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# Strategies to Improve Employee Performance in the U.S. Aerospace Industry

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Nicole Balderrama

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2016

Abstract

Strategies to Improve Employee Performance in the U.S. Aerospace Industry

by

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MS, University of La Verne, 2009

BS, University of La Verne, 2007

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2016

## Abstract

Outsourcing is a sought out practice within business and, in particular, the U.S. aerospace industry; however, some outsourced firms cannot meet client expectations. The purpose of this single case study was to explore what strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. The sample comprised 4 senior managers employed with a firm that has been producing parts for 109 years for a major aerospace company in Southern California. The conceptual framework for this study built upon systems thinking to identify the structure of the outsourcing and supplier relationship and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to understand work motivation in employee performance of the supplier in the outsourcing relationship. The data were collected through semistructured interviews and company documents. Member checking was completed to strengthen credibility and trustworthiness. Based on the methodological triangulation of the data sources collected, 5 emergent themes were identified after completing the 5 stages of data analysis: the existence of industry pressures, the need for communication, extrinsic motivational factors, organizational commitment, and strategies for employee performance. Findings of this study may provide company managers with performance strategies to support outsourcing relationships and subsequently employment as a social product. The data from this study may contribute to the prosperity of outsourced firms, their employees, their families, the surrounding community, and the local economy.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this study to my beautiful children Jakob and Mikaela. Never lose hope, never give up, and always have faith!

## Acknowledgments

I acknowledge the Lord above for giving me the courage to take on this program, the strength to endure it, and the wisdom to pull through it. I acknowledge my two children who have patiently been by my side, as we have pushed through this journey together and we have dealt with all of the ups and downs together. Lastly, I acknowledge Dr. Patricia Fusch. Through the losses and heartache that life has brought my family and me during this program, without her steady guide, I may not have pulled through. Thank You!

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Outsourcing plays a significant role in the aerospace industry and has computed up to 70% of aircraft formation (Denning, 2013). In 2013, deemed outsourcing failure within the industry, such as the 787 Dreamliner (Denning, 2013), has been cause for further evaluation of outsourcing by researchers. Multiple factors are cause for the identified flaws within the outsourcing supplier relationship, one of which specifically is an implementation flaw of the supplier failing to uphold expectations (Jackson, Lloranta, & McKenzie, 2000), resulting in attention to the supplier's performance (Jackson et al., 2000). Strategies to improve employee performance would assist suppliers in support of positive and continuous outsourcing relationships as delivery on service agreements and client-centered benefits quantify outsourcing firms' success (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011).

### **Background of the Problem**

Boeing's groundbreaking 787 Dreamliner was designed and built to decrease development time by 2 years, reduce development cost by \$4 billion, fly nonstop between any pair of cities without layovers, reduce fuel usage by 20%, and ultimately lower cost per seat by 10% (Denning, 2013). It has been the fastest-selling plane in aviation history (Denning, 2013). Conversely, in January 2013, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grounded all 50 delivered 787 Dreamliner's around the world (Denning, 2013). According to Denning (2013), this was the first time 70% of an aircraft was outsourced, attributing to the grounding of Boeing's 787 Dreamliners.

Outsourcing firms in the aerospace industry minimally focuses on the strategic dimensions of successful outsourcing (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011). Considerations for a

successful outsourcing relationship include defined desired outcomes in performance and measurable performance management (Vitasek & Manrodt, 2012). Delivery capability, a desired quality outcome in performance, is systemic of efficiency and timeliness associated with employee performance guided through performance management (Osadchyy & Webber, 2016). The employee performance of the supplier affects the achievement of organizational goals (Afful-Broni, 2012), the overall performance (Shukla, 2012), and is critical to an organization for prosperity through determination and hard work (Shah, Musawwir-Ur-Rehman, Akhtar, Zafar, & Riaz, 2012). The driving force on employee actions at work is motivation (Shah et al., 2012), which is paramount in organizational efficiency, stability, productivity, and ultimately goal achievement (Afful-Broni, 2012). Strategies to improve employee performance may be useful to suppliers in stable outsourcing relationships as delivery of service agreements (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011).

### **Problem Statement**

Outsourcing represents an increasing phenomenon with several factors such as cost reduction, flexibility, access to new technologies and skills, access to new markets, and focus on core activities to motivate locations of processes (Nassimbeni, Sartor, & Dus, 2012). In 2013, the projection of outsourcing in the area of information technology (IT) alone was \$287 billion (Han & Mithas, 2014); however, in the rapid growth of outsourcing, there are several risk factors in a supply chain (Lee, Yeung, & Hong, 2012). The general business problem is that poorly manufactured products from outsourced firms cannot meet client company expectations. The specific business problem is that

some outsourced firm company leaders have limited strategies to improve employee performance.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to explore what strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. I used a qualitative embedded case-study design of a common case with two sources of data for methodological triangulation: individual semistructured interviews and review of company archival records. Leaders from an outsourced firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California participated in my study. I conducted interviews with the participants, four senior managers, to share their strategies for improving employee performance. I conducted a thorough review of archival records to present employee tenure and years of the company in the aerospace industry. Moreover, my study findings may lead to positive social change through the reduction of outsourcing that has an impact on communities through the loss of jobs.

### **Nature of the Study**

The intent of the qualitative research design is that it invariably allows the researcher to understand the processes and procedures within the unforeseen aspects of organizational and strategic practices inside environmental complexities and contextualization (Parker, 2014). Moreover, qualitative research is a dynamic methodology and purposes to understand the social world (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014). Qualitative designs use a multitude of sources to collect data such as interviews, diaries journals, observations, and questionnaires to interpret data (Zohrabi, 2013). Conversely,



quantitative research models are broadly generalizable methods of calculating outcomes from specified inputs and outputs lacking the contextual, historical, and environmental considerations (Parker, 2014). Although there is an expanding interest in mixed method studies, the required phases of mixed method studies may require extensive time and resources to include data collection and analysis (Klassen, Creswell, Plano Clark, Smith, & Meissner, 2012).

A qualitative embedded case study was appropriate for this research study in that case studies are relevant to understand social or organization practices (Moll, 2012). Use of a case study methodology provides the researcher with the ability to focus on a single case and retain a holistic and real-world perspective on improving employee performance (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, case study research has an increased level of flexibility as it is designed to address the case and research question (Hyett, Kenn, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). Everyday situations provide insight into the social processes explored (Yin, 2014), and the objective of this single case study is to capture the circumstances of the everyday situation.

### **Research Question**

The research question for this study is, what strategies do outsourced firm company leaders need to improve employee performance?

### **Interview Questions**

The interview questions included main questions that distinguish each part of the research question, follow-up questions that seek information on themes or concepts, and probes that assist in the management of the conversation to keep focus (Rubin & Rubin,

2012). Below were the interview questions (see Appendix B):

1. How many years have you worked in the aerospace industry?
2. What have been your previous roles within the aerospace industry?
3. How long did you serve in those roles?
4. What changes have you experienced in the aerospace industry in the past 5 years?
5. How do you feel those changes have affected your ability to manage?
6. What key differences have you seen in managing a production group in the aerospace industry?
7. How has export compliance affected you as a manager?
8. How has Sarbanes Oxley affected you as a manager?
9. What knowledge or interaction do you have with the aerospace industry?
10. What other information would you like to provide that you feel pertinent to understanding the aerospace industry?
11. How many years have you served as a senior manager for parts production in the aerospace industry?
12. What departments are you responsible for in your company?
13. How many direct and indirect personnel are you responsible for in your company?
14. How many of those are in your production group?
15. In the last 2 years, how many production personnel have voluntarily resigned from the company?
16. What is the average length of employment of personnel in your production group?
17. What other information would you like to provide that you feel relevant to your

background in the aerospace industry?

18. What strategies do you use to retain personnel?
19. What strategies or concepts do you use to optimize performance?
20. What performance strategies do you use that are least effective?
21. What performance strategies do you use that are most effective?
22. In your experience, what obstacles have you encountered in performance strategies?
23. What other information would you like to provide that you feel would contribute to the understanding of performance strategies?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study was complex systems thinking and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Evolutionary logic is the basis for complex systems thinking (Neumann, 2013), and I used it to identify the structure of the outsourcing and supplier relationship. Herzberg's (1987) motivation-hygiene theory that delves into work motivation and the continuum of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction was useful in addressing employee performance of the supplier in the outsourcing relationship.

General systems theory is a science of wholeness, developed under the notion that systems, regardless of order, are not understandable by investigation of respective isolated parts (Bertalanffy, 1968). Von Bertalanffy (1968) discovered the necessity to study parts and processes in isolation as well as to investigate the problems found in the organization and the order that unifies them, which then result from the dynamic

interaction of parts. Systems thinking was therefore used in the quest for understanding problems in situations from the whole-systems perspective (Ulrich, 2012a) and problems of organizations with phenomena unresolvable from isolated events, rather dynamic interactions (Bertalanffy, 1968). The structure of the outsourcing relationship set the premise for the study and provided situational insight and inclusion to the motivational considerations of employee performance.

Herzberg (1987) researched employee motivation during the late 1950s and discovered that two different needs exist: hygiene and motivation. Hygiene factors are primarily extrinsic, such as supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, company policies, administrative practices, benefits, and job security (Herzberg, 1987). Motivational factors are primarily intrinsic and lead to job satisfaction as they satisfy the individual's need for self-actualization in his or her work (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2007). Achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement are motivational factors (Herzberg et al., 2007). Results from Herzberg's (1987) research supported indications that motivators cause satisfaction whereas hygiene factors cause unhappiness on the job.

### **Definition of Terms**

In this study, the purpose was to identify what strategies company leaders need to improve employee performance specifically in outsourcing relationships of the U.S. aerospace industry. The following alphabetized definitions are key terms used in this study.

*Dissatisfaction:* Dissatisfaction is the outcome of the absence of factors that

increase satisfaction (Herzberg, 1987).

*Hygiene factors or extrinsic sources of motivation:* Hygiene factors are extrinsic factors consisting of company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security (Herzberg, 1987). Extrinsic sources of motivation are work factors in the office environment (Afful-Broni, 2012).

*Intrinsic sources of motivation:* Intrinsic sources of motivation are within the person (Afful-Broni, 2012).

*Job enrichment:* Job enrichment provides the opportunity for employees' psychological growth (Herzberg, 1987).

*Motivation:* Motivation is the initiating of human activities to satisfy the individual's need for self-actualization (Herzberg et al., 2007).

*Motivation-hygiene theory:* Motivation-hygiene theory was a theory presented by Herzberg in the late 1950s that identified the existence of two different needs within human beings in understanding satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987).

*Outsourcing:* Outsourcing is the act of work, responsibilities, and decision rights transferred to an outside entity or external party (Gandhi, Gorod, & Sauser, 2012).

*Satisfaction:* Satisfaction is when workers feel satisfied and attribute their satisfaction to the work itself (Herzberg, 1987).

*Two-way communication:* Two-way communication is when both management and employees are communicating and listening to each other (Herzberg, 1987).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

Assumptions, limitations, and delimitations were important considerations in the

study as they set contextual boundaries. Specifying assumptions clearly stated presumptions within the study. Identifying limitations and addressing delimitations acknowledged the extent of restriction in the study and its applicability.

### **Assumptions**

Assumptions or known phenomena are illustrative of the inherent understanding of the social researcher who gathers evidence based on the nature of the question (Klassen et al., 2012). Transparency of the research assumptions was significant as transparency of the research process supports reflexivity and dependability (Houghton et al., 2012). In this study, I assumed that participant responses were truthful. In addition, I assumed that company archival records were accurate and explicit.

### **Limitations**

Limitations extend to general methodological problems that may present quandaries (Gorylev, Tregubova, & Kurbatov, 2015). In this study, four limitations were recognized. First, the study was a qualitative study and may be viewed as a compilation of narration and personal impressions that portray the researcher's bias (Masue, Swai, & Anasel 2013). Moreover, the chosen qualitative method posed challenges in demonstrating rigor through its flexible nature (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphey, 2013). Second, the study was limited to the perspective of four company senior managers. Third, the study was limited to one supplier's case, predisposing the study to that particular supplier's geographical location, demographics, and data for assessment. Fourth, the study was limited to a supplier of one particular part of the industry.

## **Delimitations**

Delimitations set the boundaries for the study and converge with the structure of qualitative research methods (Allwood, 2012) as delimitations of cases are dependent on qualities and problems and how best to investigate (Svensson & Doumas, 2013).

Delimitations are of the phenomenon as a whole and parts, and are contextual and analytical simultaneously (Svensson & Doumas, 2013). The delimitation of this study was the aerospace supplier examined in general terms of the supplier in the outsourcing relationship. There was no prerequisite or prior determination in what constitutes supplier. Specifically, there was no percentage or measurable amount in which the supplier must conduct business to consider the organization an industry supplier. Furthermore, the supplier's performance strategies were received and assessed in a general context and not relative to the specifications of the part in which they are supplying.

## **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study section consists of the contribution to the business practice and the implications for social change. In the contribution to business practice section, I identify the support this study has provided in the business practice of outsourcing the aerospace industry. The implications for social change section addresses in what way this study has contributed to social change.

## **Contribution to Business Practice**

Outsourcing is a business practice that is primarily used by companies for its cost benefits (Gandhi et al., 2012). As outsourcing has grown as a business practice so has the

need to thoroughly comprehend the risks and better prioritize and manage those risks (Gandhi et al., 2012). In addition to risk, comprehension within outsourcing is consideration of performance factors in outsourcing. There has been little consideration of firm performance and outsourcing strategies (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011). My study addressing employee performance attributed to employee motivation and the systemic industry pressures. More specifically, my study contributed to the body of knowledge in the practice of outsourcing within the aerospace industry by identifying employee performance strategies from the aerospace supplier.

### **Implications for Social Change**

In researching employee performance strategies of suppliers in an outsourcing relationship within the aerospace industry, company managers may use this research to enhance the outsourcing relationship or rectify potential negative impacts that may be occurring within the outsourcing relationship. Company managers who utilize traditional outsourcing practices have done so with the specific intent of cost savings (Gandhi et al., 2012). Conversely, the financial and vendor risks of hiring an inappropriate vendor or a vendor who cannot meet budget requirements could counteract the cost benefits of outsourcing, which could negatively impact the outsourcing relationship (Gandhi et al., 2012). Identification of performance strategies for company leaders to improve employee performance in the supplier of an outsourcing relationship provided a positive impact on the organizational performance (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011) that would then mitigate the financial and vendor risks. Company leaders use outsourcing for cost benefits (Mitchell, 2015); simultaneously outsourcing creates a social product that when



it declines, the subsequent consequences are layoffs and unemployment (Michael & Michael, 2012).

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore how outsourced firm company leaders in the aerospace industry can improve the performance of employees. In this study, I explored the following central research question: What strategies do outsourced firm company leaders need to improve employee performance? To answer the central question, the researcher reflexively intertwines the actors involved and the archival documents to form socially constructed written text (Parker, 2014) that is preceded by a thorough literature review.

A total of 120 peer-reviewed articles published within the last 5 years were used in this study, consisting of 85% of the literature used. The remaining 15% of resources are broken down into four peer-reviewed articles published prior to 2012, 10 nonpeer-reviewed articles, four books, and two federal regulations. I obtained literature, such as scholarly journals, books, and websites, through various source engines provided through the Walden University Library. I used a logical succession of the macro elements of outsourcing to the micro level of employee performance that hone in on the specific business problem of strategies to improve employee performance, through the underlying conceptual framework of complex systems thinking and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to search the literature. The literature review includes a critical analysis and synthesis of the various aforementioned sources. Keywords searched individually and searched by combining two or three keywords at a time were *outsourcing*, *aerospace*

*industry, systems thinking, organizational change, employee job performance, employee motivation, motivational theories, employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.*

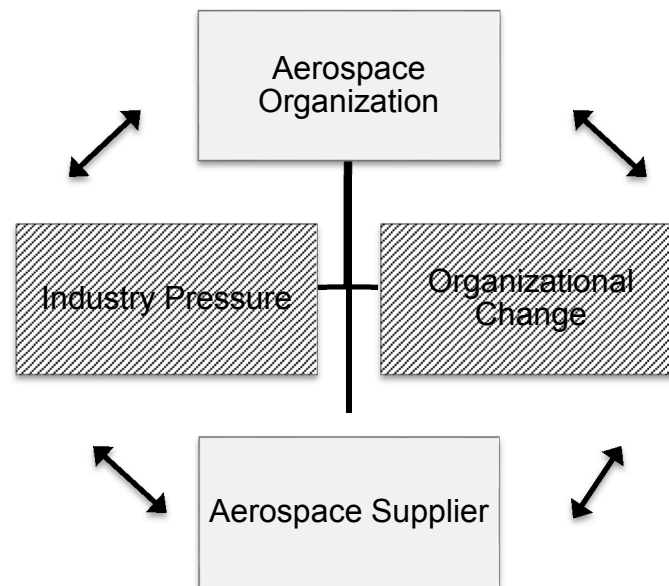
The service quality in organizational service relationships has a direct effect on behavioral, financial, and customer outcomes (Black, Childers, & Vincent, 2013). Favorable service quality has a positive impact on financial performance, customer satisfaction, and behavior intention such as relationship service intentions, loyalty, price insensitivity, and patronage intentions (Black et al., 2013). Strategies in support of positive service quality incorporate organizational and environmental variables that warrant differing approaches, as service quality is contingent upon each organization's design and structure (Black et al., 2013). Furthermore, the neglect of the environment of an organization, whether external or local, renders the traditional approach or universal best practices obsolete, thus creating a need for new practices (Matyusz, Demeter, & Sziegetvari, 2012). As I explored how company leaders in the aerospace industry can improve the performance of employees, in the literature review the aerospace industry and its systematic configuration of outsourcing are discussed, encompassing the following topics: outsourcing, systems thinking, aerospace industry environmental factors, and organizational change. In addition, preludes to performance strategies are discussed through subjects such as motivational theories, with emphasis on Herzberg's hygiene-theory, motivational outcomes, and job performance.

### **Aerospace Industry: Systemic Configuration of Outsourcing**

Matyusz et al. (2012) contended that external market factors indirectly and

directly influence business performance through operations practices and operational performance. Additionally, dynamic changes resulting from external factors affect the direction companies create or modify processes (Matyusz et al., 2012). Furthermore, the local environment of a company affects strategies used in everyday operations (Matyusz et al., 2012). Captured by using systems thinking, an approach advocating the consideration of a system as a whole and its components interrelationships (Shaked & Schechter, 2013), the external market factors in business performance as noted by Matyusz et al. (2012) become apparent. Similar to how Shaked and Schechter (2013) contended systems thinking is frequently used in the education of environmental sustainability as systems thinking grasps the multidimensional domain of ecological, cultural, and other aspects alike, while in conjunction, systems thinking further includes consideration of outside contributing factors such as building transport, consumerism, lifestyle, and its interactions with other fields. Other fields like law and engineering contribute to short, long, and inadvertent consequences (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Understanding the dynamic changes that result from a dynamic industry can equip organizations to comprehend the context in which companies operate (Perunovic, Christoffersen, & Mefford, 2012). Dynamic changes that result from external factors or environment factors are strategically important to consider in support of favorable performance of organizations (Black et al., 2013). Furthermore, the dynamic changes resulting from the external environment affect the operational performances (Matyusz et al., 2012), which may then cause the need for organizational change, and is the initiative of steps geared at altering organizational processes (Nesterkin, 2012).

In this research, the systemic configuration of outsourcing within the aerospace industry is expressed through systems thinking to capture the external factors affecting business performance as discussed by Matyusz et al. (2012). Systems thinking is the conceptual framework that maps the industry-specific considerations in the outsourcing relationship. The outsourcing relationship, the aerospace organization to the aerospace supplier, is influenced by its environment through the effects of industry-specific pressures and organizational change as captured in Figure 1. The dynamic changes then create the need for organizational change (Matyusz, 2012).



*Figure 1.* The aerospace outsourcing relationship and its environmental influences.

### **Outsourcing**

The transfer of work, responsibilities, and decisions to an entity outside of an organization is outsourcing (Gandhi et al., 2012). Outsourcing has become prevalent in

the 21st century for companies desiring to improve their competitive position (Brewer, Ashenbaum, & Ogden, 2012). Moreover, outsourcing has been deemed a critical company business strategy in the 21st-century economy (Vayrynen & Kinnula, 2012). Outsourcing enhances performance and flexibility in firms by decreasing operational costs (Osadchyy & Webber, 2016). Geographically, outsourcing can be conducted onshore and offshore (Gandhi et al., 2012). Onshore is the attainment of external services within the organization's home country, whereas offshore is the attainment of services from an overseas country (Gandhi et al., 2012). Outsourcing firms include primary activity or support activity (Kotabe, Mol, Murray, & Parente, 2012). The primary activity consists of production or marketing, and support activity includes human resource management or information technology (Kotabe et al., 2012). Additionally, support activity inclusive of call centers, suppliers, and service providers (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011). Outsourcing of primary or support activities is a decision made by organizations in part or as a whole (Kotabe et al., 2012).

New organizations form with unique practices and structures (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011). Therein lies a need for the assessments of outsourcing firms and their success to identify strategies for improved performance (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011). There have been investigations on successful strategic outsourcing agreements to highlight new methodologies for establishing successful collaborative outsourcing relationships (Vitasek & Manrodt, 2012). Additionally, researchers have developed frameworks to better assess and stimulate outsourcing risks that reduce average customer lead-time and total cost (Lee et al., 2012).

Solli-Saether (2011) contended that outsourcing venture investigations from researchers extend to success factors and risks of outsourcing while identifying issues such as strategies, structures, and cost controls. Moreover, outsourcing venture investigations differentiate from the macrolevel and the microlevel (Solli-Saether, 2011). Macrolevel investigations on outsourcing ventures consider country, industry, and its relationships whereas microlevel investigations focus on group or individuals and their behavior, motivations, perceptions, and preferences within the organization (Solli-Saether, 2011). Furthermore, at the microlevel, outsourcing venture investigations consist of changes in the organization and relations, in addition to individuals (Solli-Saether, 2011). This change is due to the inherent legal and personal relationships, along with required control mechanisms, which follow contractual agreements (Solli-Saether, 2011).

Critical success factors include entry strategy, development of contracts, governance, and cost controls (Solli-Saether, 2011). Conversely, Sharda and Chatterjee (2011) contended that research on outsourcing firms reside in a nascent stage and appeared fragmented and skewed from the relationship of outsourcing and organizational performance. According to Osadchyy and Webber (2016), positive outcomes in outsourcing from management practices are derived in categories of project communication, employee training, flexible organization, strategic communication, team unity, transparent management, and vendor adaptability. As outsourcing is inclusive of organizational changes as well as relational and individual changes (Solli-Saether, 2011), recognition must be given to the systemic makeup of the industry and the specific

pressures that exist within, before addressing the micro levels of employee performance and motivation.

### **Systems Thinking**

The science of wholeness, otherwise referred to as general systems theory, resides in the concept that systems are not understandable by investigation of respective isolated parts, regardless of order (Bertalanffy, 1968). Systems thinking, therefore, is a process that includes reflection on all types of complex situations and is based on the evolutionary logic that contends everything (product, organization, project, and individual needs) must both adapt and develop for success (Neumann, 2013). Systems thinking is a process that includes consideration of the need for integrations with the environment and surrounding circumstances as well as the need for development through the changing environment (Neumann, 2013).

The development of systems thinking emerged from an Austrian biologist, Von Bertalanffy, who contradicted the notion of scientific reductionism developed by Descartes (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Descartes's scientific reductionism was a term describing the reduction of complex phenomena in science by reducing them down to individual basic parts that if put back together would recreate a whole (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Contrary to Descartes, Von Bertalanffy, through his search for the differences in living matter versus nonliving matter, contended that the whole is not a form derived from its parts but rather from the microinfluence within the whole (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Von Bertalanffy considered the organization and the interrelationship of his research and advocated influence within a whole as a network of

relationships, which served as a basis for systems thinking (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Bertalanffy (1968) discovered the necessity to study the dynamic interactions of parts and processes in isolation, in addition to the organization that unifies them. Bertalanffy's seminal work, *General Systems Theory*, was founded on the works stemming back from 1939 to include the theory of the organism as an open system, the first announcement of general system theory in 1945, and a review of nontechnical language from 1956. VonBertalanffy's scientific approach to systems thinking was adopted and confirmed by scientists and scholars in various fields in 1968 (Shaked & Schechter, 2013).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, two fundamental approaches stemmed from systems thinking: soft systems thinking and critical systems thinking (Ulrich, 2012a). Theoretically inspired by Vickers (1965), Weber (1949), and Lewin (1946), soft systems thinking combined elements of sociological functionalism, hermeneutic, and phenomenological philosophy (Ulrich, 2012a). Soft systems thinking was developed to address limitations of systems engineering approaches that include complications with managers and organizations (Ulrich, 2012a). Theoretically inspired from European and North-American inspirations such as Churchman (1971, 1979b), Habermas (1975, 1979), Kant (1781, 1979), and Pierce (1878), critical systems thinking included critical philosophy, language analysis, and philosophical pragmatism (Ulrich, 2012a). Critical systems thinking grew to redefine contemporary concepts of applied science and general professional interventions (Ulrich, 2012b). Soft systems thinking is interpretive in nature (Ulrich, 2012a). In the process of inquiry opposed to that of the real world, soft systems thinking encompasses knowledge processes and problem investigation critical systems



thinking incorporates the use of reflective practice with an emphasis on its normative core, of applied science, and of applied systems thinking uses (Ulrich, 2012a). Both soft and critical systems thinking are mere constitutive elements of the methodology, and both support the problem structure through the participatory process of decision-making and problem solving (Ulrich, 2012a).

As systems thinking is an approach advocating a whole concept thought process with interrelationships between components (Shaked & Schechter, 2013), researchers continue to apply and extend meaning. For example, Shaked and Schechter (2013) conducted a thorough review of the historical background and definition of systems thinking to seek out an application linking systems thinking to educational leadership in attempts to create institutions that can sustain the complexity of today's challenges and expectations. Similarly, Cundill, Cumming, Biggs, and Fabricius (2012) applied soft systems thinking in conjunction with social learning theory to reassess and expose social learning for adaptive management to identify strategies that address natural resource management through social and political aspects. The authors found that soft systems thinking highlights the emergent properties of the identification of management objectives of social interactions (Cundill et al., 2012). Likewise, from an integrative perspective, Ulrich (2012b) applied critical systems thinking to operational research as an argumentative practice to enhance the conceptual sophistication of organizational research. Extension of the meaning of systems thinking has coevolved in the world with forward thinking approaches through reflections as contributions to the field (Ing, 2013). Furthermore, educators have identified a need to incorporate the systems thinking

fundamentals into business education and the social sciences as it equips students to engage effectively in the complex world with a whole picture mindset (Gehlert, Ressler, & Baylon 2013).

Systems thinking as the holistic framework that accounts for all component parts in a system with regard to interrelations (Shaked & Schechter, 2013) or as the hard or soft systems thinking that shifts from the external world of the system to the observers interactions within the system (Cundill, et al., 2012) defines traits and emergent properties as a whole, providing an effective management approach for real world problems (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Though the management approach is delivered through various systems thinking professionals, required characteristics range per project, environment, infrastructure, and organizational culture (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). The application of systems thinking and the value that attracts business leaders lay within the model or implementation designs, and productivity increases through a coherent development and increased performance (Ing, 2013) that apply to various industries, including the aerospace industry.

### **Aerospace Industry**

Systems thinking, the process inclusive of the need for integrations with the environment and surrounding circumstances in addition to the need for maturity through the changing environment (Neumann, 2013), contextually defines the outsourcing relationship with the supplier. The integrations of environment and circumstances are preceded by the organization seeking a service from a variety of business functions that are core or non-core functions (Jackson et al., 2000). Core and non-core functions are

relative to the organization's unique vision, mission, and strategy (Jackson et al., 2000). Core functions immediately related to operations, knowledge or skill of the product, and the organization's license to operate are critical to the business plan (Jackson et al., 2000). Non-Core functions are all other functions not recognized with the organization's core (Jackson et al., 2000). Identified advantages of outsourcing core or non-core functions that would promote initial or continuous outsourcing from a leading aerospace organization, were cost savings, technology, specialization and focus, market discipline, and flexibility (Jackson et al., 2000). In addition, identified flaws in the outsourcing relationship by the same leading aerospace organization were flaws in decision-making and implementation (Jackson et al., 2000). A noted implementation flaw was the supplier not upholding expectations of agreements (Jackson et al., 2000). As a result, assessment of the supplier's performance is suggested in the organization's outsourcing framework (Jackson et al., 2000).

### **The Aerospace Industry's Environmental and Circumstantial Factors**

Industry environmental and circumstantial factors require attention as Neuman (2013) contended they are contributors to integration in a whole systems perspective. The U.S. aerospace industry has undergone high profile investigations highlighting the industry's lack of ethics and compliance (Bucka & Kleiner, 2001). As a result industry pressures occur from federal regulations as the aerospace industry activities, affect the economy, environment, and lives of millions (Bucka & Kleiner, 2001).

The Boeing investigation concluded in 2006 is exemplary of an aerospace industry high profile investigation (Sachdev, 2006). In 2006, Boeing was given a penalty

for two federal investigations (Department of Justice, 2006). The first investigation was for obtaining documents from the rival company, Lockheed Martin Corporation, in the late 1990's for the development of a next-generation launch vehicle (Sachdev, 2006). The second investigation was the engagement of illegal employment negotiations with a senior Air Force official employed at the Pentagon and overseeing Boeing contracts worth billions of dollars (Sachdev, 2006). The Department of Justice's investigation of the two incidents with Boeing resulted in a monetary penalty of \$50 million and required the company to maintain an effective ethics and compliance program (Department of Justice, 2006).

Although the industry has had a considerable amount of attention on its offenses, the industry has worked on several initiatives to counter the offenses and provide effective means to change (Aguilar, 2010). For example the International Forum on Business Ethical Conduct that is led by the Aerospace Industries Association in the United States and the Aerospace and Defense Industries Association of Europe endeavor to raise awareness and support for compliance within the aerospace industry (Aguilar, 2010). Participants are required to sign annual adherence statements to the proposed principals of business ethics such as anti-bribery law compliance and undue pecuniary or other advantages (e.g. payments, gifts, hospitality) to parties to retain business (Aguilar, 2010). Additionally, to retain business, enforcement of internal control procedures, established advisory relationships in joint ventures, and prohibition of facilitation payments is required (Aguilar, 2010). The aforementioned efforts are to expand in policy and participation as compliance is not a momentary effort, rather a continuance of due

diligence (Aguilar, 2010).

Additional industry pressures exist, such as the requirement of employers of non-immigrant workers required to certify compliance with the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and Export Administration Regulations (EAR) as of February 2011 (Nackman, Strosnider, Kapos, Rathrone, Bunting, & Pannier, 2012). Discussions presented include the elimination of cost account standards exemption for contract performance entirely outside the United States (Nackman et al., 2012). The reforms now include export controls in the immigration process and U.S. employers petitioning for visas must certify compliance in EAR and ITAR (Nackman et al., 2012).

Similarly, other pressures are with technological advances that have increased globally, and the unparalleled export controls cause other countries to re-design U.S. parts and services to avoid U.S. export controls (Crook, 2013). Furthermore, Crook (2013) highlighted that the U.S. export restrictions hinder on the U.S. military in theater receiving equipment and technology to fight effectively. A reform in April 2013 took place publishing new rules on export controls of aircraft and engines that allow for streamlining of exports while maintaining better control of exports of sensitive technologies (Crook, 2013).

The structure of the outsourcing relationship with the inclusion of its challenges sets the premise for this study and provides situational insight to the changes an organization faces. Although cost savings is the initial motivation for organizations to outsource, factors such as performance quality have become highly recognized and are a significant consideration (Czepiel, 2003). Performance quality is then dependent upon

the level of human resource motivation (Achim, Dragolea, & Balan, 2013). Prior to delving into the theoretical underpinnings of motivation, discussion and understanding of the bridge from industry specific organizational pressures to the act of motivating personnel requires my attention regarding organizational change. A brief review of the existing body of knowledge of organizational change follows.

### **Organizational Change**

Systems thinking as a process encompasses a consideration of the need for development through the changing environment (Neumann, 2013). In organizations, change is the only constant (Nafei, 2013) and it is a major challenge to leaders (Jacobs, Wiltcluostuijn, Christe-Zyse, 2013). Organizational change outcomes accompanied by negative effects, disappointing results, and unintended consequences may divert resources, disrupt established routines, and destroy the trust of business partners and employees (Jacobs et al., 2013). Furthermore, organizational change can potentially violate the image of the organization that may be accompanied by detrimental effects on the organization's legitimacy and performance (Jacobs et al., 2013). Nafei (2013) contended that people are the most important part of creating change. People, however, are the most difficult as they involve values, attitudes, and preferences for activities (Nafei, 2013). Managing change can be difficult for leadership, as managers must patiently make improvements geared toward the desired change and revise organizational policies at an incremental pace (Nafei, 2013). Supportive working relationships and effective communication contribute to the success of change (Nafei, 2013).

## **Communication**

Communication is the transfer of information to a receiver with achieved comprehension, and it is the means in which individuals connect (Ayatse & Ikanyon, 2012). Ayatse and Ikanyon (2012) identified the various directional flows of communication such as downward from managers to subordinates, upward from subordinates to superiors, and cross-wise to peers or other personnel in a non-reporting relationship. Sarangi and Srivastava (2012) presented an alternate view of the directional flow of communication in three similar however more descriptive categories: (a) supervisory communication that describes the manner and perception in which a supervisor communicates with employees, (b) subordinate communication that entails the support and trust subordinates communicate to their supervisors, and (c) horizontal and informal communication is implicative of the informal networks that that instill group belong within members and evolves through organizational interactions.

There have been significant outcomes of organizational communication research and its associations (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2012). For example, Sarangi and Srivastava (2012) found that communication has a significant impact in predicting employee engagement comprising of vigor, dedication, and absorption through the theoretical model developed (Sarangi & Srivastava, 2012). Likewise, Scholastica, Maruice, Ogundipe, Ganiyat, and Rashdidat (2012) investigated the impact of business communication on organizational performance and found that the extent of effective business communication practiced affected the overall company performance it business operations.

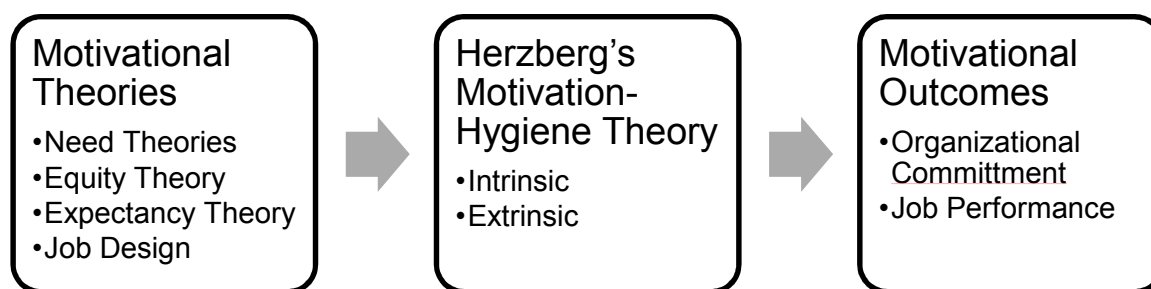
The systems thinking approach that presents situations as a whole and advocates interrelationships between components (Shaked & Schechter, 2013), highlights the outsourcing relationship with the supplier phased from outsourcing to the effect of industry specific pressure as systems parts influence one another as well as the entire system (Shaked & Schechter, 2013). Understanding the systemic makeup is, therefore, relevant when attempting to understand performance factors such as motivation, within the industry. The reason is that the dynamics of the organization change rapidly (Nafei, 2014). A significant part of managing change in organizations is harnessing the motivation of employees as the change occurs (Nesterkin, 2012).

### **Performance Strategies: Motivation and its Effect on Job Performance**

Organizations in the 21st century cannot perform at top levels without motivated and committed employees in the organization (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Employers envision that the attention on employee engagement may form more productive and industrious workforces (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). People are organisms that react to stimuli whether internal or external (Vallerand, 2012). According to Achim et al. (2013), motivation is a representation of the synergistic effect of stimuli on the behavior of employees in job performance. As such, it poses as one of the management's greatest challenges (Muo, 2013). Understanding the possibilities and forms of reasoning that suit each employee can stimulate a desire to want more and the drive function will take place in optimal conditions for both employee and company (Achim et al., 2013). The motivational system is a linear flow of need producing motivation, which leads to goal-directed behavior, resulting in need satisfaction (Achim et al., 2013). Several



motivational theories exist that are important to recognize as they establish a structural basis for evaluating and understanding individual behavior (Hegarty & Del Vecchio, 2012). The following section will review motivation theories and highlight the particular motivational framework used in this study with a discussion on its outcomes and effect on job performance (Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Motivation review.

### **Motivational Theories**

Motivation has been a topic of study dating back into the 1900s by researchers (Achim et al., 2013). In attempts to explain motivation, motivational theories such as need theories, equity theory, expectancy theory, and job design model exist (Ramlall, 2012). Need theories are theories that support and identify factors that induce behavior (Ramlall, 2012). In Maslow's (1943) need theory, he asserted that there are at least five basic needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. In addition to those needs, people are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the condition of the satisfied basic needs (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow (1943), humans perpetually want animals that are continuously partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied in all wants. McClelland's acquired needs theory is a theory that addressed the professional needs of achievements, affiliation, and power (Hegarty & Del Vecchio,

2012). Equity theory supports the notion that individuals develop beliefs of an equitable return for their work contributions, and then idealizes a suitable reward to their efforts and measured against the reward of others (Ramlall, 2012). Additionally, the theory posited that efforts are predicated on the exhibited efforts of peers (Hegarty & Del Vecchio, 2012). A perceived imbalance in an individual's outcome-input ratio prompts motivation (Ramlall, 2012). Expectancy theory is a theory that that supports the idea that people behave in a particular way through the notion of an expected outcome (Ramlall, 2012). In other words, individuals make a decision that results optimally for the individual (Hegarty & Del Vecchio, 2012). Vroom's theory is a theory that entails extended discussion and attributes in the expectancy theory through other researchers work and provides a formal model (Ramlall, 2012) that is inclusive of three variables: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy (Facer, Galloway, Inoue, & Zigarmi, 2014). Porter and Lawler's extension was a motivation model expounding on Vroom's theory (Ramlall, 2012). Job design is a theoretical approach that identifies the task as a prime element in employee motivation (Ramlall, 2012). Essentially a monotonous job hinders motivation whereas a challenging job promotes motivation (Ramlall, 2012).

Ramlall (2012) referred to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as one of the initial studies attributed to job design. The conceptual framework for researching strategies company leaders need to improve employee performance is Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. The aforementioned theories based on the individual's needs, expectations, and perceptions of equity are not inclusive of job design theories such as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (Ramlall, 2012).

### **Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory**

Frederick Herzberg researched employee motivation during the late 1950s and investigated the interactions between internal and external factors of motivation while exploring the different circumstances in which people respond to them (Herzberg, 1987). Herzberg (1987) addressed motivational practices such as reducing time spent at work, spiraling wages, fringe benefits, human relations training, sensitivity training, communication, two-way communication, job participation, and employee counseling as short-term movements (Herzberg, 1987). Reducing time spent at work is an approach Herzberg (1987) did not advocate as a motivational practice. Herzberg (1987) contended that motivated people want to work more hours. Conversely spiraling wages was deemed an effective way to motivate people in that workers seek to gain the next pay increase (Herzberg, 1987). Fringe benefits once thought to be a motivational practice has become more of a right than a reward (Herzberg, 1987). According to Herzberg (1987), the trend of spending less time working for money and security is irreversible. Human relations training from practiced psychological approaches were an ineffective approach to motivation (Herzberg, 1987). The ineffective psychological approaches were derivative to the managers not being psychologically invested in their rehearsal of interpersonal dependency (Herzberg, 1987). Similarly, sensitivity training was unproductive as it lacked proper employment (Herzberg, 1987). Furthermore, communications were futile with the explanation that management was not properly interpreting the employee's perspectives (Herzberg, 1987). Two-way communication was however deemed by Herzberg (1987) as effective in communication though there was little improvement in

motivation. Job participation programs to involve the employee in the big picture of the company provided the illusion of achievement opposed to offering substantive achievement in an assignment (Herzberg, 1987). Lastly, employee counseling was a method to allow employees to release their burdens through discussions and was found to be unsuccessful as it interfered with organizational operations (Herzberg, 1987).

Herzberg then developed the motivation-hygiene theory that stemmed from the examination of events in engineers and accountants lives (Herzberg, 1987). Since Herzberg's initial investigation, his research is highly replicated in its field with 16 additional investigations and an increasing variety of populations (Herzberg, 1987). As a result, Herzberg's (1987) research discovered that there is not an opposite of job satisfaction in an employee rather there is only no satisfaction. Likewise, there was not an opposite of job dissatisfaction rather there is merely no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory explicitly distinguished and addressed job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987).

Motivators addressed job satisfaction or no job satisfaction whereas hygiene factors addressed dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). Motivator factors are primarily intrinsic and are necessary for improvement (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). Intrinsic factors are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement (Herzberg, 1987). Hygiene factors are primarily extrinsic and are preventative of job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). Extrinsic factors include company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security (Herzberg, 1987).

Several studies have been conducted on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, as they are two major classes of motivated behavior that exist (Vallerand, 2012). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational behaviors are posited well within motivation since they address the individual motivation both inside and outside (Vallerand, 2012). The use of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors combine will result in the uppermost levels of motivation (Vallerand, 2012).

### **Intrinsic Influences**

Intrinsic motivation is behavior conducted to experience inherent pleasure and satisfaction of the activity (Vallerand, 2012). Intrinsically motivated behaviors do not provide external benefits aside from the inherent ones achieved by the behavior (Milyavskaya, McClure, Ma, Koestner, & Lydon, 2012). Frye (2012) contended that intrinsic motivation is an emotional state derived from work duties in which reflects the employee's attitude. Similarly, intrinsic influences on motivation reside under the study of autonomy (Wang & Zheng, 2012). Insecurity factors, such as anxiety, moderate the effects of an autonomy-supportive motivation, which is significantly related to intrinsic motivation (Milyavskaya et al., 2012). Furthermore, intrinsic motivation has a significant positive forecast on personal creativity and organizational innovation (Manisha, 2014).

### **Extrinsic Influences**

External factors affecting the job, drive extrinsic motivation (Frye, 2012). External factors are working conditions, monetary incentives, rewards, interrelationships, employee status, supervision and company rules, procedures, and things alike (Kulchmanov & Kaliannan, 2014). Frye (2012) contended that corporate culture and

self-actualization have the most significant impact on job satisfaction from primarily extrinsic sources. Likewise poor coworker relationships may produce negative effects (Basford & Offermann, 2012). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has also been noted by Skudiene and Auruskeviciene (2012) to have a direct connection with employee motivation. Furthermore, demographic factors such professional qualifications, years of experience, age, and employee's perception of satisfaction and motivation have an influence on employee's satisfaction and motivation (Urosevic & Milijic, 2012).

Studies that confirm or sustain the underpinnings of the motivation-hygiene theory utilize Herzberg's work (Kulchmanov & Kaliannan, 2014). Applicability of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory has extended across multiple disciplines and fields. For example, Loureiro, Miranda, and Breazeale (2013) supported an increased impact on behavioral outcomes opposed to customer delight from perceived value, trust, and satisfaction through Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. Bratton (2013) used Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as a predictive strategy of motivation for federal employees affected by government downsizing. Thaliath and Thomas (2012) based their research on motivation in the information technology field on Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and Bell, Sutanto, Baldwin, and Holloway (2014) used Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory in a gender inequity misconception study. Researchers repeatedly used Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to enrich the knowledge, factors, and processes that contribute to motivation (Thaliath & Thomas, 2012).

### **Motivational Outcomes**

Maintaining high performance in employees and keeping them committed to

organizational goals is an ongoing challenge for managers (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Motivation is a significant factor in influencing worker commitment and productivity (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Furthermore, the outcomes of motivated employees lead to positive results such as organizational commitment and job performance (Özlen & Haanspahic, 2013).

### **Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment is an important factor in determining an organization's success (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Historically it has been viewed as a form of retention for employees (Meyer, Allen, & Topolnytsky, 1998). Through organizational commitment, an organization can increase staff retention thereby increasing productivity, effectiveness, and achievement (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Additionally, commitment is an indicator or influent on how employees spend their workday (Meyer et al., 1998). Employees that are engaged are motivated and participative about their work and, as a result, perform in a way that is progressive for the organization's interest (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Employees with high organizational commitment possess tendencies to believe firmly in the objective of their organization, have a higher willingness to contribute to their organization, and strive to be a member of the organization (Lee, Hung, & Chen, 2012).

Organizational commitment consists of three types of commitment: affective, normative, and continuance commitment (Meyer et al., 1998). Emotional attachment or the personal desire to reside with the organization is affective commitment (Cho & Huang, 2012). Normative commitment stems from a feeling of moral obligation to

remain with an organization (Cho & Huang, 2012). Continuance commitment originates from a lack of employment opportunities (Cho & Huang, 2012). Yücel (2012) contended affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment have a positive impact on job satisfaction and turnover intention. Alternatively, organizational commitment and work motivation research has evolved to consider organizational commitment as an antecedent to motivation as a motivational factor (Hegarty & Del Vecchio, 2012). Understanding commitment assists leaders in their roles by extending their knowledge in understanding the potential underlying factors of commitment in which to leverage (Chowwen, 2012).

Further studies exist on the relationship of motivation and organizational commitment as antecedents, direct effects within the relationship, or as influential factors. Chen, Yung, and Sun (2012) contended that personal assets and organizational investments from the intellectual capital have been found to be antecedents of organizational commitment (Chen et al., 2012). Additionally, Afful-Broni and Nanyele (2012) contended that intrinsic and extrinsic incentives positively influence the motivation of employees and enhances their work commitment. Likewise, Bang, Ross, and Reio (2013) discovered that motivation significantly impacted affective commitment and job satisfaction. Conversely, Ozlen and Hasanspahic (2013) asserted that motivation absent in employees leads to little satisfaction, involvement, and loyalty levels (Ozlen & Hasanspahic, 2013). Moreover, a significant effect on organizational commitment and labor turnover exists (Chowwen, 2012). Yücel (2012) contended that a positive relationship exists amongst job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover



intention of employees. A positive effect occurs with the affective commitment to the reduction in a professional's intention to leave an organization for reasons such as professional advancement (Cho & Huang, 2012).

Considerable attention has been given to organizational commitment, as there are several positive outcomes from it (Chen et al., 2012) in which organizations strive to secure (Cho & Huang, 2012). Aside from an increased contribution to the organization (Lee et al., 2012) and reduced labor turnover (Chowwen, 2012), motivated and committed employees are valuable to an organization because regardless of an imperfect system, they tend to make things work (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Shahid and Azhar (2013) asserted that no organization can perform at peak levels without employee commitment to the organization's objectives and effective performance.

### **Job Performance**

It is important to recognize that organizations are social systems in which managers must comprehend how they operate to integrate individuals and the organization to create a working environment that promotes individuals satisfaction for the attainment of organizational goals and performance (Anand, 2013). Improvement of productivity and organizational performance are essential to management to attain maximum efficiency of human and material resources (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). Profitability, customer satisfaction, company growth, and productivity are indicators of employee engagement on organizational performance (Shaid & Azhar, 2013).

Maintaining high performing employees is a major challenge employers and managers face (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Additionally, primary duties of managers

are yielding the highest level of performance (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). Motivation is crucial for workers as it improves efficiency levels of employees and leads to workforce stability (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Conversely, the lack of motivation affects the quality and quantity of the work conducted (Soltani, Aghahosseini, & Akbari, 2014). Motivation is, therefore, one of the most important instruments in the induction of employee effective and efficient performance (Azar & Shafighi, 2013).

There is a positive and significant effect of motivation on job performances of employees (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). Shukla (2012) contended that a motivated worker promoted positive work performance through increased productivity. Contrariwise, a hindrance on motivation negatively affects organizational performance to include growth and effectiveness (Shukla, 2012). There is also a direct link between financial stimulation, motivation, and productivity that boost performance growth that is important in organizational performance (Achim et al., 2013). Furthermore, low salaries and the general lack of motivation have also been found as primary reasons of low morale for high performance (Afful-Broni, 2012). It is significant for the organization to discover ways to communicate successes demonstrating organizational performance and to socialize superior performance stories (Shahid & Azhar, 2013).

### **Strategy**

Strategy is the decisions and actions by managers to provide remarkable organizational performance (Wu & Lee, 2013). An organization creates strategies to attain long-term goals through control systems for progress measurement to make appropriate adjustments (Teeratansirikool, Siengthai, Badir, & Charoenngam, 2012).

Critical success factors for increased revenue performance, relative advantages with competitors, active attack in the variations of competition rules, and degrees of freedom that disengage with competitors is business strategy (Lin & Wu, 2013). Changes in strategy could influence the organizational structure and contribute positively to organizational performance (Lin & Wu, 2013). Additionally, there should be alignment in an organization's strategy and management control systems to ensure managers can assess the progress towards goals (Teeratansirikoo et. al, 2012). Strategies are unique and must consider alternate types of performance measures (Teeratansirikoo et al., 2012). Lin and Wu (2013) asserted that the industrial environment directly affects organizational performance, trailed by business strategies and organizational culture, therefore making the effects of business strategies critical.

Outsourcing enhances performance and flexibility in firms (Osadchyy & Webber, 2016), as well as reduces operational costs (Mitchell, 2015). The systemic configuration of outsourcing in the aerospace industry was portrayed through systems thinking, as systems thinking is the quest for understanding problems in situations from the whole-systems perspective (Ulrich, 2012a). The aerospace outsourcing relationship portrayed with systemic environmental factors such as industry pressures and organizational change. The aerospace industry pressures extend from federal regulations as the aerospace industry activities effect the economy, environment, and lives of millions (Bucka & Kleiner, 2001). Likewise, organizational change is constant and is a major challenge as it can affect the legitimacy ad performance of an organization (Jacobs et al., 2013). Conversely, through supportive relationships and effective communication, the

success of organizational change is attainable (Nafei, 2014). Moreover, the motivation of employees is significant in managing change in organizations (Nesterkin, 2012). A motivational system is a linear flow of need producing motivation, which leads to goal-directed behavior, resulting in need satisfaction (Achim et al., 2013). Several motivational theories exist that attempt to explain motivation such as need theories, equity theory, expectancy theory, and job design model (Ramlall, 2012). This study focuses on Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory as it focuses on the task itself (Ramlall, 2012). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory explicitly distinguished and addressed job satisfaction from job dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). Motivators addressed job satisfaction or no job satisfaction whereas hygiene factors addressed dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). Motivators are intrinsic and hygiene factors are extrinsic (Herzberg, 1987). Intrinsic motivation is behavior conducted to experience the inherent satisfaction of the activity (Vallerand, 2012) whereas extrinsic motivation is behavior influenced from external factors on the job (Frye, 2012). Motivational outcomes or motivated employees lead to positive results such as organizational commitment and job performance (Ozlen & Haanspahic, 2013). Organizational commitment is significant as it is a form of retention and it is an indicator on how employees spend their workday (Meyer et al., 1998). Job performance is significant as an outsourcing firms success relies on performance or delivery of service level agreements and client-centered benefits (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011).

### **Transition and Summary**

The case of the Boeing 787 Dreamliner outsourcing failure (Denning, 2013)

highlighted the potential adverse outcomes when outsourcing. An identified flaw in the outsourcing relationship with suppliers is the inability for suppliers to uphold expectations, therefore, drawing attention to the suppliers' performance (Jackson et al., 2000). The general business problem was that poorly manufactured products from outsourced firms cannot meet client company expectations. The specific business problem was that some outsourced firm company leaders have limited strategies to improve employee performance. The purpose of this study was to explore how company leaders improve employee performance. Through a qualitative embedded case-study design of a common case with two sources of data, individual semistructured interviews and review of company archival records, for methodological triangulation, I addressed the research question, what strategies do outsourced firm company leaders need to improve employee performance.

Systems thinking and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory establish the conceptual framework of the study. Systems thinking is an approach that considers the whole system, and its interrelationships within each part of the system. Systems thinking is used to identify the whole systems perspective (Ulrich, 2012a) of the outsourcing relationship with the supplier within the aerospace industry. Industry pressures within the system are influential factor in the changing environment (Neumann, 2013) that is constant in organizations (Nafei, 2014). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory is then used to recognize motivational tactics to increase employee performance. Herzberg's (1987) motivation-hygiene theory addressed and distinguished job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Motivators addressed job satisfaction, which are intrinsic, whereas

hygiene factors addressed dissatisfaction, which are primarily extrinsic (Herzberg, 1987). Organizational commitment and job performance are outcomes of properly motivated employees (Ozlen & Haanspahic, 2013).

In Section 2 I used qualitative research methods in this study. I expanded discussions on the research design, and I justified the use of qualitative research methods over the other potential key designs for the study to ensure the achievement of data. Additionally, I rationalized the number of participants in population and sampling and demonstrated alignment with the overarching research questions. I discussed the ethical research procedures, data collection instrument and technique, data organization techniques, data analysis, and reliability and validity.

## Section 2: The Project

I used a qualitative method and case study design in this study. Case study research, design, and analysis offers more flexibility than other qualitative approaches (Hyett et al., 2014) and may lead to a detailed understanding of organizational processes (Moll, 2012). Conversely, case studies do pose great challenges, some to include threats to validity, maintaining transparent and quality evidence, and addressing rival explanations (Yin, 2014). In this section, I provided an explanation of the methodological path, identification of challenges, and steps to mitigate the identified challenges. I discussed the research project consisting of the purpose, participants, research method and design, population and sampling, ethical research, data collection, data analysis and technique, and reliability and validity.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to explore what strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. I used a qualitative embedded case-study design of a common case with two sources of data for methodological triangulation: individual semistructured interviews and review of company archival records. Leaders from an outsourced firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California participated in my study. I conducted interviews with the participants, four senior managers, to share their strategies for improving employee performance. I performed a thorough review of archival records to present employee tenure and years of the company in the aerospace industry. Moreover, my study findings may lead to positive social change through the reduction of

outsourcing that has an impact on communities through the loss of jobs.

### **Role of the Researcher**

Qualitative research deals with evidence that is not objective or fixed (Xu & Storr, 2012). I served as the primary instrument in this qualitative study. As researchers do not possess an innate ability for quality data collection and analysis, I have effectively developed myself as a research instrument. Xu and Storr (2012) contended that one must effectively develop oneself as an instrument for collecting data and develop an interpretation congruent with the research. I have worked in the aerospace industry for 4 years; however, I do not know the participants, and I have not been directly exposed to the outsourcing and supplier functions within it.

Interviews are a widely used method for collecting qualitative data as researchers get firsthand information from knowledgeable informants (Zohrabi, 2013). Bias can exist within interviews and the research process, which threatens the validity, reliability, and transferability of the evidence (Malone, Nicholl, & Catherine, 2014). Bias in research is difficult to avoid entirely (Malone et al., 2014). I mitigated bias in my study by identification and awareness of bias, as researcher awareness of potential bias increases the potential for implementing minimization strategies (Malone et al., 2014).

Bias lies within the researcher consciously or unconsciously through the setting of assumptions, beliefs, and predispositions (Peredaryenko & Krauss, 2013). Additionally, bias exists in ungrounded interpretations made too quickly, in generalizations of findings, and in retrospective data that is highly reconstructive in memory (Neusar, 2014).



One method used to mitigate biases are a journal or documents to corroborate and enrich evidence from other sources (Yin, 2014) and to turn the researcher's lens on oneself to identify one's stance within the research and its effect on the research (Berger, 2015). A second method used to mitigate bias and support validity is member checking, in which participants review the transcription of their interview and ensure the transcription is accurate in meaning (Houghton et al., 2013; Street & Ward, 2012). Utilization of these methods assists the researcher in avoiding traps of bias, establishes construct validity, and increases truthfulness and authenticity in the researcher's study (Reilly, 2013). The journal and member checking established construct validity by supporting truth in the researcher's evaluations (Zohrabi, 2013).

I conducted interviews in accordance with the basic ethical principles and guidelines developed by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research summarized in the Belmont Report (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Additionally, I carried out the interviews through the use of a protocol (see Appendix B), which contains the procedures and guidelines adhered to during the interview and increased the reliability of the case study research (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, the use of the protocol requires forethought in the upcoming interview that forces anticipation of potential problems that may exist in the case study (Yin, 2014). Protocol aids in maintaining focus on the topic (Yin, 2014).

### **Participants**

Participants for this study were four senior managers from an outsourced firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California.

Participants in this study were purposefully chosen by their oversight production positions, within the organization. Participants shared their strategies for improving employee performance.

A strategy for establishing the working relationship with participants is to form and foster the conversational partnership with the participant by demonstrating respect through listening and adjustment of questions to what the interviewee commentates, opposed to imposing ideas without regard to the previous response (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, probing techniques in the interview are important to provide flexibility, in that interviewees are provided space to explain their views freely while keeping the interview relevant to the research (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014). Moreover, the partnership or working relationship must be sustained through the acceptance of ethical responsibility of the researcher by not harming, pressuring, or deceiving the partner, and displaying respect through tone, demeanor, and outward appearance (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher is accountable for all acts from an ethical perspective in the interview process (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014).

Once I received IRB approval, I gained access to participants through written cooperation. I attained written cooperation from the organization after formally disclosing all activities that occurred, personnel involved, and in what locations each activity occurred. After receiving IRB approval, I then received written consent forms for each participant. The research goals and procedures were provided to each participant in the protocol (see Appendix B) to identify and mitigate factors that would have adversely affected the interview to include participant comfort and interaction (Al-Yateem, 2012).

## **Research Method and Design**

Study designs are not universal and necessitate explicit regard to data saturation attainment (Fusch & Ness, 2015). In this study, the specific business problem was that some outsourced company leaders have limited strategies to improve employee performance. Through a qualitative case study, I researched the following question: What strategies do company leaders need to improve employee performance? In this section, I present the justification for the choice of qualitative method and case study design.

### **Method**

I used a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is an invaluable method to understand the social world (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014). Qualitative research provides the opportunity to capture perceptions, constructed realities, and behaviors from within (Parker, 2014). Participants in qualitative research are allowed to be expressive and responsive in their words to portray their individualized associations and categorizations to the subject (Coenen, Stamm, Stucki, & Cieza, 2012). Furthermore, researchers of qualitative methodologies develop written and verbal text that encompasses social constructs from the organization that cultivates into rich data (Parker, 2014). Through the reflexive nature of qualitative research, concepts, data collections tools, and methods can be adjusted as the research advances (Masue et al., 2013).

Although qualitative research has its benefits, it may be unsettling for researchers that seek a formula for analysis through a clear understanding of what evidence is (Xu & Storr, 2012). Masue et al. (2013) noted that qualitative research is flexible, whereas

quantitative research is highly structured, systematic, and empirical in nature (Xu & Storr, 2012). As such, qualitative research may be more time consuming and challenging mentally (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). Additionally, qualitative research may be high risk, require more resources, and require a higher time commitment (Marshall et al., 2013).

In quantitative research, data are collected and analyzed through a mathematically based method to measure the specific phenomena (Lach, 2013). Through quantitative research, an estimate of the average effect of one or multiple causes over a series of cases is sought rather than the explanation of an outcome in a particular case (Masue, Swai, & Anasel, 2013). When it comes to social phenomena, as in this study, quantitative research methods do not encompass the complexities within (Masue et al., 2013). Moreover, quantitative research expounds on directly observable indicators and causal relationships that presume a level of understanding and fails to capture the phenomena in its context and neglects unexpected aspects of the phenomenon (Masue et al., 2013). Quantitative research is most suitable when making a standardized comparison in a controlled environment (Masue et al., 2013) versus research concerned with the nature of the social world (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014).

There is an expanding interest in the methodological sophistication of mixed method research that is more than a collection of qualitative or quantitative evidence (Klassen et al., 2012). Mixed methods research involves the intentional collection of quantitative and qualitative data to maximize the strength each method offers as well as minimizing the weaknesses in each method (Klassen et al., 2012). Mixed method

research does require researchers to address issues and special considerations (Klassen et al., 2012) that make it unsuitable for this study. Two areas of consideration that limit the use of a mixed method approach in this study are methodological and logistical issues (Klassen et al., 2012). Methodologically multiple sources are gathered in mixed research that pose challenges to merging concurrent designs, attaining adequate sample sizes and comparable samples, and employing a constant unit of analysis (Klassen et al., 2012). Furthermore, according to Klassen et al. (2012), in mixed methods research extensive time and resources are required for data collection and analysis to fulfill the multiple steps required.

The research question in this study was posed to find the strategies company leaders need to improve employee performance. I used a qualitative research method as it is best suited to explore the issue in detail and depth and as qualitative research envisages obtaining a deep understanding of the specific case in an organization (Masue et al., 2013). Moreover, the differences in qualitative research from quantitative research are increasingly valued rather than a comparison of methodological shortcomings (Houghton et al., 2013).

### **Research Design**

According to Yin (2014), a case study is an in-depth inquiry that explores a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world context. Case studies are intended to fit the case and research question (Hyett et al., 2014). As phenomenon and context may not be easily discernible within the real world, a case study inquiry additionally manages idiosyncratic situations (Yin, 2014). Concerning organizational value, case studies

ideally suit a thorough comprehension of social and organizational processes (Moll, 2012). Furthermore, a case study has the advantage of allowing the researcher to become acquainted with the daily social interactions for an in-depth exploration (Moll, 2012), which made a case study the best design for this study over other research designs, such as ethnography, phenomenology, and narrative.

Ethnography is used to capture distinctions in experiences by intertwining shared ideas, histories, insights, and assumptions (Symons & Maggio, 2014). Ethnography provides researchers the ability to interpret and understand everyday life (Horst, Hiorth, & Tacchi 2012) and taking the reader in the social world of a particular phenomenon through depictive techniques that foreground the lived experience (Morgan, 2014). Ethnographies require long periods in the field, in the natural setting, and emphasize in-depth observations and interview evidence (Yin, 2014). Challenges to ethnography are that it lacks structure, guidelines, and develops as its practice (Zilber, 2014). Additionally, with the time and intensity of the fieldwork required in ethnography, assistance is usually required (Zilber, 2014). This method was inapplicable to the research question.

Phenomenology is used by researchers to explore and comprehend everyday experiences less the presupposing knowledge that allows the researcher to be open to what the phenomenon presents (Converse, 2012). Phenomenology is holistic, and researchers must understand what the data are like in a whole sense as they are presented (Giorgi, 2012). Specifically, phenomenology is used to focus on activity in correlation with an object of consciousness and explored in relation to the correlated act (Giorgi,

2012). Researchers must demonstrate methodological congruence in phenomenology to provide meaningful data in lived experiences (Pereira, 2012). As phenomenology is dynamic and comprises related parallel fluxes, it is not homogeneous and is difficult to define (Davidsen, 2013). Additionally, with a complex definition, it may be difficult to incorporate methodological congruence or rigor and experiential concerns with insight to plausibility about the phenomenon (Pereira, 2012). This method would have delved more into the social aspect of this study rather than the specific business problem, rendering it inadequate.

The use of stories to find a research outcome, in academic research, is known as narrative inquiry (Benson, 2014). The narrative method employs the exploration of individual understanding and allows researchers to explore the social process through it (Boyd et al., 2013). Narrative research provides a sense of the whole and is inclusive of beginning to end (Juntunen, 2013). Although this approach makes it possible for various questioning on the data, it is challenging (Juntunen, 2013), as it is difficult to present justifiably how a story can capture the specific outcome of a research project (Benson, 2014). The broad focus of this method was inappropriate for this research study.

Though other designs hold positive attributes, case study remained to be the most optimal design for this study. Case study design is used to gain an in-depth understanding of an organization's approach to incorporate research findings into the decision-making process, identify personnel capacity, explore changes over time, and identify dynamics that influence the capacity development and change (Peirson, Ciliska, Dobbins, & Mowat, 2012). Additionally, through the in-depth exploration, a case study

design permits the researcher to study a phenomenon in real-life context without interventions or controlled observation that requires manipulation (Street & Ward, 2012). Data saturation, in the case study design, is ensured through the lack of new emerging data (Houghton et al., 2013; Dworkin, 2012). The data are saturated when there are no new data and no new themes (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation is presented by statistical evidence (Marshall et al., 2013).

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study consisted of four senior managers from a firm, located in Southern California, producing parts for a major aerospace company. As interviews are one of the most important sources of evidence in a case study (Yin, 2014), semistructured interviews were held to gather strategies for improving employee performance. Semistructured interviews were used for the elicitation of perceptions and experiences through open-ended questions (Peirson et al., 2012). Interviews were held in a public library to simulate an everyday social conversation in the workplace in an attempt to relax the participants and allow them to comfortably appraise or criticize, as suggested by Al-Yateem (2012).

Through purposeful data collection, particular selections are used to illuminate the notional propositions of the case (Yin, 2014). I interviewed a total of four participants, as smaller samples in qualitative studies is more prevalent (Dworkin, 2012). Moreover, smaller samples in qualitative research methods are predominantly focused on attaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Dworkin, 2012).

Saturation, through purposeful sampling, was achieved in this study when there



was a lack of new emerging data (Cleary, Horsfall & Hater, 2014; Dworkin, 2012; Houghton et al., 2013). Moreover, the data is saturated through detailed, layered and intricate data rather than solely thick data or large amounts of data (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation is displayed at the point in which data saturation is attained through statistical evidence (Marshall et al., 2013). The statistical evidence demonstrating data saturation is derived from the emergent redundancy in codes from the collected data (Marshall et al., 2013).

### **Ethical Research**

The objective of social science is truth or knowledge; however, the subject's moral rights dominate over the social benefit of the research (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014). Research involving human subjects requires ethical consideration (Yin, 2014) and responsibility on the researcher to provide respect, clarity without deceit in the events that will occur, and a pressure-free relationship (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This study abided by the ethical principles and guidelines developed by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research summarized in the Belmont Report (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Ethical protection of participant was assured by displaying respect within the participant relationship and ensuring there is no pressure or deceit to the participant (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

I achieved attainment of written cooperation from the organization after formally disclosing all activities that occurred such as participant recruitment, interviewing process, and member checking. Additionally participants and locations of each activity were disclosed in the written cooperation agreement with the organization. The senior

leader of the organization signed the written cooperation agreement that provided authorization to conduct the study.

After receiving IRB approval (see Appendix A for number), I presented written consent forms to each participant and discussed in detail before attaining a signature of the agreement. The consent forms contained an explanation of the research goals, procedures, recording, and voluntary participation (Al-Yateem, 2012). Consent forms ensure the participant understands the nature of the research and the risks posed by the research (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Risks included minor discomfort such as anxiety or stress that may accompany answering questions. There were no safety or wellbeing risks posed from this study. Additionally, consent forms provide sufficient information on the research procedures, purposes, anticipated benefits, and a statement covering the ability to ask questions and the ability to withdraw at any time (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Withdrawing from the study can take place at any point in the study without penalty and requires no action. The participant may have withdrawn via email, phone call, or in person. The information presented in the consent forms was organized and comprehensible for the participant (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). There were no incentives offered to the participants aside from the opportunity to participate in this research.

Company and participant information shall remain private and confidential. Personal information was not be used for any purposes outside of this research project. The company was coded and identified as Company X. Participants were coded and are identified as Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, and Participant 4. Company and

participant agreements, recordings, transcripts, or other data developed throughout this study are password protected when the function is available and maintained in a locked cabinet for the protection of participant's rights for five years. In this study, the informed consent form number 05-09-16-0419353 location is identified in the table of contents and addressed in the ethics section.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

In this study, I served as the primary data collection instrument. Additionally, an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon researched is attained through individual semistructured interviews (Dworkin, 2012) that are conducted in accordance with the protocol provided in Appendix B. Review of company archival records was also used as an additional source of evidence for methodological triangulation as described by Rubin and Rubin (2012).

Data collection entails sources of evidence, triangulation of evidence from different sources, a comprehensive database, and a clear chain of evidence (Yin, 2014). It is important to ensure data gathered is as rich and accurate as possible to reflect the phenomena studied in support of accuracy in conclusions later developed from this data (Al-Yateem, 2012). The interview is one of the most important techniques to gather data by qualitative researchers (Al-Yateem, 2012). Moreover, qualitative researchers frequently use interviews as a primary source of data (Neusar, 2014) as it is a natural approach to the inquiry (Frels & Onwuegbusie, 2013). This section contains clearly defined instruments, data collection techniques, and data organization techniques used in this study to ensure rich and accurate collection of data.

Interviews serve as one of the most important sources of evidence in a case study (Yin, 2014). Understanding the role of the researcher in generating and interpreting data assists in dealing with the inherent complexities of qualitative research (Xu & Storr, 2012). Furthermore, the researcher as the instrument is capable of developing interviewing skills and evolving the quality of data through depth (Xu & Storr, 2012). As the interviewer, I served two jobs: to abide by my protocol, which disclosed the line of inquiry, and to ask the interview questions without bias as noted by Yin (2014). Additionally, researchers as the primary data collection instrument must be aware of their personal attitudes that may influence or affect the questions asked and their responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Likewise, researchers must be aware that the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee may influence the statement of individual interviews (Coenen et al., 2012). Protocol, also known as a conversational guide, was written and provided in advance (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) and was used to increase the reliability of the case study research (Yin, 2014). Appendix B is the protocol for this study.

I recorded the interview. The recording offers a great deal to the researcher in that the recordings can repeatedly be reviewed during data analysis (Al-Yateem, 2012). Moreover, recordings serve as a foundation for reliability and validity (Al-Yateem, 2012). When recording, interviewees may become hesitant or shy (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Recording with care provides level and unobtrusive interviews to avoid distraction to the participant and the interviewer (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Strategies for recording were the use of a protocol to guide the interview, small unobtrusive recording devices,

advanced preparation to prevent fumbling of equipment during the interview, and early preparation to allow the interviewer and participant to focus on the interview (Al-Yateem, 2012).

Member checking was conducted in which the participants reviewed and verified the transcription of the interview for accuracy in interpretation, ensuring the meaning has been accurately captured (Houghton et al., 2013). Member checking presents the opportunity to correct errors and challenge perceived erroneous interpretations (Reilly, 2013). Utilization of member checking demonstrates mindfully collected data and increases trustworthiness and credibility (Houghton et al., 2013).

I used relevant archival records in conjunction with semistructured interviews. Archival records were used to present employee tenure and years of the company within the aerospace industry. Although archival evidence is deemed relevant, care must be used to ascertain the circumstances in produced archival records (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) contended that produced archival records have an intent and for a specific audience in which requires appreciation and consideration for interpretation and use. Company archival records were used as additional source of evidence for methodological triangulation (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) in support of construct validity and credibility (Houghton et al., 2013; Yin, 2014).

A journal was used to collect data that supported and enriched the data already collected during the interviews and to clarify data (Hayman, Wilkes, & Jackson, 2012). A separate journal containing my sentiment throughout the interview and overall research was maintained for clarity and transparency as described by Houghton et al. (2013) and

Rubin and Rubin (2012). Included in the journal was documentation to include interview notes, records, drafts of interpretation, and calendars, of all aspects and components of the study, through stages of data development, analysis, and explanation. Utilizing the journal provided rigor, dependability or reliability, and confirmability to the research study from the audit trail (Houghton et al., 2013).

### **Data Collection Technique**

There are a variety of data sources, including documentation, participant observation, archival records and interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Some documentation can be vague, incomplete; other documents may be more specific; therefore, documentation is not always acceptable as an official record of events (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Documentation or documentary analysis is the examination of various documents, some of which are newspapers, speeches, budgets, transcripts, evaluations, and personal documents (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Documentation may be useful; however, is not always accurate and contains bias (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Participant observations assimilate to a formal version of watching the actions and listening to the discussion of others in everyday activity (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Gaining access to events or groups is a challenge of participant observation (Yin, 2014). Moreover, the level of activity of the researcher in the observation may impact what is seen (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) and may alter the perception of reality from an internal viewpoint versus external (Yin, 2014).

Archival records are service records, organizational records, maps, charts, survey, or public files such as U.S. census and other statistical data alike (Yin, 2014). The

usefulness of archival records, unlike documentation, may vary depending on case, and the researcher needs to ascertain carefully the conditions from which it was produced (Yin, 2014). In a case study, archival records may be used in conjunction with other sources of information (Yin, 2014). In this study methodological triangulation was accomplished through the use of archival records in conjunction with qualitative interviews to enhance completeness and credibility from multiple sources and perspectives that capture the phenomena studied (Houghton, et al., 2012).

Qualitative interviews are one of the two most broadly used techniques as the interview method provides individuals the platform in which to express in their words (Coenen et al., 2012) and experiences that may otherwise be held back (Bhattacharya & Singh, 2015). Qualitative interviews are means to gain firsthand information directly from the informants, well informed of the phenomena under investigation (Zohrabi, 2013). It is important that the data obtained from the interview is rich and accurate of the phenomena being studied (Al-Yateem, 2012). I obtained data through the use of semistructured interviews involving main questions, follow-up questions, and probes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Protocol that contained procedures and rules was used to increase the reliability of the case study and the reduction of fieldwork visits (Yin, 2014). Protocol is not to be adhered to, rigidly; rather with an adaptive stance, as planned case studies can change (Yin, 2014). Appendix B was the protocol used.

The interview questions included main questions that distinguished each part of the research questions, follow-up questions that seek information on themes or concepts, and probes in which assisted in the management of the conversation to keep focus (Rubin

& Rubin, 2012). Additionally, as noted in step seven of the protocol, member checking was conducted by providing the participant with transcripts of narratives provided during the interview and asking the participant to validate the transcription for accuracy in meaning to ensure truthfulness and authenticity (Reilly, 2013). Appendix B contains the interview questions used.

### **Data Organization Techniques**

I used a research log as Houghton et al. (2012) suggested, maintaining an audit trail or account of the research process to include data collected and methodological decisions made in the research process that supports rigor and ultimately dependability and confirmability. I used a log of the transcription, the source (tape, notes, memory, etc.) of what has been transcribed, verification of the information being transcribed, the level of detail, and comments to include relevant details such omission of data or sentiment on the data to ensure transparency (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Transparency is the visibility the reader has on the detail and thoroughness of the design and researchers conscientiousness within the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Furthermore, transparency is the keystone of social science and discourse resides on the responsibility of scholars to disclose the data, theory, and methodology in which their conclusions reside (Maravcsik, 2014). Additionally, a separate journal consisting of my overall sentiment throughout each phase and during the interview was maintained for clarity and transparency (Houghton et al., 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Utilizing a journal captures thought, back or ahead, of the experience of a particular day (Applebaum, 2014). NVivo, a data management tool, was used to organize the data collected (Peirson et al., 2012) and



provide a record of the decision made throughout analysis (Houghton, et al., 2013).

Furthermore, NVivo was used to organize the coded concepts and themes derived from the data collected. Mangioni and McKerchar (2013) contended that the quantification of qualitative data can provide a transparent and objective indicator in the research study. Archival records are organized into file folders by topic. Hardcopy data such as notes and journals in addition to company and participant agreements, recordings, transcripts, or other data developed throughout this study are password protected, when the function is available and maintained in a locked cabinet for the protection of participant's rights for five years.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the steps researchers take to turn raw data from interviews, which include examining, categorizing, tabulating and testing, into a convincing answer to the research questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Qualitative data analysis is holistic in that each case analyzed is viewed as a whole (Masue et al., 2013). I conducted data analysis in this study on four semistructured interviews held with senior management professional within an aerospace industry supplier. Appendix B contains the interview questions used.

Transcription of the interview recordings, encompass notes, word for word. It is important to transcribe interviews word for word to attain a full and accurate rendition of the questions and responses provided (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Participants review the transcripts of their interview to validate the accuracy, clarity, and completeness of the data (Peirson et al., 2012). Furthermore, I presented to the participants a summary of

their responses to ensure that the meaning of their narrative is accurately captured, which is otherwise known as member checking (Houghton et al., 2013).

Methodological triangulation was used in this study to enhance credibility by assessing data from multiple sources (Houghton et al., 2013). Moreover, triangulation provides reliability as interpretations and facts from various sources converge on the occurrence (Street & Ward, 2012). I triangulated the interviews with the archival records. Archival records include public files, service records, organizational records, geographical maps and charts, and survey data (Yin, 2014). NVivo was then used to organize, manage, and code key themes (Peirson et al., 2012) to analyze the evidence derived from the interviews, the archival records, and the journaling. NVivo is a data management tool that provides a comprehensive picture of decisions made throughout the research process (Houghton et al., 2013) and is used as a reliable tool to assist in data analysis (Yin, 2014). The data analysis process consisted of the following seven steps: transcribe interviews, define excerpts with relevant themes, sort similar marked excerpts, compare excerpts within subgroups, weigh and integrate variants, combine concepts to generate an explanation, and generalize results beyond the specific case studied (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the analysis process, key themes identified are correlated with the conceptual framework provided in Section 1 of this study, in addition to new studies published throughout the course of this study.

### **Reliability and Validity**

An integral step in research design is the assessment of validity and reliability within a study (Oleinik, Popova, Kirdina, & Shatalova, 2014). Identifying validity and

reliability strengthen the quality and rigor (Oleinik et al., 2014). Qualitative research requires strategies in place to ensure rigor (Houghton et al., 2013). Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability are strategies to attain rigor (Houghton et al., 2013). Moreover, the assessment of reliability and validity minimizes the variability of interpretation, efficiently uses text and permits researchers to spend less time on convincing readers of the high quality in the research (Street & Ward, 2012).

### **Reliability**

Reliability is the consistency of the research procedures and is demonstration that the study can be repeated with the same results (Yin, 2014). Reliability is the stability of the research instrument or research finding (Street & Ward, 2012). A formal protocol is a technique used to establish reliability in a case study (Street & Ward, 2012) as listed in Appendix B. Likewise; dependability is achieved by logging decisions and rationale throughout the research study (Houghton, et al. 2013). As discussed in further detail under *data organization and techniques*, a log was used in the transcription process and a journal was kept for research sentiment throughout the research process. In addition, confirmability was achieved through queries in NVivo, the software used for qualitative data analysis (Houghton et al., 2013) that is further defined under *data analysis technique*.

Organizations and site location impact findings and the transferability of the study results (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In this study, the generalization of the organization is within the aerospace industry as a supplier, and the general site location of the study is in Southern California. Similarly, transferability is provided in this study through rich

description, detailed for readers to make informed decisions on applicability (Houghton et al., 2013).

### **Validity**

Validity is whether or not the research is believable and true, and whether the researcher evaluates what it purports to evaluate (Zohrabi, 2013). Validity is trustworthiness, utility, and dependability that the evaluator and the stakeholders regard the research (Zohrabi, 2013). Additionally, validity is the agreement of the research instrument or research findings and the phenomenon under study (Oleinik et al., 2014).

Content validity and external validity are types of validity with varying elements (Zohrabi, 2013). Internal validity is the strength within the case study (Yin, 2014) and the congruence of the research findings and authenticity (Zohrabi, 2013). External validity is comparable to transferability of a case study and the extent within it (Yin, 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). Techniques to address validity are member checks, formal case study protocol, archival data, and triangulation (Street & Ward, 2012). Similarly, credibility, the tightly linking of evidence to a conclusion (Rubin & Rubin, 2012), is enhanced with triangulation, data saturation, and member checking (Houghton et al., 2013). Credibility is further achieved through the portrayal of qualified and informed participants in the research study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In this study, methodological triangulation was conducted through semistructured interviews and archival records. The data was saturated when there was a lack of new emerging data (Coenen et al., 2012; Houghton et al., 2013). I conducted member checking, asking the participant to review my summary of the interview results for accuracy in meaning (Rubin & Rubin, 2012,) to

ensure credibility as noted in the protocol by ensuring that the meaning of participant's responses is captured (see Appendix B).

### **Transition and Summary**

The specific business problem is that some outsourced firm company leaders have limited strategies to improve employee performance. This study was the exploration of what strategies outsourced firm company leaders need to improve employee performance. I used a qualitative case-study design with two sources of data for methodological triangulation: semistructured interviews and review of archival records. The researcher was the primary instrument in this study in which personal development as an instrument emphasized for the capability to collect data and develop accurate interpretations of the research (Xu & Storr, 2012). Four senior managers from an outsourced firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California participated in this study. Participants were purposefully chosen through their relevant positions within the organization. Ethical consideration and responsibility were adhered to through the Belmont Report (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). I obtained written cooperation from the organization and consent forms from participants (see Appendix A) after IRB approval was received. Protocol (see Appendix B) was used in this study containing procedures and rules. Research logs were used to maintain account of data collected as well as a journal to reflect researcher sentiment throughout the study. All materials and evidence used in this study, such as agreements, recordings, transcripts, are password protected, when the function is available, and maintained in a locked cabinet for 5 years. NVivo is the data management tool that was

used to provide a comprehensive picture of decisions made through the research process (Houghton et al., 2013). Reliability and validity were ensured through the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. In Section 3, following IRB approval and conduction of the study, I provided the presentation of the findings, application of professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action and further research, and reflections.

### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

In Section 3, I discuss the results of the study concerning the application for professional practice and implications for social change. Section 3 contains the presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for action, recommendations for further study, reflections, and summary and conclusion. The findings are derivative from semistructured interviews reflecting the participant's perspective and experiences of the aerospace industry and managerial positions within it. Additionally, archival documents are used in methodological triangulation to enhance credibility by utilizing data from multiple sources (Houghton et al., 2013). In Section 3, I present the findings of the study.

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore what strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. I used a qualitative embedded case-study design of a common case with two sources of data for methodological triangulation: individual semistructured interviews and review of company archival records. Findings of the study supported the existence of industry pressures demanding organizational change and the need for good communication. Additionally, findings of the study supported extrinsic factors of motivation with the motivational outcome of organizational commitment through job retention and company years of service. Lastly, strategies that support employee performance are inclusive of the following elements: good communication, manager interaction, teamwork, flexibility/adaptability, incentives, training, and alignment checks.

### **Presentation of the Findings**

The overarching research question for this study was as follows: What strategies do outsourced firm company leaders need to improve employee performance? I used a qualitative research design that allowed for an understanding of the processes and procedures contextually and within environmental intricacies (Parker, 2014). I used an embedded case-study methodology of a common case that allows the researcher to concentrate on an individual case and maintain real-world perspective (Yin, 2014). Additionally, I used semistructured interviews and archival documents for methodological triangulation.

Four senior managers from an outsourced firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California participated in semistructured interviews. I interviewed managers with ethical consideration and responsibility adhered to through the Belmont Report (Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). A protocol (see Appendix B) was used in this study containing procedures and rules. I held interviews in a public library and scheduled at a time convenient for the participants. I used pseudonyms for the protection of the company and participants to ensure confidentiality. I identified participants as Participants 1, 2, 3, or 4. I identified the company as Company X.

Raw data from the semistructured interviews were used in data analysis to include examining, tabulating, and categorizing (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Yin, 2014). Interviews were transcribed to attain a full and accurate log of the questions and responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Each participant reviewed his or her transcription for accuracy and



completeness of data (Peirson et al., 2012). Additionally, I provided summaries of the semistructured interviews to the participants for member checking ensuring I captured the meaning of their responses accurately (Houghton et al., 2012) and to promote credibility (Roy, Zvonkovic, Goldberg, Sharp, & LaRossa, 2015).

NVivo, a data management tool, was then used to organize, manage, and code themes to provide a more transparently stemmed approach in coding data that is less disposed to researcher bias opposed to wholly manual coding (Fielding, Fielding, & Hughes, 2012). As suggested by Fielding et al. (2012), a word frequency analysis on each set of responses per question was conducted and then integrated with text search or key-word-functions, highlighting recurring themes in data. Quantitative data are presented through percentiles of responses mentioned per question (Fielding et al., 2012) and provided in tables displayed in the corresponding thematic subsections. I used methodological triangulation to analyze the data from the semistructured interviews with archival records, including organizational records, archival documents, and charts (Hoque, Covalski, & Gooneratne, 2013; Yin, 2014) that complement and clarify the quantitative findings in common themes involving retention and years of company service (Bekhet & Zausniewski, 2012). I enhanced credibility by evaluating data from various sources (Houghton et al., 2013) and enriched reliability through the convergence of multiple sources on interpretations (Street & Ward, 2012).

Findings tied into the conceptual framework of systems thinking and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and to the existing literature on effective business practice. Findings confirmed the peer reviewed knowledge in the disciplines provided in the

literature review that highlighted and synthesized what was known or not known on the topic to establish clarity on the necessity, uniqueness, and significance of the study (Goldberg & Allen, 2015). Five themes occurred during the interviews: (a) the existence of industry pressures, (b) communication, (c) extrinsic motivational factors, (d) organizational commitment, and (e) strategies for employee performance.

### **Demographic Data of the Participants**

Participants for this study were four senior managers from a firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California. Demographics of the participants were established through relevant questions during the interviews and listed in Appendix C. Of the four participants, the shortest amount of time spent in the aerospace industry was 19 years from Participant 2, and the longest time spent in the industry was 38 years from Participant 1. The time spent within the aerospace industry establishes a level of experience and knowledge about the aerospace industry. The participant's time as a manager within the aerospace industry ranged from 5 to 25 years, with 75% of the participants having over 17 years. The years in management indicate the time frame of experience as a manager. The number of departments worked, personnel managed, and the number of production personnel conveys further insight into the background of each participant's management responsibility within the industry through involvement of departments, quantities of personnel overall, and specifically quantities of personnel in production. The information provided in Table 1 provides an idea of the level of experience and knowledge of the participants providing the performance strategies to answer the overarching question.

Table 1

*Demographic Data of the Participants*

Participant	Years in aerospace industry	Years in management	# of Departments worked in	# of Personnel	# of Personnel in production
1	38	25	7	40	33
2	19	17	2	4-30	30
3	32	20	4	20-26	16
4	25	5	3	10	5

**Emergent Theme 1: Existence of Industry Pressures**

The environment of an organization has a large impact on strategies and operations of an organization (Matyusz et al., 2012). Organizations operate in markets with a mix of suppliers and sell products to varying customers regulated by governments (Matyusz et al., 2012). Also, recommendations from the U.S. Federal Sentencing Guidelines and Sarbanes-Oxley Act have made it crucial for organizations to conform and comply (Freeman, 2007). Matyusz et al. (2012) contended that external market factors impact organizational operations, which affect operations performance improvement and ultimately affect business performance improvement. During the semistructured interviews, I asked participants about changes experienced in the aerospace industry within the past 5 years. Each participant acknowledged changes within the industry. Increased compliance, increased requirements, and increased technological advances are the most prevalent changes identified (see Table 2) by the participants.

Table 2

*Other Aerospace Industry Changes*

Theme	Sources in percentile
Increased competition	25%
Increased compliance	50%
Increased manning	25%
Increased oversight	25%
Increased requirement	50%
Increased technological advances	50%
Increase in women	25%

Participants also noted competition, manning, oversight, and an increase in women as industry changes. I asked participants how they were affected by those changes as managers. The immediate responses from participants were “very challenging” from Participant 1, “demanding” from Participant 2, “most effectively” from Participant 3, and “increased diligence” from Participant 4. Participants 1, 2, and 4 immediately identified with an increase in action as a manager resulting from the noted changes (Participants 1, 2, 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 immediately identified with a positive outcome of effectiveness speaking specifically on the change of the increase in technological advances (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 elaborated on the technological advances supporting a reduced opportunity for manual error (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Although Participant 3 identified with other changes listed in Table

2 that required an increase in action as a manager, Participant 3 was the only participant who identified with a decrease in action as a manager.

I asked participants if export compliance and the Sarbanes Oxley Act affected them. All identified explicitly with changes resulting from export compliance (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Environmental Influences*

Theme	Sources in percentile
Changes	100%
Managers affected by change	100%
Export compliance	100%
Sarbanes Oxley	25%

Participant 1 noted that export compliance was a highly visible component in what they did because they ship all over the world in which require abiding by the export compliance regulations and the regulations are challenging to keep up with (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 2 commented on the demand of their overseas customers and the increased requirements needed to get their product there on the delivery date and on time (Participant 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 emphasized the extremity of the effect of export compliance changes on Company X as the need for continuous and various amounts of training (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 4 also identified

with the task of having to keep up continuously with the changes in export compliance and commented on the need for acceptance of knowing the rules and knowing that changes will come (Participant 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 was the only participant who identified with being affected by Sarbanes-Oxley. Participant 3 highlighted the documentation requirement that is the responsibility of managers to ensure all the criteria of performance are met as a result of the Sarbanes-Oxley act (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016).

Findings confirm existing knowledge from peer-reviewed studies provided in the literature review section on the existence of environmental factors affecting the aerospace industry in that external factors indirectly and directly influence operations practices and performance (Matyusz et al., 2012). As noted by Bucka and Kleiner (2001), the federal regulations imposed on the aerospace industry are a result of historical high profile investigations highlighting a lack of compliance and ethics. Enforcement of export compliance as a result of previous investigations is a continuance of due diligence, not a momentary effort (Aguilar, 2010) that affects managers presently, as noted by the participants' responses to industry changes.

Findings coincide with the conceptual framework of systems thinking, the science of wholeness, and the inclusion of dynamic interaction of parts within the system to understand the system (Bertalanffy, 1968). I used systems thinking as the conceptual framework to map industry-specific considerations in the outsourcing relationship of the

aerospace organization to the supplier, influenced by its environment. Understanding how the industries environment affects the organization is significant in tailoring strategies for an organization in that industry. Perunovic et al. (2012) contended that changes resulting from a dynamic industry might equip organizations in comprehension of the contextual operations of the company. Lastly, the findings highlight the importance or effect of working conditions and environmental factors on job performance (Jayaweera, 2015) in business practice to reduce ambiguity and creating awareness on the system and the environmental conditions (Vidal & Marle, 2012) as the environment of the participants were found to affect managers.

### **Emergent Theme 2: Communication**

People exist within complex systems affecting them and being affected by them at multiple levels, whether global, regional, or local (Monroe, Plate, & Colley, 2015). Understanding systems involve interventions to provide the opportunities to learn and build the skills necessary (Monroe et al., 2015). Systemic thinking encompasses a focus on vehicles intended to assist and promote organizational processes (Bednar & Welch, 2012). The identified theme of the existence of industry pressures created change that was noted by all of the participants (see Table 3).

Leading through change may come from communicating the desired result of change (Bell & Bodie, 2012). Similarly, Nafei (2013) contended that managers managing change could experience difficulty to make improvements directed at attaining the desired change and require supportive working relationships and effective communication. Communication is information transferred to a receiver achieving

comprehension from managers to subordinates, subordinates to superiors, and across peers (Ayatse & Ikanyon, 2012).

Communication was a recurring theme in responses to two of the questions during the semistructured interviews: when discussing retention and when discussing strategy to optimize performance. In Table 6, 50% of the participants identified communication as a strategy for retention. Upon being asked the question about what strategies participants use to retain personnel, Participant 3 immediately responded with, “open communication.” Participant 3 elaborated that it is important that personnel know what their expectations and responsibilities are and to keep them properly trained (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Likewise, Participant 4 identified communication by keeping personnel informed and working with them (Participant 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016).

One hundred percent of the participants identified communication as a strategy to optimize performance listed in Table 7. Participant 1 noted communication multiple times and referenced it in different facets, such as the need to understand the customer and what they are looking for, communicating realistically what can be provided, communicating the requirements from export compliance, and communicating all of the above within and across the organization (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Similarly, Participant 2 identified with communicating the requirement from the customer (Participant 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member



checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 highlighted open communication to ensure understanding of the expectations and job performance along with any issues that may be occurring (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 4 noted communicating to individual personnel as each person is different and communicating information from customers or the company will not be able to supply what they would like (Participant 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016).

All the participants identified communication in a few different ways; however, all of the forms of communication noted addressed communication with the purpose to enhance performance. Communication as a recurring theme, noted by its emphasized importance from the participants, confirmed the existing knowledge from peer reviewed sources in the literature review, advocating the transfer of information with achieved comprehension (Ayatse & Ikanyon, 2012). The conceptual framework of systems thinking was appropriate as the prevalence of communication as a response systemically and contextually arose from an organization experiencing the existence of industry pressures and the resulting continuous change as discussed under theme one. The existence of industry pressure resulting in change (theme one) that is supported by communication (theme two) that is seemingly effective in the next few sections through organizational commitment (theme four) and organizational longevity under performance strategies (theme five) convey the systems thinking approach that highlights the systems parts influence on one another in addition to the entire system (Shaked & Schechter,

2013). Likewise, the findings on communication tie into the existing literature on business practices in that communication can support vertical and horizontal relationships (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013) and the interaction assists the attainment of organizational goals (Ayatse & Ikanyon, 2012).

### **Emergent Theme 3: Extrinsic Motivational Factors**

The changing environmental circumstances make employee motivation issues complex (Thaliath & Thomas, 2012). Fredrick Herzberg contended that satisfaction and dissatisfaction were two elements of motivation not dependent on each other and affected by two different sets of factors in his motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, 1987).

Motivators or intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, and advancement influence whether an employee is satisfied or is not satisfied (Herzberg, 1987). Hygiene factors or extrinsic factors that include company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security, influence whether an employee is dissatisfied or not dissatisfied (Herzberg, 1987).

When I asked the participants about strategies to retain personnel and strategies to optimize performance, there was an overlap of themes (see Table 4).

Table 4

#### *Overlapping Themes From Table 6 and 7*

Table 6: Retention Strategies	Table 7: Optimize Performance
A genuine concern	Manager interaction
Benefits	Incentives
Communication	Good communication
Effective training	Training
Flexibility	Flexibility/Adaptability

The first overlapping theme was a genuine concern for retention strategies and manager interaction to optimize performance. Under strategies to retain personnel (Table 6), 50% of managers commented on having a genuine concern for their personnel's personal lives and their professional sentiment. Participant 1 noted that as a manager you have to remember that everyone has a life and families (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 2 discussed having respect and dignity for your personnel and caring about them (Participant 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). A similar theme of manager interaction was prevalent under strategies to optimize performance. Manager interaction was noted by 75% of the participants through involvement and interaction with their personnel on a personal level. Participant 1 discussed interacting on a personal level by going off site for luncheons (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 2 discussed working on the floor side by side with personnel (Participant 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 referenced cutting the rug with personnel to keep them going (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Themes, genuine concern and manager interaction, consist of the manager having a genuine concern for their personnel and expressing that concern through their interaction.

The second overlapping theme was benefits for retention strategies and incentives to optimize performance. Participant 2 identified benefits for retention strategies as supplying personnel's needs from benefits to salary (Participant 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 1 identified incentives for optimizing performance as monetary or tangible items or events (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Benefits and incentives are similar as they both relate to pay or a monetary expense.

The third overlapping theme was communication for retention strategies and good communication to optimize performance. Fifty percent of the participants noted communication for retention and 100% of the participants noted good communication to optimize performance. Communication is the underlying factor that overlaps in retention and performance optimization strategies. I provide discussion on communication under theme two.

The fourth overlapping theme was effective training for retention strategies and training to optimize performance. Participant 2 identified effective training for retention and Participant 1 identified training to optimize performance (Participant 1, 2, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Training is the core factor that overlaps in retention and performance optimization strategies.

The fifth overlapping theme was flexibility for retention strategies and Flexibility/Adaptability to optimize performance. Seventy-five percent of the

participants noted flexibility for retention and 50% of the participant's noted flexibility/adaptability to optimize performance. Participants described flexibility as maintaining flexibility with policy from Participant 1, and issues that may arise in your personnel's personal lives from Participant 1, 3, and 4 (Participant 1, 3, 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Adaptability was an extension to flexibility noted by Participants 1 and 4 in optimizing performance in that you not only have to be flexible for change but adapt as well to the changes that occur on the job (Participant 1, 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016).

The themes identified in these areas all fall within extrinsic or hygiene factors as discussed by Herzberg's motivation hygiene theory in the conceptual framework. Extrinsic factors are one of two major classes of motivated behavior (Vallerand, 2012). Extrinsic factors prevent job dissatisfaction according to Herzberg (1987). Although Herzberg's motivation hygiene theory discusses both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, the absence of commentary on intrinsic factors from the participants is independent of extrinsic factors as intrinsic factors address job satisfaction or no job satisfaction whereas hygiene factors address dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1987). The prevalence of extrinsic factors crossed with the high levels of tenure noted under theme four: organizational commitment and the amount of voluntary resignations noted by managers within the previous two years (see Table 5), confirms the existing knowledge on extrinsic factors and motivation in the peer reviewed studies referenced in the literature review.

Table 5

*Tenure: Voluntary Resignations in the Past 2 Years*

Participant	Voluntary resignations
1	5
2	0
3	0
4	0

Moreover, the findings tie into the existing literature on business practice and motivation, in that motivated employees lead to organizational commitment and job performance (Ozlen & Haanspahic, 2013), which is discussed further under theme four: organizational commitment.

#### **Emergent Theme 4: Organizational Commitment**

Intrinsic and extrinsic factors positively influence employee motivation and support work commitment (Afull-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Organizational commitment is often viewed as a form of retention of employees (Meyer et al., 1998). As noted by Shahid and Azhar (2013), organizations may have an increase in staff retention, productivity, effectiveness, and achievement resulting from organizational commitment.

I asked participants how many voluntary resignations they had in the past two years with only one participant having any voluntary resignations (see Table 5). Company archival documents showed that the average length of employees was 16.8 years for 79 employees (Analysis of employee tenure, July 26, 2016). The longest length of employment was 46 years, and the shortest length of employment was two years (Analysis of employee tenure, July 26, 2016). Percentage of employees ten years or more was (51 of 79) 64 % and percentage of employees nine years or less (28 of 79) was

35 % (Analysis of employee tenure, July 26, 2016). Additionally, company archival documents trace the formation of Company X back with 109 years of service (Company history statement, July 26, 2016). Through methodological triangulation of the data derived from the semistructured interviews and with company archival documentation, tenure for personnel was notably high.

In Table 6, I identified themes for strategies used to retain personnel with flexibility as the lead strategy.

Table 6

*Themes for Strategies Used to Retain Personnel*

Theme	Sources in percentile
A genuine concern	50%
Benefits	25%
Boosting morale	50%
Communication	50%
Effective training	25%
Flexibility	75%
Work life balance	25%

Seventy-five percent of the participants noted that flexibility was a strategy to retain personnel, which was the highest method of retaining personnel. Participant 1 specifically noted flexibility in policy and procedures to address each situation with personnel (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 3 noted flexibility in retaining personnel by working with personnel on issues that arise (Participant 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Participant 4 noted flexibility specifically in working with personnel and keeping them and their

personalities and keeping them content (Participant 4, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). The next highest method of retaining personnel noted by at least 50% of the participants were a genuine concern, boosting morale, and communication. Lastly, at least one participant noted benefits, effective training, and work life balance as a method to retain personnel.

Findings confirm the existing knowledge on organizational commitment through the level of tenure held by employees (Analysis of employee tenure, July 26, 2016) triangulated with 109 years of service (Company history statement, July 26, 2016), supporting the association of organizational commitment and tenure as noted by Meyer et al., (1998). Likewise, the findings support organizational commitment as a positive influence on performance as Shahid and Azhar (2013) contended. Furthermore, the findings support the conceptual framework of motivation with the positive outcome of organizational commitment and job performance (Ozlen & Haanspahic, 2013).

#### **Emergent Theme 5: Strategies for Employee Performance**

Sirohi and Sharma (2012) asserted that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have an influence on whether employees will remain in an organization and perform at increased levels. Organizations cannot perform at peak levels without organizational commitment from employees on the organization's objectives and with effective performance (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Improvement of organizational performance and productivity are crucial in attaining maximum efficiency (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). Sustaining increased levels of performance from employees is a



challenge for managers (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). Strategies are then used to attain goals (Teeratansirikoo et al., 2012).

I asked participants what strategies or concepts they used to optimize performance (see Table 7) and 100% of the participants responded with good communication (discussion provided under theme 2).

Table 7

*Themes for Strategies or Concepts Used to Optimize Performance*

Theme	Sources in percentile
Alignment check	25%
Flexibility/Adaptability	50%
Good communication	100%
Incentives	25%
Manager interaction	75%
Teamwork	50%
Training	25%

Seventy-five percent of the participants noted manager interaction as a strategy for performance (discussion provided under theme 3). Fifty percent of the participants highlighted flexibility/adaptability as a performance strategy (discussion provided under theme 3). Participant 1 and 3 noted teamwork as a strategy for performance (Participant 1, 3, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). Specifically, Participant 1 commented, “If we work together we make things happen.” Participant 3 stated, “everyone has to work together, and performance is about teaming up.” Participant 3 elaborated on teaming up:

It’s with your fellow management so that you’re on the same page, that staff in all departments referring to all managers or corporate, that they understand that we’re

only as good as the weakest link. It takes everybody to do what we do from answering the phones effectively to data interface to sales to management to producing the parts of manufacture. We can do all that, and if the driver doesn't care and damages it on the truck, all that production work is gone.

Twenty-five percent of the participants noted training and incentives as strategies (discussion provided under theme 3). Lastly, Participant 1 noted alignment check, by ensuring the process from order to delivery is on the same page, as a strategy for performance (Participant 1, personal communication, July 26, 2016; confirmed through member checking on September 1, 2016). The findings extend the knowledge in the discipline of performance strategies by contributing specific factors that positively affect performance. Likewise, the findings support the conceptual framework with positive outcomes of motivated employees through the high retention rate and company years of service discussed under theme four.

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

Employees are valuable to an organization (Bilal, 2012) and maintaining a high level of performance is a challenge amongst managers (Afful-Broni & Nanyele, 2012). The purpose of this study was to explore strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. The findings of this study revealed the existence of industry pressures and the change that occurs in an organization as a result of those pressures. The systemic reaction of those changes creates a need for effective communication in which communication was also a finding in the study.

Extrinsic motivation factors and organizational commitment were findings as well

that revealed the effectiveness of the performance strategies disclosed. In Table 7, I listed the performance strategies disclosed with good communication, managerial interaction, flexibility and adaptability, and teamwork as the most used. Training, alignment checks, and incentives were other strategies noted by at least one participant in Table 7.

The findings are relevant as the strategies derived from the study are tailored specifically to a supplier of the aerospace industry. These strategies are not generic; rather they are specifically derived from and contoured for the aerospace industry. Furthermore, the findings are relevant since a company that has been in the industry 109 years (Company history statement, July 26, 2016) provided them and the company's employee tenure is 16.8 years on average (Analysis of employee tenure, July 26, 2016). The source of data is credible with notably effective strategies.

### **Implications for Social Change**

Outsourcing supports a social product of employment and when it declines the consequences are layoffs and unemployment (Michael & Michael, 2012). Subsequently, unemployed personnel from formal sectors revert to the informal sectors that are characterized by lower earnings, productivity, and potentially increased poverty (Chowdhury, Islam, & Lee, 2013). Furthermore, Chowdhury et al. (2013) contended the economic impacts of unemployment affect public health through areas such as hunger and malnutrition, suicides, domestic violence and child abuse. Long turn unemployment is increasing, and there is considerable impact on social and public health (Chowdhury et al., 2013).

The environmental changes for an organization affect motivational issues in an organization from the inherent complexity (Thaliath & Thomas, 2012). The motivation system of an organization is constructed for that particular organization, and its environment with the needs of their employees in mind (Thaliath & Thomas, 2012). In studying the performance strategies of suppliers in an outsourcing relationship within the aerospace industry, performance strategies identified are derived from a company with effective outcomes in tenure and performance. These strategies may assist company managers within the aerospace industry by enhancing employee performance and ultimately positively supporting and furthering the outsourcing relationship. Identified performance strategies for managers in an outsourcing relationship provide a positive impact on the organizational performance (Sharda & Chatterjee, 2011) in which supports the social product of employment (Michael & Michael, 2012).

### **Recommendations for Action**

The purpose of this study was to explore strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. Outsourcing as a business practice has grown and is used by companies for benefits particularly in cost (Gandhi et al., 2012). Suppliers in an outsourcing relationship in the aerospace industry would benefit from the findings of this study by utilizing effective strategies in employee performance. Additionally, potential suppliers seeking to engage in an outsourcing relationship in the aerospace industry would benefit from the strategies identified in this study to support quality employee performance and sustain new outsourcing relationships. The results will be briefed to the participants verbally, and I will provide the completed published

study will at that time.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

Findings of the study included performance strategies for suppliers of the aerospace industry. It is my recommendation that future researchers investigate the organizational culture of a company that may confirm, disconfirm, or extend findings from this study as organizational culture encompasses external and internal environments and how each specific way is dealt with (Goldman, 2012). Additionally, adding a quantitative element to assess or attempt to define company success in its industry would counter the limitations of qualitative research in this study. Likewise, the limited perspective of four company managers in this study would be strengthened in future studies with more manager's perspectives and with more cases in varying geographical locations and demographics. Lastly, future recommendations would be to investigate different portions of the aerospace industry such as electronics supplier, defense, quality, etc.

### **Reflections**

The experience of completing a doctoral study was truly humbling and enlightening. The level of detail required in conducting a doctoral study and accounting for all angles in research, particularly the research as an instrument and one's own biased, was humbling as day-to-day life does not demand such levels of scrutiny. Contrariwise, the process itself is enlightening as I took a potentially one-dimensional issue or statement, and transformed it into a contextually and conceptually dynamic piece of information that may support the future of a company and its industry. As I initially

crafted the conceptual framework of this study, I did so with what I thought to be logically constructed. It was exciting during the participant interviews to hear the participants naturally speak with the same logic in which this study was constructed. The importance of contextually rich data has become ever more apparent to me as a result of this study.

### **Summary and Study Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to explore what strategies outsourced firm company leaders use to improve the performance of employees. I used a qualitative embedded case-study design of a common case with two sources of data for methodological triangulation: individual semistructred interviews and review of company archival records. Semistructred interviews with four senior managers from a firm currently producing parts for a major aerospace company in Southern California. Following the semistructred interviews with the participants, I transcribed and summarized the data. Participants verified transcripts and member checking was conducted to ensure the accuracy of the participant's meaning. The data was coded and then analyzed that resulted in the following themes: the existence of industry pressures, communication, extrinsic motivational factors, organizational commitment, and strategies for employee performance.

Findings of the study clearly support good communication, managerial interaction, flexibility and adaptability, teamwork, alignment check, incentives, and training as effective performance strategies within the outsourcing relationship of the aerospace industry. The findings are pertinent since the strategies derived from the study

are fitted exclusively for a supplier of the aerospace industry. As strategies in support of positive service quality, incorporate organizational, and environmental variables that necessitate differing methods (Black et al., 2013), the findings increase the knowledge in the discipline of performance strategies by adding specific factors that positively affect performance in the aerospace industry. Current or prospective suppliers of an outsourcing relationship in the aerospace industry would benefit from the performance strategies found in this study to enhance employee performance or sustain new outsourcing relationships.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

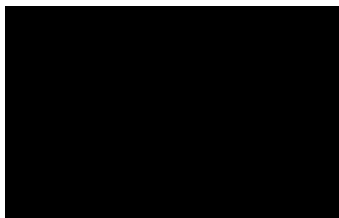
1. Self-introduction to participants.
  - 1.1. Provide name of interviewer.
  - 1.2. Provided name of learning institution and degree path.
  - 1.3. Provide study objective
2. Present and discuss the consent form
  - 2.1. Content of consent form
  - 2.2. Address questions and concerns of the participant.
  - 2.3. Attain participants signature
  - 2.4. Provide participant copy of consent form.
3. Place recording device visibly between the participant and myself.
  - 3.1. Turn on the recording device.
4. Introduce participant with pseudonym/coded identification
  - 4.1. State the date and time.
5. Start the interview with the first question and continue in sequence to the last question.
6. Discuss any additional questions.
7. Discuss member-checking to participant and explain the how it is conducted.
8. Thank the participant for their time and participation in the study.
  - 8.1. Restate participant's contact numbers for follow up questions
  - 8.2. Reiterate interviewers contact number for any potential concerns from participants.

9. Protocol complete.

## Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. How many years have you worked in the aerospace industry?
2. What have been your previous roles within the aerospace industry?
3. How long did you serve in those roles?
4. What changes have you experienced in the aerospace industry in the past 5 years?
5. How do you feel those changes have affected your ability to manage?
6. What key differences have you seen in managing a production group in the aerospace industry?
7. How has export compliance affected you as a manager?
8. How has Sarbanes Oxley affected you as a manager?
9. What knowledge or interaction do you have with the Aerospace (organization)?
10. What other information would you like to provide that you feel is pertinent in understanding the aerospace industry?
11. How many years have you served as a senior manager for parts production in the aerospace industry?
12. What departments are you responsible for in your company?
13. How many direct and indirect personnel are you responsible for in your company?
14. How many of those are in your production group?
15. In the last two years, how many production personnel have voluntarily resigned from the company?
16. What is the average length of employment of personnel in your production group? (Provide Company Documents to support 1)# of Personnel 2) length of time for each)
17. What other information would you like to provide that you feel is relevant to your background in the aerospace industry?
18. What strategies do you use to retain personnel?
19. What strategies or concepts do you use to optimize performance?
20. What performance strategies do you use that are least effective?
21. What performance strategies do you use that are most effective?
22. In your experience, what obstacles have you encountered in performance strategies?
23. What other information would you like to provide that you feel would contribute to the understanding of performance strategies?

## Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation From a Research Partner



June 20, 2016

Dear Nicole Balderrama,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled, Strategies to Improve Employee Performance in the U.S. Aerospace Industry within [REDACTED]. As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit participants from a provided list of names via email or telephone, collect data through an initial off site interview lasting approximately 1-2 hours, a second off site interview lasting approximately 30 minutes to review transcripts for accuracy and conduct member checking, and lastly to disseminate results of the activities in a 1 -2 page report. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: Providing a list of senior managers and to provide archival records that present employee tenure and years of the company in the aerospace industry. Personal information such as names and customers are not necessary in the archival records. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

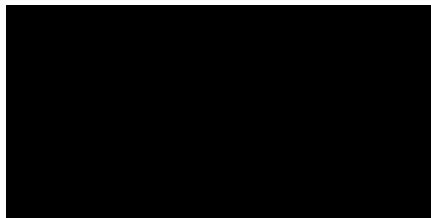
I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Authorization Official:

Contact Information:



Walden University policy on electronic signatures: An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically. Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Electronic signatures are only valid when the signer is either (a) the sender of the email, or (b) copied on the email containing the signed document. Legally an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. Walden University staff verify any electronic signatures that do not originate from a password-protected source (i.e., an email address officially on file with Walden).