' and 'formal' communication strategies) in teams, networking styles and use of online/traditional networking and leadership approaches.

Research Questions:

- How do freelancers, 'gig workers', and enterprises emerge from the 'gig economy', adapt to the 'changing nature of work'? What 'informal' and 'formal' business practices and communication channels shape these enterprises?
- What helps or hinders the development (and change) of these enterprises?
- How do individuals and teams find ways to successfully combine their capacities, competencies, and commitment in these enterprises?

(Figure 1-1)
Research Objectives and Research Questions

Section 1.3: Structure of the Thesis: Brief Summaries of Chapters

The thesis is divided into 6 Chapters that address the research topic, present findings, and draw conclusions that demonstrate an understanding of the findings. The research is presented in the thesis in the following order:

Chapter 2 presents a semi-systematic literature review examining key areas of relevance for the research area and in relation to the gaps in literature that are addressed by the subsequent chapters. It outlines justifications for employing a semi-systematic literature review methodology and provides an overview of the search strategy employed. Details are provided of the specific search terms used, how the literature was sourced and the inclusion and exclusion criteria. This section also identifies themes and concepts (and outlines the processes involved in analysis) derived from the literature that underpin a narrative review of literature that follows. A narrative review of literature is then presented as the second stage in the study process. The literature review introduces the context of the field of study; discusses current research in the field (established in stage one); and outlines the key gaps in the literature that inform the (emerging) project aims, objectives and the provisional research questions.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology of the thesis, addresses the research philosophy, and examines current trends for research in workplace settings. It contextualises and justifies the methodological choices made, relative to consideration of research philosophy. It addresses methodological limitations, drawing upon the 'social researcher's toolkit' to frame issues (Bryman 2008). Consideration of work-place research and the 'gig economy' are discussed, before outlining the philosophical groundwork of the study, the methods, data collection and data analysis to meet the aim and objectives.

Chapter 4 provides a reflective review of the researcher's involvement with the 'gig economy'. It represents a form of 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012), and was utilised to guide the development of the semi-structured interview questions/topic guide alongside the academic literature. These factors were deemed to be important components of quality control in qualitative research, situating the researcher's beliefs relative to the research context (Berger 2015). As such, this chapter provides a reflective account and critical questioning of the authors experiences in the gig economy relative to the research area in the form of 'Bracketing' and 'Philosophical self-reflection' (Lynch 2000).

Chapter 5 presents the findings for the data sets: Section 5.2, addresses the findings of Data Set 1. Section 5.3 presents the findings for Data Set 2 and Section 5.4 presents the discussion of the findings

relative to: Comparing data on defining the gig economy, communication, technology, and business development; the research questions and current academic literature. Finally, Chapter 5 introduces discussion of the potential applications of the competency and communication mapping tools used as part of the analysis to support the processes outlined in the 'RARE Model' (presented in depth in Chapter 6) in real world settings.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents the conclusions of the thesis, assesses the limitations of the research and provides suggestions for areas of future research. It provides conclusions in relation to the research questions of the thesis, presents a novel model drawn from findings and literature for conceptualising the 'stages' and 'reflective cycles' of enterprise development in the 'gig economy'. The thesis concludes with outlining potential applications for this new model in different settings (i.e. a large established firm versus freelancers/start-ups in gig economy contexts), relative to existing debates and addresses limitations of the research and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Section 2.1: Literature Review Introduction

This section outlines the justification for employing a semi-systematic literature review methodology and the search strategy employed. A semi-systematic literature review methodology is commonly used in social science research (Zunder 2021; Bryman 2021; Bruce 1994; Coughlan and Coughlan 2018). It provides transparency (and replicate-ability) to the 'scoping stage' and a 'plurality of knowing' (Zunder 2021; Coughlan and Coughlan 2018) formed by the narrative stage of the literature review. Processes of 'action learning' are utilised to examine current literature and identify key themes, concepts and gaps in the literature to inform development of research questions, aims and objectives (Zunder 2021; Coughlan and Coughlan 2018). As fully systematic reviews involving meta-analysis are more typically used in medical settings or where the data involved is highly quantitative in nature (Zunder 2021), they were not deemed a suitable approach for the thesis. Details are provided of the key search terms used; where the literature was sourced; how it was filtered for relevance (the inclusion and exclusion criteria); how articles were categorised; and which key themes and concepts were identified and utilised to inform a narrative review of literature. A narrative review of literature, as the second stage in the study process, introduces the context of the field of study; discussion around the extant research (established in stage one); and identifies and outlines gaps in the literature that inform the (emerging) project aims, objectives and the provisional research questions.

In order to produce this semi-systematic literature review, a number of 'keywords' or search terms were input into online databases (i.e. the university library portal, Google scholar and SOCARXIV) and accessed via the university online library portal. Table 1 shows in more detail the sources searched, the search terms used, and the number of articles excluded/included. Initial searches used generic terms such as: 'gig economy', 'entrepreneurship', 'gig economy and start-ups'. A date filter was applied to optimise searches (within 5 years) in some instances, particularly in fast moving fields (i.e. the 'digital gig economy'). For the first stage, the search criteria were kept broad, to capture a variety of academic and 'grey literature' such as government reports, policy documents and research conducted in organisational settings. After an initial review of this wider literature, more refined searches were made in relation to: 'informal' and 'formal' communication workplace', 'team building workplace', 'enablers small and medium size enterprise (SME)', 'barriers small and medium size enterprise (SME)' (see Table 1 for a full list of 'search terms'). Following completion of the initial literature review, additional searches were conducted around emerging themes deemed to be important to the aims, objectives and the research questions. A summary of how these contribute to the narrative review and themes are discussed in section 2.2.1 (summaries provided in Table 7).

Database /Sources Searched	Date Range and Filters	Search Terms/Criteria	(Returned/Excluded Relevance/Excluded Abstract) /Included
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied, 2019-2023, 2018-2023 (Sorted by date.)	"The gig economy" (The gig economy)	(520/353/76)/91
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied, 2018-2023, 2018-2023 (Sorted by date.)	"The gig economy" + "Entrepreneurship", "The gig economy" + "Start-up". (The gig economy: entrepreneurship/Start-ups)	(607/402/90)/115
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied. 2018-2023 2018-2023 (Sorted by date)	"Formal and informal business practices" + "communication", "Formal" and "informal" "business practices and communication". ('Formal' and 'Informal' Professional Practices and Organisational Growth)	(370/234/82)/54
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied. 2018-2023 2018-2023 (Sorted by date)	"Organisational change informal coalitions" "Organisational change informal and formal" (Formal and informal professional practices and organisational growth)	(270/218/4)/48
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied. 2018-2023 2018-2023 (Sorted by date)	"Barriers for SMEs + start-ups" "Enablers for SMEs + start-up" "Enablers for small business" "Barriers for small business" (Barriers and Enablers for start-ups and SMEs)	(388/203/125)/60
SOCARXIV, University of Stirling Library portal, Google Scholar	Non applied. 2018-2023 2018-2023 (Sorted by date)	"Building teams + small business", "Building teams + workplace", "Forming and storming teams + business", "Forming and storming teams + start-up" (Building teams and Networks for gig-workers, start-ups, and SMEs)	(530/384/65)/81
Totals	-	-	(2165/1794/442)/449

Table 1. Search Strategy Table: Databases Searched, Search Terms and Criteria, Number of Articles Excluded Based on Relevance of Title and Abstract and Those Included for Review

The following section outlines the themes identified from the literature that inform the narrative review that follows. A brief breakdown and a summary of each theme (and related sub-themes) is provided in table form in the following section (see Appendix B, D, F, H and J for full breakdown and all subcategories). Each article included for review was assigned an identification number (see full lists in Appendix A, C, E, G and I) and a 'thematic' code, or in some cases a series of codes were assigned

to each article. These initial codes were then condensed in to subsidiary and main themes. These themes form the basis and structure of the narrative literature review that follows.

2.1.1 Development of Themes Per Section of the Narrative Literature Review

For Section 2.2 (which represents the initial scoping searches), five themes were identified (see Appendix A and C for a breakdown of initial and sub-themes) in literature that provide insight into the social, economic, and technological structures of the gig economy: 1) Characteristics of the gig economy, 2) Characteristics of gig workers, 3) Experiences of freelancers and gig workers in traditional (offline) versus digital gig economy settings, 4) Entrepreneurs, start-ups, and enterprises in traditional and digital gig economy settings and 5) Power dynamics in the gig economy and policy development. These themes represent the background context of the gig economy such as: Who operates in the gig economy? What overt and tacit power dynamics are present? What forms of regulation can protect gig workers in this fast-growing and largely unregulated area of the economy? (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lapanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gupta and Gupta 2023). The foundations of the themes are shown in Table 2, and 3 (see Appendix A, B, C and D for a full breakdown of sub-categories). These themes are discussed in more depth in the following sections to elucidate how the gig economy functions relative to the wider literature.

Themes and Sub Themes Identified from Literature Review		
Main Themes	Sub-themes	No. of Articles
Characteristics of the gig economy	n/a	43
Characteristics of 'gig workers'	n/a	33
Experiences of 'gig workers': traditional (offline) versus digital gig economy settings	Traditional vs digital 'gig economy' models	48
Entrepreneurial activity	n/a	6
Power dynamics in the 'gig economy' and policy development.	Power Dynamics in the 'gig economy' 'Gig economy' relationships Regulating the 'gig economy' Algorithmic control Autonomy Human Resource management Resistance Inequality Migrant workers Gender and the 'gig economy' Government research, policy development and external economic factors Government led reports/Government funded research. Impact of Covid 19	79

Table 2. Condensed Themes and Sub-themes: The 'Gig Economy'

Condensed Sub-themes: 'Gig Economy', Entrepreneurship, Start-ups, and Enterprises		
Condensed Sub-themes	Initial Sub-themes Included in Each Category	No. of Articles
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurship wellbeing Entrepreneurship hybrid Entrepreneurship micro Entrepreneurship innovation Entrepreneurship behaviour Entrepreneurship power Entrepreneurship change Entrepreneurship slack resources	45
Individual differences	Education Generational Disability Gender Race Wellbeing, health migration	15
Characteristics of the 'gig economy'/entrepreneurship	n/a	8
'Gig worker' experiences	n/a	11
Small business and 'gig economy'	n/a	3
Start-ups and gig economy	n/a	2
Covid, entrepreneurship and 'gig economy'	n/a	4
Born Global	n/a	4

Table 3. Condensed Themes and Sub-themes: 'Gig Economy', Entrepreneurs, 'Start-ups', and SMEs

For Section 2.3, 'Formal' and 'informal' professional practices and organisations, four core themes were identified: 1) Communication and knowledge transfer; 2) The mechanisms of 'formal' and 'informal' 'knowledge transfer' in organisations and institutions; 3) Organisational change management and 4) Organisational change, 'informal coalitions', and workplace culture. These issues are introduced in relation to how forms of 'informal' and 'formal' communication may be important for building and managing teams (Lai and Yang 2017), leadership in organisations (Schumacher et al. 2022), building relationships (Jaffe 2019) and for developing workplace culture (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019). A breakdown of themes (main and sub themes) is shown in Table 4 (see Appendix G and H for a full breakdown of initial and sub-categories). These core themes are discussed to build a more comprehensive understanding of the 'formal' and 'informal' interactions and processes that occur between individual actors and teams in the development of new and existing organisational structures and pathways to business development.

Condensed Sub-themes: 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication and Organisation Growth		
Condensed Sub-themes	Initial Sub-themes Included in Each Category	No. of Articles
Communication	Communication Communication cooperative	8
Knowledge	Knowledge Information	5
Mechanisms	Mechanisms Development Emotional intelligence Evidence Feedback Learning Autonomy	10
Institutions	Institutions Organisational change Environment Leadership Innovation	7
Organisational change management	Change management Organisational change politics Change management learning Change management structure or organisation Change management teams Change management conflict Change management innovation Change management culture Change management gender	19
Organisations and 'informal coalitions'	Coalitions Coalitions change Coalitions conflict Coalitions organisational change Coalitions culture	7
Workplace culture	Informal interactions Informal interactions social Informal interactions authority Informal interactions culture Informal interactions norms and values Informal interactions routine Informal interactions trust Informal interactions competition Informal interactions learning Informal interactions support Informal interactions management and Leadership	26

Table 4. Condensed Sub-themes: 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication and Organisation Growth

For Section 2.4, Barriers and Enablers for 'Start-ups' and Enterprises, three themes were identified, representing: 1) Barriers and enablers for micro business, 'start-ups', entrepreneurs, and Enterprises, 2) Building teams and networks for 'gig workers', 'start-ups', and Enterprises and 3) Leadership strategies and mechanisms of team formation. These factors elucidate the types of adaptations required and challenges faced by companies in the 'digital era' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus

et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016) and for team formation under these conditions (Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021). A breakdown of themes (main and sub themes) is shown in Table 5 and 6 (see Appendix E, F, I and J for a full breakdown of initial and sub-categories). These themes are discussed to examine the challenges faced by new and existing organisations in the new ‘digital era’, before drawing conclusions that inform the emerging aims and objectives, and research questions for the present study.

Condensed Sub-themes: Barriers and Enablers for Start-ups and Enterprises		
Condensed Sub-themes	Initial Sub-themes Included in Each Category	No. of Articles
Microbusiness	n/a	4
SME	n/a	15
Start-ups	n/a	8
Entrepreneurship	n/a	10

Table 5. Condensed Themes and Sub-themes: Barriers and Enablers for ‘Start-ups’ and Enterprises

Condensed Sub-themes: Building Teams and Networks.		
Condensed Sub-themes	Initial Sub-themes Included in Each Category	No. of Articles
Leadership	Leadership Leadership structure Leadership innovation	10
Process	Process Process innovation Process team cohesion Process boundaries Process formation Process trust Process identity	17

Table 6. Condensed Sub-themes: Building Teams and Networks

Several additional searches were conducted following completion of the literature review process, around key themes identified as important for the thesis aims and objectives, and discussion of the findings. These searches centred around the following topics: The gig economy: A complex and contested concept; Freelancers and the gig economy; Freelancers, gig workers and pathways to business development; Defining ‘enterprise’, and the relationship to freelancing, gig work and entrepreneurship; Communication, technology, the gig economy, and enterprise development. Table 7 provides a brief overview of the literature reviewed and a short summary of how the additional articles contribute to the narrative literature review and broader themes outlined above.

Additional Searches Conducted: Summary of Contribution to Discussion and Themes Identified			
Themes/Search terms	Summary of Key discussion points Included in literature review	Authors	No. of Articles Included

The Gig Economy: A Complex and Contested Concept	Identified literature that suggests where the boundaries are drawn in relation to the gig economy. These boundaries are complex and contested. Identified literature that discusses the importance of communication and technology to the 'gig economy' as a construct. Expanded discussion around freelancers working in both online and offline gig economy settings and their inclusion in conceptualisations of the gig economy. Incorporated discussion of 'The Dynamic Structural model' of the gig economy with discussion of broader literature and in relation to exploring how both offline and online freelancers contribute to the gig economy and the underlying structures that support the 'gig economy', including the importance of technology to the construct. Incorporated discussion of the complexity involved in delineating the conceptual boundaries of the gig economy from other forms of precarious work, particularly in relation to problems conducting research in this area due to the overlap between 'neighbouring concepts' and the challenges for public and academic discourse and framing for research in these contexts. Incorporated literature discussing the blurred lines (conceptually) in academic literature between the gig economy and the platform economy and how these conceptualisations may be becoming obsolete in the context of a maturing digital	(Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Healy et al. 2017; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Huđek and Širec 2023; Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017). (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020) (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021). (Malik et al. 2021).	8/12
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	economy and increased digitalisation of workplace practices.		
Freelancing, Precarious Work and the Gig Economy	Introduces discussion around freelancers as a sub-set of workers associated with the gig economy that work in both online and offline settings. Discusses solo-self-employed freelancers and their impact on shaping economies in the digital age. Discusses the increased prevalence of self-employed freelancers in western economies. Discusses the increased prevalence of highly educated freelancers and their impact on levels of innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation. Discusses the scale of 'trust' in freelancing settings. Higher skilled (or specialised workers) have a greater level of freedom or choice over their 'gigs', relative to lower skilled workers, representing levels of inequality for workers associated with the gig economy.	(Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020) (Burke and Cowling 2020) (Barlage et al. 2023) (Burke and Cowling 2020; Barlage et al. 2023) (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020)	5/20
Freelancers, gig workers and pathways to business development	Discusses relationship between freelancers associated with the gig economy, gig workers and new business formation and entrepreneurship. Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' examines the mechanisms underlying the 'non-linearity' of freelancers' progression towards establishing gig-work-based careers. This model provides a useful framework to examine how the gig economy intersects relative to pre-existing (corporations and) structures of the wider economy.	(Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) (Reilly 2017)	7/19

	Parallels observed between the layers in Reilly's (2017) layered career model and Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) dynamic structural model (community and scale of trust). Transient working relationships, higher isolation and loneliness for freelancers and gig workers. Rise in co-working spaces, to encourage sense of community and support networks. Professional practices support development and maintenance of professional identities for freelancers.	(Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020) (Ashford et al. 2018) (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021) (Petriglieri et al. 2019)	
Defining 'Enterprise', and the relationship to freelancing, gig work and Entrepreneurship	Discusses legal classification of 'enterprise'. Discusses definitions of entrepreneurship. Discusses classification of enterprises by size (number of employees) and regional differences in classifications of SMEs and large firms. Alternative characterisations of enterprises relative to 'three dimensions of the characteristics of small firms' and qualitative factors such as the structure and functioning of the enterprise.	(Jinoria 2014) (Breen 2004) (Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015). (Berisha and Pula 2015)	4/18
The Changing Nature of Work (Communication, Technology and Business Development in Organisations).	Formal and informal professional practices that influence interpersonal relationships and workplace culture. Formal and informal communication and intersect with technology used to establish cohesive brands. Productivity and the use of informal and formal communication and technology in digital environments.	(Heimann and Kampf 2021; Stachova et al. 2017) (Gonzalez and Lester 2018) (Stockl and Struck 2022)	8/14

	Productivity of gig workers in digital environments relating to technology, communication and limitations related to mechanisms of feedback.	(Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021)	
	Communication and technology: poor team cohesion in remote gig worker settings.	(Lai and Yang 2017)	

Table 7. Additional Searches Conducted: Summary of Contribution to Discussion and Themes Identified

This section provides an overview of the semi-systematic literature review methodology used, an outline of the literature search strategy and evidences how the key literature was categorised into themes that form the basis of the narrative literature review that follows. The next section of this chapter explores and critically evaluates this literature in more depth, to contextualise the research aims, objectives and provide support for the research questions that follow.

Section 2.2: The Gig Economy: A Complex and Contested Concept

The first section of this chapter discusses: the nature of the gig economy and debates around it as a complex and contested concept; the structural conditions underlying the changing nature of work (with reference to the importance of communication and technology); how freelancers fit into our understanding of ‘the gig economy’; the rise of new forms of technology, digitalisation of workplace practices and digital gig economy platforms (and how communication and technology shape modern work practices); debates surrounding regulation and employment rights of new categories of gig workers; issues around definitions of the gig economy and explores models of the ‘gig economy’ prevalent in literature and the issues that underlie them. Finally, this section discusses research related to freelancers, gig workers and pathways to career and business development.

2.2.1 Characteristics of the Gig Economy

Despite the term ‘gig economy’ being coined recently (Johnes 2019), it is not a new construct (Kuhn 2016; Sutherland and Jerrahi 2017). In the nineteenth and twentieth century, ‘gig’ or ‘task-based’ work was the de-facto form of employment for many workers, many of whom lacked job security, or the modern benefits of a minimum wage (Flanagan 2019). Industrialisation and technological advancement over the years has shaped economic models (Zheng and Yang 2020), ‘formal’ employment laws in the ‘traditional economy’ across the globe (Lehdonvirta 2018; Malik et al. 2021; Malik 2016) and the nature of work itself (Kelly 2020). Unstable global economic constraints (recently) have also impacted employment conditions and worker behaviours (Kacher and Weiler 2017). Furthermore, traditional models of freelancing (Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019) and

entrepreneurship provide many parallels worthy of examination to elucidate new conceptualisations of the 'gig economy' (Barrios et al. 2022).

Where the boundaries are drawn in relation to conceptualisations of the gig economy can be viewed as complex and contested (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). Montgomery and Baglioni (2021) suggest that 'the gig economy' may not hold up to scrutiny as a concept, relative to broader understanding of 'precarious work,' due to: 'definitional borders which overlap neighbouring concepts'. Similarly, Malik et al. (2021), suggests this is further complicated by blurred lines between academic conceptualisations of the 'gig economy' and the 'platform economy', with these boundaries becoming 'increasingly obsolete' as the digital economy matures and with increased digitalisation of the workplace. These poorly defined conceptual boundaries (of the gig economy) can be challenging to unpick, particularly in policymaking settings (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021), and for employment relations and regulation (Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017). Additionally, conceptual murkiness around the defining characteristics of the gig economy may negatively impact or obscure the needs of excluded groups of workers (that do not fit into academic/policymakers' definitions), in addition to sectors of the economy where precarious work is long standing or commonplace (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017; Pinsof 2015).

Different forms of communication, utilising newer forms of technology, such as 'digital platforms' are viewed by some (including the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) as an important defining factor of the gig economy (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Healy et al. 2017; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Huđek and Širec 2023; Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017). However, Montgomery and Baglioni's (2021) study found that public perception of the term (the gig economy) suggests a wider interpretation is held by members of the public (rooted in discourses historically around freelance, or precarious forms of work) and are not exclusive to workers using digital platforms (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021). Furthermore, freelance work involving short-term contracts on a project-by-project basis, is included in some conceptualisations of the gig economy, operating in both online (using online platforms) and offline contexts (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). This suggests that when research is conducted with members of the public (i.e. surveys, questionnaires, interviews) it may be important to focus (relative to the literature) on how 'they' define 'the gig economy', and the influence of communication and technology (digital platforms, methods of communication channels with clients) on conceptualisations of the gig economy to fully gain insight into the types of workers that embody the sub-sets of precarious work across the gig economy. Furthermore, the 'scale' of precarity, and technological

developments in both communication methods and workplace practices (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020) are deemed to be important factors for clarifying some of the challenges around understanding the gig economy and the sub-sets of workers that occupy this economic space.

The definition of the gig economy applied in Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) 'Dynamic Structural Model of the Gig Economy', recognises it as characterised by: Precarity; 'new ways of working'; a significant impact of app use or platform-work (and algorithmic control methods utilised by platforms), whilst also acknowledging freelance work in the gig economy is not always limited to or mediated by platform use. The structures of the model outlined as important by Page-Tickell and Yerby (2020) relate to: Peak Precarity (different levels of precarity experienced at the micro, meso and macro level); Trust (viewed on a scale from high to low - with workers perceived to have high levels of trust (and often specialism) experiencing higher 'freedom of choice' over their 'gigs', and vice versa); Pay (amount and reliability of pay); Collective (scales the sense of community and 'collective' that gig workers create that can help to challenge organisational power relative to workers engaged in insecure work); Place (when and where the gig work is carried out) ; and Tenure (how long the gig lasts- with a scale of from one hour to recurring yearly contracts deemed to be 'gig work'). This allows for a broader conceptualisation of the gig economy, that potentially falls more in line with wider interpretations observed in public discourse around the topic, as observed in Montgomery and Baglioni (2021).

2.2.1.1 Freelancing, Precarious Work and the Gig Economy

As noted in the section above, freelancers represent a subset of workers associated with the gig economy that may operate in both online and offline settings (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). Burke and Cowling (2020) suggest that solo-self-employed freelancers have been pivotal (over the last twenty years) in shaping economies in developed countries worldwide, enabling malleability when allotting resources in the workforce for both established and new business models (Burke and Cowling 2020). Additionally, research suggests that solo-self-employed freelancers are increasing in prevalence in western economies (Barlage et al. 2023), they are highly educated, and promote greater levels of innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation (Burke and Cowling 2020; Barlage et al. 2023). This interplays with the notion of the scale of 'trust' described in Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) Dynamic Structural Model, whereby higher skilled (or specialised workers) are trusted more and have a greater level of freedom or choice over their 'gigs', relative to lower skilled workers (that are perceived to have lower levels of trust). As such, it is important to note that not all experiences of freelancers or gig workers are necessarily equal (positive/negative), with levels of motivation, precarity, trust and power

interplaying with inequalities in pay, security, and flexibility to choose 'gigs,' (Page-Tickell and Yerby's 2020).

In recent years, online 'gig work' platforms (Uber, Upwork, Fiverr, Amazon mechanical TURK and 'Figure eight'), have increased in prevalence, enabling digital 'gig workers' to find novel routes to employment (Vallas and Schor 2020; Malik et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Healy et al. 2020; Bricka and Schroeder 2019). 'Digital' or 'platform' gig workers represent a growing portion of the workforce globally (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Gupta and Gupta 2023), necessitating increased debate around changing employment practices, government policy development, legal protections for gig workers (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Johnes 2019; Jeon and Ostrovsky 2020; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023) and how self-employed freelancers, independent contractors, and digital gig workers fit into our understanding of the economy (Vallas and Schor 2020; Jacques and Kristensson 2019; Malik 2016).

As noted, despite a long history of 'gig work' performed by freelancers in the traditional (pre-technology centric) economy (Osnowitz 2010; Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019), definitions of the gig economy have struggled to definitively converge on a consensus, with many definitions focusing on the innovations of the digital age (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Watson et al. 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022) and diversity of digital platforms (McNeill 2017), rather than broader conceptualisations of the changing nature of work (such as increased digitalisation of workplace practices) across all sectors of the economy (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020). However, a consensus is generally held around precarity and technological advancement as central to most conceptualisations of the gig economy (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). Research over the past decade has examined the characteristics of the new gig economy and the potential outcomes for the 'future of work' (Shaw et al. 2022; Vallas and Schor 2020; Graham et al. 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Malik 2016; Kacher and Weiler 2017). More recent literature has examined the socio-economic motivations for entrepreneurship (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) and entrepreneurial behaviour in the 'platform economy' or 'gig economy'

(Morales-Pérez et al. 2022). Table 8 provides a summary of current debates relating to the 'characteristics' of the 'gig economy'.

Author/(s)	Summary of Current Debates and Evidence
(Vallas and Schor 2020; Gleim et al. 2019; Graham et al. 2017; Bunders et al. 2022)	How multiple (digital) platforms are organised
(Behl et al. 2022)	The barriers to entry of the 'gig economy'
(Vallas and Schor 2020; Gandini 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Malik 2016)	Who qualifies as a 'gig worker' and the environments they operate in
(MacDonald and Giazitzoglu 2019)	The role of youth employment in the 'gig economy'
(Barrios et al. 2022)	The impact of the 'gig economy' on new business formation
(Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016)	The impact of the 'gig economy' on entrepreneurship
(Zheng and Yang 2020)	Novel economic models associated with the 'gig economy'
(Fest et al. 2021)	The motivation of 'gig workers' and the role of leadership in the 'gig economy'
(Friedman 2014)	The impact of 'shadow corporations', who use ('gig economy' based) transient work forces in lieu of permanent staff
(Graham et al. 2017)	Examination of power dynamics and impact on livelihood of workers
(Bunders et al. 2022)	The organisation and viability of (user owned) cooperative platforms
(Healy et al. 2020)	The role of consumers in constructing the 'gig economy'
(Lian et al. 2022)	'Free riding' models, whereby firms monopolise a shared labour pool

Table 8. Summary of Debates in Literature: Defining the 'Characteristics' of the 'Gig Economy'

The 'sharing economy' and the 'direct selling' economy represent two distinct sub-sections of the gig economy with users interacting with these platforms in a variety of ways with different motivations (Geim et al. 2019). 'Bargaining power', and the competitive nature of the jobs in digital labour platforms can lead to inequality in opportunities relative to a worker's skill or experience but can provide opportunities to learn 'on the job' or improve future career prospects of educated gig workers (Graham et al. 2017). Geographical location of the gig worker is important, with much work carried out on digital platforms performed in wealthy countries such as: the US, UK and Canada, leading to competition and discrimination in the supply chain between high and low-income countries (Graham 2013; Graham et al. 2017). Another distinct category relates to 'platform cooperatives' (Bunders et al. 2022), although there is scarce research examining the structures underpinning them and the types of users they attract. Current research in this area has focused predominantly on platforms set up as an alternative to driving and food delivery services, such as 'Uber' and 'Deliveroo' (Bunders et al. 2022) which can be beneficial for workers' rights and barriers to entry (Bunders et al. 2022). However, the power dynamics observed in investor-owned platforms may be reproduced in 'cooperative platforms',

who often have lower levels of capital investment available, can struggle with collective decision making and have fewer resources available to respond to challenges (Bunders et al. 2022).

2.2.1.2 Freelancers, Gig Workers and Pathways to Business Development

Recent research suggests the 'gig economy' may have a bearing on new business formation (Barrios et al. 2022) and entrepreneurship (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016). Barrios et al. (2022) examined the impact of online-based (gig economy) taxi services such as 'Uber' and 'Lyft' on new business registrations in cities in the USA. An increase of five percent in new business registrations and a seven percent increase in online searches for key words related to 'entrepreneurship' correlated with the arrival of gig economy platforms in cities in the US. Barrios et al. (2022) propose that digital platforms provide a supplementary source of income for workers, acting as a safety net for early-stage entrepreneurship, new businesses and a 'launching platform' for workers with lower educational achievement. In contrast, Burtch et al. (2016) found negative effects for entrepreneurial activity measured via unsuccessful crowdfunding campaigns, suggesting new forms of employment in the 'digital gig economy' dissuades entrepreneurship (Burtch et al. 2016). However, generalisability of this research to other sectors of the gig economy is limited, due to the sample and skills addressed in the study. Notably, there is scant research examining these factors regarding 'professional services' provided by freelancers and consultants in offline (not app based) 'gig economy' markets.

In contrast, Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' (of stand-up comedians i.e. self-employed freelancers) highlights some of the challenges freelancers experience when building their own 'patchwork' career. It examines the mechanisms underlying the 'non-linearity' of freelancers' progression towards establishing gig-work-based 'careers', constituting three distinct layers (the 'Proximate Layer'; 'Community Layer'; and 'Industrial Layer'), with progression through each layer requiring 'participation' and maintenance of connections and engagement with the previous layer. This may provide a useful framework for conceptualising how the 'digital' and 'offline' gig economy intersect relative to pre-existing (corporations and) structures of the wider economy. It may also provide clues to how career development in the gig economy can lend itself to formalising a specialism or service offered into a formal business offering (including branding, an established reputation which improves trust (Reilly's 2017)) and assistance in unpicking these factors in relation to the rise in entrepreneurship in the gig economy (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016); together with the underlying mechanisms, motivations of business development for freelancers engaged with entrepreneurship and business development in the gig economy. Interestingly, Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' shares some parallels with Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) 'Dynamic Structural Model of the Gig Economy' (relative to core components of the different layers) with core features of building

a community, and trust lending itself to improved flexibility and freedom (for workers in the gig economy) in both models.

Experiences of 'gig work' can present unique challenges, and workers operating in the gig economy tend to have more transient working relationships, moving between jobs or working alone, which can lead to higher levels of isolation, loneliness, and a feeling of physical separation (Ashford et al. 2018). This need for a sense of community and comradery for workers operating in the gig economy has led to a rise in co-working spaces, which enables freelancers to feel more connected to communities and workplace support networks (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021). 'Independent workers' or freelancers construct 'personal holding environments' that anchor their work and routine to people and places. These professional practices serve as a support and substitute for connections typically held in a traditional working environment, assisting with the development and maintenance of professional identities (Petriglieri et al. 2019). This trend is consistent with the patterns observed by both Reilly (2017) and Page-Tickell and Yerby's, (2020) models, in relation to the importance of community in freelance environments in the gig economy. This may provide clues as to how different methods of communication (with clients and potential clients) and new forms of technology (to promote brand, sell services, offload workload with automation and artificial intelligence etc.) are utilised alongside career development strategies (via engaging with entrepreneurship, and business development), as a means (or outcome) of seeking increased levels of security for some workers. These workers may also be highly motivated to build their skill-sets, careers, increase specialism and competency, build a sense of community and assist in developing businesses out of gig economy experience and workplace practices.

There are a number of barriers to entry for freelancers and digital 'gig workers', particularly in the food delivery sector of the gig economy (Behl et al. 2022). Behl et al.'s (2022) study establishes a hierarchy of barriers, such as, strong competition for jobs; long and unsociable hours of work; and poorer working conditions. Poor payment protections are challenging for workers who lack traditional employment rights and must bear operating costs (i.e. fuel) (Graham et al. 2022). However, the specificity of the research to the food delivery sector may reduce generalisability to other sectors such as 'micro-taskers' or 'crowd workers' (Vallas and Schor 2020). Furthermore, younger employment groups experience unstable pay, poorer working conditions, alienation, increased levels of anxiety and lower job security relative to other age ranges operating in the gig economy (MacDonald and Giazitzoglu 2019), suggesting individual differences may have a bearing on individuals' 'experience' of 'gig work'.

Notably, Vallas and Schor (2020) categorised the 'gig economy' into distinct concepts representing: 1) Entrepreneurial incubators; 2) 'Digital cages'; 3) 'Accelerants of Precarity'; 4) 'Institutional chameleons' and 5) 'Permissive Potentates'. 'Entrepreneurial incubators' frames the digital gig economy as driven by 'the sharing economy' of the previous decade after the economic crash. Early online buying and selling platforms (Amazon and eBay) and peer-to-peer networks enabled users to monetize their assets (i.e. a spare bedroom on Air B&B), held promise for promoting entrepreneurial spirit, flexible working hours, favouring rating-based systems to foster trust and promote 'crowd-based capitalism' (Vallas and Schor 2020). In contrast, 'digital cages' arise when human management practices are replaced by 'algorithmic control' on platforms, thus limiting worker autonomy (Vallas and Schor 2020). Notably, these models do not account for forms of worker resistance (to algorithmic control) that have the potential to mitigate these challenges (Walckirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022).

Alternatively, 'Accelerants of Precarity' frames the gig economy as a natural transition of employment practices, not solely stemming from digital and technological platforms for gig work but as an extension of long-standing freelancing and consultancy practices observed in the offline gig economy (Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019; Friedman 2014). Alternatively, 'Institutional chameleons' suggest the gig economy is constructed by the institutional context rather than the technology or platform itself (Vallas and Schor 2020) with more companies moving towards 'transient' models of employment in lieu of permanent staff (Friedman 2014). Finally, 'Permissive Potentates' promotes that limitations in the other perspectives can be partly mitigated by conceptualising gig economy platforms as a new form of economic activity, with an uncertain future (Vallas and Schor 2020; Zheng and Yang 2020).

2.2.2 Characteristics of Freelancers and Workers in the Gig Economy

Hierarchies of 'platform work' facilitate conceptualising variations in work practices, the types of jobs available in the 'digital' and 'offline' gig economy and what types of workers use these systems. Vallas and Schor's (2020) research characterises gig workers as fitting into five distinct categories. The first category, 'Architects and technologists' use entrepreneurial thinking, innovative methods, and technology to develop, market and maintain online platforms becoming 'founders' of new platforms in the gig economy, influencing the lives and the opportunities of other gig workers (Vallas and Schor 2020).

'Cloud-based gig workers' (Vallas and Schor 2020) or 'digital nomads' (Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017) are freelancers and independent contractors that offer high level professional services and may operate in both the digital and offline 'gig economy'. The financial security of this form of 'gig work' is

often dependent on repeat business, either through building a client base, or via repeat custom using online gig economy platforms (Vallas and Schor 2020). Both categories support gig work for highly skilled professionals, representing an alternative conceptualisation of traditional entrepreneurship, freelancing, or consultancy in the traditional (offline) gig economy (Donovan et al. 2016; Barlage et al. 2019) showing positive benefits for entrepreneurial activity (Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016). Furthermore, 'digital nomads' represent a distinct sub-set of this category, typically using multiple online platforms, are not geographical rooted, moving from location to location frequently, often working in creative professions remotely and exhibiting high levels of agency (Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017).

The third category involves gig workers (Vallas and Schor 2020), or 'on-demand' gig workers (Kaine and Josserand 2019) who utilise online digital platforms to source work but perform work in real world environments. These jobs are typically low-skilled i.e. food delivery services, caregiving, labouring, and other offline tasks. This can afford gig workers greater flexibility and autonomy (Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Vallas and Schor 2020; Jacques and Kristensson 2019). However, workers have few employment protections (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Johnes 2019; Jeon and Ostrovsky 2020; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023), unstable financial income, vulnerability to market fluctuations (Vallas and Schor 2020), especially when they are unable to work (Kalleberg and Dunn 2016), leading to reduced autonomy.

The fourth category involves gig workers engaged in 'micro tasking' jobs on platforms such as AMT (Amazon Mechanical TURK). 'Micro taskers' often earn less and work in online settings categorising images, or statements, providing the 'human' element of artificial intelligence systems (Vallas and Schor 2020). They bid for projects and prices are competitive, working long hours to make sufficient income to survive. This can lead to financial instability, reduced autonomy, and working unsociable hours (Vallas and Schor 2020). In contrast, 'architects and technologists' are 'content creators'. They constitute a group of aspirational workers who work for little or no money creating content or working as influencers on social media platforms (Instagram, YouTube etc.). There is very little initial pay for these workers, with income gained once high numbers of followers are reached, leveraged against advertising revenue or a customer base to sell their content or services (Vallas and Schor 2020). Notably, Arora and Sharma (2022) propose that many businesses (post-pandemic) must also integrate social media and technology into their strategies to be successful in the 'digital age'. 'Digital nomads' may also represent a sub-set of this category due to the prominence of creative professionals in this

sector, and their proficiency in learning, using, and adapting new technologies to facilitate 'digital gig work' (Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017).

More generally, extant research suggests freelancers and gig workers operating in the 'digital' and 'offline' gig economy are 'independent contractors', working on short-term 'gig' or task-based projects (Vallas and Schor 2020; Kuhn 2016) and do not fit into traditional models of employment law (Vallas and Schor 2020; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Johnes 2019; Jeon and Ostrovsky 2020; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023). They are likely to have flexible working schedules (Vallas and Schor 2020; Kuhn 2016; Lehdonvirta 2018; Tan et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Abraham et al. 2019; van Doorn et al. 2022; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Duggan et al. 2022; Bunders et al. 2022; Shaw et al. 2022; Kirven 2018; Cornelissen and Cholakova 2021; Doucette and Bradford 2019; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Watson et al. 2021), poorer job security (Cornelissen and Cholakova 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lehdonvirta 2018; Tan et al. 2021; Webster 2016; van Doorn et al. 2022; Berger et al. 2019; Ashford et al. 2018; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Graham et al. 2017; Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017; Duggan et al. 2022; Bunders et al. 2022; Johnes 2019; Anwar and Graham 2021; Shaw et al. 2022; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Kirven 2018; Cornelissen and Cholakova 2021; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Barlage et al. 2019) and lower wages, relative to their traditionally employed counterparts (Shaw et al. 2022; Behl et al. 2022; Berger et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019).

It is evident that whilst 'digital gig economy' platforms provide the infrastructure for gig work (by design) the ways in which different types of workers are motivated to use these platforms varies significantly according to individual circumstance and differences. Table 9 provides a brief summary of key research in this area. As shown in the previous section, research suggests that delineating characteristics or archetypes of 'gig workers' operating in the different 'gig economy' markets can assist in unpicking the more overt mechanisms that operate in the digital and offline 'gig economy'. Research suggests that freelancers and gig workers often experience poorer working conditions (Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023; Berger et al. 2019), greater levels of isolation (Kaine and Josserand 2019) and have higher levels of anxiety relative to workers in the traditional economy. The following section will address these aspects of the gig economy in relation to the experiences of freelancers and gig workers.

Author/(s)	Summary of Current Debates and Evidence
(Tan et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Berger et al. 2019; Graham et al. 2017; Anwar and Graham 2021; Kirven 2018; Doucette and Bradford 2019; Ludwig et al. 2022; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Herrmann et al. 2023)	Education level
(Tan et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Ashford et al. 2018; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Graham et al. 2017; Duggan et al. 2020; Johnes 2019; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Kirven 2018; Ludwig et al. 2022; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Barlage et al. 2019)	Skill level of the 'gig worker'
(Ashford et al. 2018; Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017)	The resources available to the 'gig worker'
(Anwar and Graham 2021; Shaw et al. 2022; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Eager, B., Maritz and Millemann 2022)	Socio-economic status
(Shaw et al. 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Al-Qahtani et al. 2022; Cook et al. 2018; James 2022)	Gender
(Shaw et al. 2022; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019)	Ethnicity
(van Doorn et al. 2022; Graham et al. 2017)	Migration status

Table 9. Summary of Research: Individual Differences and 'Characteristics of 'Gig Workers'

2.2.3 Experiences of Freelancers (Wellbeing, Communication and Technology) in Offline vs Digital 'Gig Economy' Settings

Several factors are important for understanding the experiences of freelancers and digital gig workers relative to the wider context of the gig economy. These issues are discussed, as follows: motivations for 'gig work' and working conditions experienced by gig workers in the UK (Broughton et al. 2018; Johnes 2019); how behaviours, work practices and professional identities are shaped by the gig economy (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019); how worker motivation and leadership are mediated in online and offline contexts (Fest et al. 2021); how 'formal' and 'informal' communication strategies function in the gig economy (Fest et al. 2021; Anwar and Graham 2020; Ludwig et al. 2022); how knowledge exchange occurs in these contexts (Barlage et al. 2019); gig workers' experiences of autonomy (Pichault and McKeown 2019) and resistance to algorithmic control in digital platforms (Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022; Wood et al. 2019a); and experiences of inequality and how these are constructed and reproduced in gig economy contexts (MacDonald and Giazitzoglu 2019; Shaw et al. 2022; Graham et al. 2017; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019).

The 'flexibility' of work is a highly regarded motivation for freelancers and digital gig workers entering the gig economy in the UK (Broughton et al. 2018). Workers in the gig economy that have another job

are less impacted by market fluctuations, whereas full-time gig workers are more prone to financial insecurity. Most workers operating in the gig economy cannot financially plan or save, living predominantly month-to-month, with scarce opportunities available for training or career progression, and poor protections in place (at the platform level) for health and safety (Broughton et al. 2018). Notably, London made up the largest portion of respondents in Broughton et al's (2018) study, which may influence the generalisability of results to other areas of the gig economy, including internationally. Johnes et al. (2019) found that London had the highest number of gig workers relative to the rest of the UK, with the greatest number of these gig workers operating in service roles and possessing high-skill levels, with variations in use of gig economy platforms deemed to be important for contextualising policy development at a regional level (Johnes 2019).

2.2.3.1 Communication, Technology, Workplace Practices, Career Development and the Gig Economy

Several factors identified in the literature influence how behaviour and work practices are shaped by gig economy platforms (Ashford et al. 2018). Traditional models of organisational theory are rooted in outdated models of organisations, geographically situated in office workspaces, co-working environments and hierarchical management structures. These types of workplaces are increasingly less common, as workplaces have shifted to a 'remote' or 'hybrid' work culture alongside the evolution of a more transient approach to employment strategies (Ashford et al. 2018). These factors (amongst others) have precipitated more irregular working schedules, lower job security and an increase in temporary contracts offered, relative to permanent roles. Increasingly, workers in the traditional and digital gig economy can be viewed as 'a company of one' with little or no loyalty to organisations as their sole provision of income (Ashford et al. 2018; Friedman 2014; Doucette and Bradford 2019). Ashford et al. (2018) suggests the (lived) experience of work differs for individuals working in organisations relative to those working in the gig economy.

For workers in the gig economy, job and financial insecurity and high levels of autonomy characterise the lived experience and reality of (typical) freelance and gig economy work. However, this can increase the perceived 'meaningfulness' of the work to the individual or actor (Ashford et al. 2018). Time management and working to deadlines can also represent a challenge for some freelancers and gig workers and become a determinant of financial success or hardship (Ashford et al. 2018). Freelance and gig economy work has no clear structure for career development, few opportunities for mentors but may provide a more forgiving buffer to learn, relative to traditional employment contexts (Ashford et al. 2018; Reilly, 2017). Currently, this cohort represents an understudied group (Kuhn, 2016). Additionally, freelancers and 'independent' professionals may also play a mediatory role for 'knowledge sharing' in professional contexts which can benefit the organisations that hire them

(Barlage et al. 2019) since 'knowledge management' enablers are essential for organisational effectiveness (Ferasso and Greiner 2021).

Self-employed freelancers additionally face pressure to develop and present their brand to generate demand for services via traditional and digital networking and must be astute at self-monitoring to present appropriate versions of themselves in each professional context. These 'performative' functions of freelancing and gig work in professional networking settings may be more difficult for intrinsically motivated (Jabagi et al. 2019) or introverted individuals to sustain relative to extroverts (Ashford et al. 2018). This can make it difficult for freelancers and gig workers to construct coherent, professional identities, when freelancers and gig workers take on new roles and must revise their strategies and professional identities accordingly (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019). Nevertheless, freelancing and gig economy jobs are often experienced positively by workers; some gig workers thrive in these contexts, enjoy the varied work, the journey of personal and professional growth and the inherent challenges associated with these types of roles.

The transient and remote-working nature of gig working can present challenges understanding the nature of communication (Ludwig et al. 2022), motivation, and leadership in online and offline gig economy contexts (Fest et al. 2021). Communication between clients and gig workers (micro tasking setting) often consists of ('formal') pre-written statements containing instructions on the work-task with minimal (if any) client feedback (Fest et al. 2021), leading to potential informational asymmetries due to poor leadership in digital contexts (Ludwig et al. 2022). Traditional methods of workplace motivation, or monetary rewards, do not have a significant impact on output level, and ('informal') motivational messages paired with non-goal orientated charismatic leadership strategies can reduce worker output (Fest et al. 2021). In contrast, ('informal') charismatic leadership strategies and 'goal related' charismatic leadership can increase the performance of workers dramatically (Fest et al. 2021).

As more work has shifted towards remote, or hybrid 'virtual teams' in recent years, leadership in digital contexts may be an important aspect of successful digital environments and teams (Fest et al. 2021). However, this may promote future inequalities, with younger, highly educated and more digitally savvy freelancers and gig workers comprising the largest section of this growing workforce (Anwar and Graham 2020; MacDonald and Giazitzoglu 2019). Finally, 'independent' professionals typically experience higher levels of autonomy in their roles, Pichault and McKeown (2019) propose that this autonomy is mediated by different levels of structural control. This can also be observed in digital contexts, where gig workers exhibit resistance to algorithmic control in digital platforms to increase autonomy (Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022) or have

developed 'informal' practices, tools and communities to increase autonomy in their roles (Lehdonvirta 2018).

2.2.3.2 Complexities in Defining 'Enterprise', and Entrepreneurship

The legal classification of 'enterprise' can be defined as a 'universal form of organization of entrepreneurship' (where entrepreneurship is the 'activity' of enterprise) (Jinoria 2014). In contrast, entrepreneurship can be viewed as: the creation of new ventures; the process of enterprise; the pursuit of opportunity, regardless of resources; and activities that have a social outcome (Breen 2004). Business enterprises are typically classified in terms of size (small, medium, and large), although classifications of size (number of employees) can vary between countries (Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015). The types of activities enterprises engage in vary along dimensions such as: 'Production of goods or services; Independence; Purpose of getting profits; Registration in accordance with legislation (additional requirement); Organization and autonomic governance; Presence of employees and working facilities' (Jinoria 2014).

As such, some authors suggest that determining the size of an 'enterprise', solely by the number of employees may represent a limitation, with 'generalized comparisons across sectors difficult' (Berisha and Pula 2015). For example, a business operating in the construction industry, may be considered small relative to the size of its competition and (relative) market share, and large in other sectors (based on the number of employees), (Berisha and Pula 2015). An alternative conceptualisation of SMEs and large firms takes account of three dimensions of the characteristics of 'small firms', namely these are: 'management of firm by its owner(s) in a personalized manner'; relatively small share of the market in economic terms; independence in the sense that it does not form part of a larger enterprise and is relatively free from outside control in its principal decisions' (Berisha and Pula 2015).

However, Berisha and Pula (2015) suggest a number of qualitative factors can be evaluated to establish an SME, from a large firm along the dimensions of: type of management (proprietor-entrepreneurship/manager entrepreneurship); personnel (lower skilled workforce and general knowledge/higher skilled workforce and specialism); organisation (personalised contacts and communication/formalised communication); sales (uncertain competitive position/strong competitive competition); buyer's relationship (unstable work/long term contracts); production (labour intensive/capital intensive); research development (intuitive approach/institutionalised); and finance (self-financing/diversified ownership structure), with moving from 'unstable' to long-term

contracts deemed to be an important differentiator between an SME and a large firm in these contexts (Berisha and Pula 2015).

2.2.4 Pathways to Career and Business Development: Freelancers, Entrepreneurs, and the Gig Economy

Recent research suggests that 99.9% of businesses fall under the threshold of 500 staff and 81% have no employees, with the number of 'non employer' small businesses rapidly rising over the last couple of decades (Lahm 2020). Similarly, in the US (over the last decade) half of these small businesses work from home, with 86.6% of these being sole traders or 'non-employee' businesses (Lahm 2020). Lahm (2020) suggests a growth of up to 42 million small businesses by 2026 in the US, with competitiveness in these markets mediated by the availability of talent, the use of online platforms (and integrated online marketing), and stable infrastructure for these mechanisms. Independent workers represent an understudied group in these contexts, with upwards of a third of individuals in the US engaging in freelance work in 2020 and over 60% of these doing so by choice rather than due to financial pressures or unemployment (Lahm 2020). Arora and Sharma (2022) also suggest that (post-pandemic) many businesses internationally have been 'thrust' into becoming a part of the 'gig economy' and need to adapt their strategies towards digitalisation accordingly. It is evident that for SMEs and large firms, digitalisation of workplace practices (including digitalisation of communication) and the use of technology (including engagement with platform-based gig work), represent a stable trend, similar to those observed in the gig economy. However, there is a lack of research that examines the underlying mechanisms that shifts freelancers towards entrepreneurship, how this intersects with conceptualisations of freelancers having 'patchwork' or layered careers (Reilly 2017) and how this intersects with entrepreneurial intentions and business development, observed as an increasing phenomenon in the gig economy (Lahm 2020). In addition to how self-employed freelancers, gig workers and enterprises emerge from these marketplaces (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016).

Whilst the conceptual boundaries of the 'gig economy' (in academic and public discourse) may be disputed (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020), survey data suggests upwards of a third of individuals in the US (claim to) have worked in the gig economy in some capacity as of 2018, and three out of ten adults surveyed (Lahm 2020). These businesses have created up to two thirds of new jobs relative to a third created by larger organisations up to 2019 (Lahm 2020). Research such as Lahm (2020), which captures population statistics and workers' behaviours in relation to employment and business formation, signifies a trend towards entrepreneurial intentions for modern workers, particularly in the US. Lahm (2020) proposes that

'ready or not' the digital gig economy represents a seismic shift in the socio-cultural dynamics of how we view employment. Additionally, 'hybrid self-employment' or 'hybrid entrepreneurs' may represent a growing category of workers (in Europe) as the gig economy continues to flourish (Bogenhold 2019; Ferreira et al. 2019).

Whilst conclusions that can be drawn from Lahm's (2020) research are limited (in terms of their generalisability) regarding experiences of US workers, these trends are consistent across developed economies (Burke and Cowling 2020). Increased freelancing and self-employment can be regarded as 'transformative' for economies (over the last couple of decades) and for facilitating novel business and employment models (Burke and Cowling 2020). Additionally, highly educated, and skilled gig workers or freelancers drive innovation, create jobs, and promote entrepreneurship (Burke and Cowling 2020). However, recent policy changes in the UK around 'false-self-employment' have led to challenges for organisations legitimately hiring freelancers, without incurring potential penalties for avoidance of payroll or 'exploitation' of workers (Burke and Cowling 2020).

Additionally, Burke and Cowling (2020) suggest there is a lack of research in relation to the 'users' of freelance services, such as micro-businesses (Reuschke et al. 2021) and micro-entrepreneurs (Eveland and MacLennan 2019) and an over-reliance on the notion that freelancing erodes employment rights (Burke and Cowling 2020). In the context of the gig economy versus the wider economy, this poses questions around how organisational dynamics are impacted by the increased use of freelancers and gig workers alongside traditional employment models, as is the case with 'shadow corporations' (Friedman 2014). In addition, as organisations increasingly hire professional services from platforms such as 'Fiverr' (Green et al. 2018), there is a sparsity of research about how these 'remote' extended teams and networks impact organisational culture. Furthermore, recent research suggests technology can facilitate digital transformation and the growth of entrepreneurialism and small businesses (or pathways to business development) moving forward, particularly for younger workers that have grown up in the digital age (Reuschke et al. 2021). Generational divides combined with general trends in employment practices may have altered power dynamics in the gig economy, the platform, consumer (and organisations), and workers in these contexts. These issues will be discussed further in the following section.

2.2.5 Power Dynamics in the Gig Economy and Policy Development

Several power dynamics underpin the structure of relationships in the 'gig economy' influencing relationship formation, communication, the motivation of gig workers (Fest et al. 2021; Waldkirch et al. 2021; Ludwig et al. 2022) and entrepreneurship (Audretsch and Fiedler 2023). These include leadership styles, digital leadership strategies (Malik and Raziq 2022) as well as the client, platform,

and 'gig worker' relationship (Straughan and Bissell 2022). Other power dynamics are: human resource management practices utilised in the gig economy (Jabagi et al. 2019; McDonnell et al. 2021; Williams et al. 2021; Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2023; Carr et al. 2017; Zheng and Yang 2020; Le Brocq et al. 2023); the systems and mechanisms of algorithmic control in digital platforms (Muldoon and Raekstad 2022; McDonnell et al. 2021; Williams et al. 2021; Walker et al. 2021; Kenney and Zysman 2015; Wood et al. 2019a) and gig workers' experiences of algorithmic control and resistance strategies deployed to regain autonomy (Anwar and Graham 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022; Ravenelle 2019; Duggan et al. 2023).

Highly automated processes govern digital gig economy contexts, the relationships between 'gig workers', digital platforms, and consumers. Contractual agreements set standards for expected behaviour and technology-based IT systems manage how workers join, work, and exit these digital platforms (Waldkirch et al. 2021). As such, there is an inherent power imbalance between the 'gig worker', consumer, and the platform, mediated by mechanisms of algorithmic control. The methods for how remote gig workers can communicate with clients and the platform are often text-based, leading to uncertainty for gig workers, and consumers alike (Ludwig et al. 2022). Consequently, the negative impacts of these uncertainties include high numbers of unfilled jobs or lower success rates at bidding for jobs (Ludwig et al. 2022), with 'good leadership' in these contexts increasing productivity, motivation, and perceived autonomy (Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021).

Much recent research has focused on regulation, exploring the power dynamics present between existing norms and institutions in the 'gig economy' (Healy et al. 2017; Frenken et al. 2020; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020) and how to define 'gig workers' in relation to employment law and policy development (Stewart and Stanford 2017; Donovan et al. 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Snider 2018; Kirven 2018; Cornelissen and Cholakova 2021; Malik 2016; Schiek and Gideon 2018). Consequently, it is important to evaluate the extent to which inequality is produced or reproduced in the gig economy, relative to the traditional economy. Research suggests that in some instances, a gender pay gap still exists in the digital gig economy as is also observed in traditional employment contexts (Barzilay and Ben-David 2017; Cook et al. 2021; Hunt and Samman 2019; Kasliwal 2020; Doucette and Bradford 2019; Churchill et al. 2019); and other socio-economic factors such as, migration (van Doorn et al. 2022); coming from a low-income family (Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019), age, education level and skill level (Shaw et al. 2022) can have an impact on gig workers' experiences and prospects.

Finally, this section of the chapter discusses potential issues impacting government-led policy initiatives (with a UK focus) in relation to the gig economy, and the emerging evidence relating to the impact of the global Covid 19 pandemic on the gig economy. Whilst the UK government has largely supported the growth of the 'sharing' economy (digital sharing platforms), consensus within government has been difficult to measure. Dissenting voices and 'institutional uncertainty' over the years, has potentially hampered efforts to put adequate (and well-measured) regulations in place to protect (Chalmers and Matthews 2019) and support (Burke and Cowling 2020) workers in this emerging sector of the economy (Chalmers and Matthews 2019).

The global pandemic (Covid 19) caused widespread disruption to traditional economies globally, with dramatic and fast-moving changes occurring to the infrastructure of society during this period (Gallitto et al. 2022; Alameeri et al. 2021; Arora and Sharma 2022). However, research suggests that the global pandemic (Covid 19) had a positive impact on the growth of the gig economy and entrepreneurship (Alameeri et al. 2021) with more jobs being advertised and undertaken via online digital platforms during the pandemic (Umar et al. 2021). Similarly, recent research suggests that the economic uncertainty and adversity that occurred during the pandemic increased the levels of 'new ventures' during this period (Maritz et al. 2020; Usman and Sun 2022), with entrepreneurial intentions mediated by necessity due to environmental and economic constraints and the 'perceived feasibility' that a start-up would improve conditions (Usman and Sun 2022). However, whether these changes represent a 'new normal', or are enduring following the global recovery from the pandemic, remains unclear and requires further investigation.

2.2.6 Summary

In summary, several characteristics make the 'gig economy' unique in relation to traditional employment practices. Whilst digital platforms provide new forums for workers to engage in 'gigs' or find work, they cannot be viewed as separate from the wider socio-economic pressures or mechanisms underpinning offline models (not mediated by platform or app use) of the 'gig economy' (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). A greater understanding is needed of how entrepreneurship, career development and pathways to business development operate in relation to the dynamics of the gig economy, with a particular research gap in relation to higher skilled freelancers (operating in gig economy contexts) that provide specialised offerings. In addition, the influence of digitalisation of workplace practices, communication and technology in the gig economy and the broader economy are important to consider in relation to the ongoing debates around the gig economy. How workers engage with digital platforms (and in offline contexts), their motivations, aspirations, and experiences are determined by several factors including education and skill level, experience, age, gender, socio-

economic background, amongst others. It is also evident that research to date has struggled to converge on definitive models of the gig economy incorporating 'offline' self-employed freelancers and 'digital' gig economy workers.

Workers in the gig economy, (both offline and digital), do not exist in a social vacuum, yet there is a significant gap in academic research that tackles a comparative analysis of these cohorts. This is an area requiring further research to add to the debate around models of the 'gig economy' and entrepreneurship and how it operates in the context of wider social and economic structures. Furthermore, whilst there is limited research examining new business formation and entrepreneurship in the context of service-based ('taxi' or 'delivery') platforms, there is also a gap in research regarding these issues for self-employed freelancers and gig workers providing 'professional service' in these contexts. As an example, further research is required to understand if or how professional gig workers actively use the gig economy to facilitate entrepreneurship and develop small businesses (or how enterprises emerge from the gig economy). What factors enable or constrain gig workers in these contexts, and how do the digital and offline gig economies' intersect regarding entrepreneurial aspiration?

Section 2.3: The Changing Nature of Work (Communication, Technology and Business Development in Organisations): 'Formal' and 'Informal' Professional Practices, Organisation Growth and Change

The following section of Chapter 2 introduces research relating to workers' use of 'informal' and 'formal' professional practices and communication strategies that impact building and maintaining: interpersonal relationships (Heimann and Kampf 2021); a professional workplace culture (Stachova et al. 2017); leveraging the competencies of employees to strengthen organisations (Stachova et al. 2017) and to establish cohesive brands (Gonzalez and Lester 2018). Furthermore, in digital contexts, lower levels of both 'formal' and 'informal' communication can reduce productivity (Stockl and Struck 2022). These factors may be particularly important for remote gig workers and freelancers who often have little feedback or communication from clients, with poor communication strategies negatively impacting productivity and 'output' (Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021). Additionally, the unstable nature of gig economy teams may negatively impact the mechanisms of 'formal' and 'informal' knowledge transfer and information sharing strategies in these settings, resulting in poorer team cohesion (Lai and Yang 2017) and lower levels of leadership legitimacy (Schumacher et al. 2022).

2.3.1 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication and 'Knowledge Transfer'

In traditional employment environments, professionals typically use a wide range of communication strategies to navigate professional contexts. Whilst 'formal' communication is often favoured in

professional contexts, particularly where there are fixed horizontal and vertical management structures present (Stachova et al. 2017), other forms of 'informal' communication and flattened hierarchical management structures can result in a more efficient and relaxed working environment (Tenhiala and Salvador 2018). A unique form of 'informal' communication is 'workplace gossip', which represents a form of resistance to unequal power dynamics in the workplace (Fan and Dawson 2022). Despite some negative effects for workplace culture noted, 'gossip' is a common form of 'informal' communication in traditional office settings (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019). In online digital contexts, freelancers and gig workers may not have the same amount of inter-personal contact to facilitate these 'informal' interactions.

Additionally, where there are no fixed 'horizontal' or 'vertical' management structures, as may be the case for professional freelancers, and gig workers, this adds a level of complexity to reading the context for when it is appropriate to deploy 'formal' or 'informal' communication strategies, particularly when dealing with clients that have an existing workplace culture requiring a level of formality that is not known to the freelancer or gig worker. This may be a challenge to navigate due to variance in workplace cultures, with some organisations favouring a flattened management structure and a more relaxed 'informal' approach (Tenhiala and Salvador 2018). As such, chameleon-like adaption may be needed if a freelancer/gig worker is employed in a variety of settings in quick succession, presaging issues gig workers face with managing (and constantly redefining) a coherent, professional identity (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Bellesia et al. 2019).

Furthermore, deficits in 'formal' and 'informal' information sharing in traditional work contexts can have a negative impact on team cohesion (Lai and Yang 2017). Where there are well defined, stable management and team structures, 'formal' forms of information sharing (meetings, or in a written form on a traceable platform i.e. email) provide a valuable resource for collaboration and improving efficiency of a team (Lai and Yang 2017). However, in unstable, or more fluid team environments, 'informal' (off the record) forms of information sharing are dependent on the motivation of the team members to share their knowledge, and teams that are unstable, or fluid may hinder these processes leading to poorer team cohesion overall (Lai and Yang 2017).

2.3.2 The Mechanisms of 'Formal' and 'Informal' 'Knowledge Transfer' In Organisations and Institutions

In competitive workplace environments, or where businesses are co-operating or working together on a project, a difficult balance must be struck between sharing and protecting professional knowledge that may give competitors an advantage (Gast et al. 2019). These sorts of arrangements are commonly managed via 'formal' non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), dictating what can and

cannot be shared. However, this may undermine more organic informal 'off the record' interactions, reduce the overall level of 'formal' and 'informal' communication and could negatively impact inter-team cohesion (Lai and Yang 2017), leaving little room for typical 'informal' practices of office culture (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019).

Additionally, 'goal oriented' and productivity based external and (internal) reflective 'feedback' can serve as useful mechanisms to foster teamwork in the workplace, reinforce social norms and values, develop a shared workplace culture (Potosky et al. 2022) and help to develop stronger relationships (Jaffe 2019). In the context, of transient workers such as freelancers and gig workers, it is evident that these nuances may not be easy to digest, presenting challenges for integration into pre-established teams, that have their own sets of norms and values and 'formal' and 'informal' feedback systems. Additionally, for new business ventures without formal policies and procedures for consistent provision of feedback to team members, this could stymie development of a coherent workplace culture, especially in digital environments where most communication is likely to be short form and text based (Ludwig et al. 2022). In addition, there can often be resistance to change in organisations, where issues can be mitigated by a strategy of regular 'formal' and 'informal' communication, strong leadership and by reframing the working culture to the new expectations of the worker (Appelbaum et al. 2017).

2.3.3 Organisational Change Management

'Organisational change' can be like 'walking a tightrope' (Kulkarni et al. 2021), with 'change actors' navigating a complex web of processes, pre-existing power structures, and routines (Battilana and Casciaro 2013). It can also impact communication networks, where the power lies or the 'centrality' of actors in these networks (Maurer et al. 2023), can disrupt the 'norms' and 'values' of pre-established teams (Hirschhorn 2002; Coghlan 1994), impact learning and development in teams (Beech and MacIntosh 2017) or cause conflict between individual and organisational 'norms' and 'values' (Shoemaker et al. 2020). Success of initiatives is largely dependent on how employees make sense of 'top down' changes (Khan 2018) and how the transition (between old and new) is organised and managed (Crosby 1996). Interventions are bolstered by strong leadership and encouragement of practices supporting 'commitment to change' (Coghlan 1994) where 'innovation champions' can positively facilitate 'innovation' and 'organisational change'. In the case of innovation champions, 'actors' mediate between the formal hierarchical structures and 'teams', creatively using resources (and organisation), tactics of 'informal persuasion', coalition building (gaining support from within and between individual actors and teams) and acting as a buffer between hierarchical politics and 'creative' teams to promote organisational change (Shane 1994).

Despite several well-established methods for implementing organisational change, few businesses succeed in their attempts to change (Hirschhorn 2002; Coghlan 1994) with up to two thirds of structured interventions failing (Rodgers 2007; Rodgers 2010). In contrast to 'top down' strategies, 'organisational change' can also emerge from the 'bottom up', starting at the grassroots level or via coalitions formed between like-minded groups (Githens 2012). In these contexts, 'informal' and 'formal' groups (such as LGBTQ networks established by employees in companies) seek to build pressure on the upper echelons or 'decision making' actors to improve working conditions or rights in organisations (Githens 2012). Additionally, 'communities of practice' represent a similar type of organic dynamic present within and between organisations. These comprise self-organised groups where individuals (doing the same professional practices) learn from each other (Schulte et al. 2020). A need for change can also be impressed upon organisations from societal and political pressure, and new regulations and laws, for example through initiatives to increase gender representation in the workplace (Madsen 2019; Kulkarni et al. 2021) or changes occurring because of wider initiatives to rebalance socio-economic inequality that are mirrored from wider society in the workplace.

In addition, there are numerous reasons an organisation may seek to change its structure or culture, including: fast growth or expansion, pressures due to political, economic and market shifts (Hamilton-Hart and Wai-chun Yeung 2021; Deb et al. 2020, Makate et al. 2019); economic shocks such as the global pandemic where organisations had to quickly adapt and develop new routines and processes (Sonjit et al. 2021); or a general lack of alignment in relation to vision, values and the culture of an organisation (Campbell 2011). These issues are important to consider in the context of the 'changing nature of work' in the gig economy over the last decade (Vallas and Schor 2020; Malik et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Healy et al. 2020), and the increase in online (precarious) work (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Bajwa et al. 2018; Bodiroga-Vukobrat et al. 2018). Transient workforces are increasingly used as supplementary staff by larger organisations or 'shadow corporations' (Friedman 2014) and the extent to which these 'teams' impact the wider organisational structure and culture remains largely unexplored and unaccounted for by traditional work models.

Recent research suggests that there may be a number of challenges unique to remote working in regard to wellbeing and work life-balance. Remote or 'home working' project management 'organisational change' strategies (that became commonplace during the pandemic) create challenges for employees relative to traditional workplace settings. Employees work longer hours, have increased

stress levels, a lack of separation between home and work life (which can negatively impact both work and familial relationships), and suffer from greater levels of exhaustion and poorer mental health (Dacre et al. 2021; Glavin and Schieman 2022). Remote working (from home) can also present unique challenges for workers with children, where childcare duties can add complexity to work in these settings (Dacre et al. 2021).

Traditional models of organisational change suggest that 'change initiatives' can conflict with (pre-existing) team and group 'norms' and 'values', 'informal' and 'formal' group membership and 'workplace culture' (Coghlan 1994). Extant research tends to focus on 'face-to-face' teams and physical workspaces as demonstrated by Coghlan's (1994) model. It remains unclear how these processes function in 'virtual teams' or where organisations rely on remote or hybrid working cultures. In traditional workplace settings, attempts to change the structures that support these pre-established mechanisms can result in resistance to change, inter-team conflict, and opposition to change at an individual, team and wider organisational level (Coghlan 1994). Resistance to algorithmic control (in lieu of human resource management systems) on digital platforms is a common theme observed in digital gig worker settings (Walckirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022) and the extent to which these mechanisms relate to 'autonomy' and organisational change is a thought-provoking debate to consider in relation to the 'gig economy' and 'change management' literature.

Additionally, organisational change can involve processes of both 'informal' and 'formal' changes (Lindner 2003). 'Informal' changes can be characterised as changes that are implied and acted upon via the workplace culture (without a 'formal' 'rule' change), whereas 'formal' changes represent prescribed and structured changes to policy or the 'rules' of an organisation that employees are required to follow (Lindner 2003). Traditional models such as Coghlan (1994) and Lindner (2003) rely on outdated models of organisations that do not fully account for variables such as 'virtual teams', remote and hybrid working, the digital revolution of the last couple of decades, and the 'new normal of work' (Taylor 2017). Social interactions in workplaces can be viewed as an integral part of workplace culture that are mediated by shared workplace identities, competition and union membership, and variability in incentives to socialise (Lyttelton 2019). However, it is unclear how these are mediated in remote settings or where teams are operating in the digital realm of 'virtual teams'.

2.3.4 Organisational Change, 'Informal Coalition', and Workplace Culture

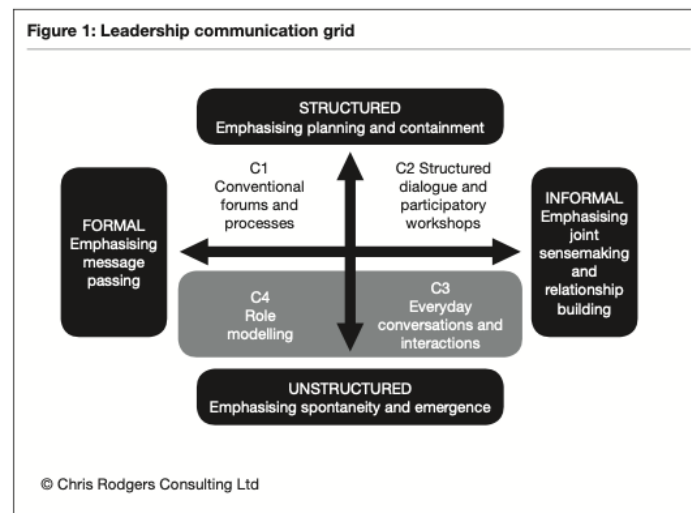
'Informal coalitions' are an understudied 'mechanism' of organisational change, representing the 'off the record', 'informal' interpersonal interactions and behaviours that can create meaning and provide context to relationships, inform the actions of 'actors' within organisations, and when these are not

aligned (in favour of the change), can frustrate change initiatives (Rodgers 2007; 2010). Siegmann and Schiphorst (2016) suggest that for freelancers, gig workers or individuals engaged in precarious work these 'coalitions' may improve bargaining power where there is conflict with organisational structures. Rodgers (2007; 2010) suggests that high failure rates for organisational change initiatives can in part be accounted for by these 'messy', 'informal', complex, social interactions and power dynamics that exist within organisational structures which are largely ignored or given only partial attention in traditional models. 'Coalitions' can also bind together disparate ('informal' and 'formal') groups to enact change from the grassroots level in organisations (Githens 2012) or to support 'top down' organisational change i.e. 'innovation champions' who use 'informal persuasion', building coalitions to strengthen innovation practices and organisational change (Shane 1994). Similarly, 'allies' act as peer to peer 'change agents' transmitting the organisational change message (horizontally) to peers, rather than (vertically) 'top down' from the traditional management or leadership hierarchical structures (Li et al. 2023).

Furthermore, Rodgers (2010) proposes a 'change leadership' strategy that focusses on five core characteristics: 'Reframing communication'; 'Thinking culturally'; 'Acting politically'; 'Embracing the paradox' and 'Providing a vision'. 'Reframing communication' involves a focus on 'informal' mechanisms of 'sense making' and 'building relationships' rather than 'formal' instructional information sharing. This strategy uses the natural channels of communication networks (and informal relationships) present in organisations as a medium to shift everyday discussion towards the organisational change objective to facilitate organisational change. 'Thinking culturally' suggests that 'patterns' emerge in the 'sense making' processes of 'actors' and that their perceptions of leadership can have an impact on the culture of an organisation. Successful 'change leaders' are able to reflect upon how their actions influence these 'sense making' processes and the emerging patterns in perceptions and how these factors contribute to workplace culture (Rodgers 2010). 'Acting politically' addresses the power dynamics involved in 'change leadership', with Rodgers (2010) suggesting that 'change leaders' should use their power 'ethically' to benefit the organisational objectives and to encourage changes that hold personal meaning for the individuals working at the organisation.

The fourth characteristic, 'Embracing the paradox' promotes leadership styles that embrace existing tensions rather than having an 'either' 'or' approach to change management. This allows natural dynamics (present in workplace culture) to 'inform' rather than 'frustrate' changes (Rodgers 2010). Finally, 'Providing a vision' proposes 'change leaders', in everyday actions, facilitate communication that allows individuals to make sense of the vision through natural communication channels. This limits challenges that arise from drastic reshaping of underlying dynamics present in the existing

culture (Rodgers 2010). The figure below shows Rodgers' (2010) Leadership Communication Grid. This visualises 'informal', and 'formal' communication strategies (in terms of how meaning is created to the 'actors') against the 'medium' of communication type (structured/unstructured) (see Figure 2-1, Rodgers 2010).



(Figure 2-1)
Leadership Communication Grid (Rodgers 2010)

2.3.5 Summary

It is evident that 'formal' and 'informal' communication strategies play an important role in managing teams effectively (Lai and Yang 2017), impacting the effectiveness of leadership approaches (Schumacher et al. 2022), enabling productive knowledge transfer (Gast et al. 2019), knowledge management (Ahmed et al. 2021) and information sharing practices (Lai and Yang 2017), constructing social norms and values, building strong professional relationships (Jaffe 2019) and developing a coherent work place culture (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019). Additionally, where organisations are 'changing', these processes are mediated, assisted (or hindered) by both horizontal (peer to peer) and vertical (top down and bottom up) communication networks and dynamics which include 'informal' interpersonal interactions, and 'informal coalitions', leadership styles and group dynamics (Rodgers 2007; 2010). These factors can impact pre-existing and emergent company culture (Rodgers 2007; 2010). Whilst there is evidence for how these mechanisms help to shape workplace culture in traditional (established) organisational settings, there is limited evidence relating to how these factors help or hinder professional freelancers, 'gig workers', remote workers or professionals engaged in new business development, or in SMEs where there are limited, or no 'formal' arrangements for knowledge sharing, information sharing, or where teams are in a constant state of flux, and hierarchical organisational structures are not well defined.

Section 2.4: Barriers and Enablers for Enterprises

Several barriers and enablers have been identified in extant literature that may provide a useful context for situating freelancers, gig workers, micro-business, entrepreneurship ventures, start-ups, SMEs and large firms within the wider literature relating to the offline and digital gig economy. These issues will be discussed in the following order: the types of entrepreneurial competencies necessary to meet the demands for 'the future of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021); uncovering common problems encountered by start-up enterprises (Hazudin et al. 2015); examining characteristics of organisational resilience in the context of digital entrepreneurs (Isensee et al. 2023) and entrepreneurship (Beknazarov et al. 2020); and subsequently, individual differences such as gender (Raghuvanshi et al. 2017), race (Lam et al. 2019), age (Sharma 2018), and the inequalities reproduced in these settings. Finally, Section 2.4.1 will discuss barriers and enablers faced by SMEs, micro-businesses, collaborative networks, freelancers and gig workers.

2.4.1 Barriers and Enablers for Micro-businesses, 'Start-ups', Entrepreneurs, and Enterprises

Given the fast-changing nature of technological advancements over the last decade, there has been a shift in workers' preferences for more autonomous, flexible, remote and digital or hybrid work environments (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016). Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) proposed that established SMEs and large enterprises must adapt their 'organisational culture', digitalisation, and leverage readily available technology for greater collaboration, and task automation to maximise available human resources, financial resources (Beknazarov et al. 2020) and mediate disruption to traditional marketplaces. Furthermore, adoption and integration of novel technologies (such as AR and VR) are useful strategies for SMEs and large enterprises aiming to keep pace with the digital revolution globally (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Such changes necessitate a reframing of 'demand' skills or competencies that workers must possess moving forward (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). However, these shifts in power dynamics globally have reinforced inequality around geographical distribution of buying and selling power (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Graham et al. 2017) and increased levels of age-related discrimination as older generations are perceived as being less able to adapt to these new trends in working practices (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021).

Notably, Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) contextualises the required competencies of employees of established SMEs and large firms in Germany and Lithuania, whose employees favoured concepts of individualisation, saw themselves as more like entrepreneurs and craved more engagement with

democratic processes of the organisations (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Kai et al. (2018), similarly found that entrepreneurial competencies are highly regarded by students. However, in the context of the 'gig economy', freelancers, micro-businesses (Fielden 2000; del Pilar et al. 2020; Portman-Smith and Harwood 2015) and (high skilled) professional 'gig workers' such as 'digital nomads' (Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017), 'architects and technologists', 'content creators' and 'crowd-workers' (Sutherland and Jarrahi 2017), are best positioned and have the most to gain from this shift relative to precarious forms of work (Vallas and Schor 2020) in digital contexts. Furthermore, they are well positioned to use their existing skills, or to further develop skill sets and competencies for 'digital transformation', by leveraging through entrepreneurial action. However, there is limited research exploring the competencies of this group of freelancers and gig workers, in relation to how they can successfully and proactively transition from 'gig work' into entrepreneurial organisations in these settings. Most research in this area currently focuses on 'platform cooperatives' (Bunders et al. 2022) and taxi-based 'gig economy' 'start-ups' (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016). Furthermore, 'start-up' enterprises entering the market recently, may be more adept at shaping their organisational culture as they are born into the digital transformation era, like 'born global' businesses of the last decade (Rodriguez-Serrano and Martin-Armario 2019; Aspelund et al. 2018).

Successful SMEs and large firms that are adaptable to economic uncertainties, are an important component of global economies (Borkova et al. 2019), show high levels of innovation in their fields (Huda and Rejito 2020), an increased engagement with big data and associated technologies (Polkowski et al. 2017), can be purely 'for profit' organisations, or social enterprises (Maiolini et al. 2016), and have a global significance which is on the rise (Ivanova 2017). Several issues were identified in literature in relation to barriers to entry such as costs associated with exports or internationalisation (Crick and Crick 2016; Castagna et al. 2020), high costs of branding, marketing strategies and human resource management (Widyastuti 2019). Individual differences such as gender, motivation, work-life, and family prioritisations (Hazudin et al. 2015; Sharma and Sharma 2020) should also be considered.

However, Isensee et al. (2023) identified several characteristics that lead to resilience in organisations, including, but not limited to: professionalisation, organisational culture, stakeholder collaboration, digital and financial competency, and unconventional leadership styles. These competencies align with the insights from Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) in relation to the need for a decentralised approach to SMEs and large firms that focus more on collaboration and less on traditional hierarchical management structures, giving more autonomy and agency to the employee to shape the organisational culture. As previously noted, individual differences such as gender (Hazudin et al. 2015; Raghuvanshi et al. 2017), race (Lam et al. 2019), age (Sharma 2018) and experience and knowledge,

investment, and design competencies (Landoni et al. 2016) represent dimensions that produce and reproduce inequalities in entrepreneurial settings.

Similar to freelancers, micro-businesses, 'gig workers', and members of 'collaborative networks' face challenges in relation to network forming and management, combining often disparate motivations and interests with regard to other team members, by effectively working as an 'actor' amongst a number of parties, each with their own organisational 'norms' and 'values' (Moazzez et al. 2020). Furthermore, collaborative networks that are not astute at making the most of their resources in terms of technological capabilities, research skills and collaborative organisation often do not fare well in these competitive marketplaces (Moazzez et al. 2020). Moazzez et al. (2020) proposed a model of collaboration characterised by a lack of cohesion between each 'actor', each with their own organisational identity, and hence struggling to construct an identity associated with the network as a whole (Moazzez et al. 2020). Awatara et al. (2018) also noted barriers in relation to motivation, available resources, and marketing strategies in relation to the 'success' of new startups. This has strong parallels with difficulties experienced by freelancers or independent contractors who typically move between different, disparate, and disconnected organisations (Vallas and Schor 2020).

2.4.2 Building Teams and Networks for Self-employed Freelancers, 'Gig Workers' and Enterprises

This section examines the extant research regarding how teams and networks are constructed and supported in the context of freelancers, gig workers, start-ups, and enterprises. Firstly, leadership strategies in traditional and digital contexts are discussed in relation to: leadership and online gig work (Fest et al. 2021); how discrimination and bias can create tension between diversity and 'shared leadership' (Xu et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021); how established SMEs and large firms navigate the challenges around digital transformation in hierarchical structures that operate from the 'top down' and the issues that can arise in these contexts (Schildt et al. 2023); together with the impact of leadership networking strategies (Chung et al. 2020). Finally, this section discusses enablers for collaboration and teamwork (Hurley and Shumway 2015); issues around team cohesion over time (McClurg et al. 2017), in family workplaces (Bizri et al. 2016) and as members of 'collaboration networks' (Tagliaro et al. 2022).

2.4.2.1 Leadership Strategies and Mechanisms of Team Formation

Collaboration and teamwork are vital components of the workplace (Hurley and Shumway 2015; Batenburg et al. 2013). However, the ways in which teamwork is enacted in digital and hybrid settings can present challenges for productivity (Fest et al. 2021). As workplaces have changed with digitalisation, and technological advancements (Vallas et al 2020), leadership strategies have had to adapt to find ways to motivate and manage workers in increasingly 'virtual' settings (Fest et al. 2021).

In the context of online gig work, Fest et al. (2021) found that inconsistent or poorly implemented 'non-goal orientated' charismatic leadership strategies had a negative impact on micro-task worker output. Furthermore, traditional methods of boosting worker productivity (monetary rewards) were not seen as a benefit to productivity. As such, it is evident that models of team building and leadership must adapt to fit digital, hybrid and offline contexts (Fest et al. 2021) being mindful of inclusivity and diversity of leadership styles (Xu et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021) and leadership networking strategies (Chung et al. 2020). For traditional enterprises, 'organisational secrecy' can result in reduced motivation and productivity (Schildt et al. 2023). This could be due to a breakdown in 'formal' and 'informal' knowledge exchange which can reduce team cohesion (Lai and Yang 2017) and lower levels of leadership legitimacy (Schumacher et al. 2022).

2.4.3 Summary

Shifts in employee attitudes to work, and fast paced technologically orientated economies have led to even established SMEs and large firms having to adapt their strategies to keep employees engaged, and to maintain an edge in the face of competition (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016). Implementing changes to company culture in established enterprises can represent a practical challenge and mean that long-standing practices need to be adjusted to match employee and consumer expectations of the digital era (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Consequently, this presents an opportunity for new business enterprises, which do not have a pre-established company culture, to leverage their skills to create 'born digital' enterprises. However, research suggests that team management, and building a cohesive team environment may be challenging (Fest et al. 2021) without strong organisational practices in place around leadership, knowledge exchange and a careful consideration of how workers can effectively and productively combine their competencies to structure 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies, knowledge transfer, and information sharing to support effective collaboration and cohesive teams (Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021).

Section 2.5: Literature Review Conclusion

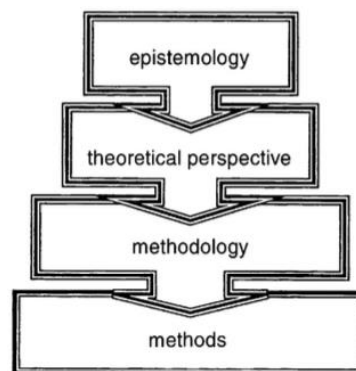
In conclusion, this literature review has provided an overview of the complexities around conceptualisation of the gig economy, the key characteristics of the 'gig economy' and explored the different types of offline and digital workers that operate within it. It has established the disjointed nature of the 'gig economy', evidencing challenges around the conceptual boundaries of the gig economy and how to conceptualise offline and digital 'gig workers' in the context of the wider

economy and in relation to communication, technology, and career and business development in these contexts. It has examined the role of 'informal' and 'formal' professional practices and communication channels for leadership, motivation, organisational culture construction and organisational growth (as a mechanism of business development for both self-employed and established enterprises). It has also considered the barriers and enablers for self-employed freelancers, 'gig workers' and enterprises (of varying size), and presented team building practices in these contexts to inform the debate in relation to how offline and digital freelancers and 'gig workers' fit in to the 'new world of work'. The following section provides an overview of the philosophy, methods, research aims and research questions.

Chapter 3: Methods

Section 3.1: Methods Introduction, Aim and Objectives

This chapter contextualises the methodological ‘decision making’ processes underpinning the hierarchical dimensions of research philosophy (see Figure 4-1). It justifies choices made, methodological limitations, and draws upon the ‘social researcher’s toolkit’ to frame issues (Bryman 2008). Traditional and current trends (work-place research and the ‘gig economy’) are discussed, before outlining the philosophical groundwork of the study (Benton and Craib 2011), and the methods, data collection and data analysis to meet the aim and objectives provided in Chapter 1 (and Section 3.3.2). The design of research can be viewed as hierarchical in nature, stemming from the methods upwards or the philosophy downwards (Crotty 2020) (Figure 3-1). However, the former is considered ‘poor practice’ (Benton and Craib 2011; Crotty 2020) leading to reduced credibility and rigour of results, and a lack of philosophical foundation when considering methodological choices (Cunliffe 2011). A researcher’s ‘ontological positioning’ or view of the ‘nature of reality’ (ontology) and the ‘purpose of knowledge’ (epistemology) are less flexible than methodological choices, which provide a stronger foundation for research.



(Figure 3-1)

Four Elements of Research that Inform the Next (Crotty 2020)

Section 3.2: Research Philosophy

3.2.1 General Principles

The ‘Philosophical toolkit’ (Benton and Craib 2011) suggests four sub-disciplines (within philosophy) can assist in formulating research methodology. These comprise: the nature of reality (ontology); the purpose of knowledge (epistemology); the logic of the argument; and the ‘value’ of the ‘role’ of the researcher (axiology). Traditionally, ontological debates fall into two groups ‘materialists’ and ‘idealists’ (‘subjectivists’ and ‘objectivists’ in contemporary social science), whose ‘ontological positions’ oppose each other (Benton and Craib 2011). The ‘objective’ viewpoint, predominant in the

natural sciences, considers the world and its 'truths' to exist independent of human consciousness and experience. In contrast, 'subjectivists' view reality as the product of the human mind (Holden and Lynch 2004). As such, researchers question the acceptability, validity, and legitimacy of knowledge (epistemology), and the effectiveness of research to document 'truths' within this 'ontological positioning'. The ontological viewpoint of 'materialists', historically utilised an epistemological stance of 'rationalism' in contrast to 'empiricism' (Benton and Craib 2011). Furthermore, the epistemological and ontological debate widened notably with the emergence of 'positivism' and 'sociology', attributed to French philosopher Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century (Halfpenny 2014).

'Positivism' developed alongside research into humanity, from the pre-scientific metaphysical stage, into the sciences. Anti-naturalism, or 'Interpretivism', emerged as an 'alternative tradition' widely attributed to Max Weber (Sayer 2000). Scientific acceptance of social anthropology emerged later, driven by authors such as Peter Winch (Winch 1964). Many contemporary authors, dispute the above dualisms, partly due to the 'role of the researcher' and issues such as 'subject' and 'object' agency (Cunliffe 2011). Ontological disputes may stem from 'regional' or 'special' ontology (Benton and Craib 2011), constituting ongoing 'ontological' debates within disciplines, each questioning the nature of reality within their own microcosm. Epistemological debates are continuous and changing, with some identifying 'Positivism', 'Realism' and 'Interpretivism' (Benton and Craib 2011) as dominant epistemologies, and others including 'Constructionism' as an epistemological stance (Crotty 2020).

3.2.2 Interpretivism and Phenomenological Perspectives and Applications to Workplace Settings

Opposing the 'positivist' ontological perspective, 'Interpretivism' is conceptually bound to 'reflexivity', rooted in the social sciences' (specific) inquiry of human subjects, societal structures, and the capacity of human subjects to 'self-reflect' and possess 'self-consciousness' of their position 'within', and influence 'upon' the world around them. These factors are examined through exploration of the meaning, language and 'reflective thought' underpinning communication and the relationships that exist between these social phenomena (Benton and Craib 2011). However, criticisms of 'Interpretivism' (and associated sub-divisions) relate to the separation of the researcher (in a role of investigator) from the participants (Walker and Dewar 2000). In contrast, 'Constructionism' provides a potential framework for examining the collaborative processes of 'knowledge creation' involving the researcher and participants' 'construction' of reality. This presents benefits for the processes of learning, skill acquisition and improvements for professional practice (of both the researcher and those in their field), which may be particularly relevant for factors such as 'workplace learning' (Walker and Dewar 2000; Anselmann 2022).

Phenomenological perspectives (viewed as complementary to 'Interpretivism'), focus on how meaning or 'sense making' processes impact the world they inhabit, and features of 'reality' that are not 'observable' or 'measurable' (Benton and Craib 2011). Rooted in the phenomenological perspective, 'rational choice theory' suggests people (and groups) balance 'the benefits' (positive or negative) to the actor(s) to mediate behaviour (Benton and Craib 2011). Phenomenology focuses on the 'typification' of patterns and similarities that individuals observe and synthesise to build (individual and shared meaning around) 'types' of people or groups that constitute 'taken for granted' or 'common sense' norms and values of the social world (Benton and Craib 2011).

3.2.3 Critical Realism and Applications to Workplace Settings

Due to the dualism and 'ontological' debates positioning 'Positivism' and 'Interpretivism' as the dominant philosophical approaches in the social sciences, 'critical realism' represents a controversial 'ontological position' in relation to its application (Benton and Craib 2011). The 'realist' perspective (rooted in Positivism and natural sciences) posits that there is a 'real world' that exists as a separate entity (independent) to individual (or group) belief about or understanding of it. From this ontological position, these 'real world-truths' can be uncovered, and knowledge about these phenomena can impact 'change' to the processes underlying these 'real world' contexts (Benton and Craib 2011). The critical realists' perspective provides an alternative to this dualism comprising 'extreme social constructionism' or 'extreme positivism', in relation to viewing the world as purely constructed or derived purely from 'quantitative data' (Brown 2014).

'Critical realism' promotes a 'common sense' approach to research that positions the researcher 'outside' of the phenomena, as an interrogator, independent to the research 'problem' under investigation. From this perspective, the role of the researcher is to 'discover' (or uncover) the independent 'social' and 'natural' structures relating to the investigation, delineating the mechanisms that underpin them (Brown 2014). 'Critical realists' perceive 'the nature of knowledge' defined in terms of 'transitive' (theories and science-based knowledge which are relatively fixed 'perceptions of reality') and 'intransitive' (the object of inquiry i.e. things that are physical or social, relatively fluid, and the mechanisms structuring these objects) knowledge with dimensions constituting 'layers' of reality ('the real', 'the actual' and the 'empirical') (McGhee and Grant 2017).

The 'role of the researcher' in 'critical realism' is important when discussing appropriate 'ontological positioning' in relation to the current inquiry. 'Critical realism' in opposition to 'social constructionism' and other interpretive disciplines sees the researcher as an (outsider) interrogator of the research 'problem' using 'judgemental rationality' to evaluate appropriate theories and converge on 'the truth' rooted in existing knowledge (Stutchbury 2022). However, whilst the use of the 'critical realist'

perspective represents a growing trend in organisational and employment relations literature, recent authors challenge its legitimacy as being overly 'reductionist', separating the component parts of employment relations to a distinct entity from wider economic or 'capitalist systems', and obscuring the refined localised and specific cases or viewing the phenomenon as a 'whole' entity (Brown 2014).

There has been a rise in 'critical realist' research in applied settings, including but not limited to marketing, business, education, and psychology (Price and Martin 2018). Additionally, a number of trends in the application of 'critical realism' in these contexts has established the prominence of features, such as, the importance of researchers remaining consistent and committed to their ontological positioning of phenomena existing independently from social constructions of reality about them; limiting their own biases whilst going beyond the 'facts' in analysis of the phenomenon; using 'judgemental rationality'; promoting cross-disciplinary research and knowledge bases; focussing on the relevance of 'structure' and 'agency' for mediating social structures and 'actors' within them; and acknowledging the role of researcher reflexivity as an important feature for resolving inconsistencies between the theoretical explanations and the observational (in practice) findings (Price and Martin 2018).

3.2.4 Social Constructionism and Applications to Workplace Settings

The aligning of philosophy to research methods provides a stable foundation, clarity and justifiability to the outcome of the research. Data gathering conducted without a thorough framework can result in 'grab-bag' style research (Crotty 2020), ill-received by the research community (Holden and Lynch 2004). The philosophical basis therefore tends to inform the research methods. The foundations of 'social constructionism' in workplace settings, developed by twentieth century organisational ethnographers such as Van Maanen (Cunliffe 2011), burgeoned (as 'social constructionism') within the last thirty years (Cunliffe 2008). The question of what it is to 'be' rather than to 'see' members of an organisation (Van Maanen 1979) links neatly to Berger and Luckman's (1966) influential work 'The Social Construction of Reality', seen as the birthplace of contemporary 'social constructionism'. It suggests that facts are social products, and knowledge is socially constructed. These principles are consistent with applied social research (Haas 2020), given that it is inquiry 'from the inside' rather than 'from the outside' (Iacono et al. 2009). In the context of the 'gig economy', this positioning aligns with Denzin and Lincoln's (1994) assertion that constructionist researchers are 'bricoleurs', similar to that of 'gig workers' (discussed in Chapter 2). 'Social constructionism' therefore permeates the literature presented in Chapter 2, including the role of the researcher as an insider to this 'jack of all trades' world (Crotty 2020) and the role of reflection and reflexivity within this research process.

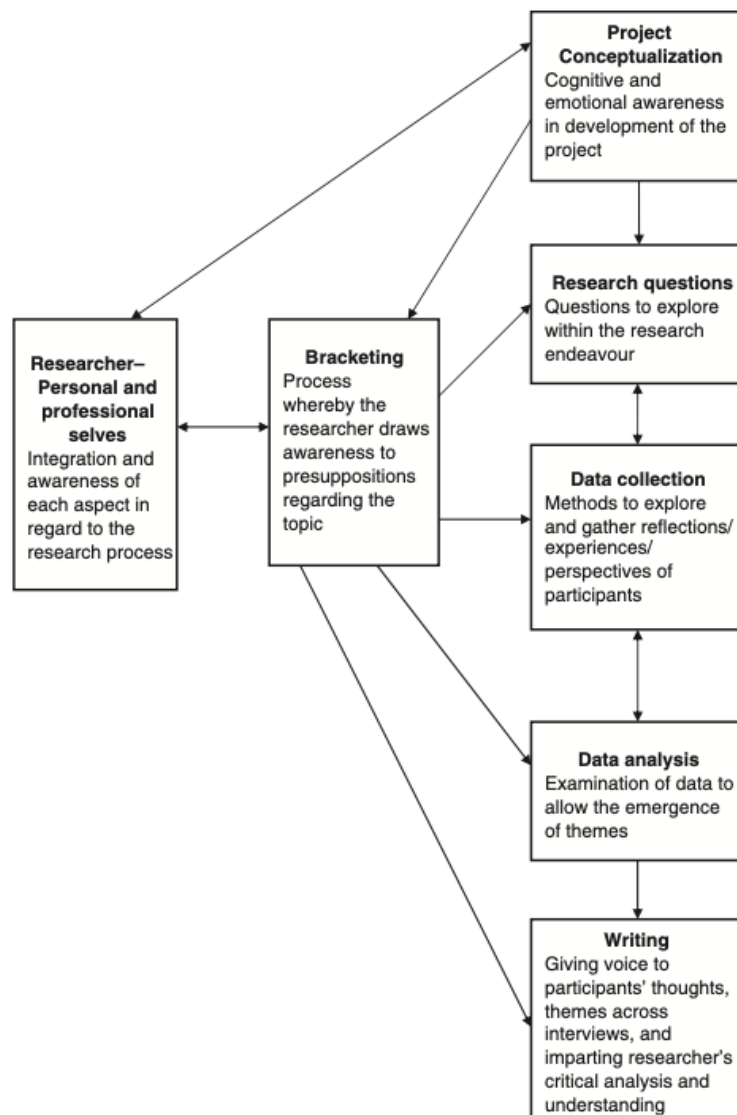
A key element that differentiates ‘social constructionism’ from (aligned) ‘Interpretivist’ perspectives is the assumption that language is not a by-product (or mirror) of ‘reality’ but actively constructs it (Airo 2021). In the context of extant literature reviewed for this thesis, there is a prevailing discourse and lack of consensus around what constitutes the ‘gig economy’ (or the ‘new world of work’) (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Watson et al. 2021; Morales-Perez et al. 2022), with more recent literature examining the interpersonal, individual and socio-economic characteristics of the ‘platform’ or ‘gig economy’, suggesting these mechanisms are important for understanding the phenomenon (Morales-Perez et al. 2022). ‘Social constructionism’ provides a useful framework or philosophical lens to examine how communication strategies and technology, utilised in digital and offline ‘gig economy’ settings (and the power that lies within these interactions) impact how the ‘gig economy’ is constructed by its participants and how this influences ‘organisational change’, and mechanisms of career and business development relative to the ‘gig economy’ and wider world of work.

Communication strategies deployed in these contexts are particularly important in relation to digital and offline ‘gig work’, such as in leadership contexts (Schumacher et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021); ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication channels for managing teams (Lai and Yang 2017); building relationships (Jaffe 2019); developing workplace culture (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019); and building ‘coalitions’ (Githens 2012; Rodgers 2007; 2010; Shane 1994). It is also of note that ‘social constructionism’ has not been widely deployed as a philosophical or theoretical framework for ‘workplace’ management research or in the context of workplaces bound to ‘socially constructed spaces’ such as traditional work environments (i.e. offices), with little consideration in extant literature of how these principles apply to the contexts of freelancers, remote workers, and digital gig workers’ communications or how the ‘framing’ of ‘the work-place’ plays out in the boundaries of the digital realm and new world of work.

3.2.5 Philosophical Self-reflection and Reflexivity

As highlighted in Section 3.2.4, ‘social constructionism’ emerged due to prior work in cultural anthropology, and importantly, from research into workplace settings (organisational ethnography). Since cultural anthropology has traditionally focussed upon unfamiliar societies (Iacono et al. 2009), organisational ethnography may have a research focus more familiar to the researcher, even if the subject of the research may be considered a ‘niche’ or isolated society in themselves (Moeran 2009; Van Maanen 1979). This is particularly problematic in applied social research and could lead to

researcher immersion (Reilly 2017) that may cast the validity and methodological rigour into question (Patnaik 2013). These research integrity challenges have caused much debate and concern within the 'unconventional' research community (Cunliffe 2003). However, Moeran (2009) called it a 'qualitative leap', Reilly (2017) described the embodiment of the sensations of the participants as a significant benefit and, Van Maanen (1979) highlighted the importance of 'being' as opposed to 'seeing' the community in focus (Section 3.2.4). These epistemological and axiological issues of the researcher being both the 'instrument for analysis' (Starks and Trinidad 2007) and a member of the community in question can be dealt with in many ways to negate preconceived influences when the data is gathered, synthesised, and reported. One of the widely utilised techniques is that of 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012).



(Figure 3-2)

Bracketing in Qualitative Methodology (Source: Tufford and Newman 2012)

Described as a self-reflective process of setting aside a priori knowledge, assumptions, and bias (Starks and Trinidad 2007), 'bracketing' may also help the researcher to 'sort out' what 'is', and 'is not', influenced by the researcher's experience of the phenomenon (Drew 2004). This important stage of the research process is shown above in Figure 3-2. The route of the orthodox research process would likely lead from the 'researcher awareness' stage to the 'writing' stage in a relatively linear fashion. However, when the researcher has intimate knowledge (or at least pre-conceived knowledge) of the community in question, a further stage should be included to 'bracket' the researcher's presuppositions regarding the topic. This stage can be prior to data collection in the form of reflection (Tufford and Newman 2012), or continuously throughout in the form of reflexivity (Cunliffe 2003;2004). Shufutinsky (2020) proposes the 'use-of-self', in the form of self-reflection, provides transparency, giving the reader the opportunity to scrutinise the researcher and the research process. This 'auto-ethnography' is deemed to be of particular importance when the researcher is in some way linked to the research community (Creswell 2013; Shufutinsky 2020). As Tufford and Newman (2012, p.14-15) suggest, "'bracketing' can support social science researchers in stretching beyond the constraints of egocentrism and ethnocentrism to facilitate innovation and renewed insights into the pressing social phenomena of our time".

Section 3.3: Methods and Research Design

3.3.1 Key Informant Interview Methodology (Utilisation of Data Sets) and Selection of Methods

The following section transitions from the philosophical considerations (ontology, epistemology, and axiology) of the thesis, in line with good practice guidelines for research design (Creswell et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Benton and Craib 2011), to addressing the justification for and selection of an 'appropriate' methodology. Creswell et al. (2007), provides a useful framework for conceptualising appropriate methodological approaches that align with research philosophy and how the research or inquiry questions are framed or interpreted by the methodology selected (see Figure 3-3). This suggests that the philosophical perspectives and methodology directly influence the 'how', 'why', 'what', 'where' and 'when' dimensions of the research topic (Creswell 2013). As the current research is rooted in the 'social constructionist' perspective these 'framing' dimensions of the current study were carefully considered. The 'key informant interview' approach was identified as 'appropriate' for addressing the research aim and objectives, and research questions. Key informant interviews are a vital part of qualitative research (Lokot 2021), they were originally prominent in cultural anthropology, and are commonly used in Social Science settings (i.e. Sociology, Psychology and medical settings). The method is particularly suitable for policy-focused research (Lokot 2021), applied settings or where there are elements of 'development activities', involving 'identification, planning, implementation and evaluation' (Akhter 2022). Key to this study, they are also useful for: decision making tasks;

understanding perspectives (of participants); planning interventions; identifying motivations and attitudes of a target population; and identifying ‘urgent’ issues in a community by experts. Additionally, Key informant interviews are in depth interviews that capture rich, in-depth detail including the perspectives, experiences, and beliefs of participants (Akhter 2022). Figure 3-3 outlines how the type of knowledge generated are impacted by different methodological research designs, using an applied social research example relating to counsellors (Creswell et al. 2007). This is a useful framework through which to ‘test’ the assumptions of each model in relation to the current investigation, in an applied professional workplace setting.

TABLE 1: Types of Research Questions, Qualitative Designs, and Illustrative Test Interpretation (TI) Examples

<i>Type of Research Question</i>	<i>Qualitative Design</i>	<i>Illustration of Questions Within TI Context</i>
Chronological/story-oriented questions: Questions about the life experiences of an individual and how they unfold over time	Narrative research	What stories does a client tell us about the T1 process?
In-depth, descriptive questions: Questions about developing an in-depth understanding about how different cases provide insight into an issue or a unique case	Case study	How do four counselors share problem-focused or potentially “hard-to-hear” test results with clients?
Process questions: Questions about experiences over time or changes that have stages and phases	Grounded theory	What theory best explains the therapeutic effects of TI?
Essence questions: Questions about what is at the essence that all persons experience about a phenomenon	Phenomenology	What does <i>timing</i> mean to counselors who regularly share test results with clients?
Community action questions: Questions about how changes occur in a community	Participatory action research	How do community mental health centers better optimize their use of psychological tests in day-to-day practice?

SOURCE: Adapted from Morse and Field (1995, p. 25).

NOTE: TI = test interpretation.

(Figure 3-3)

Research Question, Qualitative Designs and Context Interpretation (Creswell et al. 2007)

Additionally, the use of ‘triangulation’ of methods and data sources can represent an important feature for measures of validity. ‘Triangulation’ can encompass: ‘investigator triangulation’; data and source triangulation; triangulation of methods; or theory triangulation (Carter et al. 2014). Several

components of research design are deemed to be important for conducting successful key informant interviews, namely these are: Reviewing existing data; selecting target population and key informants; preparation of an interview tool (i.e. interview guide); structured documentation method; compiling and organisation of data (Akhter 2022). Additionally, Akhter (2022) suggests that 'action researchers' must carefully consider the 'nature of participants', and their motivations in the research process and 'prepare the 'field' or 'scene' (Aguilera and Amuchástegui 2014), whilst acknowledging the power dynamics between researcher and 'expert' (Lokot 2021). As such, the following section outlines the justification for the selection of key informants for the study.

3.3.1.1 Selection of Key Informants

Akhter (2022) suggests several stages as important for the selection of 'key informants', namely these are: 1) Appropriate selection of groups from which key informants are drawn; 2) Key informants may represent experts on aspects of 'community' of the selected group, or privileged knowledge; 3) Informants must be willing, knowledgeable, credible, impartial and be representative. As such, two settings were identified as appropriate from which to draw the key informants: Setting 1- A large firm that has contracted freelancers and gig workers and operates in an industry (the construction industry) where this is commonplace; and Setting 2: - A selection of self-employed freelancers and gig workers working in 'gig economy' contexts. Selection of key informants from these specific settings provides data that represents an established organisation that may have relatively formalised organisational structure, compared with self-employed freelancers, and gig workers, who may have less formalised unstructured work environments.

The juxtaposition of these groups may also provide useful comparisons for findings in relation to the broader research questions to illuminate some of the unique challenges and opportunities around communication, digitalisation of workplace practices, novel use of technology and debates regarding the conceptual clarity of the gig economy as a concept (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020), in contrast to conceptualisations of 'the future of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017). The selection of key informants across different levels or responsibility within the organisation in setting 1, and individuals with different levels of success and experience working as freelancers and gig workers (setting 2), alongside examining aspects of organisational change, and change leadership strategies (Rodgers 2007; 2010). This may provide in depth data that can help to establish how these factors impact pathways to business development, with a focus on the framework of 'layered careers' (Reilly 2017) for self-employed freelancers, gig workers and enterprises at different stages in their development. However, whilst key informant interviews are generally regarded as being flexible and

enabling quality exploratory research (over a short period of time), quantifications and generalisability must be approached modestly (Akhter 2022).

3.3.1.2 Units of Analysis: Key Informant Interviews, Rationale for Selection of Key Informants, and Inclusion of Data Sets

‘Key informant interview’ methodology was identified as appropriate for the study, with ‘key informants’ selected across two distinct settings, including: Members of a large firm (that has contracted freelancers and gig workers and operates in the construction industry where this is commonplace); and a selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers (in gig economy contexts). The findings of the key informant interviews are presented in the enquiry as in-depth qualitative data sets (Data Set 1 and 2). These data sets include thematic analysis of data gathered from multiple sources including in depth semi-structured (transcribed) interviews with participants across the data sets, reflective observations (in the form of a bracketing chapter) and analysis of policy and procedure documents (Data Set 1- a large firm that has contracted gig workers and operates in an industry where this is commonplace). Qualitative data sets (particularly large data sets) typically encompass multiple research questions and must be framed in their analysis. They provide the flexibility and rigour to tackle delineating the boundaries of the analysis and approach the same qualitative data from numerous angles in relation to the core aims of the research (Namey et al. 2008; Zahle 2021; Saldana 2015).

3.3.2 Introduction to the Structure of the Research: Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

The semi-systematic literature review (Chapter 2) established key gaps in literature regarding: conceptual boundaries of the gig economy (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020); definitions of the ‘gig economy’ (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016); the entrepreneurial intentions of ‘gig workers’ (Lahm 2020); and how self-employed freelancer, gig workers and enterprises emerge from the ‘gig economy’ (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016). In addition to how this intersects with pathways to business development for freelancers and ‘gig workers’ as they develop ‘layered’ careers (Reilly 2017) and adapt to challenges as the business grows. ‘Organisational change’ management literature was also reviewed (as a means of framing pathways to business development and ‘the future of work’ in established organisations) including but not limited to: ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication strategies (Fest et al. 2021; Anwar and Graham 2020; Ludwig et al. 2022), how knowledge exchange occurs (Barlage et al. 2019); and how organisations, individuals and teams combine their capacities relative to the ‘changing nature of work’ (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). The research aim and objectives are restated below in line with the key

gaps in the literature identified in the previous Chapters that inform the research questions. Figure 3-4 restates the research objectives and research questions:

The aim of this thesis is to examine how enterprises emerge from the 'gig economy', including pathways from freelancing to business development. In addition to how enterprises navigate challenges and opportunities and develop cohesive teams and networks. This is examined from a 'social constructionist' perspective, with a particular focus on evaluating communication strategies, technology use, digitalisation of workplace practices and routes to business development in each setting. The thesis utilises key informant interview methodology, across two distinct settings where 'key informants' were identified (established organisation versus freelancing and gig work settings), with findings presented as two data sets.

Research Objectives:

- To explore how businesses emerge as cohesive entities from the 'gig economy', including pathways from freelancing to business development. In addition to how new and established organisations adapt to the 'changing nature of work' in the 'digital era'. This takes a particular focus on communication strategies, use of technology and digitalisation of workplace practices.
- To explore the experiences of business leaders, workers, and the barriers and enablers of operating in the 'gig economy' versus 'traditional economy' settings (acknowledging the role of technology and digitalisation of workplace practices).
- To explore experiences of and differences in approaches used by self-employed freelancers, gig workers as compared to employees and leaders of a large firm to evaluate interpersonal relationships ('informal' and 'formal' communication strategies) in teams, networking styles and use of online/traditional networking and leadership approaches.

Research Questions:

- How do freelancers, 'gig workers', and enterprises emerge from the 'gig economy', adapt to the 'changing nature of work'? What 'informal' and 'formal' business practices and communication channels shape these enterprises?
- What helps or hinders the development (and change) of these enterprises?
- How do individuals and teams find ways to successfully combine their capacities, competencies, and commitment in these enterprises?

(Figure 3-4)

Restating the Research Objectives and Research Questions

The structure of the research is thus divided into three core sections: 1) The first section (Chapter 2) comprises a semi-systematic literature review of relevant academic literature in line with the research aims and objectives; 2) Section 2 (Chapter 4) encompasses a critical, reflective review of the

researcher's involvement in the 'gig economy' and gives an account of the author's prior relationship with organisations and their associates, prior to undertaking the field work for the key informant interviews. The reflective Chapter represents a form of 'bracketing' which adds validity and rigour to the inquiry (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012). Personal and professional emails and communications received by the author, whilst acting as an associate of large firm (member of Data Set 1) are reflected upon together with communications received by the author working in the gig economy in self-employed freelancer settings (Data Set 2). These interactions are fully anonymised and used for the purpose of preliminary thematic analysis, with the aim of drawing out key themes and providing a reflective framework for the development of semi-structured interview questions in Section 3, in line with the literature. 3) Section 3 comprises the field work for the key informant interviews (data sets), prior to moving on to the Findings, Discussion and Conclusions Chapters.

Section 3.4: Methodology

3.4.1 Methods

The current research is situated in the 'social constructionist' perspective, utilising key informant interview methodology and qualitative data sets. These philosophical and methodological approaches were deemed appropriate utilising the 'researchers toolkit' (Bryman 2008), in line with 'good practice' guidelines for research design (Creswell et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Benton and Craib 2011) and carefully considering the importance of incorporating 'triangulation of methods' (Carter et al. 2014) and 'bracketing' in the form of reflection and reflexivity (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012). This process sets aside 'a priori' knowledge and biases of the researcher (Starks and Trinidad 2007) and is incorporated in the thesis in a reflective chapter written prior to the commencement of field work (Chapter 4). In addition, professional communication and email interactions were thematically analysed providing a reflective framework for development of semi-structured interview questions with participants (in relation to Data Sets 1 and 2), relative to the academic literature reviewed.

Key informant interviews were embarked upon in two distinct settings (established large firm and freelancing environments associated with the gig economy). The first setting is represented by Data Set 1- a large firm that has contracted freelancers and gig workers and operates in an industry (the construction industry) where this is commonplace, it includes in depth semi-structured interviews with team members of a large firm (including graduate scheme employees, HR representatives, freelancers, contractors, and directors of the company). The second setting (Data Set 2) – encompasses a selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers (spanning freelancing environments, 'online' and 'offline' 'gig economy'). This incorporates semi-structured interviews with

self-employed freelancers and gig workers (a group of self-employed freelancers and 'gig workers' - Data Set 2A; and a new business partnership/'Start-up'- Data Set 2B). All data was recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed and stored in accordance with ethical guidelines. A research diary and field notes were used over the course of the field work, in addition to analysis of internal documentation (where accessible to the researcher).

The organisation that represents Data Set 1 is a well-established large firm that has contracted freelancers and gig workers and operates in the construction industry where this is commonplace, it 'bids' for jobs in a competitive marketplace against 'high profile' companies and can be viewed as a 'disruptive innovator' (Mahto et al. 2020) in its field. Multiple semi-structured interviews (13 Interviews: Data Set 1) were conducted at different levels of the organisation (from director, HR departments, through to the graduate scheme team members). Where not publicly available (e.g., on company webpages), requests were made for additional documents i.e. company codes of conduct and hiring policies to build in-depth descriptions of the case (Creswell et al. 2007). A request was also made to shadow (for a limited period of one to two days) a member of the upper management team at the organisation representing Data Set 1, to observe patterns of relationships within the organisation (formal, informal, and vertical, horizontal) physical (or digital) workplace settings. However, the high workload of staff (Data Set 1) meant this was not feasible within the timeframe available for field work. Semi-structured interviews (7 interviews, Data Set 2) were conducted for the gig economy setting and additional documentation was provided at the discretion of participants. All interview data was transcribed and thematically analysed by the researcher. Participants were recruited using opportunity sampling (contacting participants from the researcher's 'professional network' or via senior 'gatekeepers' over whom I have no coercive influence). Given the complex and contested nature of conceptual boundaries of the gig economy (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020), it was deemed important to include workers in representations of the gig economy that were characterised by both online and offline gig economy work (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020).

3.4.2 Instruments

The instruments used for the thesis inquiry incorporated methods of 'triangulation', which strengthens validity of qualitative inquiry (Carter et al. 2014). The methods and primary sources of data collection are outlined in Figure 3-5 and expanded upon in the following section.

Methods utilised and Sources of Data collection

- Semi-systematic literature review methodology, commonly used in social science settings (Zunder 2021; Bryman 2021; Bruce 1994; Coghlan and Coughlan 2018) and deemed to provide transparency
-

(and replicate-ability) to the 'scoping stage' and a 'plurality of knowing' (Zunder 2021; Coughlan and Coughlan 2018) formed by the narrative stage of the literature review.

- 'Reflection', 'reflexivity' and 'bracketing' outlining the researcher's a priori experiences in the 'gig economy', and with some of the key informants. This was included in the form of a self-reflective (bracketing) Chapter (Chapter 4) 'separating' out the biases and pre-existing knowledge or assumptions of the researcher.
 - An analysis of historic communications with (associates of and) the key informants was undertaken, providing a 'reflective framework' to add further validity to research (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012).
 - Key informant interview methodology was identified as appropriate for the study inquiry and utilised after engagement with the 'researcher toolkit' (Bryman 2008) and 'best practice' guidance on research design (Creswell et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Benton and Craib 2011).
-

(Figure 3-5)

Methods and Sources of Data Collection

The data sets (including data from the key informant interviews) incorporated the use of 'semi-structured' interviews (See Appendix AA-ZZ for extracts from the interviews relative to themes), promoting the gathering of rich, complex data in relation to participants' experiences (Costley et al. 2010; Farquhar et al. 2020) and broadening 'the scope' of research (Farquhar et al. 2020). Field notes, and a researcher diary were also deemed to be important regarding reflexivity and rigour (Costley et al. 2010). Thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews was conducted in line with 'best practice' recommendations from relevant academic literature and themes derived from this data were used to directly address the research questions (Terry et al. 2017; Saldana 2015; Mason 2018). Qualitative data sets provide flexibility and rigour delineating the boundaries of the analysis and approach the same qualitative data from numerous angles in relation to the core aims of the research (Namey et al. 2008; Zahle 2021; Saldana 2015).

3.4.3 Participants

The current inquiry was conducted between 31/10/2022 and 30/01/2024. For stage one and two of the research design: the semi-systematic literature review (Chapter 2) and the reflective review (Chapter 4), the researcher (I) was the only participant. Semi-structured interview participants (key informants) were recruited via opportunity sampling, utilising available professional networks (or gatekeepers to networks accessed via professional contacts). The selection criteria (identification of key informants) centred around accessing participants across two distinct settings (an established organisation and gig economy settings). As such, the inclusion criteria stated that participants must be over 18 and working within an established business or large firm (preferably associated with, or having experience of freelancing, or 'gig economy' practices-Data Set 1), or working as a freelancer, or gig worker in offline or online gig economy settings (Data Set 2). Twenty interviews (Data Set 1,

n=13; Data Set 2, n= 7 (Data Set 2A, n=5; Data Set 2B, n=2) were conducted. There was a wide age range for participants (between 23 and 65 years old) and a relatively even split of genders across Data Set 1 (men, n= 7; women, n= 6) but more men than women for Data Set 2 (men, n=5; women, n=2). Interviews were conducted on the telephone, online, on Teams or face-to-face at a place of work (at a mutually agreed time, notified in advance). There were no incentives or compensation (financial or otherwise) for participation in this study. Participants were emailed an information sheet (see Appendix M) and a participant consent form (see Appendix N) via a Microsoft word document, at least a week in advance of participation and given an opportunity to ask questions before commencement of the interview, so participants could consider their decision. The participant consent form was signed and dated by participants before commencement of any interviews, observations, or document analysis were undertaken.

3.4.4 Ethics

This project was approved and deemed to meet the ethical requirements by the General University Ethics Panel at the University of Stirling (see Appendix P). All ethical requirements were carefully considered regarding how they relate to human participants and the specific components associated to the current inquiry. Participants were interviewed at a time and place that worked best for them. Interviews (including online interviews) were conducted in a private space, where they could not be overheard by others to protect their privacy. Participants were provided with an information sheet (see Appendix M) and had an opportunity to ask questions before recording their consent using the consent form (see Appendix N). They were assured of confidentiality, provided they did not disclose reportable or illegal activities. All interviews were recoded with participants' consent and transcribed and anonymised by the researcher. Anonymity was protected as far as possible, although participants were reminded that they may be identifiable from the stories they tell. Interviews and documentation (where not publicly available) were securely stored on university secure storage (SharePoint). In addition, any meetings held on Teams or other video conferencing software platforms were password protected to reduce the likelihood of hacking or any third parties having access to the interviews. Participants were notified that a copy of the final submission could be viewed by participants by making an email request to the author.

3.4.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved a critical reflective review and thematic analysis of 1) Involvement professionally with members of the data sets, self-reflection of a priori personal 'gig work' experience and any professional association to the key informants (across Data Sets 1 and 2B), representing 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012); 2) Historic personal and professional

emails relating to the key informants (Data Sets 1 and 2B); 3) Field notes and 4) A research diary produced in the context of the study. Thematic and discourse analysis of semi-structured interviews (Data Sets 1 and 2) were conducted to provide detailed accounts that add value to the scope of qualitative research (Costley et al. 2010; Creswell et al. 2007; Yin 2018). Thematic analysis of additional documentation provided by participants and interview data was transcribed by the researcher and participants were assigned a participant number. Thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews and additional documentation was conducted in line with 'good practice' guidelines, drawn from academic literature (Terry et al. 2017; Saldana, 2015; Mason 2018) and used to build and analyse the data sets and address the research questions. Any personal/confidential information (including audio recordings) was stored separately from the transcribed data on the University's secure storage (SharePoint). Data will be kept for the duration of the project, until the award is made for this project, and then will be securely destroyed.

3.4.6 Limitations

Every effort has been made to build in components of 'best practices' around: semi-systematic literature methodology (Zunder 2021; Coghlan and Coughlan 2018); determining 'philosophical positioning' (Bryman 2008) and research design (Creswell et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Benton and Craib 2011). In addition to the 'validity', and 'rigour' of the current inquiry when considering 'triangulation of methods' (Carter et al. 2014), key informant interview methodology (Akhter 2022), the utilisation of qualitative data sets (Namey et al. 2008; Zahle 2021; Saldana 2015), 'bracketing' and researcher reflection and reflexivity (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012). However, it is notable that this research may be limited (to some extent) in relation to its generalisability to wider populations. Although key informant interviews are generally regarded as being flexible and enabling quality exploratory research involving collection of in-depth data, quantifications and generalisability must be approached modestly in these contexts (Akhter 2022).

Section 3.5: Conclusion of Methods Chapter

This Chapter provided an overview and critical analysis of the 'philosophical' and methodological assumptions and underpinnings of the current study. It utilised the 'researcher's toolkit' (Bryman 2008) and 'best practice' guidance (Benton and Craib 2011; Crotty 2020) to determine the appropriate philosophical lens for the study ('social constructionism') via an analysis of historical and contemporary philosophical perspectives more generally and in relation to their application to workplace settings. The perspectives addressed were: Interpretivism, phenomenological perspectives; critical realism; and 'social constructionism'. These perspectives were evaluated in relation to how they can address questions that arise from extant literature in relation to the current

inquiry. Also discussed was the role of the researcher (axiology) in relation to the philosophical and methodological considerations and research (Benton and Craib 2011; Crotty 2020) and 'validity' in terms of 'bracketing', reflexivity, and reflection (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012). Finally presented were the research aim and objectives; research questions; the structure of the research; the methodology (key informant interview methodology); the rationale for selecting key informants spanning two distinct settings (established organisation versus gig economy setting) and the inclusion of data sets; the instruments for data collection; recruitment and ethical consideration in relation to the participants; the methods utilised for data analysis; before addressing the limitations of the research.

Chapter 4: Relationship with the Participants of the Data Sets and 'Gig Work' - Reflective Account

Section 4.1: Introduction to the Reflective Review

Experiential accounts of the researcher, in the form of reflection (Lynch 2000) or reflexivity (Cunliffe 2004; 2016; Berger 2015) have a long history in anthropological studies, where the researcher is often positioned as a 'participant observer' and/or 'reflective practitioner' (Iacono et al. 2009). Reflective accounts of the researcher are of particular importance when exploring workplace practices (Moeran 2009) and can be viewed as important components of quality control in qualitative research, situating the researcher's personal, political, and professional beliefs within the wider context of the research (Berger 2015). This chapter provides a reflective account and critical questioning of my experiences in the 'gig economy' relative to the research area in the form of 'Philosophical self-reflection' (Lynch 2000) and 'Bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012).

The following sections involve introspection that draw upon my own experiences of running a small business and working in the gig economy. It outlines my professional relationship with the businesses that represent the data sets (or identify access sought via gatekeepers or contacts from my professional network in the case of the organisation that represents Data Set 1) and provides a 'self-critical' examination of beliefs and assumptions relative to the research context (Lynch 2000). As such, this chapter comprises a reflective account of personal experience running a business and working as a freelancer and 'gig worker' in 'the gig economy' over the past few years. It explores personal perceptions of the barriers and enablers for working, and networking in the gig economy, including the ('informal' and 'formal') communication strategies personally used that have helped or hindered building a cohesive workplace culture. It is hoped that this form of bracketing subjective experiences regarding the gig economy, may assist in examination of how personal beliefs and assumptions are situated in the context of the current study and the development of semi-structured interview questions (See Appendix O for the interview questions/interview guide utilised for the interviews), alongside the literature presented in Section 2.1.

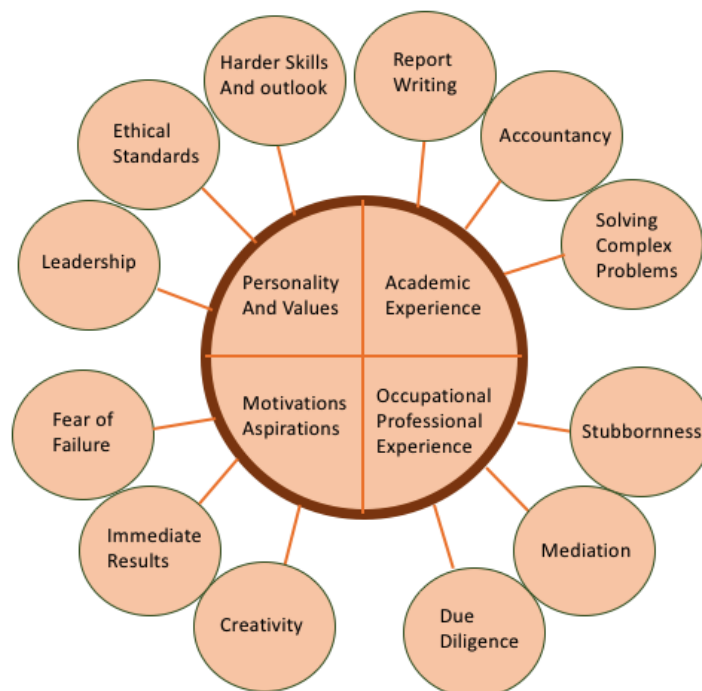
Section 4.2: Background to My Business Partnership and 'Combining Competencies in Teams'

Whilst working on my Professional Practice Report in 2020, an assessment was undertaken of the 'gig work' of my business partnership which was at the time chaotic and required a more coherent and stable business model and strategy. The strengths and weaknesses of this business partnership were self-assessed in four areas: values; academic experience; professional experience; and aspirations. My own results are shown in Figure 4-1, my business partner's in Figure 4-2. As our business had no formal hierarchy (vertical management structure), identifying, visualising, and combining our 'shared competencies' helped to evaluate how the partnership could structure the business more effectively

and examine the potential selling points of our business offering. This is shown in Figure 4-3, with the blue bubbles being my strengths, the orange that of my business partner, and the green being overlapping strengths (or ‘shared competencies’).



(Figure 4-1)
My Professional 'Makeup' Revisited



(Figure 4-2)
My Business Partner's Professional 'Makeup' Revisited



(Figure 4-3)
My Partnership's Professional 'Makeup' Revisited

There are parallels that can be drawn between my own subjective experiences of the gig economy noted above and the literature identified in Section 2.1. Most prominently, the notion that freelancers, gig workers and traditional employees share certain attributes driven by increased 'digitalisation' of work practices, with more autonomous, flattened hierarchical organisations deemed to be desirable for 'modern workers' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Reflection on these 'shared competencies' may be useful in order to frame semi-structured interview questions around how organisations, freelancers, gig workers and partnerships 'combine competencies' to structure their teams, relative to the findings of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021). My partnership has since worked on numerous projects or 'gigs' including with a board member of a large firm (Section 4.3), with a small digital agency (Section 4.4), with universities and on a new business venture which will be briefly explored in Section 4.5.

Section 4.3: Work with a Board Member of the Organisation Representing Data Set 1

4.3.1 Profile of Data Set 1

The organisation representing Data Set 1 is a large firm formed in 2002. In the 21 years since its formation, this business has grown from a small team to over 300 active employees, and an annual turnover exceeding £100 million. It has offices in the North East of England, London and Glasgow, and a UK based factory. The company is forecast for significant growth and has recently broken through the SME barrier to become a large business model. This business has an owner; a Board of Directors;

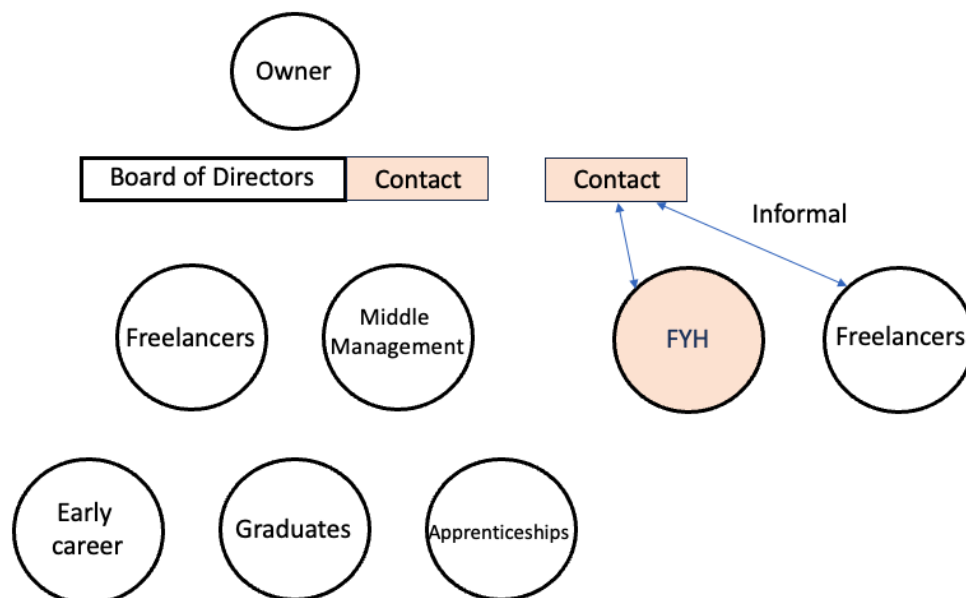
a middle-management structure; a graduate recruitment scheme; apprenticeships and early career workers.

4.3.2 Work in Parallel Venture with Participants of Data Set 1

My business partner and I work via freelance work, producing research and associated reports (in a parallel venture) for a contact on the Board of the organisation representing Data Set 1 but have no direct association to the organisation. My partnership has a casual relationship with this contact who is an experienced consultant and business development professional and has helped us connect with potential clients and develop a wider network to provide reports.

4.3.3 Networking Style with Research Group and Associate of the Organisation Represented in Data Set 1

The contact at the company represented in Data Set 1, is my only 'formal' contact within the business structure. My networking and communication with this contact (in the context of the parallel venture) is generally 'informal' (telephone calls, in person and Microsoft Teams meetings, and WhatsApp messages). Feedback discussions are generally communicated via email (and email chains across collaborators) and over the phone, with contractual agreements being casual and, on a project-by-project basis. This is highlighted in Figure 4-4.



(Figure 4-4)
Networking with Associate of Company Representing Data Set 1

4.3.4 The Types of 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication Experienced with Research Group and Associate of Company Represented in Data Set 1

For this reflective review, the types and frequency of 'informal' and 'formal' communication received in relation to work with freelancers and the associate of the organisation represented in Data Set 1 were retrospectively examined. Analysis of this communication has been used to interrogate and reflect upon themes in these communications and how 'formal' and 'informal' communications impact broader team dynamics relative to the literature and development of semi-structured interview questions. Table 10 below represents the frequency, and themes established from reviewing these communications, and are discussed more depth in Section 4.4 below (see Appendix K for a full breakdown of frequency of 'types of communication').

Themes Identified	Formal	Informal	Horizontal	Vertical
Information sharing	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Instructional	High frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency	High frequency
Assigning roles	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Suggestions	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency	Low frequency
Organisational	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Miscellaneous	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency	Low frequency

Table 10. Themes Identified in Messages, Type and Frequency Levels of Communication with Parallel Venture of Company Represented in Data Set 1 from October 2022 to March 2023 in 'Formal' and 'Informal' Settings and Horizontal (Peer Bases) and Vertical (Senior) Organisational Structures

4.3.5 Summary

Over the field period a high number of WhatsApp messages, phone calls and emails were received in relation to freelance work with the associate of the organisation represented in Data Set 1 (in addition to a smaller number of 'face-to-face' and virtual meetings). Messages reviewed included a group chat (myself, my business partner and 2 other collaborators of a similar level of experience), emails, email chains (including collaborators and senior contact) and notes taken from phone calls and meetings. The most significant number of messages received stemmed from a WhatsApp group chat set up to provide a quick informal channel of communication, easily accessible for everybody. Group chats (WhatsApp etc.) are commonly used in these settings, in lieu of face-to-face communication or where individuals are working remotely, leading to many short-form messages exchanged. Figure 4-5 outlines the six themes that emerged from initial coding and thematic analysis of these communications. Appendix K outlines the frequency and types ('informal', 'formal', horizontal and

vertical) of communication with the vast majority of WhatsApp messages representing ‘informal’ types of communication with peers (horizontal connections) and far fewer being ‘formal’ or vertical interactions in this type of medium.

Themes Identified	Key Reflections and Descriptions of Themes
information sharing	Sharing research papers, links, articles, news stories and key updates in relation to work ongoing and being completed.
Instructional messages	Communication specifically assigning tasks or jobs.
Assigning roles	Messages organising more complex roles or a series of tasks amongst individuals.
Suggestions	Individuals suggesting alternative methods or resources that could be used (for example with sourcing relevant information online) or when dealing with more specialised academic literature.
Organisational	These messages relate to the organisation of practical arrangements such as meetings or more structured formal forms of communication i.e., seeing availability, notifying of being unable to attend a meeting etc.
Miscellaneous	Informal discussion that may not be directly relevant to the work being undertaken, or resolution of minor conflicts with the closest equivalent in traditional workplace settings being workplace ‘banter’ or ‘small talk’.

(Figure 4-5)

Themes, and Key Reflections of Communication with Research Group and Associate of Company Represented in Data Set 1

This section has outlined retrospective analysis of communications over a six-month period on a project working as part of a research group for an associate of the company represented in Data Set 1. The themes identified are not intended to represent data but are presented as a tool to reflect upon my own experiences of how communication, power dynamics, hierarchical structures, and the communication mediums used influence the dynamics between ‘actors’ and the ‘workplace culture’ in these ‘gig economy’ settings. In addition to providing a reflective framework for conceptualising ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication strategies, relative to academic literature to generate semi-structured interview questions.

Section 4.4: Working with Members of the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B

4.4.1 Profile of the Start-Up Represented in Data Set 2B

The partnership represented in Data Set 2B has undergone a significant period of transformation recently. An earlier iteration of the company describes itself as a digital agency connecting entrepreneurs to those with digital expertise. Formed eighteen months ago by a couple, their website listed these two as founders, with three freelancers listed on its website, with a range of expertise. As

a 'start-up' business, the owners also worked (alongside getting this business off the ground) in website design, report-writing and securing 'gigs' themselves on Fiverr.

4.4.2 'Gig Work' for the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B

Since its inception, several informal 'gigs' have been undertaken with this company. As such, this has facilitated prior observation of how the partnership functions. My previous experience with members of Data set 2B is outlined in Section 4.4.3. I have provided reports and other professional services in the past but no longer actively work with the partnership due to them moving away from the 'digital agency' model. In the context of the research, the founders (earlier iteration) of this small business may fit into the category described as 'Architects and technologists' which comprises 'gig workers' that use entrepreneurial thinking, innovative methods, and technology to develop, market and maintain online platforms (Vallas and Schor 2020). However, this business model was not actively pursued by the partnership, as they refined their model refocusing their offering as a company.

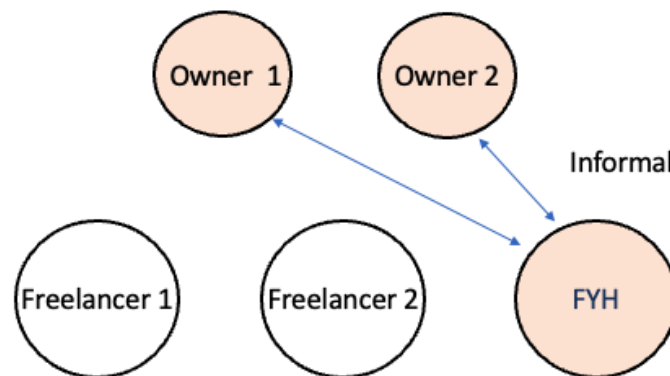
4.4.3 Experience of the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B as a 'Cohesive Entity'

My experience of the Start-up represented by Data Set 2B over their twelve months was varied. As one of the freelancers listed on the website (in an earlier iteration of their business) I did not receive any paid work through the website (or online platform), with confusion amongst the owners if the work they themselves did (on Fiverr and other online 'gig economy' platforms), was outside or inside the company's scope. This is an issue I have also personally experienced in relation to my own business and may represent the very early stages of a new business as ideas settle and practical ways of putting ideas into action become more apparent over time. The Start-Up represented by Data set 2B is a new company that is diversifying and is starting to build a client base. It is not afraid to evolve as a company, is searching for stability in a changeable marketplace. With these unique circumstances providing ample opportunities for questioning in relation to the thesis research questions.

4.4.4 Networking Style in the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B

As an emerging business, the earlier iteration of the Start-up represented by Data Set 2B (that I observed) had an unstructured networking/communication style. This came in the form of WhatsApp messaging and casual phone calls. Communication was received from both owners, and although they themselves had a cohesive partnership, the 'workplace culture' with the founders and the associated freelancers was unstructured. As with the parallel venture of the organisation representing Data Set 1, there was significant 'informality' in the 'gigs' offered, with financial uncertainty a challenge for members of Data Set 2B and the associated freelancers. It is important to note that this is not a criticism of the owners, but a reflection on the type of issues common in freelance work. Figure 4-6

shows a visual representation of the dynamics experienced ‘networking’ with members of Data Set 2B in relation to ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ channels of communication.



(Figure 4-6)
Networking with the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B

4.4.5 The Types of ‘Formal’ and ‘Informal’ Communication Experienced with the Start-Up Represented by Data Set 2B

The types and frequency of communication received over a twelve-month period in relation to previous work with members of Data Set 2B was retrospectively examined. The table below (Table 11) shows the themes identified for ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ communication utilised across horizontal (peer) and vertical (founders) structures of the emerging enterprise (see Table 11). The details are discussed in the following section (see Appendix L for a full breakdown of the frequency and types of communications examined).

Themes Identified	Formal	Informal	Horizontal	Vertical
Information sharing	High frequency	High frequency	Low frequency	High frequency
Instructional	Low frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency
Organisational	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Motivation	Low frequency	High frequency	Low frequency	High frequency
Brainstorming	Low frequency	High frequency	High frequency	High frequency
Miscellaneous	Low frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency	Low frequency

Table 11. Themes Identified in Messages, Type, and Frequency of Communication with Members of Data Set 2B: From April 2022 to March 2023 in ‘Formal’ and ‘Informal’ Settings and Horizontal (Peer Bases) and Vertical (Senior) Organisational Structures

4.4.6 Summary

Over the period from April 2022 to March 2023 (twelve months) several WhatsApp messages, phone calls, and emails were received in relation to work with members of Data Set 2B. There were no face-to-face meetings, and a small number of virtual meetings (video conferencing/facetime) over this period. Two of the video calls represented a meeting between the two founders of the company represented by Data Set 2B, my partnership and a potential client. A small portion of the WhatsApp messages (5) and emails (3) are interactions between my partnership and a client. The significant remainder of the messages represent those that occurred in a WhatsApp group chat set up for easy communication amongst collaborators, and to a lesser degree emails. The founders were initially based in Canada making it hard to communicate due to the time difference. As such, communications were relatively sporadic over this period with formal communication being infrequent.

Seven key themes emerged from initial coding and thematic analysis of these communications including notes from phone calls, emails and chains of emails, notes from meetings and WhatsApp messages. These themes are: 1) Information sharing; 2) Instructional; 3) Organisational; 4) Motivation; 5) Brainstorming; and 6) Miscellaneous. In contrast to the parallel venture of the organisation represented in Data Set 1, vertical interactions (between the author and the founders of the company represented in Data Set 2B) were more often informal in nature (see Table 11). Perhaps due to the younger age of the founders, and the early stage of the business, their communication strategies tended to be more 'informal', less instructional, more aspirational, involving significantly more 'brainstorming', and employing more motivational leadership strategies. less formality was observed in meetings or task organisation when compared to 'informal' and 'formal' communications experienced in the parallel venture of the organisation represented by Data Set 1.

Section 4.5: The Development of 'INSite'

4.5.1 Introduction

The discussion of the previous sections provides a backdrop to the development of a new business called 'INSite'. This new business seeks to leverage learnings from working in 'gig economy' contexts to find more stable and consistent 'gig work'. As outlined in my Professional Practice Report in 2020 and in Section 4.2, my business began as a series of sporadic and uncoordinated 'gigs' balanced with postgraduate study commitments. This lack of cohesiveness created challenges navigating shocks such as the Covid 19 pandemic and led to significant deficiencies in my partnership's ability to network to find more work. Securing work has been dependent on development of ties with professional networks, business professionals and other freelancers or 'start-ups' seeking services in the 'gig economy' marketplaces. This in several ways forced a business refocus, refinement and co-ordination to match our strengths (and weaknesses) and to manage our time more effectively.

4.5.2 Utilising a SWOT and TOWS Analysis for 'Sense Checking' Procedure

During initial brainstorming meetings for a new business venture (INSite), a SWOT analysis was generated in meetings to examine the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats to our business (Figure 4-7). This has been a particularly useful tool in early brainstorming meetings for 'formalising' an understanding the partnership and the barriers and threats faced by the enterprise (See Figure 4-8 for the structure of the TOWS analysis).

Strengths	Weaknesses
Research methods	Multiple business names
Teaching	A lack of media presence
Creativity	Marketing knowledge
Opportunities	Threats
Forming a cohesive business	Under-confidence
Overcoming Barriers	Working in industry threatened by shocks
Networking	A lack of vision

(Figure 4-7)

A SWOT Analysis of INSite

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths	X	✓	✓	✓
Weaknesses	X	X	✓	✓
Opportunities	X	X	X	✓
Threats	X	X	X	X

(Figure 4-8)

A TOWS Table for INSite

In essence, this TOWS analysis table was used in meetings as a method to compare one element of the SWOT against another, and to visualise the enterprises competencies, the enablers and barriers that could be potentially faced when moving forward with the project. This type of procedure is intended not to answer questions or solve problems, but to encourage debate and co-ordination in

teams. In the context of meetings, this provided a framework to help to structure thoughts and reflections on the business and formalise roles and the types of tasks to be undertaken moving forward, relative to the 'competency bubbles' (Figure 4-1; Figure 4-2) which identified personal strengths that might help this endeavour. Questions that could be used to generate a SWOT analysis may provide a useful 'sense checking' procedure to utilise in the semi-structured interview questions, particularly as follow up questions asked of leaders of the organisation represented in Data Set 1 to evaluate 'general' perceptions of 'barriers' and 'enablers' for 'organisational' change relative to the wider competencies observed in the workforce.

Section 4.6: Conclusion to the Reflective Review.

This section highlighted personal, key experiences of working in the 'gig economy', providing an account of the barriers and enablers experienced of freelancing and 'gig work', networking and the communication strategies utilised. 'Gig work', undertaken for two separate entities, built upon earlier reflections drawn from my Profession Practice Report of 2020. Experience developing a new venture, INSite, highlighted the potential for incorporating 'sense checking' procedures into the semi-structured interview questions (SWOT and TOWS Analysis). This chapter has considered my experiential account of pros and cons of 'gig working' and how it can lead to coherence for small businesses. The aim of this chapter has been to propose 'reflective frameworks', presented as a form of 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012) in relation to the research questions. Figure 4-9 summarises several themes identified from a research diary, and more (general) reflections and personal learnings from my experiences of running my business, 'gig work' and professional relationships with businesses in these contexts.

Keywords/Themes	Key Reflections and Learnings From 'Gig Economy' Experience
Building Trust Gaining Experience Moving to Formal Arrangements	It has often been necessary to build trust with a client by providing services without charge or to gain experience as a 'gig worker' or freelancer. This can be important for learning, developing skills and making new connections. However, knowing when to draw the line is also important to ensure that informal arrangements are formalised in the long term.
Information Sharing Organisation of Teams Individual Differences	My experience suggests there are both 'formal' and 'informal' channels of communication that operate in smaller and larger organisations. The types of information shared, how teams are organised and the types and register of communication used can differ depending on the personalities involved and the organisational culture they are situated in.
Refining Product Finding Niche	I have found (in the experience of my own business) that in order to be competitive in gig work and for developing start-ups and small businesses, it can be necessary to distil ideas into a clear and 'sellable' offering. To move from being a 'jack of all trades' to providing a clear focused product or package of services that align with skill sets.

(Figure 4-9)
Key Themes, Reflections and Learnings from 'Gig Economy' Experience

Chapter 5: Findings

Section 5.1: Introduction

Sections 5.2 and 5.3 below report on the findings of Data Set 1 and 2, and begin to address the research aim, objectives and questions posed by the thesis. Section 5.2 addresses the findings of the analysis of Data Set 1 from thirteen interviews with employees at various levels of seniority within the organisational structure. Summaries (and field notes) of formal policy documents are also included in analysis. The key informants interviewed are employed in various roles within the organisation including but not limited to: graduate scheme employees; administrators; lower, middle, and senior managers; an external freelancer (providing specialist services to members of Data Set 1), and members of the Board of the organisation represented in Data Set 1. Attempts were made to recruit participants (key informants) that could provide an insight (as experts) into both the 'top down' vision and strategy and the grass roots 'bottom up' perceptions of the organisation. In-depth qualitative evaluation of these 'tacit' and 'overt' dynamics assists in illuminating the relative influence of communication, technology and leadership strategies deployed, the broader workplace culture and dimensions of organisational change that permeate the overall structure of the organisation and to illuminate discussion of pathways to business development in these settings. Dimensions of organisational change are deemed to be important for managing change (Rodgers 2007; 2010), as well as understanding how freelancers, gig workers and employees experience the 'changing nature of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Bogenhold 2019) and the (non-linear, layered) stages related to transitioning to secure work (Reilly 2017) in traditional and gig economy-based workplace settings, or pathways to business development for freelancers and enterprises.

Inclusion of employees in management and non-management roles contextualise the data collected along the hierarchical dimension of the 'vertical' ('top down' management hierarchy) and 'horizontal' ('parallel' or peer based) and examines the 'informal' and 'formal' dimensions of communication channels and procedural systems. These features are noted by Rodgers (2007; 2010) as being important dimensions of 'successful' organisational change regarding ('reflective' and 'adaptive') leadership and communication strategies in traditional organisational settings. However, these factors may also be important for illuminating how communication, technology and digitalisation of workplace practices influence mechanisms of team and, competency development and pathways for business development (relative to the scale of the enterprise) in these contexts. The findings of this thesis (across the data sets) examine these mechanisms across more diverse settings than previously addressed by extant research. Additionally, a number of the questions posed to participants were rooted in trying to understand the relationship of employees to the broader 'gig economy', and

whether organisational change in established organisations, and the development of enterprises for self-employed freelancers and gig workers (Data Set 2) occurs in a linear or non-linear fashion, as observed in Reilly's 2017 'layered career model' for freelancers and gig workers (stand-up comedians).

The extent to which participants expressed entrepreneurial aspirations (Lahm 2020); and the influence of the gig economy on enterprise development (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) were of particular interest in relation to the construction of semi-structured interview questions and the themes that subsequently emerged from analysis of the data in relation to Data Set 2. The findings also address, the competencies that participants possess that help them to be successful in their roles, their underlying motivations, aspirations, and experience of teamwork in the workplace and the broader workplace culture in line with the research aims and objectives. Current literature regarding 'competencies of modern workers' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021), relative to the reflective frameworks and 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012) outlined in Chapter 4, influenced the structuring of interview questions, and extends the scope of research to gig economy contexts and an organisation associated with the gig economy and emerging from consultancy led (gig economy) practices as it transitions to a large firm.

The interviews with members of Data Set 1 provided over six and a half hours of data (11 hours, 30 minutes and 30 seconds recorded for Data Set 1 and 2 combined). Table 12 below provides a full breakdown of the gender, age of participants and length of interviews conducted with participants of Data Set 1. Table 13 provides a full break down of the age ranges for both Data Set 1 and 2.

Participant Number	Gender	Age	Data Set Group	Interview length
Participant 1	Female	63	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	55m 15s
Participant 2	Male	60-65	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	57m 59s
Participant 9	Male	25	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	30m 50s
Participant 10	Male	54	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	20m 35s
Participant 11	Male	32	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	30m 17s
Participant 12	Female	23	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	19m 05s
Participant 13	Male	26	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	24m 13s
Participant 14	Female	33	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	28m 17s
Participant 15	Female	25	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	26m 30s
Participant 16	Male	35	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	23m 48s
Participant 17	Female	29	Data Set 1 Large Firm)	27m 01s
Participant 18	Male	37	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	20m 15s
Participant 19	Female	28	Data Set 1 (Large Firm)	21m 29s
Totals	-	-	DS1, n= 13	6 hrs, 25 m, 34s

Table 12. Participant Number, Gender, Age, Data Set 1, and Duration of Interview

Data sets 1,2A and 2B (n= 20)										
Total <35	Women <35	Men <35	Total >35	Women >35	Men >35	Total >50	Men >50	Women >50	Total Men	Total Women

11	7	4	5	-	5	4	3	1	12	8
Data Set 1 (n= 13)										
Total <35	Women <35	Men <35	Total >35	Women >35	Men >35	Total >50	Men >50	Women >50	Total Men	Total Women
8	5	3	2	-	2	3	2	1	7	6
Data Set 2A (n = 5)										
Total <35	Women <35	Men <35	Total >35	Women >35	Men >35	Total >50	Men >50	Women >50	Total Men	Total Women
1	1	-	3	-	3	1	1	-	4	1
Data Set 2B (n = 2)										
Total <35	Women <35	Men <35	Total >35	Women >35	Men >35	Total >50	Men >50	Women >50	Total Men	Total Women
2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

Table 13. Number of Participants in the Data Sets Organised by Gender, and Age (Under 35 Years Old, Over 35 Years Old and Over 50 Years Old)

The audio recordings of the interviews conducted with members of Data Set 1 were transcribed, coded and thematically analysed. The findings reported in the following sections are presented in line with the key themes that emerged, according to the topics covered in the interviews, that address the research questions. The key themes provided are evidenced with quotes from participants, and initial observations are provided of key similarities and differences to further draw out how the organisation is experienced by the decision makers and employees of the organisation represented in Data Set 1. During the research process, requests were made for access to additional 'formal' policy and procedural documents, contextualising the 'formal' policies and procedures in place for the large firm (Data Set 1). Documents (access via a senior employee of the organisation represented in Data Set 1) included: 1) HR Paternity Policy; 2) HR Grievance Procedure; 3) HR Code of Conduct; 4) HR Maternity Leave and Antenatal Care Policy; 5) HR Culture Statement Policy; 6) HR Equal Opportunities Policy; and 7) HR People Strategy Policy. The documents provided were not permitted to be included in their raw form, however brief summaries, omitting identifiable information, were permitted and have been provided and contrasted against the day-to-day experiences outlined by participants.

In Section 5.2.1 discussion of 'flexibility' and 'individual preference' for a 'work from home' or 'office-based' workplace culture featured prominently in the initial discussions with participants around their day-to-day work arrangements. Table 14 below provides a more comprehensive breakdown of the main theme, sub-themes and condensed codes identified around this topic (See Appendix Q for a full breakdown of codes and initial themes).

Main Theme: Working Arrangements (Remote Versus Office-Based)	
Sub-themes	Codes
Flexibility	Flexibility in work arrangements
	Flexibility in work arrangements – cultural change
	Covid

Preferences (work arrangements)	Flexibility in work - Freelancing
	Flexibility in work - autonomy
	Preferences for office versus remote working arrangements

Table 14. Themes and Sub-themes for General and Demographic Questions

For Section 5.2.2, Definitions of the ‘gig economy’ provided by participants can generally be divided into two sub-themes namely: ‘Insecure work and intersect with SMEs and large firms’ and ‘Cultural Change’. These factors will be discussed in more depth in the subsequent section followed by an exploration of the experiences of freelancers and ‘gig workers’; and organisational use of freelancers and ‘gig workers’ (See Table 15 for a breakdown of the main themes and sub-themes identified, see Appendix Q for a full breakdown of the main themes, sub-themes, and codes).

Main Themes	Sub-themes
Theme 1: Definitions of the ‘Gig Economy’	Insecure work and intersect with SMEs and large firms
	Cultural change
Theme 2: Experience as a Freelancer/‘Gig Worker’	Bridge to full-time work
	Cultural change - shift towards ‘gig work’
Theme 3: Organisational Use of Freelancers/‘Gig Workers’	Specialised skills in demand
	Gig work, resource management and organisational growth

Table 15. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 1

Section 5.2.3 explores the ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ dimensions of organisational change/development before addressing the participants experiences of social and cultural changes and challenges managing change and division at the organisation represented in Data Set 1. Table 16 outlines the main themes and subthemes identified in the interview data (See Appendix R for codes, themes, and sub-themes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Top-Down and Bottom-Up Organisational Change/Development	Fast company growth
	Organisational change: Recruitment drive, young work force
	Innovation
Theme 2: Social and Cultural Changes	Cultural shift/Organisational change
	Cultural change: Work from home versus face-to-face
	Relationships: Work from home versus face-to-face
	Cultural change Covid- work from home
	Experiences of environment and changes
Theme 3: Managing Change and Division	Leadership/management styles
	Management structures and teamwork
	Silo’s, division, and companywide communication
	Top-down versus bottom-up processes, structures, and dynamics

Table 16. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 2

Section 5.2.4 explores the ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication strategies utilised by employees at the organisation represented by Data Set 1. It examines employees’ external communication relative to peer-to-peer communication (‘horizontal’, with colleagues), ‘up and down’ management structures (‘vertically’) and across departments (‘horizontally/diagonally’). Table 17 provides a breakdown of the main themes and sub-themes identified, expanded upon in the following sections (See Appendix S for a full breakdown of the main themes, sub-themes, and condensed codes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: External and Internal Communication Mediums used (‘Formal’/‘Informal’)	External communication mediums ‘formal’/‘informal’
	Internal communication mediums ‘formal’/‘informal’
Theme 2: Division in the Workplace, Relationship Building and Barriers to Effective Communication.	Division, resource allocation and barriers to communication
	Social (‘informal’) bonding
Theme 3: Formalising Strategy, Policies, and Procedures	Formalising policies and procedures
	Social norms, workplace culture

Table 17. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 3

Section 5.2.5 outlines the themes identified in relation to ‘individual’ and ‘shared competencies’ of workers. Participants provided a few examples of competencies that help them to be successful in their roles at the company, derived from: academic experience; professional experience; motivations and aspirations. Participants were also asked to provide a few words or examples demonstrating how they view the workplace culture at the organisation represented by Data Set 1. Several responses were provided, all responses were coded, and themes have been identified and visualised relative to the frequency of responses. Table 18 provides a condensed table outlining the themes that emerged from analysis of this data.

Academic Experience	Professional Experience	Motivations/Aspirations	View of Workplace Culture
Tech expertise (2)	Tech expertise	Autonomy	Autonomy
Communication	Communication (3)	Adaptability (2)	Adaptability (2)
Report writing (3)	Tutoring/mentoring	Tutoring/mentoring (2)	Generational differences (6)
Group projects (2)	Problem solving (4)	Problem solving	Barriers to change (3)
Research skills (2)	Motivating people	Motivating people (2)	soulless (3)
Problem solving (2)	Creativity (2)	Creativity	Semi-automated (3)
Broad Knowledge (2)	Learning	Learning (2)	Top-down/bottom-up issues (2)
Applied training (2)	Real world experience (4)	Money (4)	Digitised (2)
Meeting deadlines	Varied work (3)	Opportunities to develop (4)	Fast paced (2)
Confidence	Multi-tasking (2)	Professional Development (3)	Socialisation
Presentation skills	Knowledge	Group work (3)	Monitoring
Organisation	Presentation skills	Security (2)	Agility

Due Diligence	Practicality	Business Growth (2)	Poor communication
Social skills	Marketing	Fulfilling work (2)	Corporate
Logic	Determination	Productivity (2)	Constantly changing
-	-	Positive feedback	-
-	-	Wellbeing	-
-	-	Inclusivity	-

Table 18. Self-reported Condensed Competencies (Numbers in Brackets Represent Number of Times a Competency is Mentioned)

Section 5.2.6 addresses the themes identified in relation to the barriers and enablers for organisational change and development at the organisation represented by Data Set 1. Three themes were identified in relation to the data namely these are: 1) Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff; 2) Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth; and 3) Hierarchical Dimensions of Organisational Change and the 'gig economy'. Table 19 provides a breakdown of the main themes and sub-themes identified (See Appendix U for a full breakdown of main themes, sub-themes, and codes.)

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff	Barriers for teams and staff
	Enablers for teams and staff
Theme 2: Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth	Barriers to organisational change and growth
	Enablers for organisational change and growth
Theme 3: Hierarchical Dimensions of Organisational Change and the 'Gig Economy'	Cultural change - perspectives of staff
	'Top-down' strategy for organisational change
	'Gig economy': Relationship to organisational growth and change

Table 19. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 5

Section 5.3 follows a similar structure to that outlined for Data Set 1, and highlights the key themes observed during the analysis of the interviews conducted with members of Data Set 2 (a selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers, n=7); Data Set 2A (an unrelated selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers, n=5); and Data Set 2B (a selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers engaged in a new start-up, participants, n=2) (See Table 13 for a full breakdown of ages and gender of all participants). In total, over five hours of data was recorded, transcribed, and thematically analysed for Data Set 2. Data Sets 2A and 2B were thematically analysed as a combined group, this was felt appropriate due to the size of the sample relative to Data Set 1 and in order to provide a comprehensive comparison and 'sense checking' procedure between Data Set 2, relative to Data Set 1. Comparisons are drawn between the responses of members of Data Set 2A and Data Set 2B as a group and the combined group (Data Set 2) relative to Data Set 1. Table 20 provides a breakdown of the gender and age of participants and the length of interview for each participant.

Participant Number	Gender	Age	Data Set Group	Interview length
Participant 3	Male	40-45	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	53m 13s
Participant 4	Female	30	Data Set 2B (self-employed freelancer/Start-up - NOMAD)	49m 10s
Participant 5	Male	30	Data Set 2B (self-employed freelancer/Start-up - NOMAD)	46m 30s
Participant 6	Male	50	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	35m 08s
Participant 7	Female	24	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	38m 25s
Participant 8	Male	42	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	37m 36s
Participant 20	Male	39	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	44m 54s
Totals	-	-	DS2A, n = 5, DS2B, n= 2	5 hrs, 4m, 56s

Table 20. Participant Number, Gender, Age, Data Sets 2A and 2B, and Duration of Interview.

Section 5.3.2 summarises the key information collected during the interviews with members of Data Sets 2A and 2B (Data Set 2). All participants of Data Set 2 were able to provide a definition of their understanding of the 'Gig Economy'. Definitions provided can generally be divided into four sub-themes namely: 'Self-employment, project by project work and insecurity.'; 'Side hustle, no fixed income (insecure work); 'Gain experience, exploitative, competitive'; and the traditional (music based) 'gig economy'. These factors are discussed in more depth in Section 5.3.2 followed by an exploration of the experiences of 'gig workers' and their 'Entrepreneurial ambitions'. (See Table 21 for a breakdown of the main themes and sub-themes identified, See Appendix V for a full breakdown of the main themes, sub themes and codes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Definitions of the 'Gig Economy'	Self-employment, project by project work, insecurity.
	Side hustle, no fixed income (insecure)
	Gain experience, online platforms exploitative, competitive
	Traditional (Music based) Gig economy
Theme 2: Experience of 'Gig Work'	Use of technology, online gig economy, networking platforms and traditional networking
	Traditional networking
	Hiring gig workers (online/offline) gig workers
	Experiences of online platforms and traditional gig work
	Insecure contracts and uncertainty
	Motivations for doing gig work
Theme 3: Entrepreneurial Ambitions	Entrepreneurial ambitions
	Entrepreneurial ambitions: Long-term strategy

Table 21. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 1

Section 5.3.3 addresses how 'start-ups' can adapt or develop whilst operating in the 'gig economy' marketplace. Table 22 presents the main themes and associated sub-themes that emerged. These themes are discussed in the following section (see Appendix W for full list of themes, sub-themes, and codes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Transition from 'Gig Work' to More Secure Business Models	Transition from freelancer/gig work to secure business model
	Leadership strategy
	Issues with gig economy work and business development
Theme 2: Cultural and Organisational Change	Cultural shift: Online coaching/influencers (Instagram)
	Use of technology and online networking platforms
	Resistance of online algorithms (gig workers/start-up)
	Cultural change – communication methods
	Division, cultural change
Theme 3: Managing Change - Coaching, Mentoring and Support Networks	Coaching and mentorship
	Support networks

Table 22. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 2: Size of the Business, Organisational Change and Development

Section 5.3.4 explores the 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies (and mediums of communication) utilised by the members of Data Set 2. These factors are examined in relation to how self-employed freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' communicate externally (with clients and third parties) and how this differs from peer-to-peer communication. The hierarchical dimensions examined are likely to be less structured (compared with Data Set 1) due to the company representing Data Set 2B lacking a formalised hierarchy and Data Set 2A constituting an unrelated group of self-employed freelancers, and gig workers. This section is designed to illuminate emerging processes, formalisation of 'informal' practices as freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' emerge as cohesive identities. The themes identified are outlined in Table 23 (see Appendix X for a full breakdown of the main themes, sub-themes, and condensed codes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Formal External Communication and Procedures	Procedure-Design (standardised)
	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Invoice
	Sales and Marketing: Proposal, linked in, email, phone, zoom
	Formal Communication-Instructional, project based, tracking-paper trail
Theme 2: Informal External Communication and Procedures	Procedure-strategy, timeline (flexible)
	Development/Support network
	Sales and Marketing: communication
	Informal Communication-project based
Theme 3: Cultural and Marketplace Changes	Shift in, marketplace, workplace culture

Table 23. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 3: 'Informal' and 'Formal' Procedures and Communication Channels

Section 5.3.5 outlines themes that emerged in relation to ‘individual’ and Shared competencies (Data Set 2). Participants were asked to provide a few words or examples demonstrating the competencies (they possess) that help them to be successful as ‘gig workers’, or ‘start-ups’ derived from their: academic experience; professional experience; motivations and aspirations. Participants were also asked to provide a few words or examples demonstrating how they view the emerging workplace culture (or derived from their personality and individual values). Several responses were provided, all responses were coded, and themes have been identified and visualised relative to the frequency of responses. (See Appendix Y for a full break down of participant responses and codes).

Section 5.3.6 addresses the themes identified in relation to the barriers and enablers experienced by members of Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B) whilst working as self-employed freelancers or ‘gig workers’, or as they have developed their businesses (Organisational/career change and development). Two themes were identified outlined in Table 24 (See Appendix Z for a full breakdown of main themes, sub-themes, and codes).

Main Theme	Sub-theme
Theme 1: Barriers for Organisational Development and Change	Barrier: Mental health, wellbeing, and self-development
	Financial constraints, competition, and time management
Theme 2: Enablers for Organisational Change and Development	Enabler: Teamwork and building relationships
	Enabler mental health, wellbeing, and self-development
	Innovation, Innovative use of technology and uniqueness
	Social and economic factors

Table 24. Main Themes and Sub-themes Topic 5: Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Development

Section 5.2: Findings Data Set 1 – Large Firm

The following sections provide an outline of the findings from Data Set 1. The themes that emerged from thematic analysis of the interview data are presented according to the following topics (constructed via the interview guide to address the research questions, relative to the gaps identified in literature in Section 2.2.7): 1) General and Demographic Questions; 2) The ‘Gig Economy’; 3) Size of the Business, Organisational Change and Development; 4) ‘Informal’ and ‘Formal’ Procedures and Communication Channels; 5) Combining Competencies in Teams and Workplace Culture; and 6) Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Development. Finally, a SWOT Analysis and TOWS matrix (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Strengths) is presented (Participants 1 and 2) to understand in more depth the overall strategy of the company representing Data Set 1 currently has for organisational development and change, based on the responses of a member of the Board

(Participant 2) (Business Development), in contrast to the responses provided by a freelancer (Participant 1) employed by the large firm.

5.2.1 General and Demographic Questions

The following section summarises key general and demographic information collected during the interviews regarding participants of Data Set 1. Overall, thirteen participants were interviewed for Data Set 1, 53.8% were male and 46.1% were female (Male, n= 7; Female, n=6). Four were in a non-managerial role; nine were in managerial roles (Lower management n=3; middle management, n= 3; upper management, n= 2) and one external freelancer worked in a management role but had no management duties at the large firm. Table 25 below presents this information relative to the Job Roles provided by participants regarding their employment at the organisation represented in Data Set 1.

Participant Number	Gender	Job Role	Management Level
Participant 1	Female	Director/freelancer	Yes (external, 1 employee)
Participant 2	Male	Board Director	Yes (Upper)
Participant 9	Male	Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer	Yes (Lower)
Participant 10	Male	Senior Estimating Engineer	No
Participant 11	Male	VDC Automation Manager	Yes (Middle)
Participant 12	Female	Assistant Sub-contract Buyer	No
Participant 13	Male	Project Planner	Yes (Lower)
Participant 14	Female	HR Manager	Yes (Middle)
Participant 15	Female	Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team	Yes (Lower)
Participant 16	Male	Technology Director	Yes (Upper)
Participant 17	Female	Marketing Assistant	No
Participant 18	Male	Head of National Proposals	Yes (Middle)
Participant 19	Female	Assistant PA to the Directors	No

Table 25. Participant Number, Gender, Job Role and Management Level (Lower, Middle, Upper or External)

Analysis of the participants' responses in relation to working arrangements suggests there is a strong hybrid work culture at the organisation represented by Data Set 1. Digitalisation of work-practices and variability in attitudes towards these changes were noted by participants in relation to the increased use of hybrid and remote work-practices at the large firm represented in Data Set 1. Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) suggests that the 'changing nature of work', and increased digitalisation of work practices (in recent years) can impact attitudes, competencies, and expectations for 'modern workers' of organisations. Notably, Over half of the participants (53.8%, 7/13) work a mix of 'work from home' and 'office-based' work on a weekly basis (ranging between 60% and 90% office-based work). Comparatively, there is a strong office-based culture for some departments based at head office, particularly for those in lower or non-managerial positions. 23% (3/13) of participants work in office-

based roles and stated a preference for this type of setup versus remote work. Fewer participants worked either most of their time in the office, or most of the time at home with 7.6% (1/13) of participants based primarily in the office and occasionally working from home and 7.6% (1/13) (Board Director) working mostly from home or remotely, supplemented with occasional office and site visits. Furthermore, one participant worked solely in a work from home/remote capacity (participant 1, freelancer). Table 26 provides a full breakdown of the responses in relation to working arrangement of the participants of Data Set 1.

Participant Number	Job Role	Management	Working arrangements
Participant 1	Director/freelancer	Yes (external, 1 employee)	Work from home/remote
Participant 2	Board Director	Yes (Upper)	Work from home/remote (occasional office, site visits)
Participant 9	Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer	Yes (Lower)	Office-based (option for hybrid working)
Participant 10	Senior Estimating Engineer	No	Hybrid work (60% office-based)
Participant 11	VDC Automation Manager	Yes (Middle)	Hybrid (mainly office-based)
Participant 12	Assistant Sub-contract Buyer	No	Office-based (occasional WFH)
Participant 13	Project Planner	Yes (Lower)	Office-based (option for hybrid working)
Participant 14	HR Manager	Yes (Middle)	Hybrid (90% office-based)
Participant 15	Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team	Yes (Lower)	Hybrid work (60% office-based)
Participant 16	Technology Director	Yes (Upper)	Hybrid work
Participant 17	Marketing Assistant	No	Hybrid (80% office-based)
Participant 18	Head of National Proposals	Yes (Middle)	Hybrid work (60-80% office-based)
Participant 19	Assistant PA to the Directors of the Company	No	Office-based

Table 26. Hybrid and 'Work from Home' Arrangements for Employees (Percentages of Days in Office Relative to Working Remotely Provided Where Available)

5.2.1.1 Working arrangements (Remote versus Office-Based)

Flexibility and autonomy are highly desirable components of modern workplaces typified by increased digitalisation of workplace practices (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020). Notably, just under half of the participants (6 of 13, 46.1%) mentioned flexibility in work arrangements. Primarily these statements were focused on flexibility in work arrangements and contracts (Participant 17); and changes to the broader workplace culture stemming from a shift towards hybrid work practices during and following recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic

(Participants 10; 11; 17; 18) (See Appendix AA for full quotes). Discussions around the shift towards a hybrid workplace culture also focused on increased flexibility in relation to freelancing work (Participant 1) with the organisation represented in Data Set 1, and increased autonomy at work (Participant 2). Preference for 'work from home' or 'hybrid work' also featured prominently in responses with several participants stating they preferred office-based work over remote or hybrid work: 'I hate working from home' (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer). Furthermore, managerial preferences impacted workplace arrangements and may not be consistent across all departments at the organisation represented in Data Set 1, as noted by the HR manager: 'I think sometimes it just does really depend on your line manager' (Participant 14, HR manager) (See Appendix BB for full quotes).

5.2.2 Topic 1: The 'Gig Economy'

The following section summarises the key information collected during the interviews with participants of Data Set 1 regarding the 'gig economy'. Notably, just over half of the participants 53.8% (7/13) in Data Set 1 were able to provide a definition of their understanding of the gig economy, relative to 46.1% (6/13) that could not. Just under a third (30.7%, 4/13) of participants stated that they had some form of experience working in the gig economy, relative to 69.2% (9/13) of participants who stated they had no prior work experience of this. Table 27 breaks down the responses from the key informants from Data Set 1 in relation to whether participants have provided a definition or have previously had experience of 'gig work'.

Participant Number	Job Role	'Gig Economy' Definition	Experience of 'Gig Work' (Yes/No)
Participant 1	Director/freelancer	Yes	Yes (20 years freelancing)
Participant 2	Board Director	Yes	Yes (20 years as consultant)
Participant 9	Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer	Yes	Yes (Tutor at University)
Participant 10	Senior Estimating Engineer	No	No
Participant 11	VDC Automation Manager	Yes	No (Consultant for practice)
Participant 12	Assistant Sub-contract Buyer	No	No
Participant 13	Project Planner	Yes	No
Participant 14	HR Manager	No	No
Participant 15	Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team	No	No
Participant 16	Technology Director	Yes	Yes (Contractor)
Participant 17	Marketing Assistant	No	No
Participant 18	Head of National Proposals	Yes	No (part-time jobs at university)
Participant 19	Assistant PA to the Directors of the Company	No	No

Table 27. Whether Definition of 'Gig Economy' had been Provided and Whether Participant had Experience of 'Gig Work' (Yes/No)

5.2.2.1 Definitions of the 'Gig Economy'

Several of the participants related their understanding of the 'gig economy' to self-employment, insecure work and popular online 'gig economy' platforms (Participant 1; Participant 9); whilst others related the gig economy to skilled workers and doing: 'something they find fulfilling' (Participant 1, Director/freelancer); how the gig economy interacts with small businesses (Participant 2; Participant 13) and 'expert' freelancers (Participant 11). Additionally, some of the participants contextualised their understanding of the gig economy in relation to 'cultural change' and the 'changing nature of work', with Participant 18 (Head of National Proposals), noting that: 'it wasn't really a thing' when he was younger as he engaged in relatively structured part-time work whilst at university. In contrast, Participant 1 (Director/freelancer), reflects upon having 'entrepreneurial ambitions' and entering the gig economy in 1998, encountering a world that 'lacked safety nets' (See Appendix CC and DD for full quotes):

So, I think that since I started the company, the whole world of work has completely shifted and changed. In fact, when we began the company in 1998, we jumped out of working for an employer, and into the first in my view scenario where 'gig' working was starting to take hold because we had entrepreneurial ambitions (...) In fact, by jumping out of the world of work we were jumping into a world where we lacked all of the safety nets that you had by working for a company. (...) And I think the first iteration of the company and the first product we provided was an early example of 'gig work', which today has become much more prominent. (Participant 1, Director/Freelancer, Female, Age 63)

5.2.2.2 Experiences as a Freelancer/ 'Gig Worker'

Several participants have first-hand experience working in 'gig economy' roles such as: tutor at a University (Participant 9); Independent Consultant for twenty years (Participant 2); Freelancer (Participant 1) and Contractor (Participant 16). One of the participants had previously used online platforms to engage in 'gig work' as a tutor: 'There were websites that I did give a try' (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer). Additionally, two participants expressed experiences rooted in task orientated work and insecurity: 'there was no long-term security in the role' (Participant 2, Board Director); and being undermined by recent government regulations which Participant 1 feels acts as a disincentive for more established organisations to employ freelance workers. In contrast, Participant 16 had previously worked as a contractor in the oil and gas industry utilising gig work as a steppingstone to setting up his own business in the UK and ultimately securing his job at the organisation represented in Data Set 1, where he is currently the Director of Technology. This transition could be conceptualised in terms of Participant 16 moving to more secure work from a gig economy environment or having a 'layered-career' (Reilly 2017) i.e. moving between 'gig economy', enterprise development and traditional economic settings (see Appendix EE for full quotes):

'Blue chip' clients were so worried about staying within the taxation law, that they simply just axed a lot of their freelancers, and we reeled from that. (Participant 1, Director/Freelancer, Female, Age 63).

So, a long time ago I was a contractor working in the oil and gas industry on a number of different projects for a number of different clients (...) and then I moved to the UK had a limited company working for 'redacted' and that's how we sort of got into the company. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35).

5.2.2.3 Organisational Use of Freelancers/ 'Gig Workers'

The organisation represented in Data Set 1 also utilises freelancers and gig workers in several capacities in the organisation, particularly regarding sourcing scientific or 'specialised skills' that cannot be found in-house (Participant 14); specialised technical skills; as a resource to test Research and Development pathways that have an uncertain future (Participant 11); and to assist in managing resources as the organisation grows (Participant 2). When asked the extent to which the organisation (Data Set 1) employs or works with gig workers, or external freelancers, some of the responses focused on the benefits to the company of using flexible workers: 'I think it's quite a good solution' (Participant 16, Technology Director) and the relevance of this type of work for a company growing as fast as represented in Data Set 1 for managing the change: 'its tripled since when I first started here, it's not overwhelming but it's like wow' (Participant 13, Project Planner). Although, several participants note the use of external consultants and 'gig workers', 'gig work' is 'kept to a minimum' (Participant 14, HR Manager) and not part of the longer-term strategy. This is due to the unique challenges of a quickly growing organisation, that is transitioning from a service based to a production led business and has significant amount of intellectual property requiring protection (Participant 2): (See Appendix FF for full quotes):

I think it also falls into the whole kind of context of fail-fast kind of methodology, where particularly with R&D you're wanting to test different scenarios, knowing fully well that they might not lead to anything and if that resource then becomes redundant because it's very specialised, that's not ideal. (...) So, we have been using people externally for that kind of purpose. (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

We did use quite a lot of flexible working practices in order to maintain profitability and that's something that happens quite a lot within the consultancy marketplace. But what's happened as a business has evolved, we've innovated and become more of a manufacturing business than a construction business. We now have more permanent employees and indeed one of the challenges that you have when you have consultancy type practices, is that it's hard to keep an eye on your IP (...) its less desirable to have lots of people coming in and out on a task-based basis. However, when they do, we do tie them into confidentiality, so, they don't spread the word, but obviously we will have less chance if we have less flexible workers. (Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)

5.2.3 Topic 2: Size of the Business, Organisational Change and Development

As alluded to in the previous section, fast company growth and organisational change can present unique challenges for small to medium sized enterprises, which may be pertinent for enterprises, such as the organisation represented in Data Set 1, operating in a marketplace (the construction industry) traditionally dominated by freelancing and consultancy practices. Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' for gig workers (stand-up comedians) is an interesting construct to evaluate relative to the organisational change observed in Data Set 1. It suggests that career development in gig economy marketplaces (cultural production industries) is not linear, with gig workers moving between different layers, with the 'industrial layer' characterised by higher levels of security and sustainability, deemed the 'final destination'.

For organisations, the non-linearity of organisational change may also be a factor to consider in relation to the themes identified for Data Set 1. Notably, the company comprising Data Set 1 has gone through several stages of development (over its twenty years). Section 5.2.2 introduced themes derived from the literature that suggest that 'refining' the business model and adapting the organisational structure by moving from a service to a product-based focus were cycles of change that occurred. Rodgers' (2010) 'leadership communication grid' also provides a useful framework to bear in mind relative to the themes identified for Data Set 1 in relation to the 'aggressive expansion' at the company represented in Data Set 1, which has resulted in tension between departments and poor channels of communication regarding 'top-down-messaging' (of the change) and the 'bottom-up-sensemaking' processes for staff. It suggests that successful 'change leaders' must 'reflect' on the 'sense making' processes underpinning organisational change to positively influence the workplace culture as an organisation is changing.

Furthermore, fast company growth and organisational change can disrupt the pre-existing structures, workplace culture and increase the risk for 'resistance to change' or discontent (Coghlan 1994). For the organisation represented in Data Set 1, this recruitment drive and fast company growth over the last couple of years is evident in the sample interviewed, with just over half of the participants employed at the company for more than two years (53.8%, 7/3), and 42.8% (3/7) of this sub-set employed for more than five years. Additionally, just over a third of participants (38.4%, 5/13) interviewed were employed for less than two years with 40% (2/5) of the same group employed for less than one year. Table 28 provides a breakdown of the participants' responses in more detail.

Participant Number	Gender	Job Role	Length of Employment: Data Set 1
Participant 1	Female	Director/freelancer	20 years (freelancing)

Participant 2	Male	Board Director	3 and a half years full-time, over 5 years as consultant to organisation representing Data Set 1
Participant 9	Male	Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer	2 ½ years ago
Participant 10	Male	Senior Estimating Engineer	2 years in November
Participant 11	Male	VDC Automation Manager	Since 'end of November 2021' (2 years)
Participant 12	Female	Assistant Sub-Contract Buyer	2 years in November
Participant 13	Male	Project planner	2 and a half years
Participant 14	Female	HR manager	2 years 1 month
Participant 15	Female	Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team	3 ½ years (7 years including summer temp work)
Participant 16	Male	Technology Director	10 years
Participant 17	Female	Marketing Assistant	9 months
Participant 18	Male	Head of National Proposals	'Since March' (4 months)
Participant 19	Female	Assistant PA to the Directors	3 years 2 months

Table 28. Job Role and Length of Employment at Company: Data Set 1

5.2.3.1 'Top-Down' and 'Bottom-Up' Organisational Change/Development

For employees of the company represented in Data Set 1, the most overt signs of organisational change and development stem from the 'top down' strategy of 'aggressive expansion', as expressed by Participant 11: 'It's been a really aggressive kind of growth' and 'trying to deal with that, manage that kind of change.' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager). Generally, employees expressed excitement at the change: 'It's exciting to be at a company that's just growing really quickly' (Participant 17, Marketing Assistant), hugely increased members of staff: 'We're hitting like 350 employees' (Participant 14, HR Manager) and a loss of the 'family-side' of the business (Participant 14; Participant 16). Additionally, senior figures at the company may be failing to adapt to change at some level, with one participant stating: 'It's still trying to be run like it is a bit of a small company' (Participant 16, Technology Director). Furthermore, practical changes have occurred, such as moving offices to increase capacity to accommodate the increased workforce (Participant 19). The following quotes expand upon these sentiments expressed by employees (Data Set 1) in relation to the challenges for employees of fast company growth (See Appendix GG for full quotes):

So, we've gone from being quite a small what I would class as like a family run SME, to now bridging that gap and becoming a fully-fledged, I wouldn't say corporation because I think that you lose the family side of things, but a big business, which comes along with its challenges as well and you know I think it's because it's been so fast, you're picking up quite new projects on a daily basis, so your time really just rolls into one and I think that sometimes people can't really grasp the change so treat us like quite a small business when we're not there now. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

So, I've worked here two and a half years. I think when I started, well, kind of now compared to where the company was when we started, it's gone through a massive expansion. So, you

know, even just the personnel in the office, the numbers have doubled (...) I've only been here two and a half years but it feels like I've been here longer than everyone here (laughs) (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)

The recruitment drive at the company (represented by Data Set 1) has been focused on recruitment of apprentices and graduates, with particular investment in the technology areas of the business, automation, and the design teams representing a 'refinement' and 'evolution' of the business model and a formal (structured) initiative (Rodgers 2010) to evolve the workplace culture from the top-down. Many participants have noticed an increase in younger employees: 'Recently we've hit the milestone of we've now got 100 graduates' (Participant 17, Marketing Assistant); 'We're probably at an average of about 31 at the moment' (Participant 14, HR Manager). This expanding 'young workforce' at the organisation (Data Set 1) represents several opportunities in relation to talent development and 'bottom-up' processes of organisational change with young graduates injecting innovation and a new 'energy' into the business: 'They focus on new research that they can bring new ideas to the business and roll with it.' (Participant 14, HR Manager). However, several challenges are noted by participants in relation to time constraints, managing training and development of these younger employees, and monitoring productivity of staff (See Appendix HH for full quotes):

I could really develop them and develop them into being really good generalists. I feel at the minute I just don't have that dedicated time and I can see the sort of slip in the team with the new starters, compared to my starters that started two years ago. So, that's something that I probably need to work on myself. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

A large amount of the intake has been around graduates. (...) One of the challenges we have in our business is how to monitor the productivity of those new employees, particularly in relation to those who are given tasks where they've got to deliver so many drawings per day, the output can be measured and it's easier to measure the productivity. (Participant 2, Board Director, Male Age 60-65)

One employee (Participant 15) described her experiences of organisational change over the last seven years, moving between different roles, and growing professionally with the company. The company has invested heavily in developing 'talent' and innovation, with some changes and innovations being 'a steep learning curve' for Participant 15 (Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team). Additionally, the innovation drive at the company has led to setting up new departments, at a fast pace, with huge expansion in departments like 'Automation', and Engineering over a very short space of time, with strategies needed to manage the change, as expressed by the VDC Automation Manager and the Technology Director (See Appendix HH for full quotes):

Well, I mean my journey and the manager of the project controls team has been really interesting because about a year ago this month, we kind of pitched the ideas of automation and project controls teams and we've now between us we're managing more than 30 people. So, we've kind of gone from zero to 16 in 12 months. (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

Yes, so we do have a number of branches that have significantly increased over the 3 years, especially in the engineering field. Has it changed the management style? Yes, definitely, it's affected the culture, it's affected the management style, it's affected the way you see and perceive hard work. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)

5.2.3.2 *Social and Cultural Changes at the Organisation: Data Set 1*

Diverse workplaces that encourage self-development and guide career progression are desirable for modern workers (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Notably, Micro and macro cultural shifts have been perceived by employees at the organisation (Data Set 1), with several participants mentioning visible changes to the organisation around diversity at the company: 'More kind of multi-cultural, a lot of a younger kind of population of people' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager); 'It's kind of completely diversified from sort of age, culture, and (...) a male female perspective.' (Participant 16, Technology Director). Also noted was the improved workplace dynamics or 'an energy' to shared working spaces: 'There's also like an energy, you know, like, when you walk into an office' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager). In addition, strong emotions were expressed by employees around the shift towards a hybrid working culture at the company representing Data Set 1, with many employees mentioning tensions related to the 'work from home' and 'face-to-face' workplace cultures: 'On a Teams meeting you can just mute and nobody speaks and you're waiting and there's no conversation of life and that kind of thing' (Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team). Several benefits were mentioned such as, increased flexibility, less travel and increased productivity (work from home). However, fast adoption of online communication technologies (i.e. Teams, Microsoft Office 365) and a prominence of online meetings has led to fewer opportunities for face-to-face interaction and increased challenges around: appropriate online meeting etiquette; building workplace relationships (in virtual environments); time management and a 'lack of process time' between Teams meetings and a need for protecting spaces for face-to-face communication at the organisation (Data Set 1), as expanded upon in the following quotes (See Appendix II for full quotes):

I do love working from home, but I do see that kind of wall that people have. So, like everyone now sits with their headphones on and you don't kind of have a meeting sat in a meeting room, face-to-face. (Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)

I think sometimes on Teams you can fire out invitations to people and people might not necessarily need to be there who are on the calls or conversely you get people who, I think meeting etiquette changes somewhat when it's a Teams call. So, people are late, people not turning up, people not saying they're going to be there. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

It's amazing. But I think there is a control measure that needs to be set on now that we can all be instantaneously all be connected on a video call. There has to be some sort of gaps, or set slots, or something which brings some sort time management into it and I think that's almost

like a companywide kind of approach that needs to happen, where you have like dedicated hours blocked out in everybody's diary where they can actually work or can keep up with what's going on. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)

5.2.3.3 *Managing Change and Division*

Managing change and division also emerged as a prominent theme in participants' responses. For the organisation represented by Data Set 1, leadership management styles, and approaches to 'teamwork' appear to be relatively consistent across different departments. However, the hierarchical dimensions of management structures and structures in place for training and development of the 'young workforce' do appear to vary from department to department, with some participants describing a relatively flattened, 'horizontal' management structure and other departments having clearer lines of reporting and a more 'vertical' management structure. Additionally, 'silos' in companywide communications, appear to be a particular issue present in the organisation (Data Set 1), with division playing out between head office and the factory, and between newer departments, who have had significant investment and growth, versus departments that feel like they are 'being pulled along' or falling behind with innovations and new technologies (i.e. automation) adopted by the company. Furthermore, several 'top down' and 'bottom up' processes were identified that influence the dynamics of the workplace culture at the organisation represented in Data Set 1. These issues are addressed in more detail in the following sections, with examples of quotes provided.

For employees of the organisation represented in Data Set 1, the majority experienced leadership strategies as 'collaborative', with many employees noting 'collaboration', support and mentoring as key features of management they strive to portray as managers or have experienced as employees: 'Now is more like interactive but like we'll work through a task together' (Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer); 'laissez-faire' (...) it's not as much of like a shouting match. You know, it's almost like a good team effort' (Participant 13, Project Planner), with young managers 'learning on the job': 'I'm always kind of learning what's best' (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team); 'Training, that's sort of the key thing, mentoring' (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer). However, time-constraints exist in some departments, limiting some managers' ability to develop staff as much as they would like to, given the fast organisational growth. This has led to frustration for some managers (Participant 14) and has fed into the development of different management styles for others (Participant 9) (See Appendix JJ for full quotes):

I tend to sort of like have a good management style of getting involved with all of my team. (...) I feel at the minute I just don't have that dedicated time and I can see the sort of slip in the team with the new starters, compared to my starters that started 2 year ago. So, that's something that I probably need to work on myself. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

Training, I think that was something maybe 'redacted' was lacking, especially when I started. So, when I got people underneath me, I was like, I want them to know what they're doing, as quickly as possible and I want them to feel supported and guided along the way. (...) in terms of leading projects, which is a bit less direct management but it's more kind of management of the activities of the project. (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)

In some departments, attempts have been made to encourage greater levels of face-to-face contact to promote improved teamwork and collaboration, with some managers believing that this is not as achievable in online working environments: 'I'm very much in favour of people working sort of in one space' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager). One manager's approach to mentoring and development focuses on peer mentoring and shadowing, with new starters shadowing the previous starters and organic structures of mentoring and development emerging as the department grows: 'You kind of create these structures (...) you've got maybe 5 people that are always looking to you for direction but once they get settled in people can come in and shadow them' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager). However, some managers have experienced resistance to this approach, and have struggled to organise face-to-face meetings, with staff not always happy to come to the office, or 'finding excuses' to work from home. In this context, generational differences were also discussed with some managers feeling that the younger generations 'hate being in the office' (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team) and exhibit more anti-social behaviours in the office relative to their older colleagues. Performance issues were also raised by one employee, who felt that remote workers struggle to grasp the changes if they primarily work remotely (Participant 14) (See Appendix KK for full quotes):

I can see that kind of generational thing that's come through. So, I feel like the very Gen 'Zeders', they love being at home, they hate being in the office. When they come in the office, they're like headphones on, that's it. They don't talk to you all day and then they don't really ask questions either and that's just kind of how it is. Whereas, like someone else, maybe more around my age, we'll speak, and we'll ask questions but maybe be a bit more on the phone and all of this kind of stuff and listen to music. I try and like push it as much as possible, like people being in, I have my whole team here on a Monday so that we're all together and like today we have a team meeting down stairs for the first time in ages, cos like everyone was always 'oh I've got to stay home today, I've got a delivery driver coming', and I'm like 'alright, ok'. (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)

And so, it's like, there's issues with his performance. You know, he's doing the designs that we were still doing 2 years ago when the business has moved on and it doesn't matter how many times his manager tries to help him, or develop him, he's just not grasping where we are, and I think that's maybe it's because he's just not been in the office and not been around that environment. Teams calls are great but there not always the best. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

As previously alluded to, some departments have more flattened management structures ('horizontal'), or more 'formal' channels of command ('vertical') with experiences varying on a day-to-

day basis within and between departments: 'I think within the HR team we do have probably more of a 'vertical structure' (Participant 14, HR Manager); 'on a project (...) formally you don't actually have authority over a lot of people, so it's sort of leading, without authority' (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development engineer). However, it is generally understood that more senior managers are ultimately accountable to the Board: 'So, to an extent it's more team based but I think as you get further up there's got to be lines of reporting to senior management and the Board' (Participant 10, Senior Estimating Engineer). Participant 9 expands on these sentiments in the following quote (See Appendix LL for full quotes):

It varies depending on projects because my interaction with other people in my department is sort of dependent on what project you're working on. I mean, in terms of within my projects it's sort of more horizontal, there's a lot of people I'll be managing, or overseeing they're activities but they'll actually be a lot more senior than I am within the company. (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)

At the organisation represented by Data Set 1, change has also ultimately brought about a level of division between departments and sectors of the business. This primarily plays out in tensions experienced between the factory and head-office: 'It sometimes feels like it's the office guys and the factory guys, kind of us against them' (Participant 13, Project Planner), and back-office versus technology driven departments: 'so the majority of innovation gets put into design and then we sort of trail behind trying to pick up everything else in a last-minute rush.' (Participant 14, HR Manager). Silos in companywide communication were also noted by participants, with attempts made to standardise management practices, and develop policies and procedures to begin to manage the change: 'What we're trying to move away from is this kind of siloed approach (...) everyone was doing things in their own way' (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer). Several participants also suggested that change at the organisation (Data Set 1) is 'hard to grasp' and expressed frustration around balancing the 'top-down' expectations (for changes to be quickly implemented), relative to the 'bottom-up' challenges of formalising policies and procedures and 'reigning in the change', as outlined by The Head of National Proposals (Participant 18). For the automation department, bringing in a member of staff whose primary job is to engage with employees to help them understand the changes and to 'champion' the benefits, has been successful in getting people on board and reducing resistance to change at the organisation represented by Data Set 1 (See Appendix MM for full quotes):

People are quite averse to the idea of automation because the immediate response is that they think it's going to take away their jobs, whereas when you're growing as fast as we are all it is going to do is enable that growth and we'll still need to hire more people, as we are. So, I think people become very comfortable in the way that they have done things for a long time and it's trying to encourage. We've hired in my team an implementation manager for automation and her job is pretty much 90 percent to just go around and speak to people and get their inputs on things, so that they feel heard, particularly in the factory, where robots and

things like that are coming in and that's been a really important thing but it took us a while to really get to that point where we kind of realised this needs to be a full time job because otherwise the automation changes are never going to happen, if you don't get the buy in from everybody. (Participant 11 VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

It is also evident that there is a 'bottom up' drive for more cohesion between departments, with official and unofficial social activities organised to help to mend some of the divides that have arisen at the organisation (Data Set 1). Most employees agree that social activities with work colleagues help to improve personal and professional relationships (or build coalitions) amongst the staff and between different departments, especially that do not normally interact. Whilst there are a limited number of official social events (summer BBQ's, Christmas parties) most social activities are arranged by the self-appointed unofficial 'social events organiser', who is trying to bring everyone together and 'get everyone to like open up' (Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer). However, several employees also expressed the challenges of engaging with the social activities as remote workers, or workers that do not live locally, or primarily work from home, as expressed by the Head of National Proposals (Participant 18) (See Appendix MM for full quotes):

I think it's probably down to the individuals, I think most people who aren't North East based its probably them who are like 'well I like to come up every month to catch up with people' and things like that. So, I think that's probably down to the individual and then from a social aspect there are things that happen, but I think that's more people with a longer time at the business and that culture has come through it sort of thing. So yeah, I think if you worked remotely, it would be under you own steam to try and build bonds. If people worked remotely and are used to doing that, that's great. If they haven't it's a big old challenge that you don't really consider, I think. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

5.2.4 Topic 3: 'Informal' and 'Formal' Procedures and Communication Channels

5.2.4.1 External and internal Communication mediums used ('formal'/'informal')

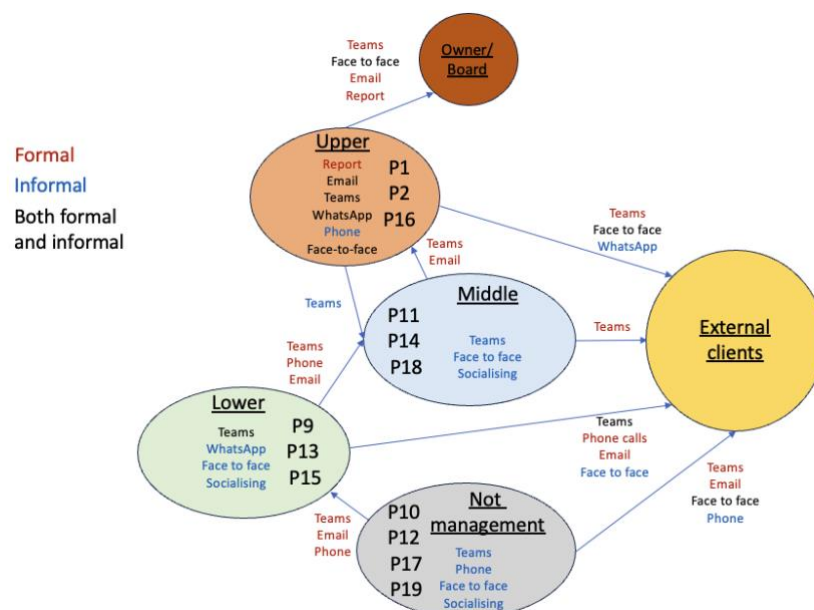
To establish how communication strategies are handled (internally and externally) at the organisation representing Data Set 1, the participants were asked whether they worked in a client facing role, or not. Just over half of the participants 53.8%, (7/13) stated they work in a client facing role. 71% (5/7) of participants interviewed who worked in a client facing role are men, relative to 28% (2/7) who are women (See Table 29 for a full break down of participants' responses).

Participant Number	Gender	Job Role	Client Facing (Yes/No)
Participant 1	Female	Director/freelancer	No
Participant 2	Male	Board Director	Yes
Participant 9	Male	Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer	Yes
Participant 10	Male	Senior Estimating Engineer	Yes
Participant 11	Male	VDC Automation Manager	No
Participant 12	Female	Assistant Sub-contract Buyer	No
Participant 13	Male	Project Planner	Yes
Participant 14	Female	HR Manager	No

Participant 15	Female	Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team	Yes
Participant 16	Male	Technology Director	Yes
Participant 17	Female	Marketing Assistant	No
Participant 18	Male	Head of National Proposals	-
Participant 19	Female	Assistant PA to the Directors of the Company	Yes

Table 29. Staff in Client Facing Roles who Communicate ('Formally'/'Informally') Externally.

Rodgers (2007; 2010) suggests that informal and formal (structured and unstructured) communication and leadership strategies can positively reduce resistance to change in organisations. Participants were also asked to provide information relating to the types of 'informal' and 'formal' communication they utilise internally (within the organisation, Data Set 1) and externally (with clients and third parties). Figure 5-1 below outlines the communication strategies outlined by the upper, middle, lower and non-management employees interviewed. The red text in Figure 5-1 represents 'formal' mediums of communication, the blue text represents 'informal' mediums of communication, and the black text represents communication mediums that are both 'formal' and 'informal'. The types of communication outlined in Figure 5-1 ('informal', 'formal' and both 'formal' and 'informal') are the mediums most commonly mentioned during discussions with participants, they are intended to provide a visualisation of 'trends' in behaviour ('informal' and 'formal') and how these strategies play out within the broader hierarchy (lower, middle and upper management structures), and relative to those utilised with external clients. The strategies outlined within each bubble (not management, lower, middle, upper) represent peer communication with employees at a similar level (horizontal) (See Appendix S for a full breakdown of the 'informal' and 'formal' strategies utilised internally within the organisation represented by Data Set 1, and externally with clients).



(Figure 5-1)***'Informal' and 'Formal' Communication Strategies (Horizontal/Vertical/Internal/External) for Non-management, Lower, Middle, and Upper management***

Figure 5-1 suggests that employees in non-management roles utilise the most 'informal' communication strategies horizontally (between peers) and vertically upwards (to middle management). The most common 'informal' communication mediums utilised are by non-management employees, such as: Microsoft Teams; phone calls; face-to-face meetings and (unofficial) social events, or socialising. The most common 'formal' channels of communication (vertically) upwards to lower and middle management are Microsoft Teams; email; and structured (often weekly) phone calls. For lower management, the 'informal' communication mediums most often mentioned (horizontally, between peers) are WhatsApp, face-to-face discussions and (unofficial) socialising. Similar to non-management the most commonly mentioned 'formal' forms of communication (vertically upwards) to middle and upper management are Microsoft Teams; email; and structured phone calls, with Microsoft Teams utilised for both 'formal' and 'informal' forms of communication.

For middle management, the 'informal' communication mediums most commonly utilised are Microsoft Teams; face-to-face discussion; and (unofficial) socialising. The most common 'formal' channels of communication mediums used vertically (to upper management and the board) are Microsoft Teams and email. Middle management appears to have the fewest connections in terms of both 'informal' and 'formal' communication channels, with Figure 5-1 suggesting that much of their working day is spent in Microsoft Teams meetings, as expressed by the following quotes:

Actually, I mean, on reflection, my calendar is full of Teams meetings, that's basically all I do now, is just like back-to-back Teams meetings all week long. (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

It's all on Teams, like everything, every person in the office is on Teams all the time, and it's not something I'm used to. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

Middle managers also appear to have fewer 'formal' lines of communication (vertically) upwards to senior management, with Microsoft Teams used (most commonly) for 'informal' communication vertically (downwards) by senior managers and Board members to communicate with middle management. As such, Figure 5-1 suggests that there are relatively standardised procedures for communication up to middle management, but less rigorous procedures in place for two-way vertical ('top-down' and 'bottom up') communication between the Board and middle management. Given that middle management are potentially the 'bridge' between the 'top-down' vision of the Board, and the 'bottom-up' changes stemming from employees and lower management structures, this is potentially a problematic trend, that could lead to division between teams and communication issues with information not filtering down the hierarchy, or up from the workforce to the Board.

Furthermore, Figure 5-1 suggests that upper management and Board members utilise 'formal' reporting procedures horizontally (with peers) and vertically up the hierarchy, and a mix of 'formal' and 'informal' communication strategies (horizontally), including: Microsoft Teams; WhatsApp, face-to-face communication and emails. 'Informal' phone discussions are also commonplace for upper managers and Board members. Formal Microsoft Teams meetings are also utilised by upper managers and Board members communicating with external clients. External communication appears to be relatively standardised with non-management, lower and middle management primarily communicating formally with external clients via Teams, structured, 'formal' phone calls, with some 'formal' and 'informal' face-to-face communication (typically site visits). In contrast, upper management or members of the Board sometimes utilise WhatsApp externally in some instances (outside office hours) for 'informal' communications:

It's probably used now for more informal communications probably more outside hours where you don't want to pick up the phone to somebody. So, WhatsApp has become a useful outside of hours just share something. Communication, which wasn't there a few years ago. (Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)

5.2.4.2 Division in the Workplace, Relationships Building and Barriers to Effective Communication

Several participants alluded to there being challenges around both 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies at the company (Data Set 1), with frustrations vocalised around silos and ineffective communication channels ('formal' and 'informal') between departments, particularly between head office and the factory: 'Yeah, I would say that I think teams are quite siloed and it's really difficult to try and bridge that gap.' (Participant 14, HR Manager); uneven distribution of resources with some departments falling behind; and a lack of companywide ('formal') communication, with upper and middle management decisions often not 'trickling down' to other departments: 'I still think communication is something that we're not really great at.' (Participant 14, HR Manager). Concerns were also voiced around the overreliance of 'Microsoft Teams' for 'formal'/'informal' communication and online/hybrid meetings at the organisation representing Data Set 1: 'Some people I haven't seen for like 4 months, who I talk to everyday which is crazy' (Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team), with one employee believing it 'impacts internal communications' (Participant 18). Many employees also find it harder to connect with other colleagues (and clients) at a 'human level' in online settings with some employees feeling that online meetings lead to more 'transactional', 'pseudo relationships' (Participant 9) (See Appendix NN for full quotes):

I think the culture in 'redacted' is very much Teams based, and you could have 4 people all in the same building and you'd have the meeting on Teams, which I find a little strange. (...) I personally don't mind the Teams, client ones, they're kind of ok. I think I find Teams has impacted internal discussions more. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

I do think you definitely do need to have a number of in person meetings because I think what tends to happen, until you've actually physically met the person, it's quite an odd, almost kind of like pseudo relationship you have with them because you've never really met them (...) I think it's better to meet someone you're working with in person as soon as possible. So, you have that sort of in person proper relationship with them, rather than just having everything virtual. (Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)

Some employees mentioned poor ('formal') communication around new starters: 'We used to get emails of a new starter (...) but that's kind of simmered down at the minute.' (Assistant PA to the Directors of the Company), with some departments struggling to 'catch up' and streamline communication channels given the fast growth of the company, feeling 'left behind', or 'out of the loop' in terms of the organisational changes: 'It's really important to keep 'remote' employees kind of in the loop (...) so that people feel part of the company culture here.' (Participant 17, Marketing Assistant) (See Appendix NN for full quotes). Several employees noted that opportunities for 'informal' social activities outside of work are important for building relationships: 'You get them talking and then you know, you're more willing to help each other' (Participant 13, Project Planner); 'I don't think morale is great here at the moment and I think any way you can kind of encourage people to come together, that's great.' (Participant 17, Marketing Assistant) and that more could be done in terms of promoting this culture (officially) from the organisation: 'The company's quite full on, everyone's so busy all the time, I feel like there's not that kind of let back of what we give' (Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team). As a result, 'informal' (unofficial) social events appear to have become common place (monthly). However, this appears to mostly benefit employees living locally to head-office, with remote workers not always experiencing this 'informal' aspect of the workplace culture, as expanded upon by Participants 18 and 19 (See Appendix OO for full quotes):

Some of our staff also try and organise on the side like nights out, so we can get to know people on an outside basis as well, and just that way there's a flow of conversation (...) like get to know them that way because obviously with a lot of our staff they aren't on site so you don't technically see them, you're on Teams calls with them but even then not everyone puts there cameras on and you just see either their initials or a picture. (Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors of the company, Female, Age 28)

If you worked remotely, it would be under you own steam to have to try and build bonds, I think. Which is challenging 'cos if people worked remotely and are used to doing that, that's great, if they haven't it's a big old challenge that you don't really consider, I think. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

5.2.4.3 Formalising Strategy, Policies, and Procedures

Reflecting on the (informal/formal) dynamics of change initiatives is deemed to be an essential component of 'change leadership' (Rodgers 2010). Notably, a number of issues were also raised around having adequate reflection time, given the pace of growth to formalise and streamline internal

policies and procedures with pressures felt around keeping up with the fast expansion, and having the ability to make policies more than just 'fit for purpose':

I think we're so focused on ensuring that we've got the correct policies in place, with adhering to guidance on gender pay equality and there's a lot of new things that the business is now starting to do because of the growth. We're just ensuring that that is all fit for purpose before we look at anything to streamline any of our sort of processes in house. I would definitely say it's probably the biggest downfall I think it is a bit like Fred Flintstone, in his car and he's personally driving the car with his feet. I think that's where currently it is, especially the back office teams, that's where we're sitting at. Whereas, you know, you've got the likes of design and the factory and you're starting to get automation up into there and they're cautious and we're still in that little car in the back just trying to tug along (laughs). We're trying to pick up the pieces of how fast the business has grown and at least just keep our head above the water from a legal perspective, and that we're adhering to everything that we need to do, once we've got all of them procedures embedded in place, then sort of sit back and look at our own processes internally as an HR team. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

5.2.4.4 HR Policy Documents: Data Set 1

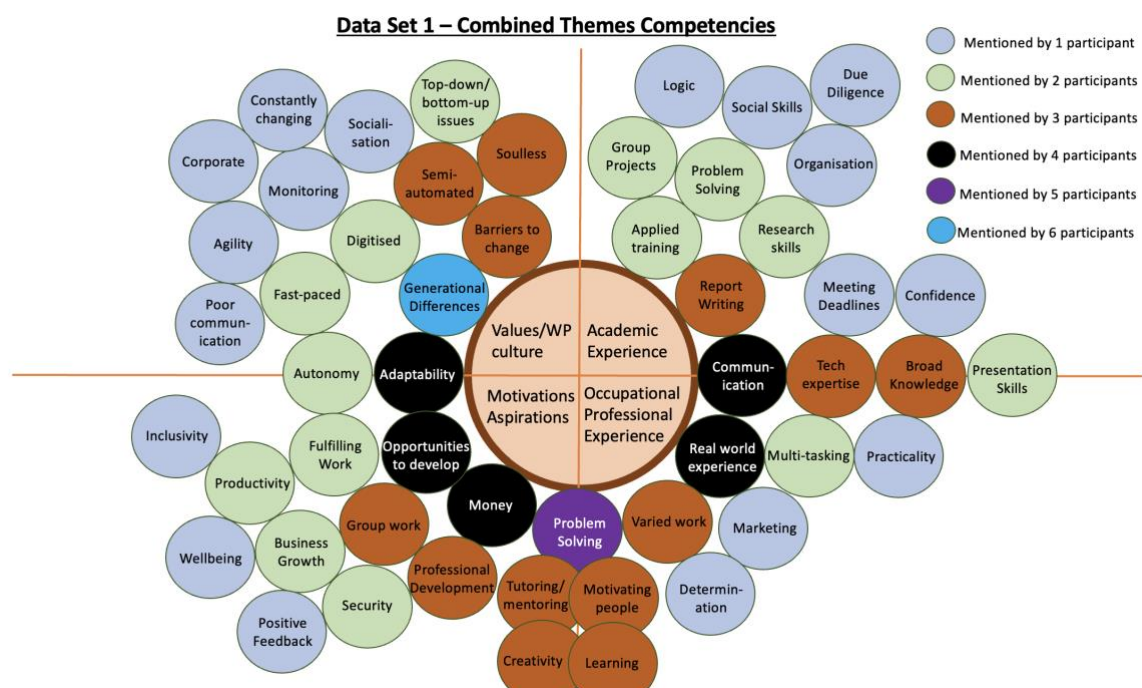
Several policy and procedure documents were provided by a senior member of the organisation representing Data Set 1 to the researcher. The researcher was permitted to read and make notes but not to include the policies in their raw form in the thesis. Any identifying details of the organisation (Data Set 1) have been redacted. The documents viewed by the researcher were around issues such as: 1) Paternity Policy; 2) Grievance Procedures; 3) Codes of Conduct; 4) Maternity Leave and Antenatal Care Policy; 5) the Culture Statement Policy; 6) the Equal Opportunities Policy; and 7) the People Strategy Policy. Field Notes were made relating to these documents. The summary of the notes of one of the policies and one of the procedures has been provided (the Codes of Conduct Policy; Grievance Policy) in the following section. The format was relatively standardised across all the policy and procedure documents read, with these documents deemed to be relatively representative (as an example) of the types of 'formal' policy and procedure-based messaging at the organisation representing Data Set 1 (See Appendix PP for field notes and Summaries of the 'codes of conduct' and 'grievance procedure' policy documents).

Generally, the policy and procedure documents are relatively impersonal, and appear to deal with primarily 'legal compliance' issues around key issues, to ensure that staff and the company are protected from legal action should any issues arise. Given the fast growth of the organisation, many of these policies and procedures have been produced at break-neck speed, in departments that are sometimes short-staffed (Participant 14, HR Manager), with many of the documents failing to communicate the 'personality' or 'culture' of the organisation represented in Data Set 1 communicated by participants in the interviews. This is consistent with the HR Manager's description of her department's progress to date, utilising formal communications and policies described as being 'fit for purpose before we look at anything to streamline' (Participant 14, HR Manager).

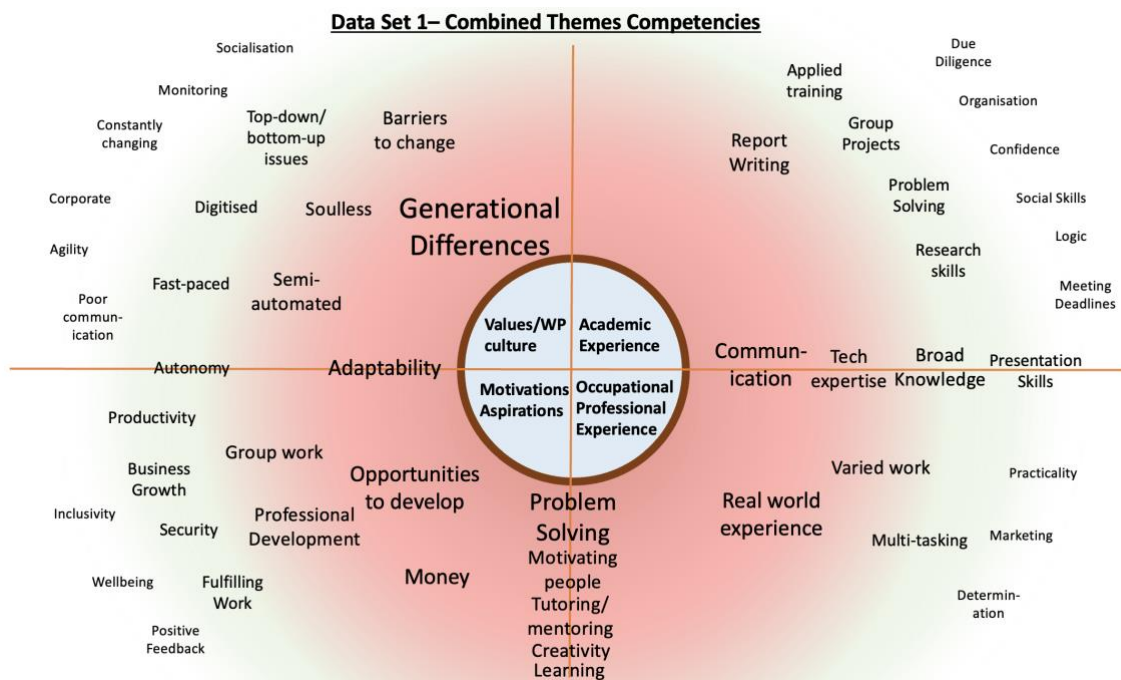
5.2.5 Topic 4: Combining Competencies in Teams and Workplace Culture

Pressures related to digitalisation and automation are key areas of concern for modern workers, who are adapting to new ways of working in organisational settings (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Figure 5-2 shows a visual representation of the combined themes identified for all the participants of Data Set 1. The competency bubbles shaded light blue represent individual responses, or competencies mentioned only once by participants, the green bubbles are mentioned by two separate participants, the orange bubbles are mentioned by three, the black bubbles are mentioned by four, with the purple (5 participants) and bright blue bubbles (6 participants) representing the competencies or themes that were most frequently mentioned by employees of the organisation represented in Data Set 1. Figure 5-3 shows a heat map of the same data, with items closer to the centre, larger and closer on the colour spectrum to red more frequently mentioned, with the competencies further away from the centre and closer to the green end of the colour spectrum mentioned less frequently.

As seen in Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 (below), several of the most frequently mentioned competencies for 'motivations' and 'aspirations' cross over with competencies derived from the employees' 'professional experience', namely these are: Problem Solving (mentioned by 5 participants); Motivating People (Mentioned by 3 participants); Learning (mentioned by 3 participants); Creativity (mentioned by 3 participants); and Tutoring/Mentoring (mentioned by 3 participants), suggesting that generally staff are motivated by, engaged with and stimulated by their professional work, with many of the competencies aligned with finding fulfilment in professional work (problem solving, tutoring/mentoring, motivating people), personal development (learning) and being creative.



(Figure 5-2)
Data Set 1 – Combined Themes Competencies



(Figure 5-3)
Data Set 1 – Combined Themes Competencies (Heat-map)

Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 also suggest that: Money (mentioned by 4 participants); Opportunities to develop (mentioned by 4 participants); Adaptability (mentioned by 4 participants); Group work (mentioned by 3 Participants) and Professional development (mentioned by 4 participants) are also strong motivators/aspirations. Adaptability also crosses over with the views on workplace culture suggesting that some employees may feel highly motivated by having to quickly adapt to changes at the organisation representing Data Set 1 in line with the fast expansion of the company. Autonomy (mentioned by 2 participants) also crosses over between motivations and workplace culture, suggesting this is a feature that is valued in the workplace culture by some. The most commonly mentioned themes for workplace culture were Generational Differences (mentioned by 6 participants); Adaptability (mentioned by 4 participants); Barriers to Change (mentioned by 3 participants); Soulless (mentioned by 3 participants); and Semi-automated (mentioned by 3 participants).

For Professional Experience, the most commonly mentioned competencies were: Varied Work (mentioned by 3 participants); Real World Experience (mentioned by 4 participants); Problem Solving (mentioned by 5 participants); and Communication (mentioned by 4 participants) (See Figure 5-2 and 5-3). There was also a crossover observed between competencies identified for participants relating to academic and professional experience, such as: Communication (mentioned by 4 participants);

Technical Expertise (mentioned by 3 participants); Broad Knowledge (mentioned by 3 participants) and Presentation Skills (mentioned by 2 participants). Interestingly, these competencies suggest that employees are actively utilising their academic skills in the professional environment, and that these skills are also developed upon in the professional environment. Given, that the organisation is also made up of a lot of younger employees that are 'learning on the job' the results may also be representative of this trend.

Figure 5-2 and 5-3 also suggests there are fewer competencies shared by participants in relation to academic experience, with the most mentioned competencies being: Report Writing (mentioned by 3 participants); Research Skills (mentioned by 2 participants); Applied Training (mentioned by 2 participants); Problem Solving (mentioned by 2 participants); and Group Projects (mentioned by 2 participants). Many of these competencies focus on the team element (Group Projects and Communication) and more practical academic skills required that help them be successful in their roles (Problem Solving, Report Writing and Research Skills). Notably, no crossover was observed between competencies for academic experience and workplace culture, suggesting that professional experience, motivations and aspirations may have a greater influence shaping employees' experience of the workplace culture, relative to the skills they have gained from academia.

5.2.6 Topic 5: Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Development

5.2.6.1 Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff

Several participants mentioned recruiting the 'right people' can be a barrier for developing effective teams at the organisation (Data Set 1). From a 'top-down' perspective, Participant 2 suggests that 'the right' people are not easy to find due to the organisation (represented in Data set 1) trying to 'reinvent the wheel': 'They certainly don't come from the traditional industries that we've been working in (...) and finding people who give a damn.' (Participant 2, Board Director). Participant 12 expressed difficulty recruiting on their team due to the role being 'a niche job': 'My manager is the only one who's like got a full understanding of the sub-contractor buying role' (Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer). Barriers are also evident at the organisation represented in Data Set 1 in relation to staff 'not knowing who they (staff) are' due to the massive expansion and poor ('formal') communications around new starters: 'I do think getting introduced to everyone would be a great aspect to achieve that, to overcome that barrier' (Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors). Participant 16 (Technology Director) also notes there are 'drastic changes' to communication styles, with challenges around managing keeping people 'up to speed'. Participant 15 (Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team) also suggested there is a shift in the working culture, as the company has

expanded with a move towards a 'corporate cycle' feeding into frustrations, and acting as a barrier for teams (See Appendix QQ for full quotes):

100 percent, 10 years ago everybody used to get into a meeting room, sit down, this is what we're all doing, right everybody scatter off and get it done (...) now we're ending up with dedicated Teams calls per day with 30 + people in them to go through different segments of different projects. So, communication styles drastically changed. I think from an improved sort of holistic approach seen as the company's scaling and growing, I think it's the rate which makes it challenging (...) it's hard to keep everybody up to speed and it's hard to know everybody anymore. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)

You're kind of stuck in that corporate cycle like you go to work, you go home, you come back to work kind of thing. I think that's probably something that maybe a HR perspective they could kind of take into a thought. (Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)

Participant 13 notes an enabler in relation to the importance of adequate leadership, training, and management and 'managing the risks' of inexperienced young graduates, with guidance from experienced team members: 'I'd say it's trying to get that experience in the new guys that you've hired before getting even more people.' (Participant 13, Project Planner). Having a clear pathway for development 'you know where your track is' and structures in place more akin to a corporate set-up can have a positive impact for staff (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team). Participant 12 suggests clear leadership and 'focusing on one goal' are strong enablers for team cohesion, expanded upon in the following section (See Appendix QQ for full quotes):

Enabler wise, I think, obviously everyone wants to do well, everyone's focused on one goal, sometimes it's just the case that teams don't talk to one another during projects but everyone knows what the final goal is and I think, even though we have the meetings, it's not necessarily everything gets resolved in the meetings and then you'll hear people mention feedback when at the end of the day if you're here late someone will be like 'oh well I'm very annoyed because this teams doing this and this teams doing this' and they're not all working collaboratively. (Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer, Female, Age 23)

5.2.6.2 Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth

Resistance to change was mentioned by several participants as a barrier for organisational change and growth. Participant 14 suggests that some employees are inflexible in relation to new work practices with some holding on to traditional views around how work should be conducted at the organisation represented in Data Set 1: 'Resistance to change, doesn't help. You still have people who want to work how they worked 20 years ago' (Participant 14, HR Manager). Generational differences are also mentioned by Participant 16 in relation to 'resistance to change' at the organisation, with adoption of technology poorer in older generations relative to the younger staff: 'There's a generational gap where people want to learn new things technology wise and people that don't' (Participant 16, Technology Director). Resistance to automation was also observed to be a particular barrier with people worrying they will lose their jobs due to implementation of 'automation' at the organisation represented in

Data Set 1: 'They think it's going to take away their jobs' (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager). Silos in data and communication and 'negative thinking' were mentioned by Participant 11 (VDC Automation Manager) in relation to barriers to organisational change, with division between the factory and head office featuring numerous times in responses. Participant 14 also outlines issues with communication and the different experiences of the factory workers, relative to head office, as expanded upon in the following quotes (See Appendix RR for full quotes):

So, silos in data, silos in communication, everything being in spreadsheets, people not talking to each other. Yeah, I think it's not just something that happens in 'redacted', it happens everywhere where there's just massive communication issues and people just focus on their day job, rather than trying to think about how the business as a whole would work better if everyone collaborated and communicated better. That's probably one thing, another thing is the negativity and negative thinking, and you'll get that a lot with change. (...) before it's always been a head office versus factory vibe, and that's something I've been trying for a long time to break down but at the end of the day it's not something that you can easily change but when you've got someone like that who's there all the time kind of listening to people, building those bridges, it does make a really big difference. (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

I think also one of our downfalls is the big divide between (...) probably head-office and the factory. I mean I go to the factory at least twice a week, spend a full day down there and I know the guys at the factory quite well. However, I think if you were to do maybe a piece on some of the guys who were on the floor that would be totally different to maybe someone else. They don't get to see sort of all the communication pieces. (Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)

Both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' trust and strong leadership are deemed by Participant 17 to be an enabler: 'Like your team trusting you that you'll kind of get the job done (...) putting trust in others as well.' (Participant 17, Marketing Assistant). Being innovative and 'thinking differently' is seen as an enabler for 'organisational change' by Participant 15: 'They think differently (...) that's why we've kind of had to move into the that kind of corporate side of things.' (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team). However, 'innovation' is deemed to be both a 'strength and a weakness' by Participant 14: 'We need to just stop and focus, (...) we're competing really good (...) but let's just work it on the next project rather than trying to fit it into the one that we've already nearly completed.' (Participant 14, HR Manager). Participant 18 suggests a lack of trust in leadership, challenges with 'owner-managed' companies and poor delegation of leadership is the biggest barrier to organisational change at the organisation represented in Data Set 1 (See Appendix RR for full quotes):

I think the biggest barrier is the ability to move from a small company to a big company, leadership needs to be able to delegate and allow for heads of departments, of which I am one, to do their thing that they were employed to do. So, I think, owner-managed companies, when they're in their smaller state those key parties are involved in every single decision that happens across the board. That can't be translated into a bigger company. So, therefore an element of delegation needs to happen. So, I'd say that's probably the biggest thing. (Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)

5.2.6.3 Hierarchical Dimensions of Organisational Change and the 'Gig Economy'

A number of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' processes that impact the workplace culture, and organisational change were highlighted by participants. Participant 16 suggested that the organisation represented in Data Set 1 needs to 'evaluate companywide communications', establish more rigorous training procedures and model 'work from home' policies from larger organisations, that are more fit for purpose: 'You might have core set hours within the company, you know, that everybody needs to be working, and the rest is flex', in addition to understanding cultural changes and younger generations expectations of the workplace such as appropriate 'attire': 'it's sort of changing quite a bit throughout the industry and you know how you keep up with that, and develop that culture, I think.' (Participant 16, Technology Director) (See Appendix SS for full quotes).

One participant suggested that 'top down' structures can help to put processes and policies in place to guide the workplace culture but the workplace culture at the organisation represented in Data Set 1 stems more from the 'bottom up': 'There's been a lot of cultural change within the last 3 years that's come from the bottom up' (Participant 16, Technology Director), 'with generational differences playing a part in these dynamics'. Generational differences are also mentioned by Participant 15 who believes cultural change is a mix of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' processes and that expectations of the young team from senior staff are hard to manage: 'a lot of people are just learning, and I think the staff at the top are wanting things to run more smoothly.' (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team). Social activities provide a forum to voice 'I'm maybe struggling with this' to senior members of staff (Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team) and appear to influence the workplace culture at the organisation represented in Data Set 1, with some participants feeling that it 'bridges the divide' between different departments as you 'get to know' staff in other departments (Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors). Participant 2 also suggests upper management are given a lot of autonomy and have an influence on cultural change at the organisation represented in Data Set 1 (See Appendix SS for full Quotes):

So, I think there's been a very sort of steep change and there are still certain people that are very stuck in the old way of doing something, most people who are young, we just hop onto you tube and watch a video what they need to do, learn how to do it, and then do it. Whereas somebody might look at that and say why are you watching a video. Well, I'm just learning what I need to do. So, 5 minutes, learn, great, now I can do it but there's like a gap there, where that's still sort of seen as well why are you, you know, it's weird. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)

So, I would say a high level sense of direction coming from the top, but we actually have senior managers in different departments and teams where we give them a lot of autonomy because of the nature of our business and they do come up with strategies that we do work through and evolve, so it isn't just top down because of the need to motivate the young people to allow them to own, to have ownership of their roles and be responsible for their roles they

are also given a lot of head in relation to developing new ways of doing things. And that's also true in the factory environment where if someone comes up with an idea of how to do something differently than that's usually adopted. (Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)

A number of participants also noted challenges around incorporating freelancers and 'gig workers' at the organisation represented by Data Set 1, with challenges noted around wages (consultants) pushing the company to recruit more graduates: 'I guess it pushed us into having a larger graduate base actually (...) it was pretty much 60 percent contractors essentially, whereas now I think we're probably on 5 percent' (Participant 16, Technology Director); challenges for recruiting a 'dynamic' team as a company is growing with short-term contracts, and training/recruiting from within, rather than sourcing out work to 'gig workers', where possible (Participant 11). Furthermore, Participant 1 also contextualises issues around the 'gig economy' and how organisational change in relation to AI will lead to many more people engaging with forms of 'gig work' in the future (See Appendix SS for full quotes):

From my perspective of growing a dynamic team that is gonna inspire change for a business, I'm not sure how I could have facilitated that with very short contract work. I think it's about building a culture and giving people the chance to learn things they wouldn't have been able to in another environment. I think that's how we're gonna retain a lot of these young clever people as well. In my team there's someone who's learning web development and java script because we have a need there, we hired that person to come in more generally for sort of a BIM related activity but they want to do that, there's a need there for them to do it and I was quite happy to let that person learn that skill for 3 months because I know that's something that we're gonna need in the future and it's kind of building that. Yeah, giving people the incentive to stay because they know that they can follow these different routes, you might not be able to facilitate that when you've not got a full-time employed culture. (Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)

I just think that particularly with the evolution of AI that 'gig work' in inverted commas is going to become much more routine, that we are going to see less and less people working in offices in a 9-5 environment, I think we are going to have more people working from home, having more autonomy over their lives. I think people being chained to an office chair in a city building is going to become a thing of the past, and given the uncertainty over how AI is going to impact on the world of work learning the flexibility, the entrepreneurship the self-starting skills that gig workers have to learn is going to be life skills that most people are going to need to acquire for the future. (Participant 1, Director/freelancer, Female, Age 63)

5.2.7 Data Set 1: SWOT Analysis and TOWS Matrix

The following section summarises a series of follow up questions that were asked of two of the participations of Data Set 1. These participants are both experienced members of the organisation representing Data Set 1, who operate at different ends of the organisational spectrum, with Participant 2 being a Board Member (Business Development) and Participant 1 being a freelancer that provides a bespoke product to the company (Data Set 1). Participants 1 and 2 were asked a series of questions in relation to the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats of their businesses and

the marketplace with a focus on organisational change. This was conceived as a 'sense checking' measure to assess whether the responses provided align with the initial themes emerging from the interview data and to establish the (similar and different) perspectives of a 'Board member' and a 'freelancer' operating at the same company, in the same marketplace, from opposing sides of the marketplace. Table 30 outlines the initials codes in relation to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Condensed codes have been provided in Figure 5-4 and Figure 5.5.

Participant number	Participant 1	Participant 2
Threats	Nature of the market is changing.	Traditional marketplace relies on consultants for design (not needed at the organisation represented in Data Set 1). Access to government procurement.
Opportunities	Constrained by current contract. Cannot evolve business. Non-disclosure agreement.	Adapting to cultural differences. Youth versus middle age differences. Ability to transition quickly. Coordination. Lots of problems to be solved. Make data driven decisions
Weaknesses	It is bespoke and cannot be repackaged for other clients	Adapting to train new people
Strengths	Knowledge of client and marketplace. Bespoke product.	Innovative product. Quick delivery of projects. Changes to the marketplace.
Role at company	Director/freelancer	Board Director (Data Set 1)

**Table 30. Data Set 1: SWOT Table (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Strengths)
Organisational Change**

As shown in Table 30 and Figures 5-4 and 5-5, both Participants 1 and 2 see the unique selling point of their product as one of the key strengths for their businesses in the marketplace with Participant 1 describing their services as a 'bespoke product' and Participant 2 describing the organisation representing Data Set 1 as having an 'innovative product'. Participant 2 also considers the 'quick delivery of projects' and 'changes to the marketplace' to be core strengths for the company (Data Set 1), with 'knowledge of the client and marketplace' being more important for Participant 2. Interestingly, whilst Participant 1 suggests that 'changes to the marketplace' are a strength for the company that represents Data Set 1, these factors are deemed to be a threat for Participant 2 or 'the nature of the marketplace changing' (See Figure 5-4 and 5-5). Participant 2 deems the 'gig economy' focus of the construction industry to be a threat for the company that represents Data Set 1. Participant 1 struggled to provide 'opportunities' during discussions, instead listing a number of barriers that blocked opportunities including: being constrained by 'current contract'; 'non-disclosure agreement'; and struggling to 'evolve the business'. In contrast, Participant 2 was focused on how the company that represents Data Set 1 could capitalise on 'cultural differences' and 'youth versus middle

age differences', with the company's ability to 'transition quickly' seen as a big opportunity. The greatest weakness expressed by Participant 1 was relating to the bespoke nature of the product which Participant 1 cannot 'repackage for other clients', with 'training new people' seen as the greatest weakness for the organisation (See Figures 5-4 and 5-5).

The following section involves conducting a partial TOWS analysis where typically each variable (Threat, Opportunity, Weakness, and Strength) is tested against the other to draw further comparisons within and between participants' responses. In the context of this thesis this analysis does not intend to provide 'recommendations' but rather to examine the pressures on each Participant's business and come up with hypothetical solutions to draw out potential parallels between the variables and to attempt to understand the pressures present in the marketplace where Participant 1 and 2 and the organisation that represents Data Set 1 operate. As such, the analysis has been conducted in relation to where the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats relate to each other for Participant 1 and Participant 2. Figure 5-6 demonstrates the structure of a typical TOWS analysis.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Knowledge of Client and marketplace Bespoke Product	Bespoke product. Cannot repackage for other clients
Opportunities	Threats
Constrained by current contract Cannot evolve business Non disclosure Agreement	The nature of the Market is changing

(Figure 5-4)
SWOT Analysis Table: Participant 1 (Freelancer, Data Set 1)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Innovative product Quick delivery of projects Changes to the marketplace	Adapting to train new people
Opportunities	Threats
Youth versus middle age differences Cultural differences Ability to transition quickly	Traditional marketplace relies on consultants for design Government procurement

(Figure 5-5)

SWOT Analysis Table: Participant 2 (Board Director, Data Set 1)

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Strengths	X	✓	✓	✓
Weaknesses	X	X	✓	✓
Opportunities	X	X	X	✓
Threats	X	X	X	X

(Figure 5-6)

TOWS Matrix Diagram

5.2.7.1 Strengths Versus Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Participant 1 could use knowledge of the marketplace to create a new bespoke product aimed at SMEs in the early stages of their business development, actively looking to supplement their teams with expert knowledge not available 'in house'. Opportunities to evolve the business could also be sought in relation to providing novel ways to package a bespoke product that can be adapted to a range of clients, or in non-competing areas of the marketplace. Additionally, providing a bespoke product to the company that represents Data Set 1 could be integrated into a training and developing programme for staff, where there is currently a particular need.

Participant 2 could 'innovate' to find training solutions to address the weaknesses expressed of 'adapting to train new people'. Informal mentoring, currently commonplace for the company that represents Data Set 1 could be supplemented with an online or technology-based training programme designed to encourage companywide communication and provide an additional forum for new starters to engage with each other, in addition to promoting further workplace learning and continued professional development of current staff aligned with a number of desirable competencies expressed by staff in Section 5.2.5 (Combining Competencies in Teams and Workplace Culture).

5.2.7.2 Summary: Data Set 1: SWOT Analysis and TOWS Matrix

It is evident from the SWOT analysis and (partial) TOWS Matrix conducted that there is a level of inequality and an imbalance between the power relationship between the company that represents Data Set 1 and Participant 1. There appears to be a focus on internal development and training of staff at the organisation, and a shift away from utilising consultancy services, with opportunities focused on internal processes rather than external pressures. Fast adaptation to organisational change to facilitate 'fast delivery' of existing products, and training also appears to be a primary focus for the organisation, with changes to the marketplace benefiting the organisation (Data Set 1) and being perceived as negative to Participant 1. The partial TOWS analysis suggests that in order for Participant 1 to have long term compatibility with the organisation and adaptability to changes in the marketplace, finding strategies to either target a bespoke product towards a business at an earlier stage of its development, or adapting the product provided to incorporate elements of training for in-house teams could future proof their services in the changing marketplace. It is important to note that these are merely hypothetical recommendations, aimed at drawing out the key pressures experienced by each party (the company that represents Data Set 1 and Participant 1) and to unpick some of the challenges around changes to the marketplace and organisational change in relation to Data Set 1. This procedure additionally provided an opportunity for engaging with processes of 'reflexivity' and 'bracketing' (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012) whilst undertaking the field work and during provisional analysis of the data.

5.2.8 Summary: Findings Data Set 1 - Established Large Firm

Chapter 5.2 presented the results for Data Set 1. Section 5.2.1 established a strong hybrid working culture at the company that represents Data Set 1, characterised by tension around employee and manager preference for, or against 'work from home' practices. Broadly, it is evident that the organisation has shifted alongside much of the working world towards a hybrid focused workplace culture, developing new routines and processes following the Covid-19 pandemic (Sonjit et al. 2021) and in response to the 'aggressive expansion' of the company.

Section 5.2.2 established several themes in relation to questions around the 'gig economy', with definitions characterised as: forms of insecure work; how 'gig work' relates to SMEs and large firms; or in relation to cultural change (a higher prevalence of gig work in recent years). Just under a third of participants interviewed had experience of working in the gig economy. These experiences ranged from (long-term) professional consultancy careers, setting up businesses (leading to full time work) and 'side hustles' whilst studying. Additionally, the company that represents Data Set 1 has shifted towards a model of internal talent development, despite the construction industry typically being a (consultancy based) marketplace associated with the gig economy (especially in design sectors of the business). Challenges around taxation and legislation of freelancers and 'gig workers' (Burke and Cowling 2020) may be a partial driver of this, in addition to the company (that represents Data Set 1) emerging as a 'product' based company, rather than a 'service based' company, more traditionally found in the construction industry sector. Despite the reduced use of freelancers and gig workers at the organisation (in recent years), they still provide specialised or 'expert' skills, filling gaps in knowledge and skill sets of the current (young) full-time workforce.

Section 5.2.3 established that organisational change (at the company that represents Data Set 1) is driven by 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' organisational pressures, including fast organisational expansion, youth recruitment and development, and (emerging) standardisation of collaborative leadership strategies. Additionally, broader cultural changes are commonplace, with outward looking policies and procedures facilitating a more culturally diverse workplace environment and a younger, energetic workforce. Time pressures, and resistance to face-to-face (office-based) meetings also represents a cultural change in light of underdeveloped 'work from home' policies that lack refinement around aspects such as the 'core hours' each employee is required to work (per week). Emerging tensions related to managing change also represent a challenge for the organisation (Data Set 1), with employees experiencing difficulties building relationships (in online environments), back-office teams and the factory falling behind some of the more technology driven departments and failing to 'grasp the change'. Additionally, there is companywide 'resistance to change', particularly in relation to automation and generational differences around adoption of new technologies. Consequently, some managers have experienced frustration and are making proactive attempts to 'reign in the change'.

Section 5.2.4 established a possible bottleneck in 'formal' and 'informal' communication strategies at middle management level with fewer standardised communication channels and a heavily Microsoft Teams-based culture. It is noteworthy, that 'talent development' appears to be a strong focus for those in non and lower management positions, with clear development pathways mapped out for the

younger graduates but no clear routes identified for middle managers to move up the chain, leaving middle management potentially discentivised relative to their more junior colleagues, whilst also experiencing unique challenges in relation to managing both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' (vertical) communications. Silos in communication between departments and animosity between head office and the factory also represent unique challenges for the organisation (Data Set 1).

Section 5.2.5 suggests that many of the participants' motivations include considerations, such as 'money', professional development, opportunities to develop and mentoring. The social elements of the workplace (group work) were frequently mentioned by employees suggesting these elements may be highly desirable to foster within the workplace culture, with a number of competencies related to motivations highly aligned with professional competencies for employees. However, there is a level of discontent in relation to the (emerging) workplace culture with many participants characterising it as 'soulless', and citing issues around generational differences.

Section 5.2.6 established a number of barriers for effective teams (Data Set 1) relating to recruitment; poor 'formal' communications; managing new communication 'norms', with some staff feeling that the company had entered a 'corporate cycle'. Strong leadership, having clear goals, fostering team cohesion, with clear development pathways, providing security and encouragement for staff may mitigate some of the challenges experienced by the organisation. Furthermore, the barriers for organisational change at the company that represents Data Set 1 are characterised by: resistance to change; generational differences in adoption of technology; silos in data and communications; division between the factory and head office; and trust-based leadership strategies. 'Innovation' is viewed as both a blessing and a curse for organisational change, with some checks and balances required to 'reign in' the innovations.

Participants generally feel that cultural change at the organisation (Data Set 1) is a two-way process developed through a mix of 'top-down' structural processes and 'bottom up' organisational changes. Furthermore, 'short-term' workers are seen by some managers as detrimental to developing 'dynamic' teams in a fast-changing environment, suggesting that the organisation (Data Set 1) currently prefers to train from within rather than outsource work (apart from in specialised areas). These findings are consistent with a 'sense checking' SWOT analysis and (partial) TOWS Matrix utilised to examine the marketplace dynamics outlined by a freelancer working at the company that represents Data Set 1 and a Board Member of the organisation (Data Set 1). The results suggest that the organisation (Data Set 1) has a long-term strategy more focused on internal training and development of staff and is shifting away from employing 'gig workers', with opportunities focused on internal processes rather than external pressures, as the company moves from a service based to

a 'product' or manufacturing based business, with the potential for huge global expansion in the future.

Section 5.3: Findings Data Set 2: Data Set 2A: (A group of Self-employed Freelancers and 'Gig Workers') and 2B (Self-Employed Freelancers and 'Gig Workers' Engaged in a New 'Start-Up'):

The following section provides a summary of the findings for Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B). The themes that emerged from (thematic) analysis of the interview data relate to the following topics: 1) General and Demographic questions; 2) The Gig Economy; 3) Size of the Business, Organisational Change and Development; 4) 'Informal' and 'Formal' Procedures and Communication Channels; 5) Combining Competencies in Teams and Workplace Culture; and 6) Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Development. Finally, a summary of Data Set 2 is presented, before discussing overall findings for Data Set 1 and 2 in the context of extant literature. A discussion section directly addresses the thesis research questions, before drawing conclusions in Chapter 6.

5.3.1 General and Demographic Questions

This section summarises the key general and demographic information collected during the interviews relating to participants of Data Set 2 (Data Set 2A, n=5; Data Set 2B, n=2). Overall, seven participants were interviewed. Of the seven participants in the sample (Data Set 2) 71% were male and 29% were female (Male, n= 5; Female, n=2). Five participants reported being currently employed in more than one job role in the gig economy (71%, 5/7) (at the time of the interview) with under a third of participants (29%) having one job that they consider to be in the gig economy. Table 31 presents a comparison of this information for Data Sets 2A and 2B, including description of their employment status and job roles.

Participant Number	Data Set	Gender	Job Role	Multiple Roles (Yes/No)
Participant 7	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Female	Education governance manager (university gig-work)	No
Participant 3	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Male	Co-owner (University Gig Worker)	Yes
Participant 8	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Male	Freelancer, Managing Director (start-up)	No
Participant 20	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Male	Business owner of studio, freelancer music production, Run a tech company (start-up), lecturer	Yes
Participant 6	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Male	Developing Start-up in energy sector, University tutor, self-employed photographer	Yes

Participant 4	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Female	Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up)	Yes
Participant 5	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Male	Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up)	Yes

Table 31. Data Set 2: Participant Number, Gender, Job Role and Whether Participant Works Multiple Roles in the 'Gig Economy'

5.3.1.1 Working Arrangements ('Work from Home' Versus 'Hybrid')

In contrast to Data Set 1, all participants from Data Set 2 'work from home' or in 'hybrid' work arrangements (See Table 32). For members of Data Set 2A (Self-employed freelancers and gig workers), 60% of participants (3/5) have multiple jobs (or 'gigs'), and all participants in this sub-group (with a second 'gig') work in 'hybrid' arrangements, with time split between office-based work (or studio based, Participant 20) and 'work from home' setups (see Table 32). Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) works from home for the majority of his time (for business activities) but utilises face-to-face contact on occasion with clients. Additionally, two of the participants (participant 6 and Participant 3), solely 'work from home' for activities relating to their small businesses but work in 'hybrid' arrangements for their other gig work. As such, as freelancers and 'gig workers', they are moving between multiple working environments, jumping between different tasks, and dealing with different groups of colleagues depending on the 'gig'. Members of Data Set 2B ('start-up') also vary their (professional) workplace between home and public spaces such as cafés 'because it gets boring otherwise' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B), and utilise online environments to communicate with clients (no face-to-face meetings).

Participant Number	Data Set Membership	Working Arrangements
Participant 7	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Hybrid (3 days in office, 2 days at home)
Participant 3	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Hybrid (business WFH, gig work Hybrid)
Participant 8	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Mostly Work from home, face-to-face contact with clients
Participant 20	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Hybrid work (work from home and studio space)
Participant 6	Data Set 2A (Freelancer/Gig Worker)	Hybrid work (workspace for tutoring provided, work from home, business work from home)
Participant 4	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Work from home/other locations (cafés, gym)
Participant 5	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Work from home/other locations (cafés, gym)

Table 32. Hybrid and Work from Home Arrangements for Data Set 2 (Data Set 2A and 2B)

5.3.2 Topic 1: The 'Gig Economy'

5.3.2.1 Definitions of the 'Gig Economy'

All participants from Data Set 2 provided a definition of the 'gig economy' featuring the following themes: 1) 'self-employment'; 2) 'project by project work': 'it's basically like self-employment, you do things on a project-by-project basis.' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin); 'working freelance', 'people who work for Deliveroo and Uber and those kind of contracts' (Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager, University Gig Worker); 3) financial insecurity: 'casual workers, who are on perhaps a zero hour contract or a very flexible contract' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University Gig Worker); 'it's very hard actually for people to make a living wage just doing gig work now, if you're talking about Fiverr and Upwork.' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy); or 4) 'gaining experience': 'people who don't necessarily have experience to gain that experience' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy).

Participant 20 described his professional work (signed musician playing smaller clubs), as surviving 'gig' to 'gig' throughout the noughties. 'Gigs' were: 'a reliable source to survive' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'). Other definitions portrayed 'gig work' as a 'side hustle' supplementing other work or a main 'gig' that is insecure: 'It could be a side hustle, it could be a main thing but it's basically not kind of having fixed income' (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director, 'Start-up'). Participant 6 has worked in the 'gig economy' since 1997 (see Appendix TT for full quotes):

So, I think I've always been involved in the gig economy but never actually knew that I was in the gig economy. So, before it was called the gig economy (laughs). So, I've been self-employed since 1997 officially and I've always had several different roles. So, even when I was in part-time work, I always had my own self-employment work on the side and that was on a gig economy style basis. So, I did a lot of freelance photography and up until the economic crash of 2008. I was swapping roles quite regularly within what we now call the gig economy. I mean I've always had more than one job role for 25 years or more. (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer ('Start-up'), Male, Age 50)

5.3.2.2 Experience of Gig Work

Four participants (57%, 4/7) (Data Set 2) have used online 'gig economy' platforms (Fiverr, Upwork) to secure work, in contrast to three participants (43%) who have not. Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) also regularly hires digital 'gig workers' using online 'gig economy' platforms, in lieu of hiring permanent staff (on a project-by-project basis). Table 33 shows the breakdown of the participants' responses (Data Set 2) in relation to their use of online 'gig economy' platforms.

Participant Number	Data Set Membership	Use of Online Gig economy Platforms (Yes/No)
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Participant 7	Data Set 2A (Freelancers, Gig workers/Start-ups)	No
Participant 3	Data Set 2A (Freelancers, Gig workers/Start-ups)	Yes
Participant 8	Data Set 2A (Freelancers, Gig workers/Start-ups)	Yes (employer and worker)
Participant 20	Data Set 2A (Freelancers, Gig workers/Start-ups)	No
Participant 6	Data Set 2A (Freelancers, Gig workers/Start-ups)	No
Participant 4	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Yes
Participant 5	Data Set 2B (Start-up)	Yes

Table 33. Use of Online ‘Gig Economy’ Platforms

Participant 3 (Data Set 2A) sources most of his work away from online platforms: ‘95% of the ‘gig work’ that I’ve done has not been on an online platform’ (Participant 3, Data Set 2A), Co-owner FYH, University Gig Worker). In contrast, participants in Data Set 2B expressed negative experiences using ‘online’ gig economy platforms. They are described as exploitative, unethical, overly competitive: ‘They demanded everything and they wanted to pay nothing’ (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy) and not successful for what they ‘want to achieve’ with Participant 4 noting high levels of competition from other countries: ‘we have used different platforms like Fiverr (...) I felt we couldn’t compete on timelines they would say we’ll do it for like five pounds and we’ll do it in a day’ (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin). Nevertheless, some benefits were noted in relation to gaining experience and building a portfolio of work (Data Set 2B): ‘For us it’s just about building some experience (...) we wanted some examples to show’ (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy). Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) expands on these sentiments in the following quote discussing his early ‘gig work’ whilst developing his business using online ‘gig economy’ platforms (See Appendix UU for full quotes):

There was a lack of empathy as well because of that digital gap. So, there’s a kind of crooked, tacit understanding that that’s the game you’re getting into now because the competition is so high and there’s nothing you can do about it to make it fair and then some people don’t even fulfil their side of the non-monetary deal in giving you that review. So, that was really frustrating. It makes it really hard to scale using those platforms now. It was hard to get money at that point in time. We hadn’t figured out our marketing or sales processes, and we wanted some examples to show and people really took advantage of us and didn’t treat us well. So, we don’t use the platforms anymore. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (‘Start-up’), Male, Age 30)

Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) has transitioned away from employing a full-time member of staff. He now scales up or down the size of his workforce (by employing contractors) on a project-by-project basis. This approach allows him to have a greater level of personal and professional separation from his employees and his interactions are more transactional: ‘So, you know, you can scale to quite a size, and part of it is an emotional side of things that when they’re an employee it’s slightly different’

(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director, 'Start-up'). In contrast, Participant 5 (Data Set 2B), thinks 'scaling up' is hard in online 'gig economy' environments, and that people 'didn't treat us well' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy, 'Start-up'). For members of Data Set 2A (Freelancers and 'gig workers'), discussion was centred around financial insecurity (Insecure short-term contracts). Participant 3 (Data Set 2A) describes his experience in the catering industry, working 'zero-hours' contracts versus more stable short-term contracts: 'My job role outside of the business and my business is as close to 100% 'gig work' as you can really get' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University Gig Worker) (See Appendix UU for full quotes).

Participant 20 also describes his experiences playing smaller 'gigs' as a professional musician 'to survive' before signing his record contract: 'So, it wasn't big money, but it was still some money and once we got the record company contract that's when things started to fall to get us wages.' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'). In contrast, Participant 7 demonstrated frustration that 'gig workers' are often used (in educational institutions) to: 'test it for a year and see what happens', which has a level of insecurity, with the current 'gig' found through 'word of mouth' (Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager). Similarly, Participant 6 expressed frustration and uncertainty over how 'bitty' his work is, which is 'difficult to juggle' financially (See Appendix UU for full quotes):

For someone like myself, it's a little bit easier to adapt to that environment in a way and it's sort of like there's a bit of a carrot dangling because I'm aware that there are better roles within the university, more stable roles, but they never seem to be obtainable because (laughs) there's always these short terms, either by semester, or summer term. It's not as if you even get an entire role within that semester, there's little portions of that available, or sometimes not. It's very bitty, I guess and it's kind of frustrating, it's just a lot of uncertainty. Fortunately, I'm quite adaptable but it is difficult to plan for and try and budget and these other kinds of frustrating things are very difficult to juggle. (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer ('Start-up'), Male, Age 50)

Several motivations for engaging with 'gig work' emerged from the discussions with participants. For some participants (Data Set 2), 'gig work' is something that people 'fall into': 'I fell into the gig economy (...) you do fall into it, nobody really chooses it and then I've been able to sort of start to build out of it' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy, 'Start-up') or to fill a gap until finding more secure work: 'So maybe in the time it takes between jobs, if you've had to leave a job quickly, I've taken flexible work while I'm looking for new job.' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University 'Gig Worker'). However, Participant 4 (Data Set 2B) suggests that 'gig work' allows her to look after her mental health, as she enjoys having the autonomy to 'push' and 'retreat' when feeling motivated or demotivated (See Appendix UU for full quotes):

I think for both of us it would probably be easier in a sense to just work a 9-5, it would take less mental energy to just do that, but we want to have the freedom to not, and so it's hard

because some weeks we don't feel up to working, we're exhausted. For us it's easier to take care of our mental health doing a project-by-project basis and when we feel motivated, we feel the energy we push forward with the marketing and when we don't, we just like retreat and let things sit until we come back to it. (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin ('Start-up'), Female, Age 30)

5.3.2.3 Entrepreneurial Ambitions

Finally, 'entrepreneurial ambitions' were identified as a theme regarding participants of Data Set 2. Several participants explicitly expressed using the 'gig economy' as a springboard for setting up or aspiring to set up their own businesses. Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) describes his business as being 'born out' of the 'gig economy' and wanting it to be more than 'just a hustle': 'It definitely was in that vein, in terms of not having any fixed things for kind of functions like accounting, things like HR.' (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director, 'Start-up'). Similarly, Participant 6 (Data Set 2A) has a longer-term strategy to build up a renewable energy 'start-up', which he hopes will provide a more stable future with more stable 'gig work' (as a University Tutor), viewed as reducing uncertainty and improving his ability to invest in his 'start-up': 'It's a backup to my backup plan and one day it might supersede all of these current activities. It's my attempt to try to find something more stable' (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-Employed Photographer, 'Start-up'). For the start-up represented in Data Set 2B, Participant 5 felt constrained by online 'gig economy' platforms, feeling he had to step away from them to build his own path. Similarly, Participant 4 describes developing a new marketing approach as an important step away from the 'gig economy' platforms (See Appendix VV for full quotes):

The 'gig economy' put us in a box of being a service provider without any real branding or ability to show our kind of value, and everybody is in these boxes on those platforms. (...) So, we knew we had to kill that side of the business, rebuild, and actually position ourselves so that we could show a value offering in our branding and connect to a consumer and show them how we can help their business, rather than just being a sort of cheap badly paid employee. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

I would get somewhere, I would stop selling and then it was just a cycle of making a little bit of money and then taking ages before the next project. So, that was why we originally started looking at Fiverr, when 'redacted' and I started working together on it but then all the issues that I just said came up. We're working on setting up sales funnels and sort of freebies, where people put in their email to get information that will help them. But that's a process we're just starting because it takes a lot of time and energy. (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)

5.3.3 Topic 2: Size of the Business, Organisational Change and Development

5.3.3.1 Transitioning from 'Gig Work' to a More Secure Business Model

Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' suggests that for some freelancers and gig workers (stand-up comedians) the 'industrial layer' is deemed to be the pinnacle of success. This layer is typified by

stability and regular work, a strong following and involves engagement with various stages/levels of development (that are not always linear) with comedians dipping in and out of the layers to build or refresh skill sets and to collaborate with other gig workers (or comedians). For Data Set 2B, the business was initially set-up by Participant 4 in the 'gig economy' (or consultancy marketplace) where she operated as a freelance web designer. After partnering with Participant 5, the product offered by Participant 4 was developed, refined, and tested in 'online gig economy' environments: 'I think people really just wanted to be like ok you're a specialist in this, we'll hire you to do that and we were just trying to get hired for anything' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, 'Start-up'). Following negative experiences on these platforms, members of Data Set 2B reassessed their product and the services offered were rebranded, entering a stage of business development described by Participant 5 as 'constant evolution'. Participant 5 states that 'breaking away from the 'gig economy' helped them to reinvent themselves. Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) expands on this summary in the following section (See Appendix WW for full quotes):

Well, my business partner 'redacted' started the business without me. I came on and we really changed our offering at that point. It had previously just been websites, web solutions and we evolved into doing 'copy' with that and (...) doing digital strategy, and we really started off at first with, 'Redacted' already had a couple of word-of-mouth clients through Instagram, we went onto the platforms Fiverr and Upwork got a bit of work through that. I think we only ever made about 1300 pounds on there, but we did a lot of work for that and then actually after that experience we kind of stepped back from the business for a little while to kind of reassess, rebuilt our brand, rebuilt our website and that's kind of been evolving ever since. (...) from there we found our niche (...) it's been a constant evolution, but we really had to break away from the 'gig economy' in order to reinvent ourselves. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

Participant 3 (Data Set 2A) describes moving from a sporadic series of 'gigs', towards a more focused approach with his business strategy and 'gig work'. The longer-term strategy is to move towards a more stable business model with repeat custom having 'found our position on the pitch' through trying different 'gigs' and developing a more focused approach that provides more stability: 'slowly the businesses have tried to be a bit more cohesive (...) we're almost looking for more stability in the business.' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University Gig Worker). Participant 20 also suggests that 'adaptability' is key to success in both the music industry and in managing his business, with budgeting viewed as an important consideration: 'You need to adapt to the environment, you need to adapt to costings (...) there's peaks and troughs of where the budget is.' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'). Similar to the members of Data Set 2B, Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) started out with a broad approach to selling their services using online 'gig economy' platforms, after a short period of limited success, Participant 8 refined the product and services offered, landing a 'big contract' as a result that provided opportunities for the growth of the business (See Appendix WW for full quotes):

(...) the first bit was things like signing up for (inaudible) Upwork and 'people per hour' to try and look for jobs, which wasn't that simple or that successful because (...) we hadn't really specialised at that point, we'd just said we do marketing, digital marketing, come and talk to us and then you sort of realise in your small sphere of Leicestershire there's thousands already that are doing that and then when you get to the national and global it's like (...) this is a really, really tiny minnow in the space. So, we need to figure out where we stand in that. So, that took about 3 or 4 months until we realised where we needed to specialise in and literally within a week of doing that and specialising, changing the website to make that happen we landed our big contract (..) and then that kind of set everything up (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

The start-up representing Data Set 2B has a horizontal management structure, where the 'founders' share responsibility for different aspects of the business. Participant 4 handles administration and technology-based duties and Participant 5 handles the 'copy' (written content of the website), external communication and networking responsibilities. Between the founders, 'leadership strategies' are not typically utilised due to the flattened management structure and the small size of the organisation: 'It's kind of like shared ownership and we have clear responsibilities. It's not one of us kind of above the other' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, 'Start-up'). However, when work is outsourced, 'empathetic leadership' styles are favoured with Participant 5 taking pride in paying external workers 'fairly' and boosting the confidence of people they work with. These sentiments are expanded upon by the following quote (See Appendix WW for full quotes):

We have a very different approach to how we do pay people when we work with them. We paid a graphic designer to do some work on a website (...) we paid her way above the market rate because that mattered to us. (...) part of us making a relationship with her was saying, that we were thinking long-term, that we like her work and so we would pay her fairly. And I think us being in the situation that we were in has led to a much more empathetic leadership style when I do work with people who I have to pay, who maybe are in the gig economy at the moment. (...) if you pay people properly and you treat people with respect and build up their confidence, they'll do a better job and they are more likely to do a better job for longer. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

Participant 3 (Data Set 2A) also favours using 'empathetic' leadership strategies: 'I developed empathy and leadership qualities', and he generally takes the lead in terms of the business strategy for his partnership: 'I suppose the leadership quality there would be foresight and business strategy' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University 'Gig Worker'). Participant 20 (Data Set 2A) works with one employee and has a leadership approach that focuses on 'replicability' of the process (mixing and mastering), 'consistency' and 'quality control': 'It's quick, there's good product quality, and a threshold and we can deliver more in a week and still keep the costs.' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'). Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) outlined some of the limitations of using online 'gig economy' platforms. He suggests they can hamper business development, making it hard to develop a 'brand' with 'low cost' (of services) being the main differentiator in these platforms for consumers choice: The 'gig economy' put us in a box of being a service provider without any real

branding or ability to show our kind of value, and everybody is in these boxes on those platforms.’ (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy, ‘Start-up’). Participant 3 (Data Set 2A) also sheds light on some of the challenges he has experienced working as a ‘gig worker’, having to refine the types of ‘gigs’ he undertakes and the direction of his business. These factors have moved him closer to the types of environments that ‘fill the gap’ in a business, rather than ‘gig work’ without a clear sense of direction (See Appendix WW for full quotes):

So, when I started in ‘gig work’ and also some of the casual staff, I've seen prior to me myself when I was a manager are a mixture really of students but more college level and undergrad level, so because of the nature of zero hours contracts it's more suitable to people who live at home maybe than when you've grown up and moved out and have adult commitments (...) but also (...) I've seen quite a lot of people struggling say with addictions and things like that. That tends to be the very casual workers that just do ‘gig work’ to make money and they don't really care what the ‘gig work’ is. But then (...) gradually as I have refined where I want to be, the people I have worked with generally tend to be older, more mature, and have a direction for their life. Most of them have little businesses as well, so that ‘gig work’ tends to be a way of filling the gap in a business that, say, doesn't quite make you full time a full-time salary. (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)

5.3.3.2 Cultural and Organisational Change

The previous section suggests that businesses in the early stages of their development (or ‘gig workers’ finding their niche), go through a series of stages of ‘reflection’, adaptation and ‘refinement’ in order to keep ‘constantly evolving’. However, given the instability of freelancing, ‘gig work’ and new business ventures, they may be uniquely vulnerable to fluctuations in marketplace trends, or less able to weather the storm resulting from a shift in consumer behaviour. This was a factor for Participant 4 (Data Set 2B) in the earlier iteration of her freelancing work: ‘It was kind of this insular group and I think that really thrived during Covid. There's a lot of people that just abandoned their businesses and went back to their life after lockdown happened (...) the bubble burst.’ (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, ‘Start-up’). Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) also notes a boom in the coaching industry on ‘Instagram’ and that ‘algorithms’ on social media platforms (i.e. Instagram) can hamper gaining traction (followers) when they are weighted against a particular marketplace trend, or if the marketplace is over-saturated (See Appendix XX for full quotes):

(...) It's changed over the last five years (...) the coaching industry had a big impact on Instagram, and it's really sold the idea, (...) that anybody could build an agency if you had a coach, or if you had somebody who would be behind you. That you (...) could hack building a business and so a lot of marketing for business, especially through lockdown as well as on Instagram but it kind of created a few sort of leaders who have a lot of followers where actually the offering is quite hollow. There are a lot of people making money on Instagram who can't necessarily add value but (...) there was a point during lockdown, during Covid where Instagram was so inundated with new followers and activity it really opened up and the algorithm became a lot easier to grow followers, that's changed now. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (‘Start-up’), Male, Age 30)

Both participants of Data Set 2B and Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) utilise marketing strategies that could be deemed to be demonstrating a form of resistance to the power imbalance present in social media algorithms, akin to 'resistance to algorithmic control' (Vallas and Schor 2020; Walckirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022). This involves manipulation of social media algorithms to weight exposure of posts or messages to specific pre-determined targets. Participant 4 (Data Set 2B) explicitly describes using AI software to targets clients. The software scrapes through data on 'LinkedIn' (of predetermined types of clients), catalogues emails and contact information and sends 'human sounding' personalised messages (at pre-determined times), automating the process of reaching out to potential clients. Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) also outsources social media activities that appear to use a similar mechanism to target posts to a pre-determined consumer group, maximising exposure. However, these online marketing strategies are combined with face-to-face events that also aim to target a 'captive audience' (See Appendix XX for full quotes):

Yeah, so it's a specific programme I think it's called 'redacted' (...) basically it allows you to put in a particular subset of people and you can search on sales navigator which is a built-in part of 'Linked in' (...) you can say I want to speak to founders, in the arts industry who've been in the industry for 5+ years and live in the UK (...) then you plug that into the 'redacted' programme and then it reaches out to people one by one slowly like it's a real person (...) this is not technically allowed by 'Linked in' (...) we did use another type of programme and his profile did get shut down multiple times. (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin ('start-up'), Female, Age 30)

We utilise all of it. So, in terms of, getting involved with doing more social posts and trying to make sure that we start doing, there's some other bits (...) a marketing company down in London (...) they do a special social media to try and get as much exposure but direct exposure for the targets that they have, or that you're looking to speak to (...) we've got I think 2 pieces of business out of that when we started it in about 6 months (...) There's a national event to exhibit and also speak at it but it's very much tailored towards where we can put ourself in a position where we're in the forefront of CRM (...) where we're a thought leader and can actually have an audience which is captured for that specific reason. (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

A preference for online networking appears to represent a cultural shift, with many of the participants suggesting it is a vital component for building their business. These practices are often favoured over face-to-face networking: 'The outreach on 'LinkedIn' has been the best for creating leads and opportunities where people will actually pay for our services.' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, 'Start-up'). For Participant 3 (Data Set 2A), it is acknowledged that online social networking has become a necessity when trying to build a client base, despite not particularly enjoying it: 'You almost have to go, like, ride the wave of it, otherwise you (...) may find you've missed opportunities.' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University 'Gig Worker'). In contrast, participant 8 (Data Set 2A) suggests that warm introductions may be the most useful form of networking for converting opportunities into paid work due to 'trust' (from a recommendation)

helping to building relationships: 'If they know and trust that person then they're likely to at least have a word with us.' (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director, 'Start-up'). Participant 5 also promotes the benefits of utilising large pre-existing (personal and professional) networks on platforms such as 'LinkedIn', providing an alternative route to accessing a client base relative to (structured) online 'gig economy' platforms. Participant 5 states this strategy can provide 'social proof' leading to more collaborative professional relationships (Participant 5, Data Set 2B) (See Appendix XX for full quotes):

I suppose things really started to change when I started using my linked in (...) I already had at that time about 600 followers (...) I already had that social proof and legitimacy that I was trying to build on these platforms. (...) So, I've found that making that shift away from it, away from the 'gig economy' has been an evolution but I'm sort of starting to find people who care about the same things and then it's becoming about relationship building, (...) kind of word of mouth around people who already have that purpose driven approach. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

5.3.3.2 Managing Change: Coaching, Mentoring and Support Networks

Larger organisational structures (such as observed in the organisation representing Data Set 1), have systems in place that divide labour according to professional competencies, such as: Guidance, mentoring, and monitoring of deadlines (management); Compliance with the law (HR management); and Branding and standardisation of formal communication (Marketing department). However, for freelancers, 'gig workers', new ventures, or micro-businesses, these support networks require self-motivated action to develop: 'You have to kind of meet people, chat to people and kind of get that collaborative sort of network going.' (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer, 'Start-up'). Several participants expressed similar sentiments, with some engaging with coaches: 'We did kind of work with a coach who told us to actually sit down and write out whose responsibility each part of the business was.' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, 'Start-up'); others engaged with business advisors or other professional support networks that encourage professional development and networking skills: 'I got involved with business networking international, BNI (...) I learned loads from the formal bit of learning how to network (...) It really helped to kind of get a core group of people.' (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director, 'Start-up'). These (self-directed) structures provide a supportive environment to help to manage the changes as organisations develop, or 'gig workers' move between different roles or sectors, as elaborated upon in the following quote (See Appendix YY for full quotes):

(...) we're in the 'start-up' environment, (...) always kept in touch with business gateway even when I was freelancing within the 'gig economy'. So, it's nice to have that constant support network I guess, um and then to mix with other people, like-minded people (...) within the entrepreneurial ecosystem it's a lot of great support. (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University tutor, self-employed photographer ('Start-up'), Male, Age 50)

5.3.4 Topic 3: 'Informal' and 'Formal' Procedures and Communication Channels

5.3.4.1 'Formal' and 'Informal' External Communication, and Procedures

Table 34 outlines the key sub-themes identified in relation to the communications strategies used by participants of Data Set 2. This analysis includes emerging procedures, and standardisation of practices (around aspects such as website design) that were identified from thematic analysis of the interview data. For the enterprise representing Data Set 2B, the participants' primary form of internal communication is face-to-face (informal). For Data Set 2 (as a whole) the primary forms of communication utilised with external clients and third parties relate to forms of 'formal' and 'informal' 'external' communication. Given that the 'start-up' representing Data Set 2B has no formal hierarchical structure this means that they utilise a combination of formal strategies to deal with administrative and legal compliance issues related to the day-to day running of the business. Participant 4 is responsible for using software to draw up contracts, send invoices and the administrative tasks constituting the businesses sales and marketing procedures (i.e. drawing up proposals). Whereas Participant 5 takes the lead on the communication-based aspects of the company's sales and marketing strategy utilising online conferencing software, telephone calls and email for the majority of these formal communications (See Table 34 and Appendix X for further details).

External (Formal)	External (Informal)
Procedure- design (standardised) (1)	Procedure- strategy, timeline (flexible) (1)
Financial, legal and compliance- Invoice (6)	Development/Support network (4)
Sales and marketing: Proposal, Linked In, email, phone, zoom (5)	Sales and marketing: Communication
Formal communication- instructional, project based, tracking-paper trail (8)	Informal communication- project based * (3)
External platform- gig platform (1)	Informal communication brainstorming (1)

Table 34. Condensed Themes: 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication Strategies, and Procedures

Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) also takes the lead on formal 'project based' communication which takes place primarily using 'zoom', email and over the phone. 'Formal' minuting and tracking of communication also appear to be important for both Data Set 2A and 2B, with this being the most mentioned form of 'formal' communication by participants of Data Set 2 (mentioned eight times). All these communication channels and procedures appeared to be consistently used, however several participants did not have a strong focus on 'sales and marketing' (Participants 6; 7; 20, Data Set 2A) (See Table 34, and Appendix X for further details).

Interestingly, several 'informal' external communications observed for Data Set 2 were focused around building supportive networks of trusted freelancers (Participant 5, Data Set 2B and Participant

3, Data Set 2A) or developing business opportunities from existing professional networks (Participant 20, Data Set 2A). This dynamic has many parallels relative to Reilly's (2017) 'community layer' of gig work, with support networks and opportunities to test out skills and develop competencies in light of challenges faced deemed to be important. Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) utilises a range of official organisations to assist with gaining advice around 'financial legal and compliance' issues and engages with 'development' and 'support networks' that operate in both online and 'face-to-face' environments. 'Informal' brainstorming, mapping out of flexible timelines and 'informal' networking (utilising professional connections) were also strategies used by several the participants from Data Set 2 (See table 34, and Appendix X for further details). Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) suggests that access to support networks has helped him get systems and processes in place (for his 'start-up') that give the 'illusion' of being a much bigger company. This has enabled his company to pitch against much bigger players in his industry and to secure high-profile clients as a result:

Our setup was not thinking bigger than what you are as a small person. I think, that's one of the key things that I learned from talking to people within the group (...) you might be new but if you keep acting and thinking that you're new, then people will treat you like you're new. So, getting the systems and processes in place that make it look like you might be dealing with 'Axentia', or, you know, 'KPMG marketing' (...) if you've got those things in place then people are much more likely to trust you, even if you are small, which makes sense. (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

5.3.4.2 Cultural and Marketplace Changes

Change leadership (Rodgers 2010) may represent a challenge for freelancers and gig workers when developing their own enterprises, or where knowledge of the 'natural dynamics' of organisational structures are not clear. Participant 6 (Data Set 2A) highlights the more tacit dynamics that can occur in organisations (or for 'gig workers') where there are no 'formal' or clear hierarchical structures or systems in place. He suggests that a shared understanding of appropriate codes of professional conduct can help to guide these interactions, particularly if the client or collaborator is an existing professional connection: 'There's a kind of understanding that there's a level of professionalism and conduct that's required.' (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer, 'Start-up'). Several shifts to the marketplace were also addressed by participants in relation to the threats of AI to the music industry: 'The industry will be there, but it will totally rip up and create a new format of how the music industry works.' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'); Challenges around 'hot-desking' In response to the 'work from home' culture (and organisations over-recruiting) when existing teams have already developed a rapport: 'If we're all just scattered across then, kind of, what's the point of being in the building.' (Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager, University 'Gig Work') and Changes related to the

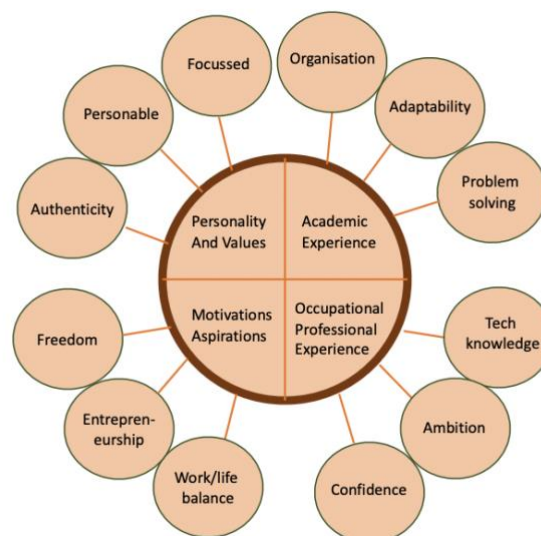
prominence of online communication software in recent years (Participant 8, Data Set 2A) (See Appendix ZZ for full quotes):

So, we'd have WhatsApp groups with the web developer, with the client, with then maybe their marketing person where we're talking about various bits or sharing bits of information and then more recently (...) a CRM system. (...) The last 2 years have obviously changed the game completely in terms of the availability of these systems and they're just kind of so quick and done so well. (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('Start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

5.3.5 Topic 4: Combining Competencies in Teams and Workplace Culture

Figures 5-7, 5-8 and 5-9 relate to Data Set 2B, displaying visual representations of the themes outlined in Appendix Y identifying 'individual' and 'shared competencies' of Data Set 2B. Figure 5-10 represents a visualisation of the combined competencies of all participants interviewed (Data Set 2), any similarities or differences observed between responses are reported in the following section. Figures 5-7 and 5-8 visually represent the individual competencies (self-reported) of Data Set 2B in relation to: Academic Experience; Occupational/Professional Experience; Personality and Values; and Motivations and Aspirations.

Figure 5-9 combines the responses from participant 4 and 5 (Data Set 2B), visualising the competencies their 'start up' team can draw upon as the company evolves. In Figure 5-9, The orange bubbles represent the responses of Participant 4, the blue bubbles represent the responses of Participant 5 and the green bubbles represent shared competencies of both Participants 4 and 5. It is evident that in delegation of tasks (as described by both participants in the previous sections), Participant 5 has drawn upon his 'communication' and 'research' skills (derived from academic experience) to take the lead in networking, talking to clients and completing research (for previous 'gig work') and written content for the website designs (See Figures 5-7, 5-8 and 5-9.)



(Figure 5-7)
Data Set 2B: Individual Competencies, Participant 4



(Figure 5-8)
Data Set 2B: Individual Competencies, Participant 5



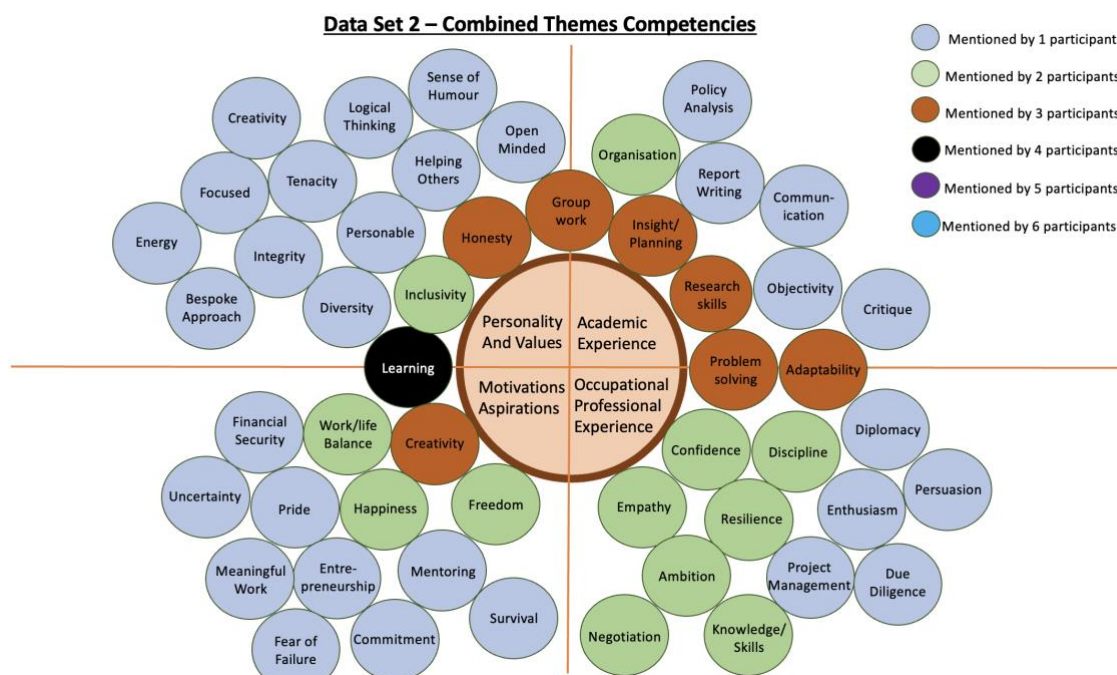
(Figure 5-9)
Data Set 2B: Shared Competencies, Combined

Similarly, Participant 4 draws upon several competencies in her day-to-day duties for the 'start-up', namely: (academic) 'organisational skills' to generate 'to-do' lists and organise day to day administration duties for Data Set 2B; 'Adaptability' (academic), enabled fast adaption of her web-design product when entering a partnership with Participant 5. The 'Discipline' (professional) of Participant 5 and 'focus' (personality/values) of Participant 4 are also complementary features of both participants that allow 'self-directed' action to continue to evolve the business (under pressure).

Furthermore: ambition (professional experience); entrepreneurship (motivations/aspirations); freedom (motivation/aspiration) and confidence (professional) (Participant 4) suggest strong entrepreneurial intentions and a drive toward a long-term strategy to developing a sustainable business model.

In contrast, financial security (Motivations/aspirations) and happiness (Motivations) are strong motivators for Participant 5, that provide a ('grounding') balance to the entrepreneurial intentions of Participant 4. 'Stress management' (professional) strategies were drawn upon (under pressure) when working on online 'gig economy' platforms early on in business development. In addition, there is a shared motivation for 'work life balance'; 'value' of 'authenticity' and 'problem solving' abilities, which may have enabled the members of Data Set 2B to 'step back', assess the problem, 'reflect' and 'refine' their product and business model to adapt to the challenges presented by working in the online 'gig economy' to continue to evolve as a business.

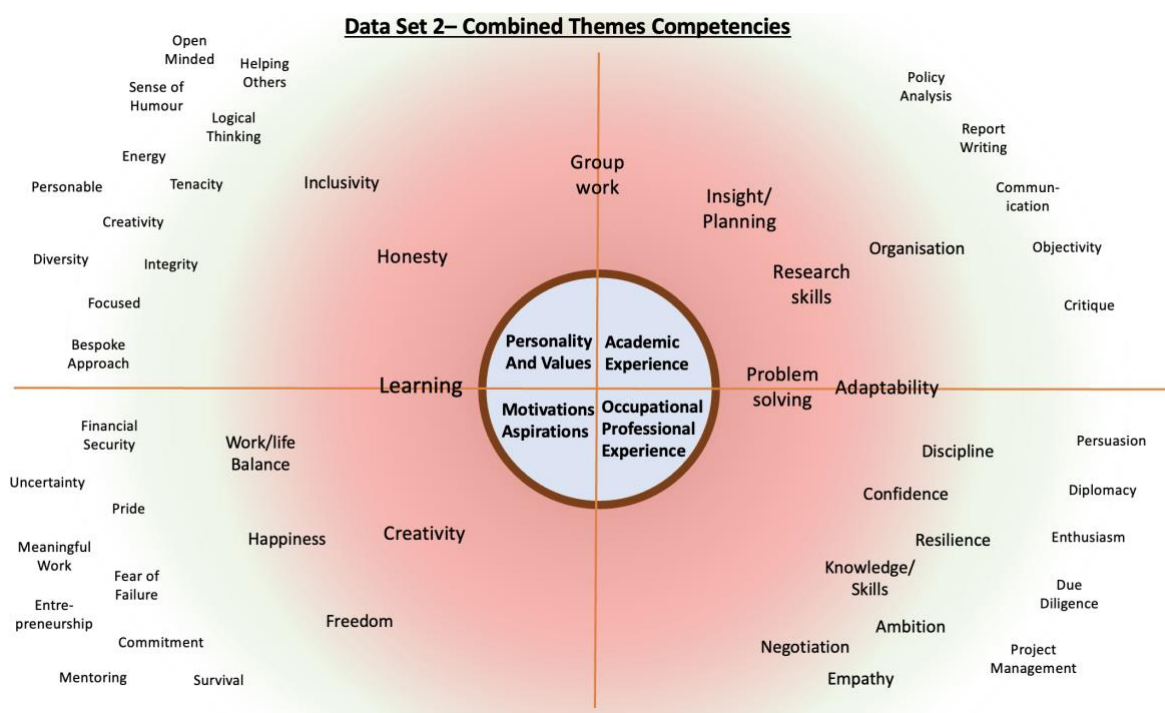
Figure 5-10 shows a visual representation of the combined themes identified for all the participants of Data Set 2. The competency bubbles shaded light blue represent individual responses, or competencies mentioned only once by participants, the green bubbles are mentioned by two separate participants, the orange bubbles are mentioned by three, the black bubbles are mentioned by four, with the purple (5 participants) and bright blue bubbles (6 participants) representing the competencies or themes that were most frequently mentioned by participants of Data Set 2.



(Figure 5-10)

Data Set 2 – Combined Themes Competencies

Figure 5-11 (below) provides a heat map of the same data, with items closer to the centre, larger and closer on the colour spectrum to red more frequently mentioned, with the competencies further away from the centre and closer to the green end of the colour spectrum mentioned less frequently. As can be seen in Figure 5-10 and Figure 5-11, two of the most frequently mentioned competencies, 'Academic Experience', cross over with competencies derived from the participants' 'Professional Experience', namely: 'Problem Solving' (mentioned by 5 participants); and 'Adaptability' (mentioned by 3 participants). 'Group work' (mentioned by 3 participants) also crosses over with 'Academic Experience' and 'Personality and Values' (Data Sets 2A and 2B). 'Learning' (mentioned by 4 participants) also represents a shared competency between Data Set 2 in relation to 'motivations and aspirations' and 'personality and values' (Data Sets 2A and 2B). This (tentatively) suggests that these types of competencies may be of value to environments characterised by instability, where there is a need to quickly identify problems, reflect, and engage in 'active' learning to manage change by 'adapting' and (collaboratively) evolving in response to fast-changing marketplaces.



(Figure 5-11)

Data Set 2 – Combined Themes Competencies (Heat Map)

5.3.6 Topic 5: Barriers and Enablers for Organisational/Career Change and Development

5.3.6.1 Barriers for Organisational Development and Change

Several participants (Data Set 2) suggest that the biggest barriers for their 'gig work' or developing their organisations relate to issues such as: managing 'toxic environments'; mental health and wellbeing; and self-development. Participants 7 and 20 (Data Set 2A) focus on self-development in their responses with Participant 7 struggling to feel motivated when support is withdrawn due to the

short-term nature of her contract: 'that's it for kind of the help (...) So, I think again that makes it harder to navigate the work I'm doing now and whatever I do next.' (Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager, University 'Gig Work') and Participant 20 struggling to have confidence in his leadership abilities early on in his career and developing more confidence through entering further education: 'having confidence of leadership. I didn't have that (...) I don't know where that came from, I think it was the thesis' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production, 'Start-up'). Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) also struggled with managing his mental health in the early stages of setting up his start up due to feeling overwhelmed, whilst Participant 6 describes experiences earlier on in his career in the entrepreneurial circuit as challenging, due to the 'toxic environment', as elaborated upon in the following quotes (See Appendix ZZ for full quotes):

Within the entrepreneurial circuit you just kind of feed off each other. I think, it's quite an energetic space to be in most of the time you know (...) I kind of went into that with a very open attitude towards everyone's success. After I'd been through that process and then reflected on it, I realised that actually other people were being quite manipulative (laughs) (...) they would force themselves in between myself and the people administrating the events. So, they were focusing the whole thing on themselves the whole time. So, that was really quite a toxic environment. (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer ('Start-up'), Male, Age 50)

Yeh, I think the biggest barrier in sort of transferring from the gig economy to running the business is actually personal growth, it's a lot to take on to be responsible for your marketing and your sales outreach and I think for a while a barrier was mental health and overwhelm. But that's something that we've solved now and I actually have a routine that I do every single day expect for Saturdays usually and I can't really make progress in the business unless I stick to it. I suppose that like me having meetings with HR and people, you know it actually sets an environment for me to run the business, whereas if you try and run it without setting any ground work you end up um falling into holes and not being able to get out of them. It's probably the main change that's happened in terms of us being able to achieve things with the business. Where for a while we were sort of stalling and that's because we weren't ready to have the success that we can have because we hadn't put the foundations in place for ourselves to have to manage the whole process. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

Other main 'barriers' related to the financial insecurity of 'gig work' which can make securing a mortgage a challenge: "Gig working' is awful (...) things like getting a mortgage require stability' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University 'Gig Worker'). The members of Data Set 2B also struggle with financial investment in the business, and issues regarding 'self-development' as they are 'learning on the job' (Participant 4). Issues around time-management for 'gig workers' were also identified. Participant 6 can sometimes struggle with time-management, 'juggling multiple jobs' and 'saying no' when he has limited time for fear of missing out on jobs, damaging relationships, and missing out on future work:

So, when you're in a situation where you need to agree to take on a certain level of work but you're juggling more than one role, you have to be very careful about how much work you

take on. Just because time is not elastic, right? Um, but you're kind of expected as a gig worker just to keep taking as much as you can (...) So, there's a level of expectation from the people who are in a position to offer you work and you kind of have to know when to say no but you don't want to say no, for fear of being, of not getting the work the next time around and at the same time you know that there's, that the time isn't elastic but you're fearful that that's gonna', (...) in the back of my mind is, that could damage your team relationship, your friendships (...) or the dynamic in your team and create barriers in the future I guess. So, that can be a huge barrier (...) (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer ('Start-up'), Male, Age 50)

5.3.6.2 Enablers for Organisational Change and Development

One of the biggest enablers for change and development for freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' relates to developing teams and building relationships. For members of Data Set 2B, both participants note that they have had to adapt to each other's working styles and personality differences to converge on a successful team for their 'start-up', with this element of the business requiring 'emotional intelligence' and seen as organic: 'we don't have processes in place it's all quite a learning curve.' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy, 'Start-up') and a 'big enabler': 'I think our working relationship has been the biggest enabler.' (Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin, 'Start-up'). Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) notes that the pandemic was a particular enabler for his business with his first contract being extended past expectations. Working with a business coach has also benefited Participant 8 in terms of developing his business. For Participant 7, she feels working in the 'gig economy' (non-fixed contracts) has allowed her to gain more experience and progress in her career more (relative to permanent contracts) (See Appendix ZZ for full quotes):

So, yeah in some ways it was beneficial because of Covid, the first contract went on a lot longer than what it should have done. I was expecting it to last for 6 weeks and 3 years later it's still there. (...) We've just renewed it for next year as well. So, in terms of that that was a massive enabler. As I said the coach has been a massive enabler in terms of understanding what we want to be as a business, understanding what it takes and what's the kind of way that you need to go through and then having that systematic approach to make sure that there's certain key performances and data that we're looking at. (...) (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

(...) The kind of the contracts I've gone through, they've given me a really broad range of experience, which I think if I'd been trying to go permanent contract, permanent contract, they'd have said you don't have enough experience to do this and to come to the next thing but because I was able to be a bit more agile than someone on a permanent contract and say that I can take on this fixed term thing and I could move around a bit more fluidly (...) I've been able to get more experience and more, like progression than I would have if I'd been on a permanent contract. So, I think there are benefits to being more flexible, especially being with all those roles, being at the same institution I can kind of navigate it a bit more easily. (Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University 'Gig Work'), Female, Age 24)

Several enablers for freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' were also identified in relation to managing mental health, wellbeing, and self-development. Participant 5 (Data Set 2B) suggests that exercise and abstaining from alcohol have been particularly useful for him maintaining his motivation to move forward with the business: 'I think that was the main barrier and I think that's something we're breaking down.' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy, 'Start-up'). Participants 3 and 20 feel developing self-confidence in their abilities has been of value: 'a lot of companies and small businesses need things and you have to have the confidence in yourself (...) that you can meet the challenges' (Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH, University Gig Worker); 'confidence, keeping your mental health strong, being persistent' (Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production). Whereas Participant 6 suggests that working with 'great people' in 'really dynamic and fun environments' and 'making a difference' have been the biggest enablers for his 'gig work' and 'start-up' (Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer, 'Start-up'). Finally, Participant 5 suggests that learning about technology and how to incorporate it into the sales and marketing processes (automation of client outreach) has been the biggest enabler for developing the business (Data Set 2B). Building these processes into the business have helped to build robust sales and marketing channels that have moved them 'far beyond what we ever could have achieved on those platforms' (online 'gig economy' platforms) (Participant 5, Data Set 2B) (See Appendix ZZ for full quotes):

Biggest enabler has been actually learning about tech in terms of sales processes. I feel like we are really quite ahead of a lot of our competition in the way that we find new leads and that we constantly find new leads and we've basically automated the job of about 2 people using some software that outreaches on 'linked in' and targets our specific targets as well. Exactly who we're looking for which is gallery owners at the moment and artists. I think that's enabled us to have conversations with and get clients who are established in the art industry and some of them are household names, or on their way to being household names. So, that process has really opened the doors for us, and I suppose we've solved for ourself what Fiverr and Upwork was trying to solve for us, or was pitching to solve for us. We've had to find a way to solve for ourselves which is an ongoing evolution but now we are far beyond what we ever could have achieved on those platforms. (Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy ('Start-up'), Male, Age 30)

5.3.7 Summary: Findings Data Set 2 (Data Set 2A and 2B)

Section 5.3 presented the findings for Data Set 2. Section 5.3.1 addressed the general and demographic questions of the interview data. The findings suggest that many of the participants are engaged in multiple jobs ('gig work'), working across a variety of industries, with different teams and networks. Many of the freelancers and 'gig workers' also have small businesses (in addition to their 'gig work') or aspirations to develop 'start-ups'. In contrast to Data Set 1, all participants tended to 'work from home' (for business activities) or in 'hybrid' setups, with a trend towards fewer 'face-to-face' meetings with clients. 'Hybrid' working arrangements were the 'norm' for 'gig workers' fitting

into working arrangements of pre-existing organisations (University 'gig workers') (as observed in Data Set 1).

Section 5.3.2 addressed interview questions related to the 'gig economy'. In contrast to Data Set 1, all of the participants were able to provide a definition of the 'gig economy' with many participants contextualising definitions to their own experiences as 'gig workers' or 'start-ups'. The 'gig economy' was characterised by participants as relating to self-employment, financial insecurity, and gaining experience. There was a divide in terms of how the 'gig economy' was conceptualised, with some participants viewing 'gig work' as a way to gain experience or build up their business and career prospects. In contrast, some participants viewed it as a 'stop gap', a 'gig' before securing more stable longer-term work. Mixed opinions and experiences were identified in relation to online 'gig economy' platforms, with some finding them to be useful for sourcing 'specialist skills' to scale their workforce, rather than hiring permanent staff. In contrast, members of Data Set 2B found the platforms to be unethical, and restrictive for developing a brand, and damaging for wellbeing, due to poor treatment by both the platform staff (unsupportive) and clients (rude and abusive, wanting something for nothing). Many of the participants also expressed frustrations and challenges working in the 'gig economy'. A lack of financial security is particularly problematic for many, with autonomy and freedom seen as a benefit for some. Furthermore, 'Entrepreneurial intentions' was identified as a theme, with some participants' businesses 'born from' their experiences working in the 'gig economy'.

Section 5.3.3 established that most of the participants had a desire to transition their businesses and 'gig work' towards more secure models. Freelancers, 'gig workers' and members of 'start-ups' must be self-motivated to organise and assign tasks when developing teams, with (self-assessed) perceived competencies and skill sets determining how tasks are split (particularly for Data Set 2A). A sense of camaraderie was noted by many participants in relation to collaborating with freelancers and 'gig workers' or developing teams, with empathic leadership strategies often deployed. The 'online' 'gig economy' platforms utilised by some participants were viewed as quite restrictive in terms of developing a unique brand with alternative sales and marketing approaches favoured and regarded as more suitable for organisations looking to transition away from 'piece meal' work.

Section 5.3.4 examined 'informal' and 'formal' procedures and communication channels utilised by Data Set 2. Many of the participants lack robust internal procedures with much of the internal communication being 'informal' (face-to-face) for Data Set 2B. Several external ('formal' and 'informal') communication strategies were identified. External 'formal' communications generally relate to fulfilling administrative duties such as sending invoices, contracts and fulfilling other financial and legal compliance duties. Some participants engaged with external 'formal' support networks to

assist with these factors, whilst others used software to help generate contracts, or design proposals. Sales and marketing also appeared to be a process that is relatively formal and standardised for some. Online social media and networking sites appear to be an important infrastructure for 'formal' sales, marketing and for networking with collaborators. Additionally, members of Data Set 2B and Participant 8 (Data Set 2A) utilise specialised software (in house or outsourced) to automate sales and marketing processes ('LinkedIn' and other networking sites) to target pre-determined client bases. Some of the technology described by members of Data Set 2B and Participant 8 is contentious and could be viewed as 'resistance to algorithmic control' (Vallas and Schor 2020; Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022).

'Informal' and 'formal' support networks are important to develop in lieu of formalised departments in an organisational structure, with a 'trusted' network of collaborators and support networks important components that can fill in the gaps in knowledge and 'manage change' for 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' as they develop teams or move towards more formalised organisational structures. Having 'formal', structured, policies and procedures in place can 'give the illusion' of being a larger company to prospective clients and can help to 'open doors' with established companies. Many of the freelancers, 'gig workers' and start-ups identified that organisational change and development had been a direct result of the processes of reflecting, adapting and refining to continue to evolve to survive in the 'gig economy'.

Section 5.3.5 reported the themes that emerged from questions exploring 'combining competencies in teams and workplace culture'. Participants were asked to provide descriptive words or examples of competencies they possess that help them to be successful in their current role, relating to: academic experience; professional experience; motivations and aspirations; and personalities/values. For enterprise represented in Data Set 2B, several shared competencies were established (work/life balance, problem solving and authenticity) that could be viewed as constituting an emerging (informal) workplace culture, with these themes also occurring often in discussion around how they structure their time and manage their 'team' based working relationship. Several compatible competencies (focus and discipline) and some strong differences were also observed regarding the 'entrepreneurial intentions' of Participant 4 (freedom, entrepreneurship, ambition, and adaptability), balanced with more practical competencies or motivations/aspirations of Participant 5 (financial security, happiness).

Shared competencies were also identified across Data Set 2 as a whole, namely these are: learning, problem solving, adaptability and group work. Other frequently mentioned competencies were creativity (motivations); research skills (academic experience); insight/planning (academic experience)

and honesty. Several shared competencies ('problem solving', 'learning', 'adaptability' and 'group work') were reported as 'motivations' and 'aspirations' for employees of the company represented in Data Set 1. These competencies cross over with 'professional experience' and the 'workplace culture' relative to 'values', 'academic experience' and 'occupational experience' for participants of Data Set 2. This suggests that for some participants in Data Set 1, these competencies are highly valued and could be useful for managing change at an organisational level.

Section 5.3.6 identified several barriers for freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups' for developing teams, networks and organisational cohesion relating to: the competitive (entrepreneurial) environment; developing a supportive environment for mental health, wellbeing, and self-motivated personal development. Limited financial resources were also noted as challenging regarding financial insecurity and not being able to invest financially in business development. Both formal and informal support networks were engaged with by participants, in lieu of formal internal policies and procedures or department like HR to manage personal and professional development. Having opportunities for development and getting experience is seen as important for some freelancers and 'gig workers' who feel this gives them an edge for career development. The biggest enabler observed related to use of technology to streamline and automate sales and management channels and having emotional intelligence to find constructive ways to manage different personalities and converge on a constructive workplace environment when working in small teams.

Section 5.4: Discussion of Findings

The following section discusses the findings of Data Sets 1 and 2 relative to the literature presented in Chapter 2. The first section (Section 5.4.1) discusses comparisons of data defining the gig economy, communication, technology, and business development, relative to the literature, before directly addressing the findings relative to the research questions and extant literature, in the following order: 5.4.2, How do freelancers, gig workers, and enterprises emerge from the gig economy?; 5.4.3, How do freelancers, gig workers, and enterprises adapt to the 'changing nature of work?'; 5.4.4, What 'informal' and 'formal' business practices and communication channels shape these enterprises?; 5.4.5, How do individuals and teams find ways to successfully combine their capacities, competencies, and commitment in these enterprises?; 5.4.6 What helps or hinders the development (and change) of these enterprises?; and 5.4.7 introduces a discussion towards developing a model of enterprise development in the gig economy and applications of the model. Finally, Chapter 6 provides the Conclusions to the thesis, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.4.1 Comparing Data on Defining the Gig Economy, Communication, Technology, and Business Development

5.4.1.1 Comparing Data on *Definitions of the 'Gig Economy'*

One of the key areas that represents a challenge for research focused on the gig economy, centres around the conflict between academic and public discourse on the concept. Whilst there is evidence of a growth of the 'gig economy' internationally (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016), it is generally agreed in literature that 'the gig economy' is a complex and contested concept (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Sargeant 2017; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). Whilst precarity (in work) and technology are considered important components of the concept (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Healy et al. 2017; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Hušek and Širec 2023; Healy et al. 2017; Sargeant 2017), there have been challenges in recent years, particularly in policymaking settings due to a lack of consensus surrounding the definition (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016) and poorly defined conceptual boundaries, relative to broader understanding of 'precarious work' in public discourse (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021).

Due to the complexity of the gig economy and discourse around it outlined above, it was deemed essential to gain an understanding of how participants conceptualised the gig economy as a construct, and where they saw themselves positioned within it to establish a baseline of where their understanding fit in with academic literature and to appropriately contextualise the findings. Notably, all participants in Data Set 2 (a selection of self-employed, freelancers and gig workers) provided a definition of (their understanding) of the gig economy. Interestingly, a scale was seen, ranging between a temporary stage in between jobs, or as a forum to develop their businesses and career prospects (or as a pathway to business development). The latter interpretation is consistent with Reilly's (2017) conceptualisation of freelancing (representing a 'patchwork' or layered career). Some participants (Data Set 2) pointed towards engagement with the gig economy as supporting the development of their businesses (or enterprises) as a by-product of their work. This is also in line with research that suggests the gig economy may promote entrepreneurial intentions (Lahm 2020) and may play a part in unpicking how self-employed freelancers gig workers, and enterprises emerge from these marketplaces (Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) and adapt to challenges as the business grows. These findings may also assist in evaluating

how the concept of layered careers (Reilly 2017) can inform a framework for how freelancers and gig workers build pathways to business development.

As a consequence, several themes emerged (around the gig economy) with varied levels of specificity around the inclusion of technology and digital platforms in their understanding of the gig economy and the conceptual separation between freelancing and gig work (in online and offline settings), with participants conceptualising the gig economy in terms of 'digital' gig work (mediated by app use and technology) and in broader terms with offline forms of freelancing and other forms of insecure work, such as: 1) Self-employment; 2) Project by project work, and working freelance (framed in terms of digital platform work and in offline contexts); 3) Precarity and financial insecurity; challenges around getting the basic minimum wage working on digital platforms; or 4) 'gaining experience'. Other definitions portrayed 'gig work' as a 'side hustle' supplementing other work or a main 'gig' that is insecure. Some participants noted their freelance work as akin to working in the gig economy 'before it was called the gig economy'.

This suggests that for participants of Data Set 2, interpretations of the concept of the gig economy (noted in the responses of participants) are relatively broad. Online 'gig economy' platforms, were seen by some as useful for sourcing 'specialist skills' to scale their workforce, rather than hiring permanent staff. In contrast, platforms were also seen as unethical, restrictive for developing a brand, and damaging for wellbeing. Frustrations and challenges working in the 'gig economy' were expressed around precarity and a lack of financial security. However, autonomy and freedom were seen as a benefit for some. Furthermore, 'Entrepreneurial intentions' was identified as a theme, with some participants' businesses, 'born from' their experiences working in the 'gig economy', supporting the existing literature (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016).

These findings are consistent with Montgomery and Baglioni's (2021) study, which found that public perception of the term includes broader forms of precarious work (rooted in discourses historically around freelance, or precarious forms of work) and are not exclusive to workers using digital platforms. As such, diversity in definitions lends itself towards a broader interpretation of the gig economy as outlined in Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) 'dynamic structural model of the gig economy', which acknowledges freelancers working in both online and offline gig economy settings and their inclusion in conceptualisations of the gig economy. This also plays into broader debates around conceptual boundaries of the gig economy (Montgomery and Baglioni's 2021) and 'the future of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017) particularly in regards to how communication and technology (and digitalisation of workplace practices) in the modern workplace influence workers in the gig economy, and across all sectors of the economy (Labanauskaitė

et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020) and may be closing the experiential gap (for workplace practices) between those in traditional employment and those in precarious work as attitudes and approaches towards work evolve in the digital age.

In contrast, many participants in Data Set 1 were unable to provide a definition of the gig economy, alluding to general concepts of freelancing when discussing organisational use of freelancers and 'gig workers'. The organisation representing Data Set 1 has shifted its focus from freelancers to internal talent development (as it has become more established). This may be a result of natural transitions in organisational structure due to the larger scale of the enterprise (Berisha and Pula 2015), challenges around taxation and legislation of 'gig workers' (Burke and Cowling 2020) and the business model shifting to a 'product' based rather than a 'service based' company. Despite the reduced use of short-term contracts at the organisation (in recent years), freelancers still provide specialised or 'expert' skills to supplement the current (young) full-time workforce. Similar to the themes observed in Data Set 2, this demonstrates a challenge when investigating this phenomenon, consistent with literature that conceptualisations of the gig economy are not coherent in academic and public debate (Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016) and conceptual boundaries are poorly defined (Montgomery and Baglioni 2021).

Interestingly, just under a third of employees in Data Set 1 had worked in the gig economy at some point in their careers, as consultants, contractors, entrepreneurs, and tutoring whilst studying. Similar to Data Set 2, this suggests a broad interpretation of the concept as including both online and offline settings, relating to various types of 'precarious' work (Kuhn 2016; Koutsimpogiorgos et al. 2020; Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020). Furthermore, the findings are consistent with the trends observed in the research of Lahm et al. (2020), with a third of the US population claiming to have engaged with 'gig work' (or freelancing) recently in 'developed economies' (Burke and Cowling 2020). Due to the corporate structure of the company represented in Data Set 1 (owner, Board members, employees, and freelancers), many of the more permanent staff do not experience the more 'transient' and volatile elements of their position in the marketplace and appear distanced in their perceptions of the company's need to 'bid for jobs' and compete against competitors for work, stressors which are more uniquely apparent for upper management and the Board.

Many of the participants in Data Set 2 have multiple jobs and are engaged in 'gig work' or short-term contracts in addition to running their own businesses. This is consistent with research that suggests a rise in 'hybrid self-employment' or 'hybrid entrepreneurs', with workers oscillating between traditional employment and gig work (Bogenhold 2019). Trends towards digitalisation in the

workplace and the growth of the 'gig economy' may be important factors to consider for this group of workers. Findings support the notion that the boundaries between employees, freelancers and 'gig worker' may be becoming more blurred, with many workers having the potential competencies or attributes of both or engaging in diverse forms of work. This notion is supported by recent literature suggesting that companies can benefit from adapting to expectations of the 'modern worker' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016).

5.4.1.2 Comparing Data on Communication and Technology

For the large firm (Data Set 1), discussion around communication and technology centred around digitalisation of workplace practices and a shift towards a hybrid working culture, including bottlenecks and silos in communication due to an overreliance on virtual meetings and a lack of in person contact. Literature suggests that in a hybrid focused workplace culture, new routines and processes became commonplace following the Covid-19 pandemic (Sonjit et al. 2021) but this also seems to have stemmed (in Data Set 1) from the fast growth of the organisation. Furthermore, increased isolation due to more remote work is consistent with literature (Dacre et al. 2021; Glavin and Schieman 2022), and can present unique challenges for workers with children, where childcare duties can add complexity to work in these settings (Dacre et al. 2021).

These factors around the flow of communication (formal and informal) can impact emergent company culture and present challenges for organisational change strategies (Rodgers 2007; 2010). In contrast, social elements of the workplace (group work) to some extent mitigated the increasing discontent regarding the workplace culture, which was characterised as 'soulless' and with unresolved issues around generational differences. This does not appear to be an issue unique to the company representing Data Set 1, with research suggesting 'intergenerational' cooperation' is required to ensure 'valuable' expertise is not lost and experience is passed on to younger generations which is a desirable aspect of modern workplaces (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021).

A lack of stabilisation to changes to communication and technology and digitalisation of workplace practices has led to poor 'formal' communications and difficulties managing new communication 'norms' resulting in a 'corporate cycle'. The findings suggest that strong leadership, having clear goals, fostering team cohesion, with clear development pathways, providing security and encouragement for staff mitigated some of the challenges experienced by the organisation (around normalisation of new communication and technology practices). This is consistent with research which suggests that

formal and informal communication strategies play an important role in managing teams effectively (Lai and Yang 2017), impacting the effectiveness of leadership approaches (Schumacher et al. 2022), enabling productive knowledge transfer (Gast et al. 2019), knowledge management (Ahmed et al. 2021) and information sharing practices (Lai and Yang 2017), constructing social norms and values, building strong professional relationships (Jaffe 2019) and developing a coherent work place culture (Fan and Dawson 2022; Bencsik et al. 2019).

In relation to communication and technology observed in Data Set 2, several 'informal' and 'formal' procedures and communication channels were identified that had a strong focus on features of 'community' and 'trust' (amongst freelancers), similar to Reilly's (2017) layered careered model with the addition of use of technology, as noted in Page-Tickell and Yerby's (2020) 'Dynamic Structural Model of the Gig Economy'. 'Informal' and 'formal' support networks substituted for more formalised departments in an organisational structure. 'Trusted' networks of collaborators and support networks fill in the gaps in knowledge and mediate pathways to business development for freelancers, 'gig workers' and enterprises as they develop teams or move towards more formalised organisational structures. Perhaps as would be expected (due to the small scale of the enterprises), many of the participants engaged with business development lacked robust internal procedures with much of the internal communication being 'informal', with 'formal' communications generally involving administrative duties (i.e. invoices, contracts and financial and legal compliance duties). It is important to note that this would not be considered unusual when examining these relative to definitions around 'scale' of enterprises (Berisha and Pula 2015), with small enterprises typically tending towards less structured personalised contacts and communication relative to more formalised communication in large enterprises (Berisha and Pula 2015). It is however interesting in terms of understanding these strategies in the context of how communication and technology can bridge the gap and provide supportive systems in lieu of more formalised internal policies and procedures that may assist in building pathways to business development.

Sales and marketing appeared to be a process that was relatively formal and standardised for some. Online social media and networking sites appear to be an important infrastructure for 'formal' sales, marketing and for networking with collaborators. Additionally, some participants (Data Set 2B And participant 8, 2A) utilised specialised software to automate sales and marketing processes (against app policy), akin to 'resistance to algorithmic control' (Vallas and Schor 2020; Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022). Interestingly, the flexible use of communication and technology described in Data Set 2, appears to bridge the conceptual gap regarding the scale of enterprise and the propensity for larger organisations to have greater levels of formalised procedures,

relative to smaller enterprises (Berisha and Pula 2015). For smaller enterprises, where internal structures are less fixed, this also provides more flexibility for quick adaptation to advancements in technology, efficient use of technological advancements (such as automation) with less resistance to change.

Comparing Data on Business Development

For Data Set 1, the mechanisms of business development were conceptualised through the lens of organisational change. The findings of Data Set 1 established that organisational change is driven by 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' organisational pressures. Research suggests that 'Change initiatives' can conflict with (pre-existing) team and group 'norms' and 'values', 'informal' and 'formal' group membership and 'workplace culture' (Coghlan 1994). Participants of Data Set 1 saw cultural change at the organisation as a two-way process, a combination of 'top-down' structural processes and 'bottom up' organisational changes. Short-term (freelance) workers were seen by some managers as detrimental to developing 'dynamic' teams in a fast-changing environment, with the organisation favouring training from within rather than outsourced work (apart from in specialised areas).

The results suggest that the company that represents Data Set 1 has a long-term strategy shifting away from employing freelancers and 'gig workers', with opportunities focused on internal processes rather than external pressures, as the company moves from a service based to a 'product' or manufacturing based business, with a focus on internal talent development and consistent with its stage of development as a larger enterprise (Berisha and Pula 2015). The barriers for organisational change at the company were focused on communication and use of technology characterised by: resistance to change; generational differences in adoption of technology; silos in data and communications; division between the factory and head office; and trust-based leadership strategies. 'Innovation' is viewed as both a blessing and a curse for organisational change, with some checks and balances required to 'reign in' the innovations.

The findings of Data Set 2 established that motivation was an important factor for freelancers and gig workers looking for pathways to business development and to move their 'gig work' towards more secure models. Freelancers and gig workers must engage with processes of reflection to identify their strengths and weakness to assign tasks and identify gaps in their knowledge. They must be self-motivated to develop teams and be flexible to adapt to changes in the marketplace and find ways to use technology to their advantage (to bridge the gap with larger competition) when managing limited resources. This helps them to refine their offering and to continue to evolve and develop in competitive marketplaces. Trust and camaraderie are important when collaborating with freelancers and 'gig workers' or developing teams, with empathic leadership strategies (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021)

often deployed. Relative to larger organisations, smaller enterprises (with smaller teams) may be able to engage with these processes more intuitively (as observed in themes that emerged from analysis of Data Set 2). However, for larger organisations with more formalised structures in place, some of these mechanism underpinning business development, processes may be obscured by the complexity of the organisational structure, resulting in a lack of flexibility and an increased likelihood of resistance to change.

For digital 'gig workers', the findings suggest that 'online' 'gig economy' platforms can be quite restrictive in terms of developing a unique brand with alternative sales and marketing approaches favoured and regarded as more suitable for organisations looking to transition away from precarious work and find pathways towards business development. Furthermore, themes emerged from questions exploring 'combining competencies in teams and workplace culture'. For members of Data Set 2B, several shared competencies were established (work/life balance, problem solving and authenticity) that could be viewed as constituting an emerging (informal) workplace culture, with these themes also occurring often in discussion around how they structure their time and manage their 'team' based working relationship. Several compatible competencies (focus and discipline) and some strong differences were also observed regarding the 'entrepreneurial intentions' (similar to - Usman and Sun 2022; Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) of Participant 4 (freedom, entrepreneurship, ambition, and adaptability), balanced with more practical competencies or motivations/aspirations of Participant 5 (financial security, happiness).

Shared competencies were also identified across Data Set 2, namely these are: learning, problem solving, adaptability and group work. Other frequently mentioned competencies were creativity (motivations); research skills (academic experience); insight/planning (academic experience) and honesty. Several shared competencies ('problem solving', 'learning', 'adaptability' and 'group work') were reported as 'motivations' and 'aspirations' for employees of the company represented in Data Set 1. These competencies cross over with 'professional experience' and the 'workplace culture' relative to 'values', 'academic experience' and 'occupational experience' for Data Set 2. This suggests that for some participants in Data Set 1, these competencies are highly valued and could be useful for managing change at an organisational level and provide interesting data points to those observed in Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) and supporting the notion that the desires of the modern worker, freelancers and gig workers may be becoming more aligned.

Many of the self-employed freelancers, 'gig workers' and those engaged in development of businesses identified that organisational change and development has been a direct result of the processes of

reflecting, adapting, refining their offering and continuing to evolve to survive in the 'gig economy'. Several barriers for self-employed freelancers and 'gig workers' were identified for developing teams, networks and organisational cohesion relating to the competitive (entrepreneurial) environment, and developing a supportive environment for mental health, wellbeing, and self-motivated personal development. Consistent with literature relating to the scale of the enterprise (Berisha and Pula 2015) and challenges around the 'scale' of precarity, and technological developments in both communication methods and workplace practices (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020), limited financial resources were also noted as challenging regarding financial insecurity and not being able to invest financially in business development. Both formal and informal support networks were engaged with by participants, in lieu of formal internal policies and procedures or department like HR to manage personal and professional development.

Having opportunities for development and getting experience was seen as important for some 'gig workers' who feel this gives them an edge for career development. This interplays with Reilly's (2017) layered career approach and the potential that it may provide a useful framework in relation to the conceptual boundaries between enterprise development in the gig economy, mediated by communication and technology supporting development and closing the gap between smaller and larger enterprises in relation to traditional definitions of scale (Berisha and Pula 2015). Notably, the biggest enabler observed related to use of technology to streamline and automate sales and management channels and having emotional intelligence to find constructive ways to manage different personalities and converge on a constructive workplace environment when working in small teams.

5.4.2 How Do Freelancers, Gig Workers, and Enterprises Emerge from the 'Gig Economy'?

The company representing Data Set 1 has undergone a fast rate of expansion over the last couple of years. This has involved developing the technology side of the business, an innovative shift and a fast-paced recruitment drive, resulting in: 'silos in communication' (see Sections 5.2.3; 5.2.4; 5.2.6); issues building relationships between staff and teamwork challenges resulting from increased digitalisation of work practices (see Sections 5.2.1; 5.2.3; 5.2.4); 'generational differences' (see Sections 5.2.3; 5.2.4; 5.2.5; 5.2.6) and 'resistance to change' (Section 5.2.3). The challenges experienced at the organisation (Data Set 1) are consistent with change management literature. Rodgers' (2010) 'leadership communication grid' suggests that 'reflective' and 'adaptive' leadership processes, and both structured and unstructured (informal/formal) communication strategies facilitate successful change initiatives. Furthermore, Kulkarni et al. (2021) suggests that 'organisational change' can be hard to balance relative to: changing organisational structures and disruption to routines (Battilana and

Casciaro 2013); altered 'communication networks' (Maurer et al. 2023); changes to team dynamics and cohesiveness (Hirschhorn 2002; Coghlan 1994) and pre-established 'norms and values' of organisations entering a state of flux (Shoemaker et al. 2020). Extant research also suggests that: how employees make sense of the change (Khan 2018); the 'change management' processes engaged with (Crosby 1996); diverse and strong leadership and 'commitment to change' (Coghlan 1994) can impact the effectiveness of initiatives, with failures in communication and a disconnect between some of the 'top-down' and 'bottom up' 'visions' and 'values' potentially underlining several of the issues observed at the company represented in Data Set 1.

Research into the 'gig economy' suggests that the 'changing nature of work' over the last decade (Vallas and Schor 2020; Malik et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Healy et al. 2020), and an increase in insecure transient work (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Bieber and Moggia 2021) are typical characteristics in these environments. However, interpretations of the 'gig economy', freelancers and 'gig workers', often overlook more established organisations' associated with (as observed in the construction industry) gig economy marketplaces, their attempts to transition away from gig economy practices and how they adapt to find more stable business models (or pathways to business development).

Acknowledging the likelihood of an increase in formalisation of policies and procedures and organisational structure as enterprises grow and scale up (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015), one of the major drivers of organisational change (and emergence from 'gig economy' practices) that can be seen from the findings is the 'top-down' initiative at the company represented in Data Set 1 (owners and Board members) as the company endeavours to transition from a 'service' to a 'product' based enterprise and establish a more corporate structure. This has resulted in recruitment and training of more staff in house and limiting the use of third parties, against a context of changing taxation laws hindering recruitment of freelancers and 'gig workers', as noted by Burke and Cowling (2020). Notably, these findings are contrary to Friedman's (2014) research which suggests there is a trend for larger companies to employ more 'transient staff'. It is possible, however, that the company represented in Data Set 1 falls below the threshold considered (for a large business) in this study, along some dimensions namely: 'management of firm by its owner(s) in a personalized manner; relatively small share of the market in economic terms; independence in the sense that it does not form part of a larger enterprise and is relatively free from outside control in its principal decisions' (Berisha and Pula 2015).

This highlights several challenges with conceptualising enterprises as fixed entities, that are characterised along a trajectory in a linear fashion from small to large, or in terms of scale (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015). The findings of this thesis suggest that in practice, there may be more 'grey' area where enterprises push and pull and are constantly having to undertake (largely hidden) processes to reflect, adapt, refine, and evolve, especially in fast changing marketplaces, mediated by increased digitalisation of workplace practices and changing attitudes in modern workplaces (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). As suggested, more established organisations may struggle to tap into the reflective cycles and layers of enterprise development that enabled them to build their business to a larger scale. This may occur as organisational structures become more complex, have informal and formal communications strategies that hamper adoption of digitalisation into established workplace cultures, or if organisations are ineffective at deploying leadership approaches to managing change (Rodgers 2007;2010). However, conceptualising enterprise development in terms of layers of enterprise development, similar to those observed in Reilly's (2017) layered career model, allows for a conceptualisation that embraces how businesses in practice may take a patchwork approach to enterprise development, and how larger organisations (that have lost flexibility) can move through and tap into the benefits of previous layers (that they have embodied) in a non-linear fashion to continue to evolve in the digital age.

The findings suggest that the company's (Data Set 1) emergence from its association with and reliance on freelancers and 'gig economy' practices has driven organizational change, catalysed by several factors, including: fast growth or expansion, changing organisational culture, political, economic and market shifts (i.e. changes to taxation laws impacting recruitment of graduates versus 'gig workers', Section 5.2.2). Extant research supports such conditions can drive 'organisational change' initiatives (Hamilton-Hart and Wai-chun Yeung 2021; Deb et al. 2020, Makate et al. 2019). Furthermore, the organisation (Data Set 1) possesses many of the qualities identified (agility, innovation, data driven processes) in literature (Borkova et al. 2019; Huda and Rejito 2020; Polkowski et al. 2017; Ivanova 2017) as being associated with successful enterprises.

However, the company represented in Data Set 1 has several pre-existing structures and power dynamics that are in a state of flux, as it transitions from an organisation bolstered by freelancers, gig workers or sub-contractors towards an entity operating across diverse sectors of the economy. As noted above, distinct stages/layers and processes similar to Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model', were observed in relation to the importance for freelancers and gig workers and pathways to business

development by building up their professional practices, competencies and collaborative networks through trial and error, reflection, refinement, adaptation and evolution at different levels of organisational development. These processes were observed as key component of driving organisational development and change across both data sets (Data Sets 1 and 2), with freelancers, gig workers and enterprises not always following a linear path in how they interact with the layers identified.

With regards to freelancers and 'gig workers' interviewed, how they emerge from the gig economy appears to be driven by several distinct factors. Motivation and moving towards greater financial security for example, was perceived as desirable for participants of Data Set 2, with many participants expressing entrepreneurial intentions, consistent with research (Lahm 2020; Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016; Usman and Sun 2022; Sharma 2018) and outlining attempts made to transition to more secure business models. Barrios et al. (2022) found that 'digital platforms' act as a buffer or 'safety net' for business development in the delivery sector of the 'gig economy', especially those with lower levels of education. In contrast, Burtch et al. (2016) established reduced levels of entrepreneurship due to engagement with 'digital gig economy' platforms. The findings of this thesis tentatively suggest that 'entrepreneurial intentions' are relatively strong (Section 5.3.2.3) for a number of the key informants in Data Set 2. They also provide new evidence relating to professional contexts and for individuals with high levels of educational achievement and specialisms in their industries. However, for some of the participants of Data Set 2, short-term contracts were taken as a means to an end, to 'fill the gaps' in their businesses, as a way to build experience, to more quickly progress on a chosen career trajectory, whilst acknowledging that job insecurity and a lack of protections remained a factor of concern for some participants, and is consistent with literature (Vallas and Schor 2020; Lapanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Johnes 2019; Jeon and Ostrovsky 2020; Cherry and Aloisi 2017; Todoli-Signes 2017; Bunders et al. 2022; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023).

The processes described by participants in regard to attempts to 'transition to more secure business models' often involved the stages of: reflection on the challenges of a perceived barrier (Sections 5.2.4; 5.2.6; 5.3.3; 5.3.5; 5.3.6); adaptation of practices or development of new approaches to overcome a barrier (Sections 5.2.7; 5.3.3; 5.3.5; 5.3.6); and refining (and implementing) the new approach to evolve their business or 'gig work' (Sections 5.2.2; 5.2.6; 5.2.7; 5.3.3; 5.3.4; 5.3.5). However, others appreciated the 'freedom' to 'push and retreat' when their motivation was high or low (Participant 4) with some having a strong desire to 'make a difference' (Participant 6). This is

consistent with Ashford et al. (2018), suggesting that precarious work and 'gig work', whilst being characterised as having higher levels of insecurity and increased level of autonomy, could also be viewed as more 'meaningful'.

5.4.3 How Do Freelancers, Gig workers, and Enterprises Adapt to the 'Changing Nature of Work?'

The workplace culture at the organisation represented in Data Set 1 has changed drastically over the last two years, characterised by some employees as 'a loss of the family side of the business' or being 'stuck in a corporate cycle' (Participant 15). Interestingly, the 'top-down' recruitment drive at the organisation (Data Set 1) has meant there are more young graduates and apprentices integrating into the workplace and a shift towards a 'hybrid' working culture evident, with some generational differences and generational division tentatively noted (Sections 5.2.3; 5.2.4; 5.2.5; 5.2.6) in findings. Whilst it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions (based on the nature and sample size of the study), the potential for generational differences in these settings is supported by literature suggesting that generational differences between young highly technologically competent workers and older generations are deemed to be a trend in workplaces moving forward (Anwar and Graham 2020; MacDonald and Giazitzoglu 2019; Fest et al. 2021; Labanauskaitė et al. 2021).

The organisation represented in Data Set 1 has adapted to the 'changing nature of work' in numerous ways. Most significantly noted is the evolution of a 'hybrid' workplace culture. These practices were largely established during the global pandemic (i.e. working from home), which was disruptive to societal structures as a whole (Gallitto et al. 2022), and are in line with trends observed in literature relative to increased digitalisation (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017). The company (Data Set 1) recruited 'remote workers' for the first time during the pandemic (Participant 14). Generally, these roles related to specialised design and technology fields with work of this nature typically based in London, as observed by Johnes (2019) observation of 'gig workers' in the UK. The ability to broaden the geographical location of workers was seen as boosting innovation, growth, and development of the business. However, 'office-based', 'remote' and 'hybrid' based working cultures have hampered the development and maintenance of a coherent workplace culture. This trend (towards increased digitalisation of workplace practices) may also be representative of a wider socio-economic and cultural shift towards 'digitalisation' and 'remote' (or 'hybrid') work practices in modern workplaces (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017).

The experiences of employees represented in Data Set 1 to some extent mirrors the challenges experienced by 'digital' 'gig workers' regarding 'relationship formation', 'communication', and 'motivation' (Fest et al. 2021; Waldkirch et al. 2021; Ludwig et al. 2022). Fest et al. (2021), proposed

that team formation rooted in adaptation of leadership styles in digital 'gig economy' contexts can provide a supportive environment for workers. However, recent research also suggests that individuals working in 'work from home' setups may be more prone to work longer hours; have higher stress levels; have a poor 'work/life' balance impacting familial relationships; higher levels of exhaustion; and have poorer mental health overall (Dacre et al. 2021; Glavin and Schieman 2022). Several participants in Data Set 1 had higher perceived wellbeing working in a traditional office environment, consequently choosing to opt out of 'work from home' arrangements (Section 5.2.1).

Across Data Set 1 and 2, there appeared to be division in preference for or against embracing 'work from home' practices. Some appreciated the flexibility it provided, consistent with literature (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lepanjuuri et al. 2018; Donovan et al. 2016; Broughton et al. 2018; Kuhn 2016; Schwellnus et al. 2019; Friedman 2014; Tan et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Abraham et al. 2019; Kalleberg and Dunn 2016; Gleim et al. 2019; Barlage et al. 2019; Watson et al. 2021; Kirven 2018; Malik 2016) whereas others experienced difficulties 'building relationships' with colleagues in 'virtual meetings' and a desire to re-establish appropriate 'meeting etiquette' (Participant 15; Participant 18). These challenges are precipitated by underdeveloped 'work from home' policies at the company represented in Data Set 1, who have responded 'reactively', rather than 'proactively' to pressures of an evolving 'hybrid' working culture.

However, personality and individual circumstances appear to influence preferences for working in 'virtual teams'. Research suggests that workplace based 'social interactions' are mediated by 'shared workplace identities', competition and 'union' membership, and different incentives to socialise (Lyttelton 2019). For 'gig workers' and freelancers, working in professional settings that require high levels of social interaction and networking, participation may be more difficult for introverts to sustain (Jabagi et al. 2019) relative to extroverts (Ashford et al. 2018). As such, personality variables may impact an individual's ability to tolerate the isolation of remote work as observed between the responses of the key informants in Data Set 1 and 2. In 'gig economy' environments, freelancers and 'gig workers' can struggle to construct coherent professional identities. The continual need for quick adaptation to multiple 'gigs' and variability in working environments means gig workers are often in a 'liminal state' constantly revising their professional identities (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019). Similarly, 'work from home' environments may result in similar issues for workers, and particularly inexperienced younger workers (Data Set 1) who may struggle to connect with colleagues and develop their professional identities working in remote environments. Challenges were noted around younger staff not knowing how to adapt their communication styles and struggling to make an impact at the organisation due to the remote working environment (Section 5.2.3).

The 'cultural' trend to use 'virtual environments' for 'day to day' work practices was also observed in the responses of participants of Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B). All the participants of Data Set 2 worked fully in 'work from home' capacities for their business activities (Data Set 2B; Participants 3; 6; 8, Data Set 2A), or in hybrid arrangements (Participants 3; 6; 7; 20). As previously alluded to, research suggests that freelancers and gig workers can experience isolation (Kaine and Josserand 2019), poorer working conditions and high levels of anxiety (Giousmpasoglou et al. 2023; Berger et al. 2019) relative to those with long-term employment contracts. For the members of Data Set 2B, problems relating to poor mental health and feeling 'overwhelmed' (Participant 5, Data Set 2B) were cited as an issue as they have tried to stabilise their business model. Notably, an adaptation to the 'digitalisation' of work or the 'changing nature of work' demonstrated by both Participants 4 and 5 (Data Set 2B) involved supplementing 'work from home' with working in public spaces like cafés or at the gym. This is consistent with research suggesting co-working spaces are useful for gig workers or 'independent workers' (Ashford et al. 2018; Petriglieri et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021), providing routine, and a connection to people and to places traditionally lacking for gig workers relative to those who are traditionally employed (Petriglieri et al. 2019).

Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) notes that 'diversity' and 'opportunity' for 'self-development' are desirable components of a 'modern workplace' for 'modern workers'. However, the organisation represented in Data Set 1 has experienced several issues regarding poor 'team cohesion' and 'resistance to change'. This represents challenges for the implementation of the 'top-down' evolving 'vision' and 'values' of the company relative to the 'bottom-up' workplace culture. The findings suggest that 'resistance to change' has been highest around issues such as, incorporation of new digital technologies into the workplace culture (i.e. online 'hybrid' meeting technologies and automation) and development (and implementation) of 'automation' technology at the company (Data Set 1: Participants 2; 11; 13; 14; 15). Notably, 'resistance to change' was a theme observed across both data sets (Data Sets 1 and 2). For the organisation (Data Set 1) 'resistance to change' was characterised by 'resistance' to face-to-face meetings (particularly amongst younger staff), automation and technology.

At the company represented in Data Set 1, the hiring of an 'automation manager' provided opportunities for employees to engage collaboratively with the process of 'change' and express their anxieties regarding the adoption of automation across departments. This 'change management' 'actor' could be viewed as fulfilling a role akin to an 'innovation champion' (Shane 1994), or an 'ally' (peer to peer 'change agents') (Li et al. 2023). For the organisation (Data Set 1), this provides a mitigating influence, reducing 'resistance to change' with positive outcomes expressed by Participant 11 (VDC Automation Manager). The process involved with this type of change management could also

be conceptualised in terms of the 'change actor' 'building coalitions' (Githens 2012), bridging the gap between the grass roots 'bottom up' workplace culture and the 'top down' 'vision' and 'values'. Shane (1994) proposed that 'innovation champions' can serve a vital role in 'managing change' at an organisational level, as they mediate between relevant stakeholders and 'build coalitions' at all levels of the organisation.

As previously alluded to, whilst some departments at the company represented in Data Set 1, have relatively flattened management structures, noted as favourable for 'modern workers' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021), and demonstrated 'informal' communication and less hierarchical management structures which tends to generate a more efficient and relaxed working environment (Tenhiala and Salvador 2018), communication between departments at the organisation (Data Set 1) remained problematic. Some of the challenges experienced (around resistance to change) by members of Data Set 1 (and to a lesser extent Data Set 2B), relate to increased digitalisation practices. This is also consistent with Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) notion that 'modern workplaces' require greater levels of 'individualisation', and autonomy, with 'staff being heard', viewed as an important mitigating factor reducing 'resistance to change' (Participant 11, Data Set 1). Notably, 'unofficial' social events (relatively commonplace at the company represented in Data Set 1, particularly amongst younger staff) may represent a 'bottom up' attempt to 'build coalitions' (Githens 2012) between departments and to 'resist' the loss of 'community' felt by the quickly growing workforce and the 'communication silos' that have emerged (particularly between head-office and the factory). However, many participants feel that the organisation does not do enough to support the emerging social element of the workplace and that the 'change' is poorly managed (Participants 12; 15; 17).

In digital 'gig economy' contexts, the members of Data Set 2B struggled to adapt to expectations of clients in these new digital environments, struggling to 'bid competitively against gig workers in other countries. This is consistent with research regarding geographical inequality in the gig economy (Graham 2013; Graham et al. 2017). Forms of resistance to algorithmic control (Waldkirch et al. 2021; Duggan et al. 2020; Cameron and Rahman 2022) were also identified in relation to members of Data Set 2A and 2B. Removing clients from gig economy platforms, increased levels of perceived autonomy for members of Data Set 2B, allowing them to dictate how they communicated with clients and enter into contractual agreements. Whilst social media was deemed an important infrastructure regarding sales and management channels of businesses in the gig economy, supported by literature (Arora and Sharma 2022), transitioning away from using online gig economy platforms to secure work by building more cohesive organisational identities (Data Set 2B and Participant 8, Data Set 2A), represent other potential forms of 'resistance to algorithmic control'. Primarily these constituted the use of

automation and AI software to essentially 'hack' the algorithm of 'LinkedIn' and to funnel sales messages to pre-determined groups of clients. This is consistent with recent research suggesting that 'start-up' enterprises entering the market, may be able to leverage the 'changing nature of work', and incorporate this into their organisational culture as they are 'born' during a stage of transformation, like 'born global' businesses of the last decade (Rodriguez-Serrano and Martin-Armario 2019).

5.4.4 What 'Informal' and 'Formal' Business Practices and Communication Channels Shape these Enterprises?

For the company represented in Data Set 1, 'collaborative' leadership strategies are an emerging 'standardised' procedure amongst lower and middle managers. However, fewer 'standardised' leadership strategies or communication methods are utilised between upper and middle management. This represents a 'bottleneck' in communications (at middle management), with communication silos evident within and between departments and a lack of cohesion between 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' messaging. Notably, there has been an active push by the organisation (Data Set 1) to rebalance some of the traditional gender divide seen in the construction industry. Hurley and Shumway (2015) suggest that female leaders excel at collaborative leadership strategies. More female leaders and employees have been hired and a woman is now sitting on the Board of the company (for the first time) (Participant 14). The cultural and gender diversity of the organisation (Data Set 1) also represents a significant 'organisational change' with more outward looking policies being integrated into the 'top-down' vision and values. There has also been a level of community outreach in the local area of the business with the company represented in Data Set 1 engaging with schools, universities and with apprentices, providing positive contributions to the local communities and further encouraging the culture of 'talent development' at the organisation (Data Set 1: Participant 2; Participant 14).

In the context of the data set findings, 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies appear to serve as mechanisms underpinning the success of 'organisational change' and how enterprises can successfully 'emerge' or transition to new business models. Notably, 'sense making' (Khan 2018), or 'grasping the change' has been difficult for employees at the organisation (Data Set 1) to navigate, precipitated by poor 'formal' communications and challenges around building a cohesive workplace culture. The findings suggest that the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' changes to the workplace culture at the organisation (Data Set 1), are a combination of both 'formal' and 'informal' changes. 'Informal' changes are not prescriptive but stem from the workplace culture (without a 'formal' 'rule' change), whereas 'formal' changes represent prescribed, and structured changes to policies, procedures and rules of an organisation (Lindner 2003). The emerging 'social' element of the workplace culture

appears to be a proactive movement by staff to 'manage the change' at a 'social' and 'emotional' level with many participants seeking 'connection' in their day-to-day interactions and wanting to 'bridge the gap' between departments and 'get to know' their colleagues.

However, the organisational structure evident in Data Set 1 is more developed than observed across Data Set 2 (Data Set 2A and 2B). For Data Set 2 many of the participants sought 'mentoring', coaching, and engaged with 'informal' and 'formal' support networks to assist with the 'day to day' running of the business i.e. 'financial and legal compliance' issues and more generally for engaging with self-motivated mentorship and self-development around key competencies such as 'networking', 'organisational skills', or for building 'trusted' connections within their industries. For Participant 8, having appropriate 'formal' 'policies' and 'procedures' in place, developed through support networks, provide him with the 'illusion' of being a larger enterprise, bolstered by 'warm introductions' and recommendations from relationships built up in this 'community' element of his support networks. 'Building coalitions' (Githens 2012) or 'allies' (Li et al. 2023) amongst peers in the gig economy are also important constructs to consider in relation to collaborative networks of freelancers. These are organically established to support small businesses freelancers and 'gig workers' navigate the challenges associated with the 'gig economy'.

The findings also suggest that members of Data Set 2B have a drive to build a 'trusted network' of freelancers (Participant 5). A sense of 'trust' and 'camaraderie' was evident in descriptions of interactions with other freelancers, which can be viewed as an important mechanism of developing layered careers (Reilly 2017) and to contemporary models of the gig economy (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020), with 'empathetic leadership', (noted by Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) to be effective in modern workplaces) approaches utilised by some (Participant 3 and Participant 5). This thesis posits that these factors may be a key mechanism supporting the conceptualisation of a layered approach to pathways for business development (and building communities and support networks) in these contexts. Furthermore, paying a fair or above market rate was deemed to be an important element of building 'trust' and 'confidence' in this transient workplace culture. This could also be viewed through the 'construct' of 'informal coalitions' (Githens 2012) or 'allies' (Li et al. 2023) whereby structural changes are implemented by 'grass roots' changes and coalitions between 'actors' in these networks. Notably, some participants have attempted to build networks that support driving up wages for gig workers, in opposition to the 'online' gig economy culture that is 'overly competitive' (Participant 4) and drives down wages due to an oversaturation of demand for low-cost services.

5.4.5 How Do Individuals and Teams Find Ways to Successfully Combine Their Capacities, Competencies, and Commitment in These Enterprises?

Findings established several individual and shared competencies for both data sets (Data set 1 and 2). For Data Set 1, the most frequently mentioned motivations (that helped employees be successful in their current role) related to: 'adaptability'; 'financial benefit' (or 'money'); professional development opportunities; opportunities for self-development; and for mentoring. Generally, participants' motivations were aligned with their professional experience with several 'shared competencies' observed in relation to 'problem solving', 'creativity', 'motivating people', 'learning' and 'mentoring', with a strong preference for 'group work' noted. However, in relation to the workplace culture, a few negative associations were prominent regarding it as being 'soulless', 'semi-automated', 'barriers to change' and 'generational differences'. For Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B), there were fewer shared motivations, with the most mentioned motivations being: 'learning'; 'creativity'; 'happiness'; 'work/life balance'; and 'freedom'. However, there were a number of shared competencies that overlapped with Data Set 1 namely these are: 'learning'; 'problem solving'; 'adaptability' and 'group work'. This (tentatively) suggests that these aspects may be particularly important competencies for freelancers, gig workers and employees across both data sets, particularly in light of the increased digitisation of work practices observed in both Data Set 1 and 2

In the context of the literature, Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) established several 'competencies' required of 'modern' workers in the 'modern' labour market. The focus of the study related to the pressures of 'digitalisation' in the modern workplace, characterised by changes to traditional workplace practices and a shift to a 'digital' workplace, with 'automation' a factor of concern for many 'modern workers'. The findings suggest that larger enterprises may be particularly vulnerable to problems around 'implementation' of changes, with collaborative processes necessary for organisations to adapt effectively. Furthermore, Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) noted that a number of conditions should be met in order to successfully attract 'modern workers', namely these are: opportunities for 'self-realisation' and 'self-development' both personally and professionally; autonomy in how work is conducted and responsibility over tasks; and a 'goal orientated' rather than hierarchically organised 'workplace' structure.

Generational differences were also noted with 'intergenerational' cooperation' required to ensure 'valuable' expertise is not lost and experience is passed on to younger generations (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). The entrepreneurial competencies identified from the quantitative portion of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) relate to: communication skills; relationship building; analytical and logical thinking; networking/team ability; and risk/response readiness. For the qualitative portion: adaptability;

'logical/analytical thinking'; 'networking/team ability'; and 'risk/response readiness' were identified as important competencies. Digital competencies identified included: flexible work; feedback; learning opportunities; creation of agile organisations; democratic business decision culture; communication; relationships; trust in management and employees; empathetic and empowering management styles. Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) also notes that small organisations, particularly those with a 'family' or community based 'corporate' culture can prove to be an advantage for adapting to the 'New Work' model.

Comparisons between Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) and the findings of this thesis suggest a strong cross over between the competencies identified as essential for 'modern workers' and the themes that emerged from the self-reported competencies of both data sets (Data Sets 1 and 2), with 'adaptability'; 'learning'; 'problem solving'; and 'group work' shared competencies observed across Data Set 1 and 2. Furthermore, motivations around 'adaptability'; 'financial benefit' (or 'money'); professional development opportunities; opportunities for self-development; and for mentoring were identified in Data Set 1, with 'trust in leadership' featuring prominently in participants' responses. These support and bear a strong resemblance to competencies identified by Labanauskaitė et al. (2021).

However, the current research extends these findings to the 'gig economy' in regard to examining 'self-reported' competencies of freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'start-ups', relative to those of employees of an organisation experiencing a period of 'organisational change' that traditionally occupied a space associated with a 'gig economy' based construction industry. It is noteworthy that 'learning'; 'creativity'; 'happiness'; 'work/life balance'; 'freedom'; and 'learning' were amongst the highest regarded competencies for participants of Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B). Whereas adaptability; 'financial benefit' (or 'money'); professional development opportunities; opportunities for self-development; and for mentoring were mentioned by participants of Data Set 1. The workplace culture evident in Data Set 1 is representative of an organisation that currently sits in a 'halfway house' between having a 'formal' organisational structure (typical of a larger firm) and a more flattened structure made up of collaborative processes. However, it lacks many of the components deemed to be important by Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) in relation to 'attracting' modern workers.

'Collaboration' and leadership styles are viewed as determinants of success or failure in 'online' or 'gig economy' styled teamwork contexts (Fest et al. 2021; Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). Collaborative leadership strategies are commonplace at the organisation (Data Set 1), however as previously noted, there are communication silos evident (within and between departments) that create barriers for 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies and development of a 'cohesive workplace culture'

and 'teamwork' (Sections 5.2.4; 5.2.5). Research suggests that well implemented 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies can improve: interpersonal relationships (Heimann and Kampf 2021); workplace culture (Stachova et al. 2017); strengthen organisations (Stachova et al. 2017); and establish cohesive brands (Gonzalez and Lester 2018). Lower levels of 'informal' and 'formal' communication in digital environments (as observed with middle managers at the organisation represented in Data Set 1, Section 5.2.4) can reduce productivity and output (Stockl and Struck 2022; Malik and Raziq 2022; Ludwig et al. 2022; Fest et al. 2021). Similarly, in digital environments, deficits in 'formal' and 'informal' 'knowledge transfer' as previously alluded to, can result in poorer team cohesion (Lai and Yang 2017) and lower levels of leadership legitimacy (Schumacher et al. 2022) which may underline some of the issues identified around 'trust in leadership' and 'trust in the team' (expanded upon in the following section) seen as a barrier for some employees (Section 5.2.6) at the company represented in Data Set 1.

5.4.6 What Helps or Hinders the Development (and Change) of These Enterprises?

Finally, several barriers and enablers were identified across Data Sets 1 and 2 in relation to 'development of effective teams' and 'organisational change'. For members of Data Set 1, the biggest barriers were perceived to be around: 'poor 'formal' communication'; 'resistance to change'; lack of trust in leadership; division between factory and head office; and generational differences, particularly regarding adaptability to the use of new technologies. Innovation was also seen as a 'blessing' and a curse, with robust 'change management' procedures required to help employees adapt to the fast-moving changes occurring at the organisational level. Notably, the use of freelancers and gig workers was also seen as a 'barrier' to development due to an inability to create 'dynamic teams' moving forward with a more corporate structure. Enablers identified for members of Data Set 1 relate to: providing a secure environment with encouragement and support; having clear leadership and goals; and providing development pathways and opportunities for personal and career development. Many of these components may be representative of the challenges faced in relation to organisational 'change management' literature regarding 'resistance to change' (Battilana and Casciaro 2013; Maurer et al. 2023; Hirschhorn 2002; Coghlan 1994; Shoemaker et al. 2020; and Crosby 1996) with many of the 'enablers' aligning with the findings of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) in regards to the desire of staff to have opportunities to develop and the provision of a clear goal orientated workplace culture.

Several established 'barriers to entry' are currently being negotiated at the organisation represented in Data Set 1, including the implementation of a new marketing and HR department deemed in literature to be challenging for smaller companies to navigate successfully due to the associated high

costs (Widyastuti 2019). The standardisation of HR procedures at the company (Data Set 1), also solves to bolster difficulties noted in literature around individual differences such as 'gender', motivation, work-life, and family prioritisations as organisations are growing (Hazudin et al. 2015; Sharma and Sharma 2020) and corroborated by the policy and procedure documents reviewed and discussed with the HR manager relating to issues such as 'gender' discrimination and diversity.

For members of Data sets 2A, and 2B, barriers existed in relation to: the competitive nature of 'entrepreneurial' environments, leading to 'toxic working environments'; challenges around creating a supportive environment for good mental health and wellbeing; opportunities for self-development needing to be self-motivated and limited; and financial limitations due to insecurity of work and a lack of ability to invest. Enablers were noted around issues such as: gaining experience due to the diversity of 'gig work' undertaken; developing support networks and opportunities for self-development, including engaging with coaches and mentors; and having emotional intelligence to manage different personalities and adapt approaches accordingly. The biggest enabler identified related to the use of 'innovative' technology that 'levels the playing field' for the sales and marketing of smaller enterprises, relative to larger organisations.

5.4.7 Towards Developing a Model of Enterprise Development in the 'Gig Economy'

Several stages and mechanisms of organisational development in 'gig economy' contexts were identified in the themes that emerged in relation to the data sets. Organisational change and development (in gig economy and organisational contexts), appear to be mediated by 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies and successful adaptation to barriers in order to successfully combine competencies in teams, networks and to construct a cohesive workplace culture. In addition, successful identification, and development of 'competencies' (through trial and error or mentoring and training) are bolstered by engagement with supportive professional networks (for Data Set 2) and by good leadership and communication in traditional settings (Data Set 1). In the context of enterprise development in the gig economy, similarities were drawn between the findings of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) and the thesis findings in relation to the identification of 'shared competencies' across the data sets that support the notion that 'gig workers' and 'employees' share several competencies in light of the increased digitalisation of workplace practices. The themes that emerged suggest that these factors are supported by reflective processes (reflecting, adapting, refining, and evolving) similar to those observed in Rodger's (2008; 2010) 'leadership communication grid', perceived as mediating the effectiveness of 'change leadership'. However, themes emerged across both data sets (Data Sets 1 and 2) that suggest there are similar processes that can drive and bolster freelancers, gig workers

and start-ups seeking more stable organisational structures or to emerge from the gig economy, relative to established organisations.

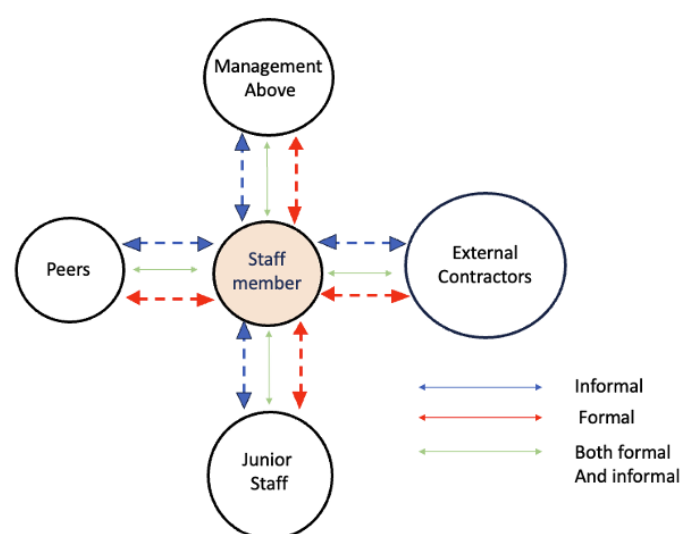
These findings combined with the patterns observed in the themes bear a strong resemblance to Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' for 'gig workers' (focusing on stand-up comedians operating in the 'cultural production' gig economy), provide many useful parallels in relation to understanding the 'non-linearity' of freelancers and gig workers' progression towards establishing 'gig-work-based-careers' or transitioning towards the development of businesses and provides a useful framework to conceptualise enterprise development not strictly in terms of the scale of an enterprise, but rather in relation to the characteristics of each layer and how each layer of enterprise developments interacts with each other, in light of increasing digitalisation in modern workplaces (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) and can uncover pathways to business development in these contexts. The 'layered career model' outlines three distinct layers (the 'Proximate Layer'; 'Community Layer'; and 'Industrial Layer'), with progression through each layer to the next requiring 'participation' and maintenance of connections and engagement with the previous layer. As such, skills continue to be 'practiced' and refined, or connections strengthened. Reilly (2017) suggests that 'stand-up' comedians rely heavily on 'informal', 'decentralised' support networks and mentorship and 'trust' based recommendations or 'warm' introductions to secure work. Many of the barriers and enablers identified support the parallels previously alluded to between Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model' and the stages of development (and barriers) that facilitate the transition of 'gig workers' towards more sustainable business models. The following section addresses each research question in turn drawing the conclusion, relative to the discussion.

5.4.8 Potential Applications of the Model and Current Debates

At its core, the tools of analysis outlined in Chapter 5 and illustrated in their simplified (raw) form in Figures 5-12 and 5-13 (below) represent a straightforward, practical tool for freelancers, gig workers (working in teams) and enterprises to map (themes relating to aspects of their teams, communication, technology use and motivations for business development) and make explicit the hidden dynamics of their enterprises and identify pathways to business development. The tools presented in Figures 5-12 and 5-13 could be used (with each member of a team) to inform data gathering (in applied workplace settings) around informal and formal communication strategies, competency development in teams and are simplified versions of the data mapping used for the study. Workplace practices are traditionally viewed as formalising in tandem with the scale of an enterprise, with smaller enterprises (typically) having fewer formalised communication approaches, policies, and procedures, relative to larger enterprises (Berisha and Pula 2015). However, proactively engaging with a practical examination of 'informal and formal' communication strategies and processes (Shown below in figure

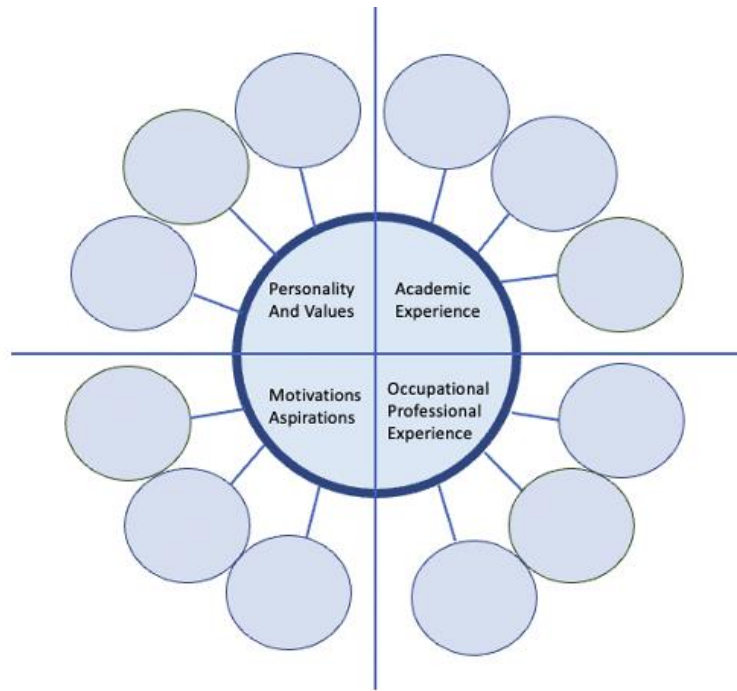
5-1) can provide a straightforward, and tangible form of reflection that is easily communicated to team members and can inform adaptations to procedures (where necessary). These processes are viewed as important to organisational change literature (along structured and unstructured dimensions of leadership (Rodgers 2010)) and have the potential to illuminate the non-linear progression through pathways to business development, or conceptualisations of a layered approach to enterprise development, akin to (the parallel) layered careers in the gig economy (Reilly 2017),

As shown in Data Set 1 and 2, this tool makes tangible the processes of 'Reflecting' on 'Values' and workplace culture; skill sets: academic experience and professional experience; motivations and aspirations to map combined competencies in teams. Visualisation of these normally hidden aspects of teams may enable organisations to reflect on where there are in their business development journey, more flexibly 'Adapt' to allocate resources (people and time), 'Refine' their offering (acknowledging gaps in their knowledge, skills or compatibility are established), and continue to evolve their businesses. As such, these simple tools provide a practical solution for freelancers and gig workers in gig economy contexts, and both small and larger companies to gain a snapshot of the makeup of their business including the competencies of their team, and their approaches to communication in order to identify any bottlenecks that may exist. In the context of debates in the social sciences, this may provide a useful insight into how the conceptual overlap between workers in the gig economy, and employees in 'the new world of work' may be narrowing, mediated by digitalisation of workplace practices and the use of novel technology (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017).



(Figure 5-12)

'Informal' and 'Formal' Communication Strategies (Horizontal/Vertical/Internal/External) Tool



(Figure 5-13)
Example of a Competency Bubble (Tool)

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Section 6.1: Conclusions: Addressing the Research Questions

The following section draws conclusions in regard to the research questions of the thesis. First a new model is presented that reimagines aspects of Reilly's (2017) 'Layered Career Model' in the context of enterprise development in the gig economy. This new model establishes three 'Stages and Reflective Cycles of Enterprise Development in the Gig Economy' to frame discussion around how enterprises 'emerge'. Rodgers' (2010) 'leadership communication grid' and Labanauskaitė et al.'s (2021) findings are utilised to draw conclusions relative to 'the changing nature of work' and informal and formal communication strategies utilised. How competencies are combined to develop effective teams are discussed in the context of the 'stages of development' outlined, before providing applications of the model for gig economy contexts, established enterprises and conclusions in relation to the barriers and enablers that help and hinder development (and change) of these enterprises.

6.1.1 Outlining a New Model, the 'RARE' (Reflect; Adapt; Refine; Evolve) Reflective Cycles and Combining Competency Development in Teams

This section addresses the research question: How do freelancers, gig workers, and enterprises emerge from the gig economy, adapt to the 'changing nature of work', and what informal and formal business practices and communication channels shape these enterprises? The findings suggest that freelancers and gig workers must be self-motivated to identify and develop their own 'competencies' (motivations, skill sets, strengths and weaknesses) in order to establish pathways to business development, structure their organisations (gig work, or start-ups) and develop teams and networks. Furthermore, pathways to business development from gig economy contexts are mediated by engagement with ongoing processes of reflection, adaptation, refinement, and evolution at different stages of business development. These findings are evidenced in the following sections: Reflection on the challenges of a perceived barrier (Sections 5.2.4; 5.2.6; 5.3.3; 5.3.5; 5.3.6); adaptation of practices or development of new approaches to overcome a barrier (Sections 5.2.7; 5.3.3; 5.3.5; 5.3.6); and refining (and implementing) the new approach to evolve their business or 'gig work' (Sections 5.2.2; 5.2.6; 5.2.7; 5.3.3; 5.3.4; 5.3.5). A model outlined in the following section and drawn from the findings and key literature suggests that pathways to business development can be reframed as coexisting in parallel to a layered career approach, with enterprises in these contexts following a layered approach to business development, similar to the dimensions observed in Reilly's (2017) layered career model.

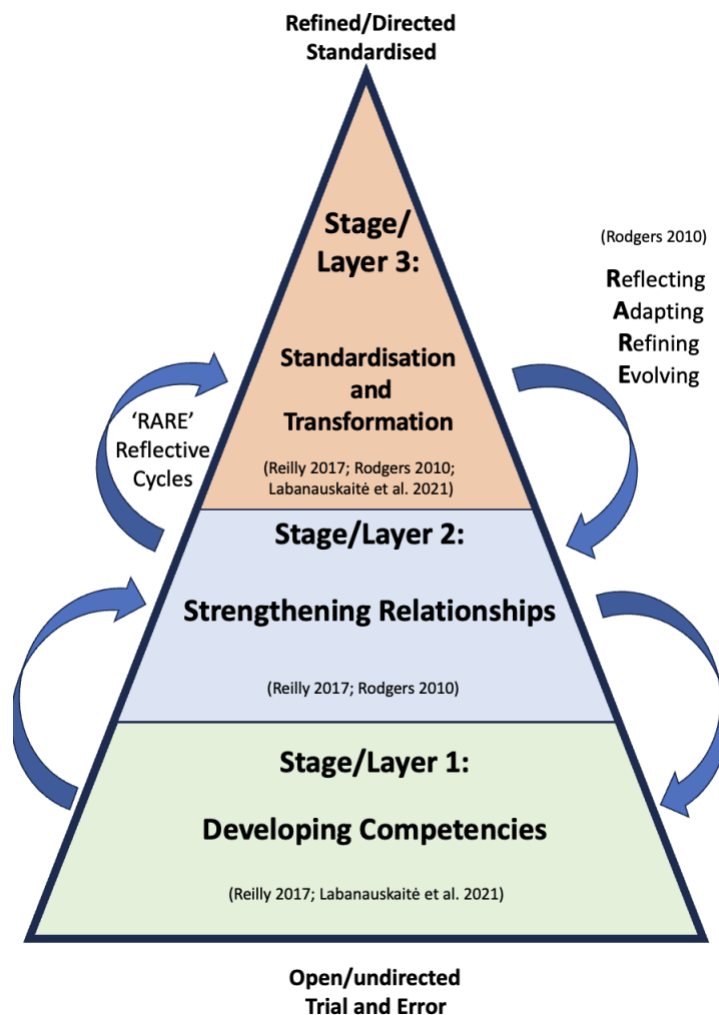
Additionally, findings of the thesis suggest that freelancers operating in gig economy settings, that are specialised or highly trained and not constrained by digital platforms, experience more freedom to build their brand, have more autonomy over their 'gigs', flexibility in the resources they have access to, engagement with communities and support networks (in lieu of formal organisational structures), and how they chose to build pathways to business development. This is consistent with the concept of the 'scale of trust' in the gig economy (Page-Tickell and Yerby 2020) which suggests higher skilled freelancers have higher levels of perceived trust, relative to lower skilled workers, representing levels of inequality for workers associated with the gig economy. This may also feed into some of the inequalities outlined in literature around poor regulation, exploitation and negative experiences associated with 'digital' gig workers or lower skilled gig workers, particularly for gig workers operating on digital platforms (van Doorn et al. 2022; Anwar and Graham 2020; Anwar and Graham 2021; Daniels and Grinstein-Weiss 2019; Kelly 2020; Bates et al. 2020; Garden 2017) as well as providing further evidence for socio-economic motivations for entrepreneurship (Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016) and entrepreneurial behaviour in the 'platform economy' or 'gig economy' (Morales-Pérez et al. 2022).

Furthermore, the findings suggest that freelancers, gig workers and employees share several competencies that are aligned to: values/workplace-culture; motivations/aspirations; and academic/professional experience with shared competencies emerging that can be viewed as beneficial for increased digitalisation of workplaces, supporting the findings of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) and enterprise development in gig economy contexts. This suggest that to some extent, increased digitalisation in modern workplace environments, and economy wide changes in the way workers communicate and engage with technology may have to some extent narrowed the experiential gap between freelancers working in gig economy contexts and employees working in more structured organisations.

The findings of the thesis propose that for freelancers and gig workers transitioning away from insecure gig work towards more sustainable business models (pathways to business development in the gig economy), there are three Stages/Layers of business development that run in parallel to the layers outlined in Reilly's (2017) layered career model. These represent Stage/Layer1: Competency Development; Stage/Layer 2: Strengthening Relationships; and Stage/Layer3: Standardisation and Transformation. The three stages of enterprise development are illustrated in Figure 6-1. The three stages are bolstered by 'Reflective Cycles' ('RARE' reflective cycles) which incorporate processes of 'reflection', 'adaptation' 'refinement' and 'evolution', drawing parallels to the processes of 'change leadership' developed by Rodgers (2007;2010). Similar to Reilly's (2017) 'layered career model',

engagement with the three 'Stages/Layers and Reflective Cycles' of enterprise development is required in order to build pathways towards more stable sales and marketing approaches and greater financial security. However, these Stages and Reflective Cycles are not linear with even larger organisations (i.e. the organisation represented in Data Set 1) needing to 'develop new competencies' (Stage/Layer 1) in light of fast organisational change and changing expectations of the workplace, and strengthen relationships (Stage/Layer 2) in order to successfully manage change.

Figure 6-1 outlines the structure of a proposed new model which synthesises literature in relation to key authors (Rodgers 2010; Reilly 2017; Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) and incorporates the thesis findings presented in Chapter 5 to converge on a new framework for conceptualising: The Stages and Reflective Cycles of Enterprise Development in the Gig Economy. Section 6.1.2 elaborates on this model further utilising data from the findings.



(Figure 6-1)
*Defining a New Model: The Stages and Reflective Cycles of Enterprise
Development in the Gig Economy*

6.1.2 The Stages and Reflective Cycles of Enterprise Development in the 'Gig Economy'

The stages/layers and reflective cycles outlined below are derived from the findings and experiences outlined by data from Data Set 2 (representing Stage/Layers 1 and 2) and from Data Set 1 (representing Stage/Layer 3). Reilly's (2017) 'Layered Career Model' provides many parallels observed in relation to 1) The Proximate Layer: constituting 'starting out', learning and developing relationships; 2) The Community Layer: constituting developing support networks and relationships with peers and a more aggressive marketing strategy to develop a following; and 3) The Industrial Layer: representing more secure branding and income, 'becoming known' in the industry. These stages are not always linear with 'gig workers' ('comedians') moving between the Layers to 'refresh' or gain new insights. Drawing on data from Data Sets 1 and 2 and relevant literature (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015; Reilly 2017; Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Malik et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020; Rodgers 2010) the stages and 'reflective cycles' of enterprise development (and pathways to business development) in the gig economy identified are outlined in the following section (see Figure 6-1 and 6-2 for a visual representation of 'Stages and 'reflective cycles' of enterprise development in the gig economy).

This thesis suggests that it may be useful to sidestep from conceptualisation of enterprises characterised in terms of their scale (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015) and towards a framework based on the mechanisms underlying characteristics of different experiential layers of business development and the processes (RARE cycles) that facilitate movement between these layers. The notion of layered careers (Reilly 2017) and parallel 'layered' business development stages are identified in this thesis as pathways to business development from the gig economy. They support the notion that the lines are increasingly blurred between expectations of the modern worker in organisations (in light of digitalisation) and workers in gig economy contexts (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) and that boundaries associated with the gig economy are becoming 'increasingly obsolete' as the digital economy matures and with increased digitalisation of the workplace (Malik et al. 2021). A new model proposes, using examples drawn from the findings, that competency development, strengthening relationships and standardisation represent different challenges depending on an organisation's stage of development. This framework may provide useful evidence and a synthesis of literature regarding freelancers, pathways to business development and how organisational change plays out in these environments, and in the context of debates around changing nature of work (Vallas and Schor 2020; Malik et al. 2021; Webster 2016; Healy et al. 2020), and 'the future of work' (such as increased digitalisation of workplace practices) across all sectors of the economy (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020).

The following section outlines examples drawn from the literature of the parallel stages/layers of enterprise development that focus on communication, technology, and business development processes as pathways to business development in the gig economy. Stage/Layer 1: Developing Competencies. This stage (evidence drawn from Data Set 2) is characterised by 'gaining experience' through trial and error and involves testing a product or services in 'gig economy' contexts via securing 'gig work' in traditional or online environments. Part of this process requires active 'learning', and 'problem solving' by engaging with reflective processes in order to refine the service offered, or to establish a unique selling point and narrow down a potential client base. Relationship building is also an important element at this stage with many participants engaging with coaches or mentors in order to understand how to start building their business and organise their (internal) teams:

So, in terms of being born out of that, yeah, it was kind of, there was an idea of wanting it to become more than just a hustle, um but in terms of where it started and fundamentally what the kind of set up was it definitely was in that vein, In terms of not having any fixed things for kind of functions like accounting, things like HR, things like just some of the legal stuff where you're just a maze to it. So, you're just, basically I've got something, a service, a product that you want to sell to people and that's kind of the ins and outs of it, you don't kind of look at things further than that. (Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('Start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

Stage/Layer 2: Strengthening relationships. This represents a stage characterised by strengthening relationships and competencies (established in stage 1) and building/developing 'trusted networks' of freelancers. This may represent a focus on 'group work', collaboration with other freelancers or re-engaging with 'gig economy' platforms to test out new ideas, or to hire 'gig workers' to support organisational growth. Supportive networks developed at this stage provide both 'formal' and 'informal' support and communication channels for gaining skills around 'financial and regulatory compliance' and in order to support self-development, mentoring and continued 'learning'. 'Formal' and 'informal' internal processes are still relatively underdeveloped at this stage of development. However, businesses begin to use 'formal' sales and marketing strategies to develop an identity and a media presence that represents a 'brand' and to differentiate their business from a 'series of sporadic gigs' towards the development of a more cohesive identity, with 'customer loyalty', repeat business or longer-term contracts which constitutes a benefit of this stage. As noted by Participant 8, companies that have relatively 'formal' policies and procedures in place, (as a new enterprise) mirroring that of a larger organisation, are able to compete for bigger projects giving the 'illusion' of being a larger company, with 'warm introductions' derived from support networks being an important enabler at this stage:

I learned from talking to people within the group, in terms of, you might be just you, you might be new but if you keep acting and thinking that you're new, then people will treat you like you're new. So, getting the systems and processes in place that make it look like you might be dealing with 'Axentia', or, you know, 'KPMG marketing', you know, if you've got those things

in place then people are much more likely to trust you, even if you are small, which makes sense (...) We've been able to deal with the likes of 'redacted', 'redacted' and it's so it's just like these things that I don't think would be possible if we'd treated ourselves as a small, you know, if you can see the office, which is an office come playroom (...)(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director ('Start-up'), Male, Age, 42)

Remaining agile to marketplace 'trends' is an important component that facilitates quick adaptation to changes and reduces 'stagnation'. Innovative use of technology also represents a strong enabler for this stage of development that can help to 'level the playing' field for small enterprises competing against larger enterprises in the same marketplace:

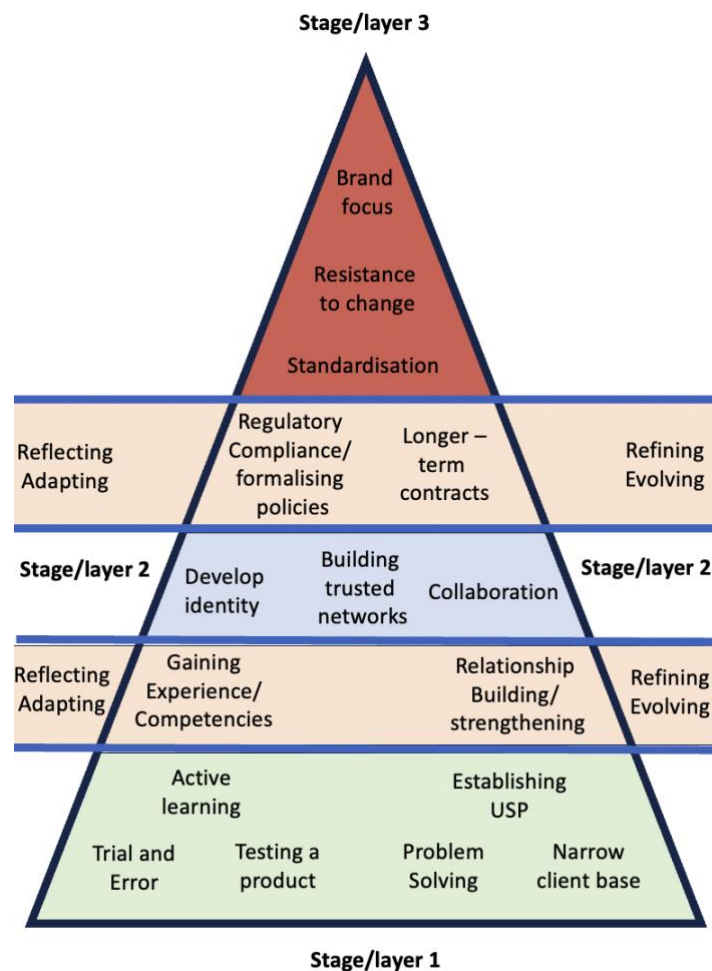
Stage/Layer 3: Standardisation and Transformation. This stage represents organisations operating in the 'gig economy' that move from 'service' to 'product' based enterprises. This constitutes the final stage of development that may change how an organisation 'identifies' and interacts with the 'gig economy'. Data Set 1 represents an organisation in the latter stages of 'organisational development', transitioning away from 'gig economy' based practices. Internal standardisation of procedures, formalisation of management practices, and 'resistance to change' characterise this stage of an enterprise. This stage is typified by the 'enterprise' striving to establish its 'brand' as a leader, or 'innovator' in its field. The sales strategy is more focused on building the brand and developing a coherent workplace culture that matches the 'top down' 'vision' and 'values'.

At all stages of development, processes of reflection; adaptation; refinement and evolution are evident (see Figures 6-1 and 6-2). The vast majority of employees of the organisation represented in Data Set 1 do not view the business as operating in the 'gig economy' despite the roots of the business originating in this marketplace (Participant 2). In-house development of teams, rather than engagement with freelancers and 'gig workers' represents a 'stabilising' of the organisation (represented in Data Set 1), with freelancers and 'gig workers' employed for 'specialist skills' and the company actively trying to develop the competencies of its staff to be 'self-sufficient' from the 'gig economy' marketplace:

Yeah, I think it's definitely had a big influence on our workforce, and I guess it pushed us into having a larger graduate base actually. I think it might have had quite a big influence on that, um, and then I guess there's also because we've moved away from traditional construction and moved into like a new industry, more of a kind of niche product-based industry. So, I mean it's probably two-fold there on why the company's perception has changed. When I started here it was pretty much 60 percent contractors essentially, whereas now I think we're probably on 5 percent, if that. (Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)

Figure 6-2 shows a visual representation (expanding on the simplified model, Figure 6-1) of the proposed 'stages and reflective cycle of enterprise development' in the 'gig economy'. Each level is depicted relative to the key components identified that represent the level. Between the levels of

‘enterprise development’, the processes of ‘reflecting’, ‘adapting’, ‘refining’, and ‘evolving’ are visualised, as occurring at each stage of development.

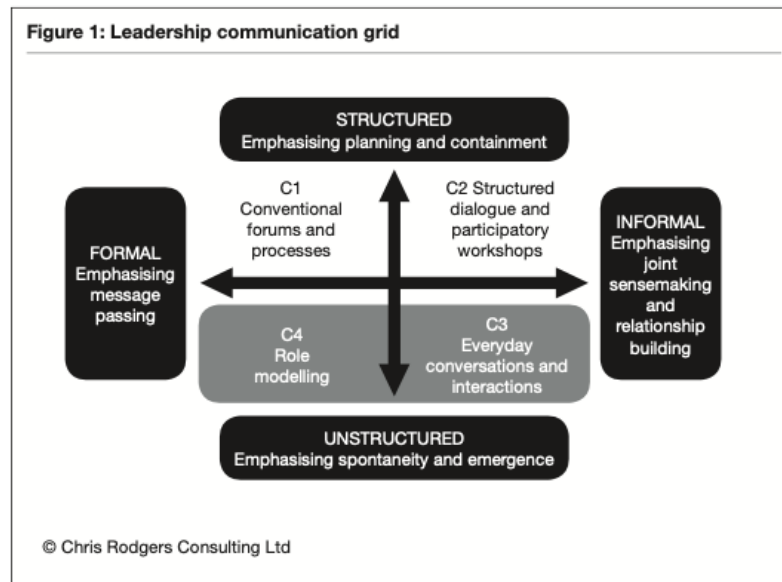


(Figure 6-2)

The Stages and Reflective Cycles of Enterprise Development in the Gig Economy

Stage/Layer 3 (Standardisation and Transformation) represents a diverse group of established businesses that may have highly defined internal and external procedures that dictate the internal organisation. Rodgers’ (2010) model of ‘organisational change’ represents a traditional model for conceptualising ‘organisational change’ and the ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication strategies utilised by ‘change managers’. Rodgers (2010) proposes a model for ‘change leadership’ strategy that focusses on five core characteristics: ‘Reframing communication’; ‘Thinking culturally’; ‘Acting politically’; ‘Embracing the paradox’ and ‘Providing a vision’. The fourth characteristic, ‘Embracing the paradox’, is perhaps the most useful in terms of evaluating how ‘informal’ and ‘formal’ communication strategies shape the organisational structures evident in Data Set 1. ‘Embracing the paradox’ promotes leadership styles that embrace existing tensions rather than having an ‘either’ ‘or’ approach to change management. This allows natural dynamics (present in workplace culture) to ‘inform’ rather

than 'frustrate' changes (Rodgers 2010). Figure 6-3 visualises 'informal', and 'formal' communication strategies (in terms of how meaning is created to the 'actors') against the 'medium' of communication type (structured/unstructured).



(Figure 6-3)
Leadership Communication Grid (Rodgers 2010)

For the company representing Data Set 1, 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies were relatively standardised (internally and externally) up to middle management, with a heavily 'Teams-based' culture evident across the organisation, 'frustrating' middle managers with a bottleneck in communications observed. An underlying assumption of Rodgers' (2010) model suggests that 'change leaders' are privy to the 'day to day' discussions of the workplace, rooted in a more 'traditional' office-based model of organisations. However, in the 'New Work' model, these 'informal' communication streams and discourses may be 'harder to grasp'. Some of the challenges observed in Data Set 1, relates to silos in communication rooted in 'online' versus office-based tensions and more generally the 'digitalisation' of the workplace and the integration of automation technology. In these environments, 'change leadership' represents a challenge for 'reflecting' on the challenges at hand and for providing a 'vision' that aligns with the needs of the organisation. Labanauskaitė et al. (2021) suggests that empathetic and empowering management styles are desirable for 'modern' workers in 'digitalised' environments, with greater levels of 'collaboration' in the 'decision making' processes favourable. For the company represented in Data Set 1, it is evident that there is a gap between the 'vision' and 'values' and the 'workplace culture' with barriers evident in relation to 'social' support with generational divides not being adequately bridged to provide 'intergenerational cooperation'. Poor 'formal' 'communication' at the organisation (Data Set 1) has led to a 'sub-culture' of 'unofficial'

social events which is an attempt for employees to 'build coalitions' across departments (Githens 2012) and a 'bottom up' ('informal') 'change initiative' that is shaping the 'workplace' culture.

Regarding the 'changing nature of work', a number of 'shared competencies' were identified that are consistent with those observed in Labanauskaitė et al.'s (2021) study and extends the findings to the 'gig economy'. These findings tentatively suggest that the 'New Work' model provides a new set of challenges for freelancers, 'gig workers' and those employed in the traditional economy. The most frequently mentioned motivations of freelancers, 'gig workers' and 'employees' centred around competencies of learning; 'problem solving'; 'adaptability' and 'group work'. Furthermore, for employees (Data Set 1) the most frequently mentioned motivations were 'adaptability'; 'financial benefit' (or 'money'); professional development opportunities; opportunities for self-development; and for mentoring. In combination with the findings of Labanauskaitė et al. (2021), this strongly supports the notion that 'gig workers', 'start-ups' and 'employees' share several competencies, and motivations that may be of benefit for enterprises to incorporate in to their 'change strategies'. This could ensure workplaces are more suited to modern expectations of workers in the increasingly 'digitised' world of work. This also supports research suggesting that as workplaces change with digitalisation, and technological advancements (Vallas et al 2020), leadership strategies must adapt to find ways to motivate and manage workers in increasingly 'virtual' settings (Fest et al. 2021). Furthermore, in contrast to observations of 'motivations' in Data Set 1, traditional methods of boosting worker productivity (monetary rewards) were not seen as a benefit to productivity (Fest et al 2021). However, findings support the notion that this may be a factor to consider improving the motivation of staff, with 'money' mentioned as a potential motivator in parallel with team building and leadership suited to digital, hybrid and offline contexts (Fest et al. 2021), mindful of diversity of leadership styles (Xu et al. 2019; Fest et al. 2021) and leadership networking strategies (Chung et al. 2020).

Enterprises in stage 1 and 2 of 'organisational development' (see Figure 6-1 and 6-2) are less likely to have robust internal procedures, or hierarchies. For key informants in Data Set 2 (Data Sets 2A and 2B), individual competencies are generally self-assessed, and tasks divided according to 'perceived skill'. However, engagement with coaches and external support networks also provide useful pathways for 'self-motivated' development and learning strategies. For the third stage of 'organisational development' (see Figure 6-1 and 6-2) 'standardisation' of management practices, and positive 'change leadership' approaches that embrace empathetic, collaborative, and empowering leadership strategies (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) may help to mitigate 'resistance to change'. This is deemed to be a common feature of modern organisations that are adapting to the 'New Work' model,

precipitated by increased digitisation of workplace practices (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021). These were most pertinent for issues relating to legal, financial and compliance issues, and softer skills such as networking, and sales and marketing strategies.

Finally, several barriers and enablers were identified that can be viewed as helping or hindering the development (and change) of enterprises. For enterprises that are situated in the first and second levels of the 'the stages and 'reflective cycle' of enterprise development in the 'gig economy' (see Figures 6-1 and 6-2), the greatest perceived barriers identified relate to: competitive environments; developing environments that promote good mental health and wellbeing; fewer opportunities for self-development; insecurity of work and financial constraints. Enablers for enterprise development identified are: gaining experience; developing support networks and opportunities for self-development (i.e. engaging with coaches and mentors); empathy and emotional intelligence to manage different personalities and adapt approaches accordingly. The biggest enabler for the first and second levels of the 'the stages and 'reflective cycle' of enterprise development in the 'gig economy' relate to leveraging technology to 'level the playing field' relative to larger organisations. As previously discussed, this is consistent with research that suggests technology can facilitate digital transformation, and the growth of entrepreneurialism and small businesses, particularly for generations with businesses 'born' in the 'digital age' (Reuschke et al. 2021).

For enterprises situated in the third level of 'the stages and 'reflective cycle' of enterprise development in the 'gig economy' (see Figures 6-1 and 6-2) (Data Set 1), the biggest barriers relate to: communication silos and division, with 'poor 'formal' communication' frustrating 'change initiatives'; 'resistance to change'; lack of trust in leadership; division between departments (factory and head office); and generational differences, particularly regarding adaptability to the use of new technologies. Innovation, which research suggests can create jobs, and promote entrepreneurship (Burke and Cowling 2020), was seen as both a barrier and an enabler with robust 'collaborative' 'change management' procedures required. Use of freelancers and 'gig workers' was also seen as a 'barrier' for developing 'dynamic teams' as more 'in house' training is perceived as preferable as a longer-term strategy. Enablers identified for enterprises situated in the third level of 'the stages' and 'reflective cycle' of enterprise development in the 'gig economy' (Data Set 1) relate to: providing a secure environment with encouragement and support; having clear leadership and goals; and providing development pathways and opportunities to develop personnel. These findings largely support recent literature (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) in relation to the 'New Work' model, extending findings to the 'gig economy' and in the context of the stages and reflective cycles of enterprise development and pathways to business development in the 'gig economy'.

6.1.3 Potential Applications of the Model for Small (Gig Economy) and Large Enterprises (Established) and Current Debates

The model presented in 6.1.2 is not intended to be definitive. It attempts to examine pathways to business development not in terms of the scale of an enterprise (Breen 2004; Jinoria 2014; Berisha and Pula 2015) but through an alternative lens akin to the layered career model (Reilly 2017), focusing on how communication, technology, organisational change (Rodgers 2007;2010) and digitalisation of work place practices (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020) provide mechanisms supporting how freelancers and gig workers build pathways to business development from the gig economy, and in light of current research suggesting a growing trend towards entrepreneurship and business formation in gig economy settings, with research largely limited to lower skilled 'gig workers' (Usman and Sun 2022; Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016).

The stages represented in the model are not linear, they represent conceptualisations of key findings from the thesis in relation to the importance of 'competency development', strengthening relationships, and standardisation and transformation at different stages of enterprise development, relative to extant literature. As outlined in the discussion Section 5.4.8 (Potential Applications of the Model and Current Debates), the RARE reflective cycles represent mechanisms that support movement through the different stages of enterprise development. The findings suggest this may be enacted more intuitively by smaller enterprises (in gig economy contexts) that have less formalised structures and fewer policies and procedures in place managing their day-to-day interactions and operations. This may be due to the more reactive nature of small enterprises operating in gig economy contexts, fewer obstacles in place (regarding resistance to organisational change) and more flexibility due to less (hierarchically) defined organisational structures. However, even smaller enterprises, can benefit from making these processes explicit, through mapping their competencies and formal and informal communication strategies in order to gain a snapshot of where they are in their development.

For larger established organisations (who have more standardisation in terms of policies and procedures and more complex organisational structures), the model may be useful in terms of actively engaging with aspects of the previous layers (of their development) identified as important for enterprise development and to enable the organisation to continue to evolve. Similar to how established stand-up comedians drop back down to the grassroots to test their sets, and continue to evolve (Reilly 2017). In the context of larger established enterprises, this could involve looking back to the last point where the company culture felt coherent, reconnecting with their staff, trying to

understand motivations, and establishing the coherence of their workplace culture, whether it is driven from the top down, or bottom up and evaluating leadership approaches.

For example, a large organisation, such as that observed in Data Set 1, could undertake formal procedures to reflect (to identify competencies of staff and bottlenecks in communication), adapt their policies and procedures in light of identifying barriers, refine their approach to communication, and continue to strengthen relationships and leadership approaches to reduce 'resistance to change' and continue to develop and evolve. In the context of current debates, the model lends itself towards supporting notions of 'the future of work' (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017) particularly in regards to how communication and technology (and digitalisation of workplace practices) in the modern workplace influence workers in the gig economy, and across all sectors of the economy (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Vallas and Schor 2020; Lahm 2020) and may be closing the experiential gap (for workplace practices) between those in traditional employment and those in precarious work as attitudes and approaches towards work evolve in the digital age.

Section 6.2: Conclusion, Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

In conclusion, this thesis has attempted to bridge the gap between 'academic' and 'real world' interpretations and experiences of the 'gig economy'. It has examined traditional employees' and gig workers' professional experiences, working across two settings: An established large firm that has previously contracted freelancers and gig workers and operates in the construction industry where this is commonplace (Data Set 1); and a selection of self-employed freelancers and gig workers working in gig economy contexts (Data Set 2). It has also extended research to 'digital' and 'offline' gig economy settings. The 'entrepreneurial intentions' of professional (highly skilled) freelancers and gig workers have been examined, mindful that previous research has focussed more extensively on the service, or delivery sector of the gig economy (Usman and Sun 2022; Banik and Padalkar, 2021; Morales-Pérez et al. 2022; Barrios et al. 2022; Burtch et al. 2016). Extant research suggests the gig economy (online and offline) provides a springboard for some entrepreneurs (extending research to 'professional' gig workers), as noted by Barrios et al. (2022), in the early development of their businesses and to bolster organisational growth to supplement a small workforce. This thesis supports those conclusions but also extends them to suggest that 'informal' and 'formal' communication strategies are mechanisms that mediate 'organisational change' and can assist in the development and maintenance of emerging organisational structures, supportive extended networks and help enterprises to 'transition to more secure business models' (Section 5.3.3) or to 'emerge' from the instability of gig economy marketplaces (build pathways towards business development). Furthermore, findings support the notion that increased digitalisation represents new challenges for

‘modern workers’. However, findings suggest that whilst unique challenges are present in regard to socialisation in ‘virtual environments’, digital environments and its associated technologies can in some cases serve as an enabler for small businesses to ‘level the playing field’ against more established competition.

Additionally, Section 6.1 presented a novel model to conceptualise ‘the stages’ and ‘reflective cycles’ of enterprise development in ‘the gig economy’, taking inspiration from Reilly’s (2017) ‘Layered Career Model’ and the reflective processes observed in Rodgers’ (2010) ‘Leadership Communication Grid’. Several shared competencies have also been identified in employees (Data Set 1) and ‘gig workers’/‘start-ups’ (Data Set 2A and 2B) that support the general assumptions of the ‘New Work’ model (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021) and the more general notion that increased ‘digitalisation’ and automation represents several challenges for the ‘future of work’ (Labanauskaitė et al. 2021; Ashford et al. 2018; Vallas et al. 2020; Taylor 2017). Traditional ‘change management’ literature overlooks the processes at play in relation to how freelancers and gig workers build pathways to business development (to emerge) from the instability of the gig economy and does not adequately address the new dynamics at play in ‘modern workplaces’. This thesis has provided a comparison between an established large firm operating in the construction industry where freelancing and gig work is commonplace (Data Set 1); and a selection of self-employed freelancers and gig workers working in gig economy contexts (Data Set 2). However, there is still scant research in relation to the extent to which these sectors of the economy rely on each other and how the reshaping of the ‘new world’ of work will impact these dynamics in the future.

For the organisation representing Data Set 1, access to the factory was difficult to navigate due to protected intellectual property and as a result, the perspectives of the office workers are more predominant than those representing the factory workers. This may act as a limitation to the findings regarding the overall organisational makeup of the company representing Data Set 1. However, the dynamics outlined are consistent with the opinions of senior management and the HR department who have access to these groups of workers and who provided consistent responses in relation to the division present in the company between the head office and the factory. Whilst every effort has been made to build in components of ‘best practices’ regarding: semi-systematic literature methodology (Zunder 2021; Coghlan and Coughlan 2018); determining ‘philosophical positioning’ (Bryman 2008); research design (Creswell et al. 2007; Bryman 2008; Benton and Craib 2011); ‘validity’, and ‘rigour’ of the current inquiry (Carter et al. 2014); and ‘bracketing’ and reflexivity (Shufutinsky 2020; Tufford and Newman 2012), it is notable that this research may be limited in its generalisability to wider populations. As such, it has only been possible to tentatively draw conclusions regarding factors

observed such as 'generational differences' relative to the extant literature. Whilst key informant interviews are generally regarded as being flexible and enabling quality exploratory research, quantifications and generalisability must be approached modestly (Akhter 2022). However, based upon the empirical research and findings presented in this thesis, a new model developed in the course of this work (see Figure 6-1 and 6-2), is not intended to be definitive but provides an alternative framework that is hoped will spark further debate, scrutiny and refinement, to extend our understanding of the 'gig economy' (including pathways to business development), how enterprises emerge from it, navigate challenges and opportunities and develop cohesive teams and networks in the face of an increasingly digitised world of work.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Breakdown of Initial Sub-Themes Identified for Main Theme: 'The Gig Economy'.

Literature Review Main Theme 1: The Gig Economy		
Initial Sub Themes Identified from Literature	Articles Included from Search (organised by article identification number)	Total Number of Articles
Characteristics of the Gig Economy	1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29, 32, 35, 36, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 52, 59, 61, 63, 66, 68, 76, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 89, 90	43
Gig Worker Experience	9, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 39, 42, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 59, 61, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 77, 78, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 90	40
Characteristics of Gig Workers	1,13, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 32, 36, 39, 42, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 56, 59, 63, 64, 66, 71, 77, 80, 82, 83, 84, 88	33
Regulating the Gig Economy	3, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 23, 24, 28, 36, 37, 43, 46, 48, 52, 56, 61, 69, 75, 80, 85	21
Algorithmic Control	28, 30, 33, 37, 38, 41, 52, 55, 58, 65, 67, 75	12
Autonomy	5, 25, 27, 28, 33, 35, 37, 50, 51, 52	10
Human Resource Management	9, 55, 58, 67, 75, 77, 81, 87	8
Traditional Vs Digital Gig Economy Models	20, 26, 44, 53, 82, 83, 84, 86	8
Gig Economy Relationships	63, 70, 67, 71, 73, 75, 84	7
Entrepreneurial Activity	7, 13, 27, 33, 42, 68	6
Gender and the Gig Economy	19, 31, 34, 40, 64, 72	6
Government Led Reports/Government Funded Research	8, 10, 12, 47, 62	5
Resistance	28, 30, 65, 67	4
Impact of Covid 19	62, 74, 89	3
Inequality	49, 80	2
Migrant Workers	24	1

Appendix B - Condensed Sub-Themes Identified: 'The Gig Economy'.

Themes and Sub Themes Identified from Literature Review		
Main Themes	Sub-Themes	No. Articles
Characteristics of the Gig Economy	n/a	43
Characteristics of Gig Workers	n/a	33
Experiences of Gig workers: Traditional Versus Digital Gig Economy Settings	Traditional Vs Digital Gig Economy Models	48
Entrepreneurial Activity	n/a	6
Power Dynamics in the Gig Economy and Policy Development.	Power Dynamics in the Gig Economy Gig Economy Relationships Regulating the Gig Economy Algorithmic Control Autonomy Human Resource Management Resistance Inequality Migrant Workers Gender and the Gig Economy Government Research, Policy Development and External Economic Factors Government Led Reports/Government Funded Research. Impact of Covid 19	79

Appendix C - Breakdown of Initial Sub-Themes Identified: 'Gig Economy'- Entrepreneurship, 'Start-Ups', and SMEs'.

Literature Review: Gig Economy- Entrepreneurship, Start-Ups and SMEs		
Initial Sub-Themes Identified from Literature	Articles Included from Search (organised by article identification number)	Total Number of Articles
Entrepreneurship	92, 93, 94, 108, 126, 130, 134, 135, 137, 144, 145, 153, 167, 190, 191, 108, 185, 187, 188, 101, 115, 119, 138, 179, 106, 175, 96, 136, 102, 118, 100, 112, 123, 124, 177, 202, 203, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 194	45
Individual Differences	95, 110, 116, 122, 127, 133, 147, 149, 150, 151, 157, 189, 180, 176, 162	15
Characteristics of the Gig Economy/Entrepreneurship	122a, 122b, 125, 128, 131, 163, 171, 173	8
Gig Worker Experiences	139, 142, 152, 183, 184, 185, 154, 156, 159, 172, 174	11
Small Business and Gig Economy	109, 117, 141	3
Start-Ups and Gig Economy	158, 165	2
Covid, Entrepreneurship and Gig Economy	99, 182, 160, 161	4
Born Global	192, 195, 196, 205	4

Appendix D – Condensed Sub-Themes Identified for: ‘Gig Economy- Entrepreneurship, Start-Ups, and SMEs’.

Condensed Sub-Themes: Gig Economy- Entrepreneurship, Start-Ups and SMEs		
Condensed Sub-Themes	Initial Sub-Themes Included in Each Category	Number of Articles
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurship Wellbeing Entrepreneurship Hybrid Entrepreneurship Micro Entrepreneurship Innovation Entrepreneurship Behaviour Entrepreneurship Power Entrepreneurship Change Entrepreneurship Slack Resources	45
Individual Differences	Education Generational Disability Gender Race Wellbeing, Health Migration	15
Characteristics of the Gig Economy/Entrepreneurship	n/a	8
Gig Worker Experiences	n/a	11
Small Business and Gig Economy	n/a	3
Start-Ups and Gig Economy	n/a	2
Covid, Entrepreneurship and Gig Economy	n/a	4
Born Global	n/a	4

Appendix E - Breakdown of Initial Sub-Themes Identified for: Barriers and Enablers for 'Start-Ups' and SMEs.

Literature Review: Barriers and Enablers for Start-Ups and SMEs		
Initial Sub themes Identified from Literature	Articles Included from Search (organised by article identification number)	Total Number of Articles
Microbusiness	206, 228, 238, 250	4
SME	220, 221, 222, 224, 258, 231, 235, 252, 263, 251, 236, 262, 207, 213, 211	15
Start-Ups	210, 227, 215, 217, 219, 243, 226, 242	8
Entrepreneurship	210, 227, 215, 217, 219, 243, 226, 242	10

Appendix F - Condensed Sub-Themes Identified for: Barriers and Enablers for 'Start-Ups' and SMEs.

Condensed sub-themes: Barriers and Enablers for Start-Ups and SMEs		
Condensed Sub-Themes	Initial Sub-Themes Included in Each Category	Number of Articles
Microbusiness	n/a	4
SME	n/a	15
Start-Ups	n/a	8
Entrepreneurship	n/a	10

Appendix G - Breakdown of Initial Sub-Themes Identified for: 'Formal' and 'informal' Communication and Organisation Growth.

Literature Review: 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication and Organisation Growth.		
Initial Sub-Themes Identified from Literature	Articles Included from Search (organised by article identification number)	Total number of articles
Communication	265, 269, 274, 275, 284, 302, 305, 308	8
Knowledge	273, 278, 289, 295, 304	5
Mechanisms	276, 281, 290, 291, 315, 292, 293, 306, 307, 272	10
Institutions	367, 298, 299, 301, 296, 271, 266	7
Organisational Change Management	402, 414, 418, 421, 422, 431, 432, 433, 436, 444, 434, 435, 437, 438, 439, 441, 443, 426, 412	19
Organisations and 'Informal' Coalitions	403, 437, 445, 446, 447, 442	6
Workplace Culture	440, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 415, 416, 417, 420, 422, 423, 424, 425, 427, 428, 429, 419, 430, 413, 400, 401, 448	26

Appendix H - Condensed Sub-Themes Identified for: 'Formal' and 'informal' Communication and Organisation Growth.

Condensed Sub-Themes: 'Formal' and 'Informal' Communication and Organisation Change		
Condensed Sub-Themes	Initial Sub-Themes Included in Each Category	No. Articles
Communication	Communication Communication Cooperative	8
Knowledge	Knowledge Information	5
Mechanisms	Mechanisms Development Emotional Intelligence Evidence Feedback Learning Autonomy	10
Institutions	Institutions Organisational Change Environment Leadership Innovation	7
Organisational Change Management	Change Management Organisational Change Politics Change Management, Learning Change Management, Structure or Organisation Change Management, Teams Change Management, Conflict Change Management, Innovation Change Management, Culture Change Management, Gender	19
Organisations and Informal Coalitions	Coalitions Coalitions Change Coalitions Conflict Coalitions Organisational Change Coalitions Culture	6
Workplace Culture	Informal Interactions Informal Interactions, Social Informal Interactions, Authority Informal Interactions, Culture Informal Interactions, Norms and Values Informal Interactions, Routine Informal Interactions, Trust Informal Interactions, Competition Informal Interactions, Learning Informal Interactions, Support Informal Interactions, Management and Leadership	26

Appendix I - Breakdown of Initial Sub-Themes Identified for: Building Teams and Networks.

Literature Review: Building Teams and Networks.		
Initial Sub-Themes identified from literature	Articles Included from Search (organised by article identification number)	Total Number of Articles
Leadership	324, 353, 362, 383, 384, 396	6
Leadership Structure	349, 357	2
Leadership Innovation	356, 374	1
Process	328, 331, 352, 375, 378, 391, 394	7
Process Innovation	381	1
Process Team Cohesion	335, 355	2
Process Boundaries	359	1
Process Formation	364, 397	2
Process Trust	399, 370	2
Process Identity	393	1
Informal and Formal	367	1

Appendix J - Condensed Sub-Themes Identified for: Building Teams and Networks.

Condensed Sub-Themes: Building Teams and Networks.		
Condensed Sub-Themes	Initial Sub-Themes Included in Each Category	Number of Articles
Leadership	Leadership Leadership Structure Leadership Innovation	10
Process	Process Process, Innovation Process, Team Cohesion Process, Boundaries Process, Formation Process, Trust Process, Identity	17

Appendix K – Type and Frequency of Communications with Parallel Venture of Data Set 1 *October 2022 to March 2023*.

Type and Frequency of Communication					
Month	Phone Call	Email	WhatsApp	Face to Face	Teams/Facetime
October	1	7	92	1	1
November	5	19	649	-	2
December	3	14	545	1	1
January	2	5	236	-	1
February	-	1	74	-	-
March	-	-	25	-	-
Total	11	46	1621	2	5

Appendix L- Type and Frequency of Communications with parallel Venture of Data Set 2B *April 2022 to March 2023*.

Type and Frequency of Communication					
Month	Phone	Email	WhatsApp	Face to Face	Video Call
April-June 2022	3	-	39	-	3
July-September 2022	3	4	36	-	2
October-December 2022	1	-	75	-	-
January- March 2023	2	6	40	-	-
Totals	9	10	190	-	5

Appendix M- Participant Information Sheet

Version 1 date: June 2023

**Participant Information Sheet****1. Research Project Title:**

Project title: How do start-ups emerge from the gig economy, navigate challenges and opportunities, and develop cohesive teams and networks?

2. Background, aims of project.

We would like to invite you to take part some small-scale research (as part of a PhD thesis project). This project aims to explore if and how enterprises (partnerships, Start-ups, and SMEs) emerge from 'the gig economy' and what shifts occur in relation to informal and formal business practices (policies and procedures) and communication channels as a company grows; the extent to which 'the gig economy' helps or hinders enterprise development; and how individuals in these enterprises successfully combine their capacities, competencies, and commitment using both traditional and online platforms.

3. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are business owner, leader or are working for an enterprise (partnership, start-up, or SME) with links to 'gig economy', and/or may have relevant experience that aligns with the research aims of the study.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. Moreover, if you do decide to take part, you can withdraw your participation at any time without needing to explain and without penalty by advising the researcher of this decision. If you choose to withdraw, we will not collect any more data from you. However, any data collected up until the point that you withdraw will be kept and used in the data analysis. You can also withdraw your data up to a week before the submission deadline (31/10/2023). To

Version 1 date: June 2023



withdraw your data email [c.e.toomey@stir.ac.uk] and your data will be removed from the submission upon request and destroyed. You will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form which will be emailed to you a week before participation so you can fully consider whether you would like to participate.

5. What will happen if I take part?

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete a participant consent form and a short interview, expected to last no more than 45 minutes. The interview will be pre-arranged at a mutually agreed time. Follow up interviews or questions may also be requested with advanced notice, although you are welcome to refuse should this not be convenient for you. You will also be requested to provide any relevant documentation. You should not include any identifiable information (i.e. names) with this. Any data provided can be withdrawn later should you no longer wish to participate in the study. You will be given the choice of whether you would prefer the interview to take place in person, over the phone or using video conferencing software (i.e., Microsoft teams), and acknowledge that you are aware that the audio of the interview will be recorded for transcription purposes and further analysis.

6. Are there any potential risks in taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks in taking part.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

There will be no direct benefit to you from taking part in this research.

8. What happens to the data I provide?

This study is being carried out as part of my studies towards the completion of my PhD degree. As part of the study, I will be recording interview data relating to your experiences working for an enterprise (partnership, start-up, or SME) and your perceptions of your workplace, the gig

Version 1 date: June 2023



economy, and professional interactions in this context. You will be assigned a participant number so that any Personal/confidential information can be stored separately from the transcribed data on the University of Stirling secure storage (Sharepoint). Your data will be kept for the duration of the project until the award of my PhD and then will be securely destroyed.

9. Recorded media.

Should you consent to being recorded for this study, the recording will be transcribed and thematically analysed as part of the analysis process of the thesis. The recorded interview audio will be transcribed by myself, and you will be assigned a participant number. The audio recording and interview data will be stored separately from your participant consent form to ensure anonymity. This interview will not be broadcast and will only be used for analysis in this specific report.

10. Will the research be published?

This research will be used for my postgraduate thesis project, and it is not foreseen that it will be published. However, a copy of the final submission can be viewed by participants by making an email request (c.e.toomey@stir.ac.uk). In an event that a copy is requested by participants any raw data or identifiable information will be removed to ensure anonymity of participants is maintained.

11. Who has reviewed this research project?

The ethical approaches of this project have been approved via The University of Stirling General University Ethics Panel.

Your rights

You have the right to request to see a copy of the information we hold about you and to request corrections or deletions of the information that is no longer required.

Version 1 date: June 2023



You have the right to withdraw from this project at any time without giving reasons and without consequences to you. You also have the right to object to us processing relevant personal data however, please note that once the data are being analysed and/or results published it may not be possible to remove your data from the study.

12. Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

If you would like to discuss the research with someone please use the attached contact details:

Researcher contact details:

Claire Toomey

Email: c.e.toomey@stir.ac.uk

Supervisor contact details:

Professor Richard Simmons

Email: R.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk

You have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>).

The University's Data Protection Officer is Joanna Morrow, Deputy Secretary. If you have any questions relating to data protection these can be addressed to data.protection@stir.ac.uk in the first instance.

You will be given a copy of this information sheet to keep.

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix N- Participant Consent Form

Version 1 date: June 2023

**Participant Consent Form**

[We recommend you use an electronic consent form if you do not require any personal identifying information – see [electronic consent form](#)]

Ethics Approval Number []

Participant number []

Research Project Title: How do start-ups emerge from the gig economy, navigate challenges and opportunities, and develop cohesive teams and networks?

Please initial box	
I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during the study up to one week before submission of the thesis (October 2023) without giving a reason, and without any penalty. I understand that beyond (October 2023) it may not be possible to remove my data from the study.	
I understand that my responses will be kept anonymous, and I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses.	
I consent to being audio recorded	
I understand how audio will be used in research outputs. I am aware that I will not be named in any research outputs, but I could be identified by people I know through the stories I tell.	
I give permission to be quoted directly in the research publication and am aware that my personal information will not be used to ensure anonymity.	
I agree to take part in this study	

Name of Participant**Signature:****Date:** [Click here to enter a date](#)**Name of Researcher****Signature:****Date:** [Click here to enter a date](#)

Appendix O- Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Proposed interview questions/Topic guide**Project Outline**

This project aims to explore if and how enterprises (partnerships, Start-ups, and SMEs) emerge from 'the gig economy' and what shifts occur in relation to informal and formal business practices (policies and procedures) and communication channels as a company grows?; the extent to which 'the gig economy' helps or hinders enterprise development; and how individuals in these enterprises successfully combine their capacities, competencies, and commitment using both traditional and online platforms.

General Demographics, Background / context based questions.

- What is your current job role in your company?
- Can you please tell me your age or age range i.e., 30-40 40-50 etc. (if more comfortable)
- Do you work from home or in an office environment or hybrid work i.e., a bit of both?

TOPIC 1 – The gig economy

(For business leaders/established organisation)

- 1) What is your understanding of 'the gig economy' (have you ever worked in the gig economy or as a gig worker, freelancer, or consultant?)
- 2) How do you feel it relates to your current business or job role? (what is similar or different?)

(For gig workers- suggested follow up)

What sorts of experiences have you had working on gig economy platforms?

How do these differ now you are working for yourself?

TOPIC 2 – Size of business - Organisational development/change

(For business owners)

- 1) How has your business changed since you started? (can you tell me a bit about how it was in the past and how it is now?)

- 2) Have the types of people you work with changed since you started?
- 3) (Business leader) Has the way you network, or find work opportunities changed or been changed by any specific factors?
- 4) What types of leadership strategies do you use or have you observed in the company?

(For gig workers -suggested follow up)

How long does a typical gig or project last? Or do you work on a task-by-task basis?

Is your business paid in advance for your services or after delivery of services and does this impact your planning?

TOPIC 3 –Informal and formal procedures and communication channels

- 1) What types of policies or procedures do you have in place for handling hr, press and communications?
- 2) How often are freelancers or consultants employed by your company? (are there any challenges or benefits?)
- 3) What types of communication methods do you use with potential clients (through formal channels or informal networking?)
- 4) How often do (you or) staff communicate with each other in your experience and what types of media are used i.e., email, WhatsApp's, face to face? Is this only in working hours? (i.e., informal meetings, formal meetings?).
- 5) Has the way staff communicate changed over time and what sorts of things have led to these changes in your opinion?
- 6) What types of things are informally or formally communicated i.e., organisation, instructions, brainstorming? How often do you have formal meetings?

TOPIC 4 – Combining capacities in teams.

- 1) Can you give me 3 personal things that you consider to be strengths from your academic experience (prior or whilst at company) that help you to be successful in your current role?
- 2) Can you give me 3 personal things that you consider to be strengths from your professional experience that help you to be successful in your current role?
- 3) Can you give me 3 aspirations or motivations (or both) that help with your current role?
- 4) Can you think of 3 things from your personality or values that help with your current role?
- 5) How big is the team you work with, and do you work across multiple teams? (challenges, benefits ?)
- 6) What key features defines the workplace culture at your place of work?
- 7) Are there any barriers or enablers to forming teams and working successfully in your current role/business?

TOPIC 5 -What helps and hinders organisational change or development.

- 1) What have you found to be the biggest barriers for (working as gig workers or) your business as it has developed?
- 2) What have you found to be the biggest enablers (working as gig workers or) for your business as it has developed?
- 3) Are there any other factors you would like to add or discuss or explore more?

For business leaders (for TOWS table)

What are the strength of business and market place?
What are the weaknesses of business and marketplace?
What are the opportunities?
What threats do you see in the marketplace?

Appendix P- Ethical Approval Letter



University of Stirling
Cottrell 3B1
Stirling
FK9 4LA

20/07/2023

Dear Claire

Ethics Application Form : How do start-ups and SMEs emerge from the gig economy, navigate challenges and opportunities, and develop cohesive teams and networks? 14810

Thank you for your submission of the above ethics application.

The ethical approaches of this project have been approved and you can now proceed with your project.

Please note that should any of your proposal change, a further amendment submission will be necessary.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Panel by email to ethics@stir.ac.uk

Yours sincerely,

General University Ethics Panel

Appendix Q - Themes and Sub-Themes for General and Demographic Questions and Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes for Topic 1 – The Gig Economy

General and Demographic questions Theme's and Sub-Themes	
Main Theme: Working Arrangements (Remote Versus Office Based)	
Sub-Themes	Codes
Flexibility	Flexibility in Work Arrangements
	Flexibility in Work Arrangements – Cultural Change Covid
	Flexibility in Work – Freelancing
	Flexibility in Work - Autonomy
Preferences (Work Arrangements)	Preferences for Office Versus Remote Working Arrangements

Topic 1 – The Gig Economy Theme's and Sub-Themes	
Main Theme: Definitions of the 'Gig Economy'	
Sub-theme	Codes
Insecure Work and Intersect with SMEs	Self-employment, side hustle, before company
	Freelancing, task based, insecure work
	Individual and small company based, task based, insecure work
	SMEs and wider economy
Cultural Change	Cultural change- flexible work, unstructured
	Culture change- insecure work, entrepreneurship, flexible work
Main Theme: Experience as a 'Gig Worker'	
Bridge to Full-Time Work	Insecurity, task based, experience
	Stepping-stone into the business, entrepreneurship
	Side hustle
Cultural Change- Shift Towards Gig Work	Cultural change- 'gig work' more prominent
	Culture change – government regulation, insecurity, undermined position
	Negative connotations, cultural shift
	Online platforms
Main Theme: Case Study 1 Use of 'Gig Workers'	
Specialised Skills in Demand	Keep minimal, specialised skills, project by project
	Specialised skills, project by project, organisational growth, resources, R&D
Gig Work, Resource Management and Organisational Growth	Project by project, sub-contractors
	Benefits access to workers
	Organisational growth, flexible working, intellectual property
	Agency workers, manage resources, manage risk

Appendix R- Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes for Topic 2: Size of Business, Organisational Development/Change

Topic 2 – Size of Business - Organisational Development/change	
Main Theme 1: Top-Down and Bottom-Up Organisational Change/Development	
Sub-theme	Codes
Fast Company Growth	Fast Growth
	Massive Growth
	Growing Quick/Fast Paced
	Fast Paced/Growth
	Aggressive/Fast Growth
	Expansion
	Fast Change
Organisational Change: Recruitment Drive, Young Workforce	Recruitment Drive
	Recruitment Push – design
	New Departments
	Young Workforce
	Young Workforce, Diversity
	Young Workforce, Grads
	Young Workforce, New Ideas
	Young Workforce- Generational Differences
Innovation	Generational Differences
	Innovation
	Data Driven
	Cutting Edge Markets
	Innovation, Transition, Tech
	Competencies, Tech, Savvy, Care
	Innovation, Tech, Preparation, Pro-active
Main Theme 2: Social and Cultural Changes	
Cultural Shift/Organisational Change	Change Hard
	Hard to Grasp, Incoherent
	Change Noticeable, Change is Happening
	Change, Different Company
	Culture Change/Culture Shift
	Family Business
	Family Side
	Socials- Young Workforce
	Talent Development- Community Outreach
	Talent Development
	Culture Change-Diversity, Perceptions
	New Roles, Role Change
	Community Outreach
	Staff Monitoring and Productivity
Cultural Change: Work from Home Versus Face to Face	Work from Home Versus Remote Work
	Resistance to Face to Face, Work from Home
	Prefer Face to Face
	Work from Home, Productivity
	Flexibility Work from Home
	Flexibility, Covid, Time Management

	Physical Space
Relationships: Work from Home Versus Face to Face	Relationships, Work from Home
	Meeting Etiquette Work from Home
	Transactional Communication, Work from Home
	Communication, Work from Home
	Face to Face Important
Cultural Change: Covid – Work from Home	Covid Culture Change, Work from Home
	Fewer Face to Face Meetings
	Covid, Branching Out (employees), Hybrid
	Covid Changes, Work from Home
	Covid Changes, Work from Home, Communication
Main Theme 3: Managing Change and Division	
Leadership/Management Styles	Collaborative Management Style
	Collaborative Management Style-Time Constraints
	Leadership Collaborative
	Management Collaborative, Team Effort
	Mentoring, Support, Deadlines
	Leadership - Unsure
Management Structures and Teamwork	Vertical Structure
	Horizontal Management
	Mid Management- Influence, Growth
	Mix of Horizontal and Vertical Management Structures
	Team Cohesion
	Teamwork
	Small Teams, Busy
	Working Diagonally
	Staff Shortages
	Structure, Growth
	Policy, Structures
Silos, Division and Companywide Communication	Workshops, Knowledge Exchange
	Head Office Versus Factory - Division
	Disjointed, Silos
	Email, Comms, New Faces
	Communication, Email Formal
	Resistance
Top Down Versus Bottom-Up Processes, Structures, and Dynamics	Resistance- AI
	Top-Down Vision
	Top-Down Recruitment
	Top-Down Change
	Bottom-Up Change
	Formal Reporting Hierarchy
Experiences of Environment and Changes	Structures Management
	Excitement
	Buzzing Environment
	Energy, Dynamic office
	Adaptable

	Proactive
	Reactivity, Agility
	International Focus
	Autonomy
	Adaptability

Appendix S- Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes for Topic 3 – Informal and Formal Procedures and Communication Channels

Topic 3 – Informal and Formal Procedures and Communication Channels Theme's and Sub-Themes	
Main Theme 1: External and Internal Communication Mediums used (Formal/Informal)	
Sub-Theme	Codes
External Communication Mediums Formal/Informal	Formal communication (clients) – tech, data environments (ease of use)
	Formal Brand communication
	External formal communication email (professional signature, professional writing style)
	Formal communications, structured, transactional, outcome based.
	Communication externally (formal) – requires planning
	Physical interaction important but less so – ease of use of teams, issues with time constraints - travel.
	Structured communication-liaison between client and teams, email (formal), phone calls discussion (informal) and face to face – reliance on Microsoft teams
	Formal processes for communication with clients- data drive, timelines, upfront, formalises understanding between parties
	Tech - Formal/informal – software facilitates brainstorming and improves relationship with client- f2f build relationships
	Communication mix of f2f and teams
	Way company wins work changed – teams based (90%)
	Teams (formal communications)
	Email, spoken word, mix of formal and informal (WhatsApp too informal)
	Physical space (Informal Communication)
	Warm introductions (networking) clients
	WhatsApp use full informal comms clients (Senior board member)
	Email teams, project software- structures and processes in place
Internal Communication Mediums Formal/Informal	F2F followed up with recording and minuting
	Formal/Informal calls (with immediate team)
	Formal mediums of communication (calls with stakeholders)
	Formal requests - email
	Teams commonly used internally (Informal-like texting)

	Teams (informal) – quick question service
	Emails (formal)– inefficient (get clogged up)
	Teams, formal project tracking/streams
	External software (Mondays) project tracking – ease of use
	(informal) share ideas, support
	New Marketing department – previously no formal communications (external/internal)
	Informal internal communication (treat like friends, flexibility, relationship based)
	Informal – WhatsApp groups, mostly use teams across teams
	Formal – structured teams groups- used more since WFH increased
	Formal – structured teams groups
	Informal – teams group chats
	Formal (most formal) email chains- organisational, task allocation
	Most business activities conducted on teams (informal/formal)
	Informal WhatsApp groups (Planning WhatsApp group) – bounce ideas, nice blend
	Office 365 communication amongst and between teams (informal/formal)
	Formalising actions from discussions (Bids team)
	Formal email- contact with HR/Board of directors (consultant)
	Informal/formal face to face contact (consultant)
	Workplace culture teams – hybrid meetings work well (senior board member)
	Informal communications WhatsApp (unofficial)
	Formal activities recorded and minuted
Main Theme 2: Division in the Workplace, Social (Informal) Bonding and Barriers to Effective Communication	
Division, Resource Allocation and Barriers to Communication	Division- resource allocation between departments
	Division – Staff shortages
	Division- resource allocation, laptops, email, poor comms
	Division- some departments falling behind
	Division- Silo's- communication between teams
	Division- communication across teams minimal
	Division – internal communication
	Division- Social divide (factory vs head office)
	Division – factory vs head office – mutual respect

	Division- physical space, Remote work vs office (relationships)
	Division company culture (formal communication) remote work vs office
	Division- communication issues (formal/informal) work from home vs office – poor communication
	Division, barriers communication, relationships work-from home and office based – hard to grow bonds
	Division- work from home, online relationships (pseudo relationships)
	Division- Social (informal) – connections harder to build virtual environments (work from home vs office)
	Division- emotional aspect WFH vs F2F, different behaviours on teams – gen diff
	Division – relationship building remote work vs f2f
	Division- lack of cohesion workplace culture, poor relationships (work from home vs office culture)
	Division F2F vs online f2f workshops better
	Division- generational differences use of tech and online behaviour
	Division – Silo external consultant and Case study 1
	Generational difference – grads social norms tech, workplace attitudes
	Poor/inconsistent formal comms
	Poor communication around new starters
	Poor formal communication down hierarchy from management to factory and office
	Good communicators, bridge between teams
	Diagonal communication across teams
	Pick up pieces- falling behind
	Physical space – space limitations
	Poor communication, tech
	Teams physically separated (factory vs head office)
	Resistance- factory vs head office
	Brainstorming-structured (mid-management)
Social (Informal) Bonding	Social Informal (organised by staff)
	Social (informal)
	Social (poor formal planning of events)- frustration
	Social Informal (WhatsApp, events-monthly), not much formally organised

	Social – informal (social bonding, relationships, morale not good)
	Social (informal) – bridge communication gap, build relationships
	Social (informal) – Informal comms build professional relationships and friendships outside work, helps productivity
	Social (informal) – more willing to help each other out
	Social (informal) – individual difference – challenge working remotely
Main Theme 3: Formalising Strategy, Policies and Procedures, Time Pressures and Frustrations	
Formalising Policies and Procedures, Time Pressures and Frustrations	Formal policies
	Rigour of Policies – time constraints
	Formal legal compliance (policies and procedures)
	Fast Paced busy
	Playing catch up- fine tuning – time constraints
	Formal processes – flexibility
	Hierarchical structure
	Structure - focus
	Communication – sub contractors (relationships)
	Experts -dial in
	Team members rarely meet clients
	Frustrations- back-to-back teams meetings
	Frustrations – control measures needed (teams) – better time management, process time
Social Norms, Workplace Culture	Technology communication- social norms
	Cultural change – Impact of Covid – opportunity for change
	Positives WFH – work across the globe, less travel
	Workplace culture – teams
	Difference in workplace norms (traditional vs new, online vs f2f))
	Meeting etiquette teams – time keeping, late, professionalism
	Resistance to online – f2f meetings more useful
	Covid – cultural shift tech, f2f spaces important
	Teams impacted internal communications
	Compliance – policies (consultant)
	Formalising systems – payment (consultant)
	Benefits of working with gig workers- Expertise, trust (relationship) (consultant)
	Social norms around workplace communication changed (Covid)
	Brainstorms with client (consultant) discussion (informal)

Formal Top-Down Development Strategy and Use of Gig Workers	Formal strategy – business development organisational change top down
	Formalised procedures – organisational growth
	Outward looking policies
	(Formal) push on policies addressing diversity
	Self- sufficiency or business vs outsourcing work
	Challenges using gig workers – profit/IP
	Benefits WFH – expanding employee base, flexibility
	Brainstorming- teams, distance, works well
	Benefits – physical space limitations (online vs f2f), right people right place
	Online work space inclusive of remote workers

Appendix T- Competencies of Workers (Self-Reported) and View of Workplace Culture Initial (Extended) Codes (Data Set 1)

Participant number	Academic Experience	Professional Experience	Motivations/ aspirations	View of Workplace culture
1	Research skills	Knowledge	Staying curious in innovations that inform society	(Consultant) Not hierarchical
	Good written skills	Experience	Having an influence on change	Needs to be agile and adapt
	Diligence	Creativity	To earn money	No set hours
	-	-	(values) interested in current affairs, philosophy, government policy	Learn things from anywhere
	-	-	Like to keep learning	Don't work to set schedule (autonomy)
	-	-	Being fulfilled, enjoying work	No set working structure
	-	-	Like pressure, determined	Fast paced, reactive
	-	-	Enjoy being absorbed in task- zealous and obsessive when doing a task	-
2	Chemical engineering degree	Ability to read a room	Autonomy	Emergent work place culture- big growth phases
	Broad understanding of engineering and problem solving	Experience of problem solving	Output driven	Getting to grips with monitoring of staff
	Multidisciplinary training	Filter out what is important	Money	Transitions happening some good, some bad
	-	Negotiation, tenacity	Teamwork	Understanding expectations of young people in work place
	-	Having a vision	(value) honesty and integrity, being direct, flexibility	Generational differences – young employees leave office early
	-	Adapting communication style	(looking for) Happy, bright, driven people to develop	Want to build an ethos- don't want empty offices

	-	-	-	Need people with can do positive attitude, want happy people in the business
	-	-	-	Need top-down leadership from the board
	-	-	--	Drive a culture of innovation and change
	-	-		People need to interact face to face
	-	-	-	Silo's exist, need to break them down
	-	-	-	Need to add focus to control the change
9	Masters in mechanical engineering	Tutoring (gig work) and engineering experience helps to convert complex ideas to something people will understand	Picked course (good at maths) – seemed like a good fit	Shifting towards being less personal
	Broad understanding of engineering	Naïve when joined the work place (knew nothing)	Broad engineering subject	More digitised
	Technical understanding critical to professional role	Researched at home every night after work (determined)	Finished Uni in middle of pandemic	More soulless
	Creative problem solving	-	Nightmare finding a job	Less social in a way
	Interpersonal elements of university (group projects)	-	Helped to get an interview by contact	Society becoming more digital (remote workers isolated), It's a sad change, poorer social wellbeing for employees
	-	-	-	Feels unfair on young people – changes after Covid, invisible, functional interactions (online), miss workplace banter

	-	-	-	Hard to progress without visibility in the office
	-	-	-	World of work has changed, people tiring of WFH, not met expectations
10	Started as an apprentice	Apprenticeship	Being engaged and enjoying work	Some elements have not changed, feel a part of the family
	Real world experience	Experience doing installations	An eye on retirement (Security)	New office facilities, social areas
	Knows what will work and not work in practice	Real world experience	Happy doing work	Younger ones socialise in the office
	-	Building rather than designing	-	Big shift with social aspect
	-	People need practical experience	-	Work together, play together
11	Architectural degree	Draw on experience as an architect	Rate of growth, so many things need doing	Vision comes from top-down
	Group working, understanding differences	Treat everyone as if they were a client	Opportunities for change	Culture influenced by middle management – set the tone
	Working to deadlines	Understand use cases of technology	Autonomy	Inspiring and motivating people important
	Yearlong thesis	Managing relationships	Lots of R&D	Energy of graduates and new starters evident
	Confidence to look at any subject	-	Support from higher levels of the company	Cultural change stems from the bottom-up
	Open minded, learned tools to structure research	-	Setting the tone important	-
	-	-	Inspiring and motivating people important	-
	-	-	Forward thinking vision, driven from top-down	-
	-	-	Working with smart people	-

	-	-	Informal problem solving	-
12	English	Work experience,	Professional Development	Company closed off
	writing contracts	Problem solving	encouragement professionally	Not a lot of collaboration
	grammar	Customer service	Opportunities to develop	Social (informal) bonding important
	-	Dealing with diverse people	-	Challenges getting people to open up
	-	Applying learnings in the workplace	-	Social events improve workplace culture, more relaxed, better communication, greater personal and professional understanding
13	Good at presenting	Good at presenting	Helping out the young graduates	New cohort of grads (Covid grads) trying hard to prove themselves
	Building up Social skill	Social and extroverted	Bouncing ideas around	New graduates haven't had (been benched for a couple of years)
	Logic behind maths	Good logical strategy (maths)	Not getting stuck in ways	Raring to go "New lads are eager"
	-	Problem solving and sociability	Being kept on toes	-
	-	Learned what not to do from bad work experiences	Wants to work for ambitious forward thinking company	-
14	-	Varied Work experience (private and public sector)	Passionate about growth of business	Graduates lack Work-experience, don't know how to adapt communication styles.
	-	Diverse understanding of different sectors	Gender inclusivity important	Graduates don't know how to articulate who they are to higher management
	-	Learning from other businesses (policies done well)	Passionate about community outreach, and talent development	Work from home staff are not as engaged (automation London centric), unable to grasp

				underperforming
	-	Inspiring change for women	-	Performance issues with work from home staff
	-	Being approachable	-	-
	-	Bringing in new ideas	-	-
	-	Treating everyone equally	-	-
	-	Feed off chaos	-	-
15	Varied University course	Internship at University	Attached to job	Not communicative
	Range of knowledge useful in workplace	Learned how to keep staff engaged (What not to do)	Worry about work	Different feel to it
	-	Previous work experience informs management style	Makes sure people enjoying work	New roles (more corporate)
	-	Understands motivations of staff, keep engaged, development important	Improving life (buying house)	New processes
	-	-	Creativity	Moving towards corporate
	-	-	-	Was more easy going and family run
	-	-	-	More deadline based
	-	-	-	Growing and getting better
16	Engineering degree	Multi-tasking	Creating a future for everyone	Bottom-up cultural change
	Broad understanding	Problem solving- Detangle webs of information and connect the dots	Creating career paths	Creating an environment where millennials want to work
	-	-	Understanding where people want to go and how they get there	Some people stuck in old ways
	-	-	Value time and dedicated to company-not wasting time	People learn in different ways- gap in communication and understanding
			wasting time	and understanding

				between generations
	-	-	Hard work and being productive	Generational differences in attitudes towards technology
	-	-	Moving company forward	
	-	-	Good career path	-
	-	-	Making a company more profitable	-
17	Broad marketing	Broad marketeer	Always looking to add to experience (appeal of current role)	Fast paced work-culture
	-	Bring a lot of varied experience to the role (Agency work, different sectors)	Enjoy variety in broad marketing	Encouraged to speak up and think outside the box
	-	-	Enjoy working in teams	Learn from the teams and learning on the job
	-	-	Sharing ideas	-
	-	-	Encouraged to speak up	-
	-	-	Taking on responsibility	-
	-	-	Layered approach to reach specialism	-
	-	-	Learning from others	-
18	Analytical – English language degree	Mixing disciplines, like journalism	To get a high score in evaluation of work	Proposals intense, people burn out
	Writing and organisation	-	Maintaining high scores	Shift towards teams based culture-people in same buildings do meetings on teams
	Investigative	-	Doing things effectively and sustainably	Everyone on teams all the time
	-	-	Proposals intense, people burn out	Covid accelerated cultural shift
	-	-	Wellbeing of staff important to avoid burnout	Hard to build relationships in online environments
19	-	Learning from manager	Getting praise	Constantly changing

	-	Professional courses and development (support)	Being told did something right	Adapting to new things
	-	Learned how to pick things up (career change, worked with kids)	Knowing the answers to questions asked	Standardising policies and procedures (so people know what they are doing)
	-	Not stuck in ways, mouldable	Helping people out	Able to ask questions if no procedure in place
	-	-	Thrive off seeing other people boosted in their jobs	-

Appendix U- Main Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes Topic 5: Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff

Main theme 1: Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff	
Sub Theme	Codes
Barriers for Teams and Staff	Barrier team-Fast company growth
	Barrier team- more projects
	Barrier team- Recruitment (finding right people)
	Barrier team- knowledge and understanding
	Barrier team- development of current staff before expanding further (young and inexperienced work force)
	Barrier team- people frustrated
	Barrier team- Meetings not resolving issues
	Barrier team- Top-down vision unclear
	Barrier staff- Corporate cycle issues (negative emotions, stuck)
	Barrier staff- HR approach to managing change towards corporate model for staff could be better
	Barrier team- not knowing who people are (poor formal communication)
	Barrier team- (freelancers) can't afford to put teams together
Enablers for Teams and Staff	Enabler team – Focused on one goal
	Enabler team - positivity
	Enabler team – good management
	Enabler team – Mentoring (management)
	Enabler team- formalising mentorship roles
	Enabler team- good formal communication, being introduced to new starters
	Enabler team- (freelancers) filling a skill gap by developing a team, saving time, improving efficiency
Main theme 2: Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth	
Barriers to Organisational Change and Growth	Barrier change- Resistance to change
	Barrier change- Resistance to change (Automation)
	Barrier change- resistance to change (technology, generational differences)
	Barrier change- resistance to change (tech, ai) technology not there yet
	Barrier change- owner managed company- resistance to change – Top-down trust in managers decision making delegation
	Barrier change- change upsets people
	Barrier change- Negativity and negative thinking
	Barrier change- Division office vs factory (Silo)

	Barrier change- Division Different experiences of culture office vs factory
	Barrier change- Silo's (poor communication)
	Barrier- Being an innovator
	Barrier- Not a traditional business model (innovative)
	Barrier change- rate of change challenging
	Barrier change- rate of change money barrier moving forward
	Barrier change – adequate evaluation of companywide communications and processes
	Barrier change- (Freelancer) finding people to trust
	Barrier change – recruitment, right people, recruiting talent
Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth	Enabler change- Being an innovator
	Enabler change - support from government and investment needed
	Enabler change- improving productivity in sector (leading, not following)
	Enabler change- marketplace ready for change
	Enabler change- company thinking differently (innovative)
	Enabler change- forced to think of new ideas, raise game. Fresh ideas and perspectives
	Enabler change- Reflecting on change, stop and focus- not always instant change
	Enabler change- moving towards corporate outlook
	Enabler change- Moving towards corporate model
	Enabler change- Rigorous policies i.e., work from home, core hours
	Enabler change- Policies around attire (Understanding generational differences)
	Enabler change- branding (different presentation of company)
	Enabler change- leaders taking responsibility (leadership)
	Enabler change- team trusting leadership (leadership)
	Enabler change – trusting management style (leadership)
	Enabler change- clear direction (leadership)
	Enabler change- having structures in place for development
	Enabler change- Structured training courses for new staff
	Enabler change- investing in employees careers

	Enabler change- retrospectively filling in development gaps for previous graduates
	Enabler change- People adapting to change, not resisting (resistance/adapting)
	Enabler- combat resistance, build coalitions, champion change- employee liaison (getting people on board)
	Enabler change- People need to feel heard
	Enabler change- getting everyone on board with change
	Enabler change- (freelancer) greater agency and autonomy, flexibility, making own future
	Enabler change- (freelancer) remaining agile, keeping team small
Main Theme 3: Hierarchical Dimensions of Organisational Change and the Gig Economy	
Cultural Change- Perspectives of Staff	Mix of both top down and bottom-up change
	Bottom-up cultural change
	Top-down need to understand young staff still leaning
	Create environments where millennials want to work
	Gap in communication and understanding between generations
	Young people struggle to ask for help
	Socials (informal) important to include remote workers in workplace culture
	Social aspect important to manage change
	Change ongoing
	Giving people a chance to learn important for business growth and staff retention
	Organisational communication style has drastically changed
Gig Economy: Relationship to Organisational Growth and Change	Building culture hard with gig workers
	Hard to grow business with gig workers
	Disincentive to use gig workers- high wage expectations
	Fewer people working 9-5 jobs in offices- gig work changing, more autonomy
	Impact of AI, concern
	Flexibility and entrepreneurship important future skills
Top-Down Strategy for Organisational Change	Sense of direction from the top
	Autonomy of senior managers
	Motivate young people to take ownership of roles
	Encourage people to speak up

Appendix V- Main Themes, Sub-themes, and Condensed Codes Topic 1: The Gig Economy (Data Set 2A and 2B)

Main theme 1: Definitions of the Gig Economy	
Sub-Theme	Codes
Self-Employment, Project by Project Work, Insecurity.	Sole proprietorship, do some gigs, fiver, find work yourself, self-employment, don't work regular hours, project by project basis (p4)
	Freelancing, short-term contracts (insecure work) (p7), Uber, Deliveroo, short term contracts.
	Casual workers Zero-hour contract Flexible contract Exploitative (work long hours) Flexible workers (p3)
Side Hustle, No fixed Income (Insecure)	Gig economy definition (p8) Side hustle, No fixed income Skill set in a particular area No formal business criteria. Virtually anybody that starts earning (p8)
	Side hustle, No permanent role Juggling contracts (short-term) Freelance type work (p6)
Gain experience, Online Platforms Exploitative, Competitive	Way for people to gain experience, online platforms- negative connotations and experiences-exploitative, competitive (p5) Like an unpaid internship (p5)
Traditional (Music based) Gig Economy	P20 Musician - gig work, Hectic, busy Surviving year on year. A lot relied on income coming in
Main theme 2: Experience of Gig Work	
Use of Technology, Online Gig Economy, Networking Platforms and Traditional Networking	Online platform - Not successful, too much competition (Fiver) (p4)
	Online Platform- undercut by subpar work (Fiver) (p4)
	Online platform networking- Instagram (Covid) (p4)
	Some experience with online platforms but 95% of gig work not on online platform (p3)
	Use automation strategy to set up sales channels on linked in (p4)
	Time constraints- automation (p4)
	Google ads ineffective (too broad) (p4)
Traditional Networking	P6 captive audience (Uni) (generational diff) networking easier when younger, incorporated into social life
Hiring gig workers (online/ offline) gig workers	P8 Had staff, moved to a model with contractors Ease of taking on people in different roles AGILE
	P8 benefits of using gig workers Work globally, flexibility, agility, scale
	Benefits using gig workers (small business) P8 agility, Can scale up, Don't have a fixed team, Odd jobs Lesser emotional attachment with contractors

Experiences of Online Platforms and Traditional Gig Work	Negative-Insecure work (p4)
	Negative - Have to self-motivate (p4)
	Negative- Exploitative, abusive, poor pay (p5)
	Negative- No support from platform (p5)
	Negative – feedback extortion, or non-compliance with contract (not leaving feedback) (p5)
	Negative- Dehumanising, frustrating (p5)
	Negative- Crooked culture (p5) Competition too high
	Negative – Damages Self-esteem- like abusive relationship (p5)
	Hard to scale up business (p5)
	Benefit- Building experience (p5)
	Benefit- Building portfolio (p5)
	Benefit- can help to move out of gig economy (p5)
	Benefit- right attitude, take the best of it and escape (p5)
	Worked in traditional gig economy (music industry), surviving year on year. (p20)
Insecure Contracts and Uncertainty	Gig work-Works on insecure contracts at university, considers that is a part of the gig economy (insecure work) (p7)
	P6 Self-employed for 25 years. Always had work on the side for 25 years
	Gig work- P7 - not sure if contracts will be extended, uncertainty
	Uni testing things out, role not secure (p7)
	Uni-finding gig work- communication a mess
	Uni finding gig work- Organic (talking to people) funnelled through HR processes after the fact
	Gig work- Currently has no long term contracts (p3)
	P3 Doing Short-term contracts zero hours up to 6 months
	P6 University gig work Always short-term contracts It's very bitty and frustrating Complications - uncertainty, budgeting, frustration university gig work (p6)
	P3 - Most people in catering are considered a zero hours contractor
Motivations for Doing Gig Work	Music industry- gig work- Prior to being signed (backed by a record label) money was tighter (insecure)
	Motivation-Want autonomy (p4)
	Motivation-Ability to push and retreat (energy dependent) (p4)
	Motivation - finding full time work challenging (p3)

	Business born out of gig work- wanted more than a side hustle (p8) Started as sole-trader
	Build own business away from online platforms P4
	Build own business away from online platforms P5
	P6 Entrepreneurial ambitions- start up part of long-term strategic planning
	P6 A lot of uncertainty in gig work, start-up longer term stability aim
	P6 Longer term dream job of being a CEO of a renewable energy company benefited by more stable income now
	Difficulties illness, motivation, low energy (p4)
Main Theme 3: Entrepreneurial Ambitions	
Entrepreneurial Ambitions	Business born out of gig work- wanted more than a side hustle (p8) Started as sole-trader
	Build own business away from online platforms P4
Entrepreneurial Ambitions: Long-term Strategy	Build own business away from online platforms P5
	P6 Entrepreneurial ambitions- start up part of long-term strategic planning
	P6 A lot of uncertainty in gig work, start-up longer term stability aim
	P6 Longer term dream job of being a CEO of a renewable energy company benefited by more stable income now

Appendix W- Main Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes Topic 2 (Data Set 2A and 2B)

Main theme 1: Transition from Gig Work to More Secure Business Models	
Sub-Theme	Codes
Transition from Freelancer/Gig Work to Secure Business Model	Freelance work versus partnership (p4)
	Transition away from gig work, longer term strategy (p3)
	Worked in content creation settings (p4)
	Finding niche/specialism important (p4)
	Finding a niche important (p8)
	Finding a niche (p5)
	Gig work – gaining experience refining roles/niche (p3)
	Bringing freelancers together (p4)
	Refining product (p4)
	Refining product (p8)
	P6 Gig work gaining experience - refining role
	Structuring responsibilities (p4)
	Responsible for own networking and sales channels (p4)
	Reassessment of business following bad experiences of online gig economy platforms (p5)
	Rebuilding / rebranding, reflected (p8)
	Rebuilding and rebranding business (p5)
	Build own sales channels – moving away from gig platforms helped to develop business (p5)
	Transition from current to future planning (p3)
	Transition to longer-contracts more sustainable model, more selective (p3)
	Gig work fills a gap in business (p3)
	Started as bits and pieces, sought resources to help formalise internal processes (p8)
Competencies- Transition from the Gig Economy	Adaptability (p4)
	Adapting (p20)
	Moving with trends (p4)
	Finding a new niche (p4)
	Formalised strategy for finding clients (Use of automation and technology for networking) (p4)
	Refined finding work with external networking group (BNI) formal networking (p8) developed networking skills, selling skills (p8)
	Reflection and adaptation of business (p5)
	Rebuilding and rebranding business (p5)
	Continue to evolve (p5)
	Building relationships in industry (p5)
	Social legitimacy (p5)
	Longer term-planning (p3)
	Structured meetings (p3)

	Built relationships (p8)
	Competencies transition to business (p20)
	Work life balance (p20)
	Consistency in processes (p20)
	P20 Business is business Creatives need to understand both sides
Leadership Strategy	Vertical management structure (shared responsibility (p4)
	Task allocation important (p4)
	Pay freelancers fairly, empathetic leadership (p5)
	Empathetic leadership (p3)
	Future strategy planning (p3)
Issues with Gig Economy Work and Business development	Freedom-Put in a box of being a service provider (p5)
	Killed online gig economy side of business (p5)
	Freedom-Wanted to be more than bad cheaply paid employees (p5)
	Clients want something for nothing (p5)
	Lack of empathy
	Lack of ethics (p5)
	Pressures that lead to gig work (p3)
	Filling gap in a business (p3)
	Tried gig work not successful, too much competition (p8)
Main theme 2: Cultural and Organisational Change	
Cultural shift: Online Coaching/Influencers (Instagram)	Social media bubble (p4)
	Coaching industry bubble burst (p5) scam (p5)
	Insular group/network (p4)
	Thrived during covid (p4)
	Bubble burst- niche disappeared post-Covid (p4)
	Adaptability (p4)
Use of Technology and Online Networking Platforms	Use of technology (Automation programmes- Linked in) to network (p4)
	Online networking more effective than face to face networking (p4)
	Online networking norm now, don't want to miss out (p3) fewer opportunities for face to face networking (p3)
	Social proof of legitimacy (linked in) (p5)
	Connect with the right people (purpose and mission driven) (p5)
	Use of email driven and personal network approaches- authenticity (p5)
	Linked in and word of mouth important for finding work (p8)
	Captive audience important, broad marketing ineffective

Resistance of Online Algorithms (Gig Workers/Start-up)	Use of automation programmes to find leads for work (not officially allowed on linked in) (p4)
	Linked in adapting to resistance of algorithm (automation programmes – profile shut down) (p4)
	Exploitation (automation service – more money) (p4)
	Algorithm became more closed – harder to gain followers (p5)
	Targeted marketing on social media (works with London based company) (p8)
Cultural Change – Communication Methods	Pre pandemic (informal teams calls, gone away) (p7)
	Work from home versus face to face – relationship building harder
	p7) Relationship barrier - work from home versus face to face
Division, Cultural Change	Silos in communication, University gig work-push to improve comms
	P20 VOLATILE BUSINESS, ADAPT TO CULTURAL CHANGE, artists NOT EXPLOITED
Main Theme 3: Coaching, Mentoring and Support Networks	
Coaching and Mentorship	Worked with coach (p4)
	Worked with coach to structure responsibilities (vertical structure)
	Business advisor (p6)
Support Networks	BNI networking and learning community (p8)
	Joined FSB- access to resources and support (p8)
	Support network business gateway (p6) exchange experiences with other businesses and gig workers (p6)
	Core Support network and silos of support networks across gig sectors (p6)

Appendix X- Duties of Each Participant Identified, Formal and Informal Communication Strategies and Procedures

Participant Number	External (Formal)	External (Informal)
4 Administrative Duties	Procedure- Design (standardised)	
	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Contract	-
	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Invoice	-
	Sales and Marketing-Proposal	-
	Sales and Marketing-linked in, email	-
5 Sales Communication /Strategy, Support and Development	Formal Communication- Instructional	Procedure-strategy, timeline (flexible) *
	Sales and Marketing- communication	Informal communication- Brainstorming
	Formal Communication-project based *	informal Communication-project based *
	External Platform- Gig platform	Professional development/ Support network
	Formal Communication-tracking	-
3 Sales, Administration/ Communication/Support and Development	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Financial	informal Communication-project based *
	Formal Communication-tracking	Sales and Marketing- communication
	Sales and Marketing- communication	Professional development/ Support network
6 Administration/ Communication	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Invoice	informal Communication-project based *
	Formal Communication-tracking	-
	Formal Communication-project based	-
7 Communication	Formal Communication-project based	-
8 Sales, Administration/ Communication. Support and Development	Formal Communication-tracking	Professional development/ Support network
	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Invoice	-
	Sales and Marketing- communication	-
20 Administration/ Support and Development	Financial, Legal and Compliance- Invoice	Professional development/ Support network

Appendix Y- Competencies of Workers (Self-Reported) and View of Workplace Culture (Personality/Values) (Data Set 2A and 2B)

Participant number / Case study membership	Academic Experience	Professional Experience	Motivations/ Aspirations	Workplace Culture (views)/values
Participant 4 (Case Study 2)	Organisation	Tech knowledge	Work-life balance	Authenticity
	Adaptability	Ambition	Entrepreneurship	Personable
	Problem solving	Confidence	Freedom	Focused
Participant 5 (Case Study 2)	Complex Problem solving	Empathy	Happiness	Inclusivity
	Communication	Discipline	Financial security	Open minded
	Research	Stress management	Work life balance	Honesty
Participant 7 (Case Study 3)	Group work	Diplomacy	Uncertainty	Helping others
	Policy analysis (Masters)	Negotiation	Learning transferable skills	Value education
	-	Adaptability	Working in something I care about	Respect others
	-	Project management	-	Diversity
Participant 3 (Case Study 3)	Report Writing	Empathy	Fear of failure	Sense of humour
	Managing Deadlines	Due diligence	Pride	Logical thinking
	-	-	Creating something	Tenacity
Participant 8 (Case Study 3)	Insight Multi-disciplinary training	Resilience	Coaching motivated to have self confidence	Honesty
	Predict trends	Negotiation	Commitment	Integrity
		Persuasion	Continuous learning	Bespoke approach
	-	-	adaptability	Value for money
Participant 20 (Case Study 3)	Master's degree	Confidence	Relationship tech and 'real world'	-
	Research skills	Skill development	Tech and Mental health	-
	-	Breaking down complex things	Automation (resistance)	-
	-	-	Balancing research and creativity	-

Participant 6 (Case Study 3)	Research	Self-starting	Survival	Comradery
	Objectivity	Self-discipline	Doing good things	creativity
	Critique and planning	Enthusiasm	-	Energy
	-	-	-	Working with good people
				competition
				Avoids toxicity

Appendix Z- Main Themes, Sub-Themes and Condensed Codes Topic 5 (Data Set 2A and 2B)

Main theme 1: Barriers for organisational development and change	
Sub Theme	Codes
Barrier: Mental health, Wellbeing, and Self-Development	Barrier - Self-development (learning on the job) (p4)
	Barrier – Personal growth, overwhelmed (p5)
	Barrier- Lack of support (gig worker) end of contract, focus (p7)
	Barrier self-development (p20)
	Barrier- confidence in leadership (p20)
	Barrier- Work-life balance (p5)
	Barrier- Gig workers treated badly (p3)
	Barrier toxic environments
Financial Constraints, Competition, and Time Management	(Money) Lack of investment (p4)
	(Money) Financial instability (p3) Financial constraints, collaborators (p3)
	Barrier- Competition high, stand out from crowd (p3)
	Barrier- Finding opportunities (p3)
	Barrier uncertainty around future work (p6)
	Barrier- Time not infinite (managing limited time)
	Barrier- role juggling (p6)
	Barrier- Trust, availability, and relationships (p6)
Main Theme 2: Enablers for Organisational Change and Development	
Enabler: Teamwork and Building Relationships	Enabler- Team work (good working relationships) (p4)
	Enabler- Understanding team working styles and emotional intelligence (p5)
	Enabler- working with great people (p6)
Enabler Mental Health, Wellbeing, and Self-Development	Enabler- Stress management strategies (p5)
	Enabler- Time management, consistency, having knowledge, continuous learning (p20)
	Enabler- confidence in self (p3)
	Enabler- confidence in self (p20)
	Enabler- Abstaining from alcohol (p5)
	Coaching/mentorship self-development (p8)
	Enabler- Autonomy, freedom (p4)
	Enabler- Autonomy, freedom, liberating (p3)
	Enabler- autonomy, Flexibility (p7)
	Enabler – gaining experience over lots of contracts (professional development) (p7)
	Systematic approach to understand the business (p8)
	Enabler- lots of opportunities (p3)
Innovation, Innovative Use of Technology and Uniqueness	Enabler-Innovations sales and marketing (p5)
	Enabler – Outgrown need to use online gig economy platforms (p5)

Social and Economic Factors	Research and creativity (p20)
	Stand out from the crowd (p3)
	Enabler- contract lasted longer due to Covid (p8)
	Making a difference (p6)
	Dynamic, fun environments (p6)
	(Money) financial investment (p20)
	Working at speed, Sacrifice (p20)
	Not easy running own business (p20)

Appendix AA – Flexibility in work arrangement Quotes.

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, Female, Age 29)	"I actually don't think its hybrid physically in my contract but there's a heap of flexibility at the moment. Yeah, it's really flexible in my role. Especially in my team as well, so, I could be open to doing more days at home if I wanted to."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, Female, Age 29)	"Yeah, especially because of Covid and I was gonna' say as well, just because the company is growing and most of the company are encouraged to sell flexible working and to work from home as well. So, yeah lots of flexibility."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, age 32)	"I think, where it forced everyone to work from home, I think, a lot of companies had to reconsider how they could maintain that flexibility that people had found."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	"It was there since I joined but I think it was, like most things, Covid sort of accelerated things a little bit so, but I'd never worked in a hybrid role before that."
(Participant 10, Senior Estimating Engineer, Male, Age 54)	"Yeah, but to be honest with you it was more like moving house and it just takes a toll, but I mean it's just the company's flexible in that respect. So, yeah, it's all good."

Appendix BB – Shift Towards Hybrid working Culture Quotes.

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 1, Director/Freelancer, Female, Age 63)	"Everything I do can be handled and can only be handled by having access to online. And so, it doesn't really matter where I work. So, sometimes I work from home, sometimes I work from other locations."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"So, I have a full-time role in that I am a permanent employee, but I have flexibility to work from where I want to, and I spend most of my time in my home office (...) I decide how I'm going to use my time in that my job is a role that I have to define for myself."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"So, the majority I would say about 90 percent of my time would be in the office but that's just my personal preference (...) I think sometimes it just does really depend on your line manager and what their preference is from a work perspective."

Appendix CC- Definitions of the Gig economy: self-employment; online platforms; link to SMEs and freelancing Quotes.

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"My understanding of it would kind of be like self-employment but before a company, if that makes sense? So, you know working your own hours, I think obviously the ones that come to mind are like Uber and Deliveroo and stuff."
(Participant 1, Director/Freelancer, Female, Age 63)	"'Gig work' I feel tends to have very negative connotations, people tend to think of 'gig workers' as being in low skilled employment, they tend to associate it with delivery drivers, taxi drivers. And that is a consequence of the development of online platforms, like Uber, and such like. But actually, for me, the term 'gig worker' is an extension of a whole spectrum of people who basically don't get their taxes, don't get their sick pay, don't get their holiday paid by an employer, but seek to earn their living by doing something maybe they love, something they find fulfilling."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"I understand it as being almost like a global resource of individuals, or experts that can work on, I suppose, more project related tasks, rather than being employed full time (...) So, I kind of associate the term with freelancing, I suppose."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"So, my understanding of the 'gig economy' is that it's essentially a working environment for individuals and for small companies, where basically they are going on a job-by-job basis, i.e. a 'gig' basis for each job. (...) So, it could be an individual who is working for lots of different people, or a company, a small company that's working for lots of different people."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age 26)	"I think my understanding is and I could be completely wrong, but I think it's to do with implementing SMEs into the wider economy. I mean I could be completely wrong on that. Essentially trying to establish yourself as a company into the main economy."

Appendix DD- Definitions of the Gig Economy: Cultural Change Quotes.

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	"It wasn't really the thing when I was at university you know, you picked up random hours and bits and pieces in places, probably a little bit more structured than I suppose it is now. I suppose now, you know you can go do a random shift here, a random shift there, do some hours here, do some hours there. Whereas, I had a part time job, so it was a bit more structured I think, I suppose then, I've never done anything totally like that. So, no real experience with that."
(Participant 1, Director/Freelancer, Female, Age 63)	"So, I think that since I started the company, the whole world of work has completely shifted and changed. In fact, when we began the company in 1998, we jumped out of working for an employer, and into the first in my view scenario where 'gig' working was starting to take hold because we had entrepreneurial ambitions (...) In fact, by jumping out of the world of work we were jumping into a world where we lacked all of the safety nets that you had by working for a company. (...) And I think the first iteration of the company and the first product we provided was an early example of 'gig work', which today has become much more prominent."

Appendix EE- Experience as a 'gig worker' Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age, 25)	"There were websites that I did give a try, I can't remember the name, or which one it was, there was one which you could do, it was mainly just that my house mate was a tutor, so I just thought I could sort of do it."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"So, a long time ago I was a contractor working in the oil and gas industry on a number of different projects for a number of different clients (...) and then I moved to the UK had a limited company working for 'redacted' and that's how we sort of got into the company."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"In terms of my own experience of the 'gig economy', before taking the full time role at the current business that I'm working for about 3 and a half years ago, I spent probably 20 years working as an independent consultant through a limited company with various clients tied in for a period of time, but essentially it wasn't specifically a 'gig' it was a task orientated activity over a period of time. So, the company that we set up for example might take on a 2-year task to develop the business for a particular client with certain outcomes expected and at the end of that the client would have to give notice, but essentially there was no long-term security in the role as it was a consultancy type role."
(Participant 1, Director/ Freelancer, Female, Age 63)	"The mentality as a 'gig worker' hasn't changed, however, the economic infrastructure has changed. One of the biggest shifts for me personally was the change in the taxation structure because our company was happily bobbling along, until the government in an attempt to drag in more people for more taxes (...) decided to attack 'gig workers' by bringing in IR35 changes (..) Now the impact it had on us was that in order to make sure people weren't exploiting a situation where they were employees, rather than 'gig workers' it meant that if you only worked for one client, you were classed as an employee not a 'gig worker', not a 'freelancer'(..) as a consequence of this tax change, at the time I think we had two or three clients but some of the 'blue chip' clients were so worried about staying within the taxation law, that they simply just axed a lot of their freelancers, and we reeled from that. We

	personally suffered because of that, and I think that remains a major constraint because it is a disincentive for people to employ you unless you can verify that you basically are not an employee, but you exist in your own right as a freelancer.”
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Appendix FF- Organisational Use of 'Gig Workers' Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"Yeah, the company we do employ them, the company as a whole (...) if we take like 'redacted' who's quite scientific based, to do with the buildings and then obviously we need to make the actual clean rooms (...) But we do try to keep the consultants quite minimal, there's probably about 6-7 consultants that we work with."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"I work quite closely with the project controls team and in that team is 'redacted' and he has used a couple of external people just for short periods of time for very specific technical kind of bits of work. So, it's things where, I think, particularly when you're growing, you might have an issue, let's say in a certain coding language, or in a particular kind of technical problem to do with, let's say, or maybe you want to explore a bit of R&D but you wouldn't necessarily want to hire someone full-time to kind of go down that avenue. I think it also falls into the whole kind of context of fail-fast kind of methodology, where particularly with R&D you're wanting to test different scenarios, knowing fully well that they might not lead to anything and if that resource then becomes redundant because it's very specialised, that's not ideal. (...) So, we have been using people externally for that kind of purpose."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"So, the interesting thing is that the business that I am currently working for has spent the last 20 years of its existence as a traditional construction company but it's grown a little bit and shrunk a little bit and its relied quite a lot on (...) its required resources that have been brought in on a short term basis and then let go when the job is finished. Also, within the design teams there's been an element of that, and also within project management there has been an element of that. But over the first few years of the company's existence, we did use quite a lot of flexible working practices in order to maintain profitability and that's something that happens quite a lot within the consultancy marketplace. But what's happened (...) as a business has evolved, we've innovated and become more of a manufacturing business than a construction business. We now have more

	permanent employees and indeed one of the challenges that you have when you have consultancy type practices, is that it's hard to keep an eye on your IP (...) its less desirable to have lots of people coming in and out on a task-based basis. However, when they do, we tie them in, we do tie them into confidentiality (...) so, they don't spread the word, but obviously we will have less chance if we have less flexible workers."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"Quite regularly, benefits are that when you need people, you can call on them and generally be able to get them. Sometimes, the negative is that they might not be available, might have too much work going on. Um, but generally I think it's quite a good solution. Yeah, we have some consultants and yes freelance kind of people."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age 26)	"We do a lot of like sub-contractors, freelancers not as such, I don't believe. However, we do deal quite a lot with sub-contractors as well, it could be relevant for them in an aspect also 'redacted' as well, as we were a small company. I'm not sure what the criteria is for a small company these days (...) think its tripled since when I first started here, it's not overwhelming but it's like wow. You know when you take a step back."

Appendix GG- 'Top Down' and 'Bottom Up' Organisational Change/Development Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract buyer, Female, Age 23)	"I think for me, I came in as an admin so like my role has changed across like twice now from purchasing assistant to obviously sub-contract side and then I think the biggest change is obviously the amount of people. Just the size of the company has got increasingly bigger at quite a fast rate."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"When I first joined it was quite small. I think when I first started there were about 70 employees. So, just within like 2 years, we've grew, we've just recruited like 20 apprentices, we're hitting like 350 employees. So, we've gone from being quite a small what I would class as like a family run SME, to now bridging that gap and becoming a fully-fledged, I wouldn't say corporation because I think that you lose the family side of things, but a big business, which is then sort of come along with its challenges as well and you know I think it's because it's been so fast. Even though people think 2 years is quite a long period of time, it's actually not really in a business sort of sense, you're picking up quite new projects on a daily basis, so your time really just rolls into one and I think that sometimes people can't really grasp the change so treat us like quite a small business when we're not there now."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"So, it's definitely lost a bit of the family side of things, but I think it's still trying to be run like it is a bit of a small company. I think generally, it's great to have seen how its grown and developed."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, Female, Age 29)	"Yeah, it's exciting to be at a company that's just growing really quickly."
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors, Female, Age 28)	"When I first started, we were in a smaller building with obviously a lot less staff. Obviously within that time frame we've moved to the bigger building, we've tripled in company size, and I think we're just continuing to just grow and adapt to the new lifestyles of what's running, but yeah, its rapidly growing as a company, projects going all over and then obviously staff increase."
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"So, I've worked here two and a half years. I think when I started, well, kind of now compared to where the company was when we started, it's gone through a massive expansion. So, you know, even just the personnel in the

	office, the numbers have doubled, you know, probably more than doubled, I've only been here two and a half years but it feels like I've been here longer than everyone here (laughs), 'cos we've just hired so many people and I think as well it's kind of just sort of the way we're running projects is maybe different because we're taking on more projects at a higher budget, rather than kind of having a smaller number."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"It's been a really kind of aggressive, kind of growth and trying to deal with that, manage that kind of change. I think the growth at 'redacted' in general has been kind of really noticeable, even in the two years that I've been here (...) it did definitely feel more like business that had been operating in a certain way, for 20 years and now it feels much less like that. It feels like somewhere where change is happening."

Appendix HH- 'Top Down' and 'Bottom Up' Organisational Change/Development: 'Bottom Up' Processes of Organisational Change Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"When I first started one of 'redacted' first passions was to bring fresh faces in to, and how he likes it to be is quite like, I think his view is quite useful, without being discriminatory, new ideas because the business is quite innovative and that's what you know our sort of goal is, breaking the tradition of on-site construction, you know bringing new ideas. I think you see he's excited. People have been coming out with graduates, when they do sort of their dissertations and things, they focus on new research that they can bring new ideas to the business and roll with it. So, I think our demographics with age, I think we're probably at an average of about 31 at the moment. So, the average age of someone working at 'redacted name of company', which is relatively young especially for a construction business. So, we're doing alright (...) I could really develop them and develop them into being really good generalists. I feel at the minute I just don't have that dedicated time and I can see the sort of slip in the team with the new starters, compared to my starters that started two years ago. So, that's something that I probably need to work on myself."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, Female, Age 29)	"We have a big graduate recruitment push here at 'redacted'. I actually think recently we've hit the milestone of we've now got 100 graduates, 100 graduates now employed at 'redacted'. Yeah, it's kind of almost like a third of the company, so we have heaps of graduates on board here. And also, we are actually about to welcome our next 20 apprentices who are about to join. So yeah, kind of really across-the-board I think as I said there's general rules from my understanding, we're always kind of recruiting."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"So, in terms of business growth, in the last (..) having made the transformation from a traditional construction company to a company that is now more focused on the manufacturing environment, we've grown from about 120 to about 350 people and we are continuing to grow very rapidly. A large amount of the intake has been around graduates. So, 3 or 4 years ago we maybe had 5 graduates in the business, now

	we have maybe 100 (..) and some of those people are focused on innovative activities (...) One of the challenges we have in our business is as we're growing so quickly and focusing on different aspects, is how to monitor the productivity of those new employees, particularly in relation to those who are given tasks where they've got to deliver so many drawings per day, the output can be measured and it's easier to measure the productivity."
(Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	"I've worked at 'redacted' in this role for three years, 3 1/2 years, but I've actually worked at 'redacted' for seven, because when I was in Uni I started as a summer temp, just literally as a summer job. Then when I finish my architectural degree, I kind of got a call from them and said I could start in the architectural department. So, kind of seven years ago (...), I've seen the business grow because I worked here every summer, they kind of offered me different jobs every summer until I finish Uni. And the companies gone from being very, I think, maybe around kind of the tech side of it, everything is very like automated, tech based like very much keeping up to trend with things and kind of having a real understanding of what we do as a company (...) how can we do design differently. That's a lot of things that I've seen very much obviously (...) I've seen like a lot of change in terms of like going from doing traditional design to doing pods and off-site manufacturing. That's obviously been a massive learning curve for me because that was never something that I learnt in Uni as well, it was quite a new thing to me in Uni. So that was kind of a massive change towards it that I saw. That was probably the main change that I saw really."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"Well, I mean my journey and the manager of the project controls team has been really interesting because about a year ago this month, we kind of pitched the ideas of automation and project controls teams and we've now between us we're managing more than 30 people. So, I've got, I think, 16 people in my team. So, we've kind of gone from zero to 16 in 12 months. It's been a really kind of aggressive, kind of growth and trying to deal with that, manage that kind of change."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"Yes, so we do have a number of branches that have significantly increased over the 3 years,

	especially in the engineering field. Has it changed the management style? Yes, definitely, it's affected the culture, it's affected the management style, it's affected the way you see and perceive hard work, I guess if that makes sense?"
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Appendix II- Social and Cultural Changes Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	“Even in the two years that I’ve been here and you’re sensing a lot more of, I mean, there’s a lot of people from lots of different backgrounds. So, a lot more kind of multi-cultural, a lot of a younger kind of population of people, which brings a very different dynamic to the team and I think it’s also forcing people to kind of think outside the box a lot more and maybe not stick to the ways that they have been traditionally doing things, which it did definitely feel more like business that had been operating in a certain way, for 20 years and now it feels much less like that. It feels like somewhere that, where change is happening, kind of thing. There’s also like an energy, you know, like, when you walk into an office and there’s people kind of like looking over each other’s shoulder and getting up and kind of concentrating on things and lots of different conversations happening in a room. It’s a lot different to the way it was where everyone kind of sat staring at the computer desk.”
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	“It’s become very much, a multi-cultural company, with like a really broad age demographic. When I started it was pretty much sort of like, I guess, late 40’s male kind of typical construction company, and now it’s kind of completely diversified from sort of age, culture, and from sort of a male female perspective. So, it’s been really great to see how we can transform.”
(Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	“If you’re sat in the meeting room you kind of, come in and you’re like ‘oh’, you talk about things, and you’re waiting for someone to come in and you’re kind of sitting, you have to speak. Whereas, when you’re on a Teams meeting you can just mute and nobody speaks and you’re waiting and there’s no conversation of life and that kind of thing, you just kind of talk about the topic of the meeting is. (...) I do love working from home, but I do see that kind of wall that people have. So, like everyone now sits with their headphones on and you don’t kind of have a meeting sat in a meeting room, face to face.”
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	“I think sometimes on Teams you can fire out invitations to people and people might not necessarily need to be there who are on the

	calls or conversely you get people who, I think meeting etiquette changes somewhat when it's a Teams call. So, people are late, people not turning up, people not saying they're going to be there."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"(...) You can be in multiple places, five minutes apart, sort of across the globe, right? It's amazing. But I think there is a control measure that needs to be set on now that we can all be instantaneously all be connected on a video call. There has to be some sort of gaps, or set slots, or something which brings some sort (...) time management into it and I think that's almost like a companywide kind of approach that needs to happen, where you have like dedicated hours blocked out in everybody's diary where they can actually work or can keep up with what's going on."

Appendix JJ- Leadership strategies Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer, Female, Age 23)	"I think the manager I have now has a different way of working compared to the manager I had before. I think that's more just my manager now is more like interactive but like we'll work through a task together and she assigns us my work, like and then we'll go through it and discuss things."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age 26)	"So, I think the main leadership role we use was, I lose track of the word, 'laissez-faire' is the leadership kind of method that we use quite, which is where it's not quite as authoritative, it's, (...) everybody has their own input, we'll work with you rather than you must do this, you must do that, um, I've noticed that a few departments it's not as much of like a shouting match. You know, it's almost like a good team effort. Um, which I think, especially with the design and build kind of environment, I think that works really well. Um, well I've seen it work well, you know?"
(Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	"Yeah, I think I kind of came into a leadership role in Covid, so, I think that's kind of had to adapt from there, in kind of being obviously like a young manager, in a sense is like I'm always kind of learning what's best and kind of where I feel that teams, it's great for like data and organisation and everything's in one place and like if someone was to say something on, like normally you would just go downstairs and say something to someone but this time you could say on a Teams message or an email, it's kind of like there's accountability against that."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"I tend to sort of like have a good management style of getting involved with all of my team. One of the things I would note is that when I first started there was only 3 of us, there was Jess and a girl called Ashley. Jess moved into the team just as I come into the team. So, Jess worked on reception and then Ashley was a graduate, she started literally 2 weeks before me and in that time period I probably had more of a time to give them my full time, we wasn't as busy as what we are now. I could really develop them and develop them into being really good generalists. Whereas, I feel at the minute I just don't have that dedicated time and I can see the sort of slip in the team with the new starters, compared to my starters that

	started 2 year ago. So, that's something that I probably need to work on myself."
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"I think, you know, people within my department, or graduates who I was leading, I think my management style to them is sort of, you know, training that's sort of the key thing, mentoring. Training, I think that was something maybe 'redacted name of the company' was lacking, especially when I started. So, sort of when I got people underneath me, I was like, right well this is, you know, I want them to know what they're doing, as quickly as possible and I want them to feel supported and guided along the way. I think, um, in terms of, I guess in terms of leading projects, which is a bit less direct management but it's more kind of management of the activities of the project, if that makes sense?"

Appendix KK- Team work in Face-to-Face versus Remote Environments Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	“So, I think it’s been a lot of, it’s to do with finding kind of commonality and bringing people together in one place. I think that, there is, I mean before, honestly before this role I was very much on the fence of sort of what’s better working remotely, or working within an office environment, as a manager now I’m very much in favour of people working sort of in one space because I think you can definitely create an energy and a kind of, you can sort of build up, um, much more of a kind of feeling of camaraderie and kind of like focus, particularly at points where you need to work quite quickly towards a common goal. That’s a lot easier to facilitate when people are all kind of together in a group, um, and I think with bringing people in, it’s definitely gotten easier the more people there are because you kind of create these structures, where to start with you’ve got maybe 5 people that are always looking to you for direction but once they get settled in people can come in and shadow them and then it sort of sorts itself out a little bit more.”
(Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	“I feel like I always sound old for my age, but I feel like, just because I’ve kind of worked for the company on and off, I can see that kind of generational thing that’s come through. So, like, I feel like the very like Gen ‘Zeders’, they love being at home, they hate being in the office. They’re like when they come in the office, they’re like headphones on, that’s it. They don’t talk to you all day and then they don’t really ask questions either and that’s just kind of how it is. Whereas, like someone else, maybe more around my age, we’ll speak, and we’ll ask questions but maybe be a bit more on the phone and all of this kind of stuff and listen to music, but yeh I feel like it’s quiet, like we have a mix of them. (...) I don’t know, I try and like push it as much as possible, like I say, like people being in, I have my whole team here on a Monday so that we’re all together and like today we have a team meeting down stairs for the first time in ages, cos like everyone was always ‘oh I’ve got to stay home today, I’ve got a delivery driver coming’, and I’m like ‘alright, ok’. Do you know what I mean?”

(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	“And so, it’s like, there’s issues with his performance. You know, he’s doing the designs that we were still doing 2 years ago when the business has moved on and it doesn’t matter how many times his manager tries to help him, or develop him, he’s just not grasping where we are and I think that’s maybe it’s because he’s just not been in the office and not been around that environment. Teams calls are great but there not always the best.”
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Appendix LL- Perceptions of Horizontal and vertical Management Structures Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 10, Senior Estimating Engineer, Male, Age 54)	"I think it was more of just like a classic (inaudible) where you had someone at the top and you had a chain of command coming down. Like you say, I think, the way the people work, the way the individuals work is more team orientated but obviously you have got managers of those departments. So, to an extent it's more team based but I think as you get further up there's got to be lines of reporting to senior management and the board and whatever. (...) I think it's probably a mix of both, 'cos you could say that, like you say you've got the heads, you possibly have heads of departments and under that you have like people who manage teams and like it's more of a team ethos I would have thought but you've got a structure there to report up the line, if you like."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"Yeh, so, I think within the HR team we do have probably more of a vertical structure because there's obviously, I'm reporting to Jonathan, so Jonathan would sit above me, as in myself and then there would normally be Jess but obviously on maternity leave at the minute but there would be Jess and then the graduate and the HR assistant."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age 26)	"We're a team of 4, we're about, obviously I've got my line manager, who's the planning manager and then the only other people in our department are 4 other, oh sorry 3 other Project Planners. So, there's me and 3 other people. So, we're all kind of at the same level."
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"So, for people who, well I'm actually, there's been a slight change recently. So, I was a line manager previously. So, I had people, sort of graduates underneath me directly, you know, I was their line manager. So, I think, you know, it's kind of a different approach with them versus on a project because when you're sort of, I guess, design manager, or project engineer formally you don't actually have authority over a lot of people, so it's sort of leading, without authority, if that makes sense?"
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"Yeah, in the department, yeah it varies depending on projects because my interaction with other people in my department is sort of dependent on what project you're working on. So, other than maybe exchanging lessons

	learned, or talking about the processes we're doing, I really have no functional overlap with any other design coordinators, or whatever on other projects. I mean, in terms of within my projects it's sort of more horizontal, there's a lot of people I'll be managing, or overseeing they're activities but they'll actually be a lot more senior than I am within the company, if that makes sense?"
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Appendix MM- Division and Silos Between Departments, Managing Change and 'bottom up' change initiatives Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors of the company, female, age 28)	"You see it, really at head office you see a lot of new starters come in, um and then obviously we do have a lot of intakes at the factories, but obviously with me being based here you don't really see that as much (..) But you do know their coming in."
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, Male, Age 25)	"We're trying to move away from is this kind of siloed approach that you'd have on each project. So, you would have like a sort of management team on each project and they were sort of doing everything it was almost like it was run by a different company each project because everyone was doing things in their own way (...)"
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"So, I think with us being a sort of a back-office function. We tend to be, and I would say a like a bit like finance and HR, we tend to be the, I would say design are probably the forefront, so the majority of innovation gets put into design and then we sort of trail behind trying to pick up everything else in a last-minute rush."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age, 26)	"So, if we're talking about the factory, you know, I'll go there everyday. I feel like, I don't say it's a culture but it sometimes feels like it's the office guys and the factory guys kind of us against them, rather than working. I feel like when I go down to the factory I get the, you know, I think they respect that I'm coming down there and you know showing myself and try to make that effort to ultimately help them."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	"So, I think predominantly 'top down', I think they're (...) deliberately wanting to be reactive to new markets, new sectors, and if they don't have a product or a solution to fit that they can very quickly adapt (...) So, you know, quick and agile and doing that. The upward change, I think the things that I have been involved in, sort of bottom-up changes is, lets control all this and have some processes (...) to regulate and record and follow up things in more sort of a formal way. So, kind of reigning in the change a little bit."
(Participant 11 VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"People are quite averse to the idea of automation because the immediate response is that they think it's going to take away their jobs, whereas when you're growing as fast as

	we are, in particular, all it is going to do is enable that growth and we'll still need to hire more people, as we are. So, I think people become very comfortable in the way that they have done things for a long time and it's trying to encourage, trying to, we've hired in my team an implementation manager for automation and her job is pretty much 90 percent to just go around and speak to people and get their inputs on things, so that they feel heard, particularly in the factory, where robots and things like that are coming in and that's been a really important thing but it took us a while to really get to that point, where we kind of realised this needs to be a full time job because otherwise the automation changes are never going to happen, if you don't get the buy in from everybody."
(Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer, Female, Age 23)	"I've found myself that I'm now like social events organiser, informally. So, I organise all the work nights out. So, when we go out, it gets invited like not just head office but the factory, who obviously if you're based in the office you don't go down there very often and just trying to get everyone intertwined so everyone knows each other. Um, because I think especially working in a call centre, when you're all based on one floor it's very different where you know everyone. Whereas now, being spread across multiple locations you can mention someone's name and people can be like 'oh who's that', or people come into the office and they've worked here years and you don't know who they are. So, it's just trying to get like a where everyone knows each other, we'll just go out and even go for drinks on a Friday, like every other month there's the current thing. We've been bawling before just to try and get everyone to like open up, especially for newbies, like people who've started on the last one. One of our new staff started on the Monday, came out on the Friday and said she felt so much better 'cos she'd actually managed to speak to people and there's not like the pressure of being in the workplace as well."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	"Do you know, I think it's probably down to the individuals, I think most people who aren't Northeast based it's probably them who are like well I like to come up every month to catch up with people and things like that, um. So, I think that's probably down to the individual and then

	from a social aspect there are things that happen, but I think that's more people with a longer time at the business and that culture has come through it sort of thing. So, yeh I think if you worked remotely, it would be under your own steam to, I think have to try and build bonds I think. Which is challenging cos if people worked remotely and are used to doing that, that's great, if they haven't it's a big old challenge that you don't really consider, I think."
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Appendix NN- Division in the Workplace, Relationship Building and Barriers to Effective Communication Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 14, HR Manager, female, age 33)	"Yeah, I would say that I think teams are quite siloed and it's really difficult to try and bridge that gap. So, design will know everything about design but they're quite siloed in their own teams and now within their teams they might have some really good communication places (...) they're on teams calls every day checking in with their team being good management of the team. The same with the factory, they, I mean they're probably not really as up to date and they're probably a bit like Frayed with the communication because not everyone has a laptop, not everyone unfortunately has a company email address in the factory. So, if they're factory workers they don't get a company email address, so they can be quite siloed to their own just whatever factory discussion are happening within the factory. So, I think it's not something, even though the technology has come in and we do have this great technology of being able to have teams and things, I still think communication is something that we're not really great at."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, male, age 37)	"Yeah, it's all on teams, like everything, every person in the office is on teams all the time (...) So, like getting people around the table actually doing work in a meeting, rather than talking about actions and bits of pieces like that. So, yeah, I think the culture in 'redacted' is very much teams based and you could have 4 people all in the same building and you'd have the meeting on teams, which I find a little strange. (...) Yeah, so, everything I have with clients is now on teams, which is fine, you know they're all over the country, less travel, like the benefits of that are absolutely fantastic but that is more of a formal communication, than it is there to have rapport building that you want with your team is not quite as important. I personally don't mind the Teams, client ones, they're kind of ok. I think um i find teams has impacted internal discussions more, I think."
(Participant 9, Project, Mechanical and Development Engineer, male, age 25)	"I do think you definitely do need to have a number of in person meetings because I think what tends to happen, until you've actually physically met the person, it's quite an odd, almost kind of like pseudo relationship you

	have with them because you've never really met them and there's this sort of, I don't know how to describe it but I think it's better to meet someone you're working with in person as soon as possible. So, you have that sort of in person proper relationship with them, rather than just having everything virtual, if that makes sense?"
(Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, female, age 25)	"Yeah, like I say, some people are at the factory, some people work from home full time and some people generally just have a work from home rota that just doesn't match mine. So, it's like there actually is some people I haven't seen for like 4 months, who I talk to everyday which is crazy, it's just so crazy, I speak to them every day, there in the office just every other day I'm not. (Laughs) So it's bad."
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors of the company, female, age 28)	"I think we used to get emails of a new starter with like the job title and who they report to, which I think worked really well for a lot of staff, especially the factory staff because then you'd be like someone new from head office working on this team we can know who we're going to and obviously my aspect if they need a meeting, right ok, I've seen the picture I know who you are I can come and speak to you but that's kind of simmered down at the minute."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, female, age 29)	"Yeah I suppose it is it's kind of weird growing at such a fast pace and obviously I guess there is really kind of a bit of catch up to identify as well and definitely a lot of fine-tuning along the way, but maybe just from the comms perspective I was going to say I mean in the past, this is kind of again, a bit more specific, but prior to myself and my manager joining there was no marketing team at all at redacted. So even introducing a marketing team in the last nine months it's kind of as I said it's as the company is growing. We've got a new marketing team. Yeah, it's kind of there were no comms in the past so I'm not sure how quickly information was shared amongst teams and across teams in the past. So, yeah."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, female, age 29)	"I think it's really important to keep 'remote' employees kind of in the loop as well especially from my role. I think internal comms is so important and kind of having those updates to keep the team looped in, which is something we're working on a bit more at the minute obviously with internal comms but, um, Yeah, I mean it's a good question like how can you replicate that? I mean we do obviously have

	people who are fully remote based so yeah, I suppose from that point of view just ensuring that kind of, I know it's coming from our department, but really improving internal comms so that people feel part of the company culture here."
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Appendix OO- Social Activities and Communication Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, female, age 25)	"The company itself could kind of do a lot more in terms of what we do. I feel like because we're so, the company's quite full on, everyone's so busy all the time, I feel like there's not that kind of let back of what we give. I feel like, there's the summer BBQ, and there's the Christmas party. There is nights out and stuff, people go on nights out, I'm just a bit of a bore really, which sounds really sad (...) There's quite a few nights out, and there's a couple of girls who arrange them and stuff, I've been on a couple but yeah, I feel like a right old lady."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, female, age 29)	"I suppose from social aspect there are social events which do happen, maybe I want to say every other month or something like that, which are relatively informal and also I was going to say nothing in terms of like, I 'dunno' like WhatsApp groups or groups or anything. There are a couple of social events going on, but not much unless it was kind of a companywide. I don't know if it was kind of a Christmas party or summer BBQ or something like that. So, yes there are a couple of things but not much (...) but I mean kind of with the social aspect we were talking about before, I think yeah that's massively important to kind of (...) get the team bonding together. I know it's relatively informal but kind of communicating with each other because I don't think morale is great here at the moment and I think any way you can kind of encourage people to come together, that's great."
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors of the company, female, age 28)	"But we, some of our staff also try and organise on the side like nights out, so we can get to know people on an outside basis as well, um and just that way there's a flow of conversation of like 'oh right, who do you work for, what are you doing' and then it will then lead to 'how you feeling' and it turns to a personal aspect on that front (...) Yeah, so as an aspect of like of us, like if we were to go to one night just to have a meal a get together so say some of our factory leads, directors or project managers we would be like 'oh right this is who you are, so what type of stuff do you do when your there' and like get to know them that way because obviously with a lot of our staff they aren't on

	site so you don't technically see them, you're on teams calls with them but even then not everyone puts there cameras on and you just see either their initials or a picture."
(Participant 13, Project Planner, male, age 26)	"I feel like as well with the more informal methods of like going for work nights out, or a summer BBQ, or a pizza, whatever it might be, I feel like that also helps long-term professionally because you get to know maybe some of the newer faces, or maybe some of the people that are not as talkative at work, um, where you kind of bring them out of their shell outside of work, I was the exact same, you get them talking and then you know, you're more willing to help each other and you know, just kind of build that rapport with one another."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, male, age 37)	"Do you know, I think it's probably down to the individuals, I think most people who aren't Northeast based its probably them who are like well I like to come up every month to catch up with people and things like that, um. So, I think that's probably down to the individual and then from a social aspect there are things that happen, but I think that's more people with a longer time at the business and that culture has come through it sort of thing. So, yeh I think if you worked remotely it would be under you own steam to, I think have to try and build bonds I think. Which is challenging cos if people worked remotely and are used to doing that, that's great, if they haven't it's a big old challenge that you don't really consider, I think."

Appendix PP- Field Notes and Summaries of Policy Documents (Data Set 1)

Policy Document	Field Notes and Summary of Document Viewed
Codes of Conduct Policy Document	The Codes of Conduct Policy Document is printed on company headed paper and is a relatively short-form document, containing two pages with only one of those pages containing written text relating to the specific policy and the second page containing company authorisation signatures (approving the document for circulation). The document provides an introduction outlining the requirement of staff to abide by the policy, with a warning notice that failure to comply will potentially lead to disciplinary action. There is a mistype at the top of first page which makes the following section a little confusing. Following on from the introduction, a short quote is provided covering expectations of staff to act cooperatively, respectfully and in accordance with anti-harassment policies. A warning notice is also provided in regard to expected and appropriate behaviour (treating colleagues with respect) with staff required to show respect towards company premises and property. Following this section another warning notice states that a failure to abide could lead to disciplinary action, or dismissal. The introduction is followed by bullet points outlining general expectations of behaviour including employees agreeing to: uphold the company image; to not set up activities in competition to the organisation representing Data Set 1; Obligations of staff to follow the chain of command (line managers) and a number of bullet points explaining health and safety obligations of the organisation representing Data Set 1 to staff, including mental health (wellbeing) and fire safety.
Summary of Grievance Procedure Document	The Grievance Procedure document is printed on company headed paper and is a relatively short-form document, containing two pages with only one of those pages containing text relating to the specific procedure and the second page containing company authorisation signatures (approving the document for circulation). The first two sections of the document outline the purpose of the document (providing a framework and steps to take to lodge a grievance at the organisation representing Data Set 1). It addresses that grievances should be dealt with informally in the first instance, with the grievance procedure coming into play if issues cannot be dealt with informally. The documents specifies that groups and individuals can lodge grievances. The subsequent section outlines two stages to the grievance procedure. The first Stage constitutes a formal complaint being lodged in writing (by the claimant), and the actions expected of the company in response (a formal meeting and a written response within a specified time frame). The second stage is in place for claimants that feel their claim has not been resolved, a final meeting and written response is offered, with no opportunity of appeal. The final section relates to the organisation representing Data Set 1

	reserving the right to take disciplinary action against claims that are evidenced to be malicious or untrue.
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Appendix QQ- Barriers and Enablers for Effective Teams and Staff Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"Finding the right type of people in the marketplace it's very hard to recruit talented people, partly because for us we're trying to reinvent the wheel. So were struggling to find the right type of people and they certainly don't come from the traditional industries that we've been working in, so that's probably been a very big barrier (...) and finding people who give a damn."
(Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer, Female, Age 23)	"I think from like my team perspective, our biggest barrier over the past year (...) my manager is the only one who's like got a full understanding of the sub-contractor buying role, 'cos she's worked here for like 7 years, she's got experience, she builds all of the contracts and then (...) we needed someone to obviously work alongside and it's been like quite hard to find someone who has, 'cos it's quite like a niche job (...). So, I think that's been like the biggest downfall, not like a downfall but like holdback recently."
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors, Female, Age 28)	"I think it would possibly be as I say new people coming in, not knowing who they are but especially if they are based like on site, or at the factory where me as a person I don't always know who's going to site or where they're going or who's there so I do find that a bit of a barrier, like not knowing who's there. (...) I do think getting introduced to everyone would be a great aspect to achieve that, to overcome that barrier. Um, and then obviously just people adapting to like if they'd been in a role similar but from a different side of things to adapt to the way we do it now."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"100 percent, 10 years ago everybody used to get into a meeting room, sit down, this is what we're all doing, right everybody scatter off and get it done, right. That's how it used to happen, now we're ending up with dedicated teams calls per day with 30 + people in them to go through different segments of different projects. So, communication styles drastically changed. I think, I think from an improved sort of holistic approach seen as the company's scaling and growing, I think and at the rate which makes it challenging is that at the rate it's hard to keep everybody up to speed and it's

	hard to know everybody anymore or know everybody anymore.”
(Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	“You’re kind of stuck in that corporate cycle like you go to work, you go home, you come back to work kind of thing. I think that’s probably something that maybe a HR perspective they could kind of take into a thought.”
(Participant 13, Project Planner, Male, Age 26)	“I’d say it’s trying to get that experience in the new guys that you’ve hired before getting even more people. So, I feel like there’s an element of risk if you’re expanding your company very quickly and you’re hiring all these new people and all these nice, young graduates, yes, they’re ambitious but you also need that level of experience. So, I think that when you expand you’ve got to be, you know, trying to strike that balance of youthful optimism and you know all that. Whereas also having that experience to maybe guide in the right direction.”
(Participant 12, Assistant Sub-contract Buyer, Female, Age 23)	“Enabler wise, I think, obviously everyone wants to do well, everyone’s focused on one goal, sometimes it’s just the case that teams don’t talk to one another during projects but everyone knows what the final goal is and I think it’s just, even though we have the meetings, it’s not necessarily everything gets resolved in the meetings and then you’ll hear people mention feedback when at the end of the day if you’re here late someone will be like ‘oh well I’m very annoyed because this teams doing this and this teams doing this’ and they’re not all working collaboratively.”
(Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	“I think the positives is kind of you, you exactly where you’re going, you know exactly what you need to do, and you know where your track is. Whereas I think that was a bit more kind of like loose years ago, in that people just kind of got on with things, they did what they needed to do, did odd jobs in that sense. So, I feel like it’s really moved towards that kind of corporate side of it.”

Appendix RR- Barriers and Enablers for Organisational Change and Growth Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"I think a barrier is probably not, we do still get quite a big resistance for change and as an innovation business, you know, that resistance to change, doesn't help. You still have people who want to work how they worked 20 year ago and that's not where we are as a business, and they sort of struggle to meet that."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"Yes definitely, definitely some sort of resistance towards it and like I guess it's almost like there's a generational gap where people want to learn new things technology wise and people that don't (...) I'm not quite sure where that line is, but like myself I love learning new softwares and all the youngsters that I have also enjoy learning new softwares and doing new cool productive things and a lot of the older folks like don't even want to use it, it's like so interactive and so good but they just, too much, you know like. So, yeah, no there's a big doubt there."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age, 32)	"That's probably one thing, another thing is the negativity and negative thinking, and you'll get that a lot with change. So, and obviously my title is automation manager, people are quite averse to the idea of automation because the immediate response is that they think it's going to take away their jobs, whereas when you're growing as fast as we are, in particular, all it is going to do is enable that growth and we'll still need to hire more people."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, male, age 32)	"So, silos in data, silos in communication, everything being in spreadsheets, people not talking to each other. Yeah, I think it's not just something that happens in 'redacted', it happens everywhere where there's just massive communication issues and people just focus on their day job, rather than trying to think about (...) how the business as a whole would work better if everyone collaborated and communicated better. That's probably one thing, another thing is the negativity and negative thinking, and you'll get that a lot with change. (...) before it's always been a very much head office versus factory vibe, um, and that's something I've been trying for a long time to kind of break down but at the end of the day it's not something that you can easily change but when you've got someone like that who's

	there all the time kind of listening to people, building those bridges, um, it does make a really big difference, yeah."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"I think also one of our downfalls is the big divide between (...) probably head-office and the factory. I mean I go to the factory at least twice a week, spend a full day down there and I know the guys at the factory quite well. However, I think if you were to do maybe a piece on some of the guys who were on the floor that would be totally different to maybe someone else. They don't get to see sort of all the communication pieces."
(Participant 17, Marketing Assistant, Female, Age 29)	"I guess just really taking responsibility in what you're leading on and like your team trusting you that you'll kind of get the job done. I mean not only taking responsibility but putting trust in others as well. I suppose that's a management style as well (...) just really kind of trusting in your employees that they can take responsibility for what they're doing and really get the job done."
(Participant 18, Head of National Proposals, Male, Age 37)	"I think the biggest barrier is, the ability to move from a small company to a big company I think the leadership needs to be able to delegate and allow for heads of departments, or which I am one, to do their thing that they were employed to do So, I think, obviously like owner-managed companies, you know when they're in their smaller state they. You know those key parties are involved in every single decision that happens across the board. That can't be translated into a bigger company. So, therefore an element of delegation needs to happen. So, I'd say that's probably the biggest thing."
(Participant 15, Assistant Manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age 25)	"I think that the company has moved like I say more into a tech company, and I think they think differently, and I think as we think differently moving into that I think that's why we've kind of had to move into the that kind of corporate side of things and like why we now have compared to what we used to have. That's kind of the way that they present themselves and how we've kind of mirrored that in that sense."
(Participant 14, HR Manager, Female, Age 33)	"I think from an enabler point of view, again probably being an innovator is one of our biggest strengths, we're always looking for the next big thing, we're happy to change. I think innovation is both a strength and weakness. I

	think with, if something is working really well or they see a big change cos someone wanted it done on that project specifically, there and then, rather than waiting for the project to close, which could then you know reworking it upsets a lot of the design work, which then makes it late for the factory getting it on time. So, I think maybe sometimes we need to just stop and focus, ok yes that's great, we're competing really good, but change is excellent but let's just work it on the next project rather than trying to fit it into the one that we've already nearly completed."
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Appendix SS- Hierarchical Dimensions of Organisational Change and the 'Gig Economy' Quotes

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"So as companies scale I think they should evaluate companywide communications, introductions, you know processes (...) teams that scale quickly you might sort of rely on sort of old training techniques where you go and sit with somebody and work something through but then now because you're scaling so quickly you actually need like courses so that somebody can just like drop onto the course and be like training themselves, instead of somebody having to train them (...) I also think the larger the company growth, the more you need to look at policies and that type of thing from like larger company scale thinking of maybe like say Honda, or like Google or like companies like that where they're fully flexy working time. You might have core set hours within the company, you know, that everybody needs to be working, and the rest is flex, um the flexible working time, the sort of, I guess a lot around attire and stuff too, you know, with youngsters coming in and what they wear (...) it's sort of changing quite a bit throughout the industry and you know how you keep up with that, and develop that culture, I think."
(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"I think it actually comes from the bottom up. Yeah, I think there's been a lot of cultural change within the last 3 years that's come from the bottom up, just with having to be accepting of the cultural change, like, or risk losing people, or not creating a working environment where millennials would want to work, you know. So, I think there's been a very sort of steep change and there are still certain people that are very stuck in the old way of doing something and you know like, most people who are young, you know we just hop onto you tube and watch a video what they need to do, learn how to do it and then do it. Whereas somebody might look at that and say why are you watching a video. Well, I'm just learning what I need to do, so 5 minutes, learn, great, now I can do it but there's like a gap there, where that's still sort of seen as well why are you, you know, it's weird."
(Participant 2, Board Director, Male, Age 60-65)	"So, I would say a high level sense of direction coming from the top, but we actually have senior managers in different departments and

	teams where we give them a lot of autonomy because of the nature of our business and they do come up with strategies that we do work through and evolve, so it isn't just top down because of the need to motivate the young people to allow them to own, to have ownership of their roles and be responsible for their roles they are also given a lot of head in relation to developing new ways of doing things. And that's also true in the factory environment where if someone comes up with an idea of how to do something differently than that's usually adopted."
(Participant 15, Assistant manager to the VDC Architectural Team, Female, Age, 25)	"Maybe a mix of both. I think, from the top down there's like, I don't know how to explain it, um, I think as a business we're a very young business, obviously with the amount of graduates we've got in and a lot of people are like 35 and under, there's a lot of people who are obviously older but I think as we're quite young a lot of people are just learning and I think the staff at the top are wanting things to run more smoothly and maybe because we're a younger group of people it's not necessarily working that way which I think is why the whole social events thing is quite important because everyone speaks and it's not necessarily it's someone who's just started as a graduate is gonna' speak to someone who's one of the older ones who's been here longer and has more understanding unless pushed to do that. I think a lot of people sometimes struggle to ask for help in job roles, especially coming in new. So, I think when you have the social events it does sort of mean people can say like 'I do this but I'm maybe struggling with this'."
(Participant 19, Assistant PA to the Directors, Female, Age, 28)	"As I say, we are a rapidly growing company (...) obviously we've expanded the factory too, so that's now doubled in size again and as we continue to grow we do try to get to know everyone and that's where we step in outside of things and take it outside work just to get to know people, because when you're in the office you don't always get the chance to go meet people because they're either on teams calls, or they're in person meetings, they've gone to the factory, or on site so it is a bit harder on that aspect but doing the little delve of the outside work does help to meet the people and introduce yourself and to get to know them."

(Participant 16, Technology Director, Male, Age 35)	"Yeah, I think it's definitely had a big influence on our workforce, and I guess it pushed us into having a larger graduate base actually. I think it might have had quite a big influence on that, um, and then I guess there's also because we've moved away from traditional construction and moved into like a new industry, more of a kind of niche product-based industry. So, I mean it's probably two-fold there on why the company's perception has changed. When I started here it was pretty much 60 percent contractors essentially, whereas now I think we're probably on 5 percent, if that."
(Participant 11, VDC Automation Manager, Male, Age 32)	"I was just reflecting before about what I was going to say about kind of the gig economy kind of topic as a whole and I suppose I think it's probably gonna become more and more important but from my perspective of growing a dynamic team that is gonna inspire change for a business, I'm not sure how I could have facilitated that with very short contract work. I think it's about building a culture and (...) giving people the chance to learn things they wouldn't have been able to in another environment, and I think that's how we're gonna retain a lot of these young clever people as well. So, for example in my team there's someone who's learning web development and java script because we have a need there, um, we hired that person to come in more generally for sort of a BIM related activity but they want to do that, there's a need there for them to do it and I was quite happy to let that person learn that skill for 3 months because I know that's something that we're gonna need in the future and it's kind of building that, yeah giving people the incentive to stay because they know that they can follow these different routes of, that you might not be able to facilitate that when you've not got a full-time employed culture. So, that's just one aspect that I was thinking about."
(Participant 1, Director/freelancer, Female, Age 63)	"I just think that particularly with the evolution of AI that 'gig work' in inverted commas is going to become much more routine, that we are going to see less and less people working in offices in a 9-5 environment, I think we are going to have more people working from home, having more autonomy over their lives. I think people being chained to an office chair in a city building is going to become a thing of the past,

	and erm given the uncertainty over how AI is going to impact on the world of work learning the flexibility, the entrepreneurship the self-starting skills that gig workers have to learn is going to be life skills that most people are going to need to acquire for the future.”
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Appendix TT- Definitions of the 'Gig Economy' Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)	"I have worked as a gig worker. My understanding of it is that someone may set up sort of a sole proprietorship um or just do some gigs on the side and that can either be through a platform who finds the work for you like fiver, or you can go out and find the work yourself, or a hybrid of the two. Um, and to me it's basically like self-employment, you don't work regular hours, you aren't an employee, you do things on a project-by-project basis."
(Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University Gig Work), Female, Age 24)	"I think things like working, either working freelance, or working sort of on very short kind of 3-month contracts I considered more of that the gig economy, or I guess you hear it quite a lot with people who like work for Deliveroo and Uber and those kind of contracts."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"Well, I suppose I suppose I have seen a lot of gig work in my career. Um, so, so as a basic definition, I suppose it would be what I would call casual workers, who are on perhaps a zero hour contract or a very flexible contract where the company that you're work, that who is employing them could choose to give them zero hours, hence the name of the contract or um be flexible up to full time, even in a lot of work I've done in the past over kind of legal hours, so you could even be, you know, have people on 60 or 70 hours a week due to the flexibility in the contract. Um, so I would say as a basic definition, um flexible workers."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"Yeh, my understanding of the gig economy is that it's a way for people who don't necessarily have experience to gain that experience. Uh the platforms that I'm most familiar with are Fiver and Upwork but I think that somewhere along the way, the gig economy, as its scaled uh there's been a failure to discuss the impact that that has on individual workers because as the um scope of potential workers has got bigger and the competition has got bigger, it means that it's very hard actually for people to make a living wage just doing gig work now, if you're talking about fiver and Upwork."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"Yeah, so my understanding of the gig economy is that essentially sometimes, it could be a side hustle, it could be a main thing but it's basically not kind of having a fixed, no fixed income, maybe a skill set in a particular area where you

	want to fundamentally see what it's like, um, and there's not kind of, I suppose a formal what you'd expect as kind of a business criteria, or a person and particular spec that would actually get involved in something like this, it could be virtually anybody that then gets involved in some kind of business when they're then acquiring a turn over."
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"Yeah, I guess you would. So, I think I've of always been involved in the gig economy but never actually knew that I was in the gig economy. So, before it was called the gig economy (laughs) (..) So, I've been self-employed since 1997 officially and I've always had several different roles. So, even when I was in part-time work, I always had my own self-employment work on the side and that was on a gig economy style basis. So, I did a lot of freelance photography and up until the main kind of crash of, the economic crash of 2008 I was swapping roles quite regularly within what we now called the gig economy. So, yeah, I mean I've always had more than one job role for 25 years or more, yeah."
(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"So, in terms of the gig economy, when I started, I used to be in a band, um, I was signed. So, I was signed for like 8 years, 6 years, between 6 to 8 years I can't remember and my experience at that time, which was around the early 2000's was very hectic, very busy, um it relied, a lot relied on it in terms of our income coming in. Um, we did a lot of big gigs in terms of Glastonbury and a lot of big, you know, V festival consistently and it helped build the smaller clubs of ours and I talk about festival gigs, smaller gigs as well which built up to good value for attendance which made us survive every year at the little clubs and then yeah, it was essential that time definitely and a reliable source as to survive."

Appendix UU- Experience of 'Gig Work' Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"I think that the kinds of people that we were working with in the gig economy were trying to get something for nothing. They demanded everything and they wanted to pay nothing, and they didn't feel like they had a very ethical focus. Um, and there was a lack of empathy as well because of that digital gap. (...) So, there's a kind of crooked, tacit understanding that uh that's the game you're getting into now because the competition is so high and there's nothing you can do about it to make it fair and then some people don't even fulfil their side of the non-monetary deal in giving you that review. So, that was really frustrating. It makes it really hard to scale using those platforms now. Whereas I think had it been 10 years ago and you got in early you could have had a chance to build a business just on there. For us it's just about building some experience, um, because it was hard to get money at that point in time. We hadn't figured out our marketing or sales processes, um and we wanted something, and we wanted some examples to show and people really took advantage of us and didn't treat us well. So, we don't use the platforms anymore."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"Yeh, so we have used different platforms like fiver, I can't remember the name of the other one, but neither were very successful because there's a lot of competition and especially a lot of competition from people in different countries where they can charge less (..) so it's hard to get hired on those platforms because people will be willing to pay less, even if you say mine will be higher quality. And sometimes, I felt we couldn't compete on timelines they would say we'll do it for like five pounds and we'll do it in a day, and we were like that is insane, no (laughs)."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"Um, a little bit with um, I've had a look at it, um, so I've had a look at things like 'Tutorful', which I think it's called, which is, um gig working for tutors. Um. Academic tutors and I've also had a little bit of experience with some very, very short-term work in, on film sets and things like that. But I'd say probably 95% of the gig work that I've done has not been to an online platform, so."

(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"For us it's just about building some experience, um, because it was hard to get money at that point in time. We hadn't figured out our marketing or sales processes, um and we wanted something, and we wanted some examples to show (...)"
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"So, we've had some staff, we took on an apprentice, about a couple of years ago but then sort of decided that we wanted to move to a model which was contractors (...) just because of the ease of being able to take on different people for different roles. (...) So, (...) some of it is through connections and networking, more the specialist ones have been going through Upwork (...) so and in some ways it's quite nice because obviously they're other people that are in a similar position that are looking for various pieces of work. So, it's, yeah and then we can also work globally as well. So, really, we're looking for the best that can do the systems, they're not meeting the client, so they don't need to have a great grasp of the English language, except to understand what they're putting together. (...) So, you know, you can scale to quite a size, (...) and part of it is an emotional side of things that when they're an employee it's slightly different, in terms of, not that you treat them worse but in terms of you've to be on the ball in terms of their life becoming part of your life and your business and the separation when it's a contractor is not the same."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"It makes it really hard to scale using those platforms now. Whereas I think had it been 10 years ago and you got in early you could have had a chance to build a business just on there. For us it's just about building some experience, um, because it was hard to get money at that point in time. We hadn't figured out our marketing or sales processes, um and we wanted something, and we wanted some examples to show and people really took advantage of us and didn't treat us well. So, we don't use the platforms anymore."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"So, anyone who works in a pub or bar or restaurant under middle management would be considered a zero hours contractor. So, so if you work in a big restaurant or anywhere in catering, generally under middle management, you will be on a zero-hours contract. And, um examples of now are multiple as well, so, my

	work for the company, but also my work personally are all flexible working, so I don't have any long-term contracts. (...) So, I would say that my job role outside of the business and my business is as close to 100% gig work as you can really get (...)some contracts that I deal with at the moment are zero hours contracts but then there's also you would consider to be more stable contracts in terms of the hours that I am given, but they are for a short period of time. So, I would consider them to be all flexible contracts and by short period of time I would say maximum six months."
(Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University Gig Work), Female, Age 24)	"(...) with the one I was on previously, it's almost like when they're like testing out new things and they want to see if the role would work, or like what that position would look like, it's been a new role and then so there's been the possibility of maybe this will get taken forward but we're just gonna test it for a year and see what happens and then can come to the end of that and there's not enough money to do it again, kind of thing. (...) the role that I'm on now, that was word of mouth and that was again people that I'd worked with in the first jobs saying there's this thing coming up in my team do you want to, you might be interested in that (...)"
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"Yeah, I mean I suppose for someone like myself it's a little bit easier to adapt to that environment in a way and yet it's sort of like, it's sort of like there's a bit of a carrot dangling because I'm sort of aware that there are better roles within the university, well not so much better just more stable roles but they never seem to be obtainable because (laughs) there's always these short term you know either by semester, or summer term or such. So, um, yeah and then there's it's not as if you even get an entire role within that semester there's little portions of that, um, what would you call it, I guess, there's little portions of that available, or sometimes not, yeah, it's very bitty, I guess and it's kind of frustrating that it's so bitty. Yeah. (...) it's just a lot of uncertainty. (...) It's tricky to plan and then there's always things to, fortunately I'm quite adaptable but it is difficult to plan for and try and budget and these other kind of frustrating things are very, very difficult to juggle."

(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	“(…) smaller gigs as well which built up to good value for attendance which made us survive every year at the little clubs and then yeah, it was essential that time definitely and a reliable source as to survive (…) So, it wasn’t big money but it was still some money and once we got the record company contract that’s when things started to fall to get us wages.”
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	“I think for both of us it would probably be easier in a sense to just work a 9-5, it would take less mental energy to just do that but we want to have the freedom to not, and so it’s hard because some weeks we don’t feel up to working, we’re exhausted, we feel like shit, like we think we don’t want to work this week and you can’t do that in a 9-5. And so, for us it’s easier to take care of our mental health doing a project-by-project basis and when we feel motivated, we feel the energy we push forward with the marketing and when we don’t we just like retreat and let things sit until we come back to it.”
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	“I fell into the gig economy because that’s a sort of, you do fall into it, nobody really chooses it and then I’ve been able to sort of start to build out of it. But yeh.”
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	“So, in the past I’ve been either forced to do flexible working because finding a full-time job was challenging. So maybe in the time it takes between jobs, if you’ve had to leave a job quickly, I’ve taken flexible work while I’m looking for new job.”

Appendix VV- Entrepreneurial Ambitions Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	“So, in terms of being born out of that, yeah, it was kind of, there was an idea of wanting it to become more than just a hustle, um but in terms of where it started and fundamentally what the kind of set up was it definitely was in that vein, In terms of not having any fixed things for kind of functions like accounting, things like HR, things like just some of the legal stuff where you’re just a maze to it. So, you’re just, basically I’ve got something, a service, a product that you want to sell to people and that’s kind of the ins and outs of it, you don’t kind of look at things further than that.”
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	“(…) What I will say is that it’s part of my long-term strategic planning. So, it’s a backup to my backup plan and one day it might supersede all of these current activities (…) So, there’s lots of uncertainty in all areas and so I think in order to try (…) it’s my attempt to try to find something more stable, I guess. Let’s call it that, yeah. (…) If the University offered me a more permanent position that would be great, that would stabilise a lot of things and reduce a lot of the uncertainty and it would even make the longer term (…) kind of dream job of running a, being a CEO to a renewable energy company more achievable and I could probably fund the things that that work requires. So, that needs investment and then it would also mean that I could perhaps take on another member of staff, or something like that. So, it would provide lots of other benefits down the line in that space I guess, let’s say.”
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	“So, we realised we needed to be more strategy focused and rather than web solutions it would be more about building a web platform that a could generate revenue for someone. So, just sort of changing the focus, so yeh and from there we found our niche which has kind of been artist, galleries, creatives um and that’s evolved as well, so it’s been a constant evolution but we really had to break away from the gig economy in order to reinvent ourselves (…) because the gig economy put us in a box of being a service provider without any real branding or ability to show our kind of value, um and everybody is in these boxes on those platforms. (…) So, we knew we had to kill

	that side of the business, rebuild, and actually position ourselves so that we could show a value offering in our branding and connect to a consumer and show them how we can help their business, rather than just being a sort of cheap badly paid employee.”
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)	“(…) I would get somewhere, I would stop selling and then it was just a cycle of making a little bit of money and then taking ages before the next project. So, that was why we originally started looking at fiver, when ‘redacted’ and I started working together on it but then all the issues that I just said came up. So, we thought, ok, now that we’re doing this together there has to be a much better way of doing this. So, now we’re doing automated outreach on LinkedIn, where the software fills in personalised information and sends messages to the people. We’re working on setting up sales funnels and sort of freebies, where people put in their email to get information that will help them. But that’s a process we’re just starting because it takes a lot of time and energy.”

Appendix WW- Transitioning from Gig Work to a More Secure Business Model Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)	“Yeah, so originally it was just me as a freelance web designer and then what I realised was missing was that people didn’t want to have their copy done separately, they wanted it as sort of a package and I couldn’t offer that myself, because that’s not my skill set. And so then ‘redacted’ came on to just do the copy and then we said you know what, let’s just overhaul this let’s make it a whole agency and bring in people to do all sorts of specialties and we did promote it like that for a while, um, but it was difficult to market so many different things. I think people really just wanted to be like ok you’re a specialist in this, we’ll hire you to do that. And we were just trying to get hired for anything (laughs) (...)”
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	“Well, my business partner ‘redacted’ started the business without me. I came on and we really changed our offering at that point. It had previously just been websites, web solutions and we evolved into doing copy with that and we evolved into doing digital strategy, um and we really started off at first with, ‘Redacted’ already had a couple of word-of-mouth clients through Instagram, we went onto the platforms Fiver and Upwork got a bit of work through that. I think we only ever made about 1300 pounds on there, but we did a lot of work for that and then actually after that experience we kind of stepped back from the business for a little while to kind of reassess, rebuilt our brand, rebuilt our website and that’s kind of been evolving ever since. (...) so, we realised we needed to be more strategy focused and rather than web solutions it would be more about building a web platform that a could generate revenue for someone. So, just sort of changing the focus, so yeh and from there we found our niche (...) it’s been a constant evolution, but we really had to break away from the gig economy in order to reinvent ourselves.”
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	“So, it started as a sporadic series of really gigs that didn’t really relate to each other, and just (...) to find money. And then slowly the businesses has tried to be a bit more cohesive. Um, so, the gigs we get are more in line with the future direction we see and that’s the same from for my external work. (...) we’ve found

	our position on the pitch essentially (...) when we started out, we were just doing anything we could and that would include very, very short projects (...) the Assembly, the Fringe Festival, which was about 3 weeks, but I took it because I really needed to make some money. Essentially, and what we're currently looking for now is either long longer-term contracts, so how do we breakthrough that six-month barrier of contract length or we're looking for repeat customers where we know and can be guaranteed an annual amount of work (...). So, we're almost looking for more stability in the business."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"(...) the first bit was things like signing up for (inaudible) Upwork and 'people per hour' to try and look for jobs, um, which wasn't that simple or that successful because we weren't, there was nothing in terms of we hadn't really specialised at that point we'd just said we do marketing, digital marketing, come and talk to us and then you sort of realise, in your small sphere of Leicestershire there's thousands already that are doing that and then when you get to the national and global it's like, oh right, ok, this is a really, really tiny minnow in the space. So, we need to figure out where we stand in that. So, that took about 3 or 4 months until we realised where we needed to specialise in and literally within a week of doing that and specialising, changing the website to make that happen we landed our big contract (..) and then that kind of set everything up."
(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"Now, um, one relationship there when you're gigging is that you have to adapt to the market. So, the recordings need to be presentable and adapted to the environment where people are gonna', you know fit with you. So, that's the same with the business as well, you need to adapt to the environment, you need to adapt to costings. So, like, there's always like a bit of a price to settle at some point, or there's peaks and troughs of where the budget is."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"(...) I'm not sure if it's technically a leadership strategy it could be called that but we have a lay out of, like a structure of responsibilities, so 'redacted' takes care of the outreach and does most of the talking to people and sort of the sales stuff and I do a lot of the tech, of setting appointments up and doing the website building and he does the copy (...) So like the

	content (...) and I will create like a to-do list and link to documents for him to work in basically. So, it's kind of like shared ownership and we have clear responsibilities. it's not one of us kind of above the other, so I don't think it actually would be considered leadership."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"We do most of the work ourselves, but we have a very different approach to how we do pay people when we work with them, we paid a graphic designer to do some work on a website (...) we paid her way above the market rate because that mattered to us. For example, if she'd gone on the gig economy to do our piece, to do our work, which was a 'gif' that she created we could have paid her about 150 pounds, we paid her 750 or around that, so she got really well paid for that. And part of us making a relationship with her was saying, that we were thinking long-term that we like her work and so we would pay her fairly. And I think us being in the situation that we were in has led to a much more empathetic leadership style when I do work with people who I have to pay, who maybe are in the gig economy at the moment. Um, so I think (...) yeh in general I feel that if you pay people properly and you treat people with respect and build up their confidence, they'll do a better job and they are more likely to do a better job for longer, so that makes sense."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"Yeah, so I developed empathy and leadership qualities prior to starting the business and prior to currently doing the gig work that I'm doing because I was in kind of upper to middle management in various roles and so in the environments I was in, you have to be an empathetic leader, or you really don't get any results. So, with regards to leadership qualities now? We tend to have more business meetings that are about the future as opposed to firefighting meetings about how are going to do things in the present (...) and I think that is just because we have started to think where is this going as opposed to what are we going to do now? (...) So, I suppose the leadership quality there would be foresight and business strategy, as opposed to you know the desperation when you first start out, I suppose."

(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"So, when I said about consistency, he can't have too much going on in his head, he needs to just focus on one process and just nail it and once he's got that it becomes like clockwork (clicks fingers like a clock ticking (...)) and that's what I had to figure out, if you having someone on board, or someone to work with. It's quick, there's good product quality, and a threshold and we can deliver more in a week and still keep the costs."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"(...) the gig economy put us in a box of being a service provider without any real branding or ability to show our kind of value, and everybody is in these boxes on those platforms. Where really (...) the main differential that shows up in the algorithm when you search is price, and then also the number of ratings that you've got. So, we realised we were going to be in a sort of donkey with a carrot kind of situation where we were going to be constantly going forward as the goalposts stayed kind of unobtainable. So, we knew we had to kill that side of the business, rebuild, and actually position ourselves so that we could show a value offering in our branding and connect to a consumer and show them how we can help their business, rather than just being a sort of cheap badly paid employee."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"Yes. Um, so when I started in gig work and also some of the casual staff, I've seen prior to me myself when I was a manager. Um are a mixture really, of students but more college level and undergrad level, so because of the nature of zero hours contracts it's more suitable to people who live at home maybe than when you've grown up and moved out and have adult commitments (...) but also people at in a little bit of a difficult time of life, and people struggling with um, I've seen quite a lot of people struggling say with addictions and things like that, that that tends to be the very casual workers that just do gig work to make money and they don't really care what the gig work is. But then (...) gradually as I have refined where I want to be, the people I have worked with generally tend to be older, more mature, and have a direction for their life. Most of them have little businesses as well, so that gig work tends to be a way of filling the gap in a business that, say, doesn't quite make you full time a full-time salary."

Appendix XX- Cultural and Organisational Change Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"So, I started out working with kind of business coaches and a social media manager, it was kind of people that were in this online bubble. Like this online economy where the business coaches were hired by the solopreneurs to help them build their business and then they were like VAs, or web designers, or social media managers and those people were hired by the business coaches to do this stuff. So, it was kind of this insular group and I think that really thrived during Covid, but then there's a lot of people that just abandoned their businesses and went back to their life after lockdown happened. So, I felt like my Instagram just dropped with engagement because so many people just walked away from their businesses. So, (...) the bubble burst."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"(...) it's changed over the last five years because I think a lot of what I am about to talk to you about is also tied in with coaching and the coaching industry as had a big impact on Instagram and it's really sold the idea, it really started to sell the idea back in about 2019 just pre lockdown that anybody could build an agency if you had a coach, or if you had somebody who would be behind you. That you could hack it, that you could hack building a business and so a lot of marketing for business, especially through lockdown as well was on Instagram but it kind of created a few sort of leaders who have a lot of followers where actually the offering is quite hollow. There are a lot of people making money on Instagram who can't necessarily add value but (...) there was a point during lockdown, during Covid where Instagram was so inundated with new followers and activity it really opened up and the algorithm became a lot easier to grow followers, that's changed now."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)	"Yeah, so it's a specific programme I think it's called 'redacted' and I think their website is 'redacted', basically it allows you to put in a particular subset of people and you can search on sales navigator which is a built in part of linked in that you have to pay extra for. But you can say I want to speak to founders, in the arts industry who've been in the industry for 5+

	years and live in the UK (...) then you plug that into the 'redacted' programme and then it reaches out to people one by one slowly like it's a real person (...) Yeah, so the thing is this is not technically allowed by linked in, so theoretically they could shut down his linked in profile, so maybe don't tell them (laughs) (...) we did use another type of programme and his profile did get shut down multiple times (...)."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"Yeah, yeah. We utilise all of it. So, in terms of, getting involved with doing more social posts and trying to make sure that we start doing, there's some other bits, well a guy that, me and 'redacted' both went to Uni with works for a marketing company down in London and they do specialise in legal but what they do is a special social media to try and get as much exposure but direct exposure for the targets that they have, or that you're looking to speak to. So, those are the methods that are really useful and quite simple to kind of use and actually, yeah, we've got I think 2 pieces of business out of that when we started it in about 6 months (...) there's a national event to exhibit and also speak at it but it's very much tailored towards where we can put ourself in a position where we're in the forefront of CRM, where we can be put in a position where we're a thought leader and can actually have an audience which is captured for that specific reason."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"Yeh, we have gone to art industry events and spoken to people, so that has led to different opportunities, but the outreach on linked in has been the best for creating leads and opportunities where people will actually pay for our services."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"I suppose things really started to change when I started using my linked in. Um, because I realising. I already had at that time about 600 followers, I'd been building it up without thinking since I was 18 and I already had that social proof and legitimacy that I was trying to build on these platforms. So, being able to use that I've been able to connect more with people who are purpose driven and generally care about what they're trying to do in their industry. When you connect with those people who are purpose driven, they are generally looking for people to go on a mission with them, rather than trying to get cheap labour."

	Um, so I've found that making that shift away from it, away from the gig economy has been an evolution but I'm sort of starting to find people who care about the same things and then it's becoming about relationship building, um and an even bigger kind of word of mouth around people who already have um that purpose driven approach, yeh."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"I've never been particularly good at networking, what I've been a little bit lucky with, the 'gig work' I've found is generally, I've been approached as opposed to having to approach people, so the networking that I do now is more online than it is in person, which I didn't think was possible six years ago when I started gig work because (...) I don't really like online networking I suppose because everyone has changed that way as far as I can see, you almost have to go, like, ride the wave of it, otherwise you won't, you may find you've missed opportunities."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"So, yeah LinkedIn's been massive, and I think a lot of the stuff that we've done of the (...) paid stuff we're not doing any more. Just because it's not been as useful, or not as powerful as having someone recommend us, that if they know and trust that person then they're likely to at least have a word with us. (...) Whereas, if we do a load of marketing to convince people, unless there in that right spot at the time that your marketing you're kind of like, it's a hit and miss versus (inaudible)."

Appendix YY- Managing change: Coaching, Mentoring and Support Networks Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"Yeah. I think when people kind of step into traditional organisations they kind of almost have an immediate support network setup in a way, people working towards a shared goal and I suppose part of freelance work, or where you're more self-motivated, you almost have to kind of develop that yourself, don't you? You have to kind of meet people, chat to people and kind of get that collaborative sort of network going."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"(...) I think in the 6 months after starting I got involved with business networking international, BNI, which is a networking group but it's a very, very formal way of networking. So, you've got targets, you got to bring things in each week, um, (...) I learned loads from the actual, the formal bit of learning how to network, how to sort of market yourself and how to market yourself in like 45 seconds, which is massive but then also the connections have been building that understanding of what we do because it's not always front of mind, you know plumbers are in there, you kind of understand what they do, electricians are there, finance, accountants and (inaudible) advisors are all there. Whereas, I come in with the same CRM and basically it's like what's that in the first place (...) So, it really helped to kind of get a core group of people around talking to 50 people, that then saw me for every week doing 45 seconds of our particular pitch but then we'd have one to one's and various other bits that they started to understand and essentially they became really our marketing platform finding leads for us on a regular basis."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"So, it was kind of natural, but we did kind of work with a coach who told us to actually sit down and write out who's responsibility each part of the business was and that kind of just allowed it to be clear in our minds. And we only sat down and wrote it out once and we haven't actually looked back at that, but I think it's just clear in our heads who does what."
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"I was just going to say that at the moment as a start-up, we're in the start-up environment, I mix with a lot of CEOs and MDs and the kind of business gateway advisors but I've always, always kept in touch with business gateway

	even when I was freelancing within the gig economy. So, it's nice to have that constant support network I guess, um and then to mix with other people, like-minded people, is supportive. So, there is a lot of, within the entrepreneurial ecosystem it's a lot of great support, a lot of people, like yourselves and like 'redacted' that share very similar experiences. So, it's good to exchange those experiences as well."
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Appendix ZZ- Cultural and marketplace changes and Barriers and Enablers for Organisational/Career Change and Development Quotes (Data Set 2)

Participant Number, Job Role, Gender and Age	Quote from Interview
(Participant 6, Data Set 2, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"I think that there's probably a standard code of professional conduct that is shared because I've actually known this person for an awful long time (...) and we share an awful lot of. So, this person is very trusted to me, for example, um, and its reciprocal. So, there's a kind of understanding that there's a level of professionalism and conduct that's required, kind of thing, yeah."
(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"So, when that's adapted to the environment of a computer doing it, it starts to become the norm and that's where you start giving priority to things which start creating algorithms by themselves and that's where it's going to be very interesting (...)the industry will be there but it will totally rip up and create a new format of how the music industry works."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"So, we'd have WhatsApp groups where we'll, with the web developer, with the client, with then maybe their marketing person where we're talking about various bits, or sharing bits of information and then more recently, you know directly into a CRM system. So, we have a work template, there's schedule bits and there's chat, there's email, there's video calling and it's all together in one. (...) The last 2 years have obviously changed the game completely in terms of the way, yeah, the availability of these system and they're just kind of so quick and done so well but yeah there's a lot of things coming through that but the whole medium, there's no kind of one way."
(Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University Gig Work), Female, Age 24)	"(...) we all sit in the same sort of area in the office, so when are in we can have like informal conversations but it's shifting more to they want everyone to be sort of hot desking. So, we're working out what that will mean for those kind of just having a quick chat with someone (...) I think it's because they've recruited as a building, not like our team, just the building, has recruited a lot of people and it doesn't have the space to people. (...) but I think we're a bit concerned (...) if we're all just scattered across then, kind of, what's the point of being in the building."
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"(...) within the entrepreneurial circuit you just kind of feed off each other, I think, it's quite an

	energetic space to be in most of the time you know (...) I've got quite a mixture of experiences there. So, the first time that I was involved with that I was very naive actually, 'cos we were all competing for pots of money that were. And I kind of went into that with a very open attitude towards everyone's success not after I'd been through that process and then reflected on it, I realised that actually other people were being quite manipulative (laughs) (...) They were out to get for themselves. I very much had like a more community oriented spirit in that environment at that time. I still approach it in the same way but I'm much more aware now that we're all competing for the same pots of money and that competition is natural and it's ok but what I did find in my earliest experience was actually that some people were quite nasty in a lot of ways and actually to the extent that they would force themselves in between myself and the people administrating the events (..) So, they would actually stop me from physically being able to have a conversation with those people to break down any potential favouritism arising in my direction, as it were. So, they were focusing the whole thing on themselves the whole time. So, that was really quite toxic, quite a toxic environment. So, yeah. Not great. (...) as I say, I was a little bit naive to that and after I'd reflected on it. I thought wow that was really, really toxic and not, it wasn't cricket if you like (laughs)"
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"Yeah, I think the biggest barrier in sort of transferring from the gig economy to running the business is actually personal growth, it's a lot to take on to be responsible for your marketing and your sales outreach and I think for a while a barrier was mental health and overwhelm. But that's something that we've solved now and I actually have a routine that I do every single day expect for Saturdays usually and I can't really make progress in the business unless I stick to it (...) I suppose that like me having meetings with HR and people, you know it actually sets an environment for me to run the business, whereas if you try and run it without setting any ground work you end up um falling into holes and not being able to get out of them. (...) it's probably the main change that's happened in terms of us being able to

	achieve things with the business. Where for a while we were sort of stalling and that's because we weren't ready to have the success that we can have because we hadn't put the foundations in place for ourselves to have to manage the whole process."
(Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University Gig Work), Female, Age 24)	"I think I had about 6 months into this one year contract, I had the meeting that was like 'so we've got to formally have this just to let you know that your contract is coming to an end' but I thought, well I already knew it was a year, I've only been here 6 months and then that's it for kind of the help in we'll give you a bit of support for what you're gonna' do next and we'll like talk it through and things like that. So, I think kind of the structures around that sort of contracted work as well, don't necessarily, they're very sort of, they fit someone who's on a formal long-term permanent contract and don't necessarily fit someone on a fixed term. So, I think again that makes it harder to navigate the work I'm doing now and whatever I do next."
(Participant 20, Data Set 2A Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"The hardest thing which was a while ago now was having confidence of leadership. I didn't have that. I didn't have any of that, I was a totally different person, you know. I don't know where that came from, I think it was the thesis, I think it was, because I didn't even want to do a masters and when I was in it, I didn't care about my degree, I just wanted to do the research. I'm obsessed with research, like I don't want to say obsessed with, but I'm obsessed with research."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"Um. Gig working is awful. It's awful in a lot of ways. You have no stability and a lot of places that you would look to for finance, for things like getting a mortgage, let's say (...) require as a founding principle, they require stability, and they will ask you what your average salary is, and they will ask you about what long term future work you have. And it's very, very difficult to actually be a gig worker."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (start-up), Female, Age 30)	"I think biggest barrier at times has been ability to invest in the business because there are a lot of things that we could be doing and that we could be paying people to do on our behalf that could lead to faster growth, more leads, more income but we don't have that initial investment. So, we've tried to do it very piecemeal, and some things work some things

	don't. So, it's all been a learning experience of what moves the business forward. So, it's sort of like lack of experience with running a business so we're sort of learning on the job and also lack of investment."
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"So, when you're in a situation where you need to agree to take on a certain level of work but you're juggling more than one role, you have to be very careful about how much work you take on. Just because time is not elastic, right? Um, but you're kind of expected as a gig worker just to keep taking as much as you can (..) So, there's a level of expectation from the people who are in a position to offer you work and you kind of have to know when to say no but you don't want to say no, for fear of being, of not getting the work the next time around and at the same time you know that there's, that the time isn't elastic but you're fearful that that's gonna', (..) in the back of my mind is, that could damage your team relationship, your friendships (...) or the dynamic in your team and create barriers in the future I guess. So, that can be a huge barrier (...)"
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"I think that we have different working styles and that's something that we're still figuring out because sometimes it works better if we work at different times of the day, or sometimes I have a different threshold, a bigger or smaller threshold for stress, opportunities, and excitement than my business partner would have. So, it has to be like an organic process which requires emotional intelligence to figure that out when you're working with someone closely and I think because it's a small business and we don't have processes in place it's all quite a learning curve, yeh."
(Participant 4, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Web Designer/Admin (Start-up), Female, Age 30)	"Yeah, I think it's sort of been a mixture of both of us being driven by various factors, to move things forward, the biggest of which has been we need to be able to pay for things, so we need to get some work and we kind of not leaning on each other, but we sort of motivate each other and talk through things. So, I think our working relationship has been the biggest enabler. Yeh and potentially that could change if there were more people, but I think as long as we are still the ones in charge that would still play a part in the business, yeah."
(Participant 8, Data Set 2A, Managing Director (Start-up), Male, Age, 42)	"So, yeah in some ways it was beneficial because of Covid, the first contract went on a

	lot longer than what it should have done. I was expecting it to last for 6 weeks and 3 years later it's still there. (...) We've just renewed it for next year as well. So, in terms of that that was a massive enabler. As I said the coach has been a massive enabler in terms of understanding what we want to be as a business, understanding what it takes and what's the kind of way that you need to go through and then having that systematic approach to make sure that there's certain key performances and data that we're looking at (...)"
(Participant 7, Data Set 2A, Education Governance Manager (University Gig Work), Female, Age 24)	"(...) the kind of the contracts I've gone through, they've given me a really broad range of experience, which I think if I'd been trying to go permanent contract, permanent contract, they'd have said you don't have enough experience to do this and to come to the next thing but because I was able to be a bit more agile than someone on a permanent contract and say that I can take on this fixed term thing and I could move around a bit more fluidly (...) I've been able to get more experience and more, like progression than I would have if I'd been on a permanent contract. So, I think there are benefits to being more flexible, especially being with all those roles, being at the same institution I can kind of navigate it a bit more easily."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"I think that exercise is another big one and diet. Yeah, and also not drinking. In fact, I think that not drinking is probably the biggest of all because I found that if I drank on the weekends it would take me until Wednesday or Thursday to feel like myself again which meant for most of the week I was on the back foot and didn't have the motivation to push ahead. And if it's just us running the business then that motivation has to come from us. I think that's been a big one. Then actually building on the absence of the drink with positive things, with positive processes, um, yeh I think that was the main barrier and I think that's something we're breaking down, we've broken down quite a lot."
(Participant 20, Data Set 2A, Freelancer Music Production (Multiple Roles, Start-up), Male, Age 39)	"(...) the enablers are confidence, keeping your mental health strong being persistent and then your brain rewarding you with that consistency that it works."
(Participant 3, Data Set 2A, Co-owner FYH (University Gig Worker), Male, Age 42)	"So, I think that you have to over the time you're doing gig work, you have to develop

	confidence in yourself, because (...) there are a lot of opportunities for people. There's a lot of people, there's a lot of companies and small businesses that need things and you have to have the confidence in yourself and your skills to know that you can meet them challenges and so the enablers would be internally it would be confidence in yourself."
(Participant 6, Data Set 2A, University Tutor, Self-employed Photographer (Start-up), Male, Age 50)	"The biggest enabler is working with great people and there are instances where you know you're going to really dynamic and fun environments and that's what makes it, that you know. So, yeah, so this's things and maybe the hope that you make a difference."
(Participant 5, Data Set 2B, Co-founder, Director/Head of Strategy (Start-up), Male, Age 30)	"Biggest enabler has been actually learning about tech in terms of sales processes. I feel like we are really quite ahead of a lot of our competition in the way that we find new leads and that we constantly find new leads and we've basically automated the job of about 2 people using some software that outreaches on 'linked in' and targets our specific targets as well. Exactly who we're looking for which is gallery owners at the moment and artists. I think that's enabled us to have conversations with and get clients who are established in the art industry and some of them are household names, or on their way to being household names. So, that process has really opened the doors for us, and I suppose we've solved for ourself what fiver and Upwork was trying to solve for us or was pitching to solve for us. We've had to find a way to solve for ourselves which is an ongoing evolution but now we are far beyond what we ever could have achieved on those platforms."