Graduate School of Business

The Third Space: Shared Understanding between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People
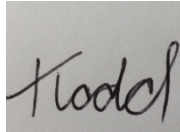
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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university

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Abstract

This research takes a constructivist, interpretivist approach to investigating what Aboriginal people call the 'third space' within the context of the Western Australian civil construction industry. The 'third space' is where shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures is reached. This research adds to the theoretical body of knowledge as well as practically improves knowledge as to what creates and inhibits shared understanding including making recommendations to facilitate improvement in engagement and retention of Aboriginal people in employment and in shared understanding within business. This research identifies leadership traits perceived by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as creating positive and negative regard for their team leader. It finds that there are commonly held views between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people as to what enables and inhibits shared understanding as well as identifies what these factors are to enable practical recommendations to industry. Finally, it proposes Baldja Leadership as a formative model of leadership based on the jointly held views of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as to leadership and shared understanding that aims to facilitate shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research explores what Aboriginal people, and others, call the 'third space' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 10) within the context of the Western Australian civil construction industry ("the industry"). The 'third space' is where shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures is reached. It was explored through the lived experiences of shared understanding in working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the industry.

While Aboriginal employment has had concomitant emphasis in Australian industry for years, rarely have the 'rules' of business considered Aboriginal employees (C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). Historically Western development of shared understanding within business is universalist in philosophy and approach with rules and communications applied to "all people whatever their social identity or background" (Sanders, 2004, p. 4). Nonetheless "universalism has its limits" (Sanders, 2004, p. 4) in implying individuals and performance are consistent and leadership concepts and behaviours are relevant everywhere (Bass, 1996, p. 731).

In the future there will be a higher proportion of working Aboriginal people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009), it is therefore "important to ensure that there are increasing job opportunities" (Buultjens, 1997, p. 59) for this upcoming cohort. To successfully increase job opportunity, industry leaders need to progress beyond a universalist approach by improving shared understanding between the two cultures.

Accordingly, the research question is:

> *What are the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding?*

This research adds to the theoretical body of knowledge on leadership, shared understanding, trust and conflict management. It provides pragmatic recommendations to industry as revealed by data in this research. Finally, it concludes that shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace is possible and recommends a leadership model to facilitate this.

1.1 Aboriginal World View

Before exploring the content of this study, it is important to understand a little about the difference between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world views. Glaskin (2012, p. 298) describes the 'personhood' of an Aboriginal person as an ontology of embodied relatedness". This is based on her experiences in the Kimberley region of Western Australia with the Bardi and Jawi Aboriginal peoples. In considering how Aboriginal people relate, she goes onto explain that:

> relationality encompasses not just people, but places, species and ancestral beings; it is a relationship between persons and places regarded as consubstantial and that has consequences for how people, and people and country are linked through space and time (Glaskin, 2012, p. 298).

This contrasts to the Western perspective. In the Western world view, individuals relate; however, this is disconnected from 'place'. The Western perspective is that a 'place' may be legally purchased and 'owned' by the individual and can be 'occupied' in terms of housing or 'worked' in terms of farming or business operation. Land is a 'thing' that may be legally purchased and owned. In traditional Aboriginal culture, however "country is inhabited by various other-than-human persons, and it is these beings and their traces (which are consubstantial with other beings) that vest the country with such sentience" (Glaskin, 2012, p. 305). Aboriginal people can 'hear' and 'smell' country and believe it is important to introduce new people to country by speaking to the "old people" (Povinelli, 1993, p. 32). These contrasting world views make genuine shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people a difficult and complex space as will be explored in this study.

This next section introduces seeing the land through the Aboriginal world view and the 'Dreaming' folklore.

1.1.1 Ngurru Nyjunngama: When the World Was Soft …

The Yindjibarndi people are the Traditional Owners in central Pilbara from Millstream-Chichester National Park across the Fortescue River to the Hamersley Ranges, in Western Australia. According to Yindjibarndi dreaming, in the beginning, the sky was once very low and the Marrga (Creation Spirits) rose from the ground and raised the sky and lifted earth from ocean. Then the world was soft and the Marrga carved and moulded the earth to

form country and all the birds and animals. Finally, the Marrga created Ngaardangarli, the Aboriginal People. In Yindjibarndi country, there is evidence of the world once being soft with children's footprints clearly moulded in what is now 'hard rock'. The contrast between the soft world of Aboriginal spirituality and the rationalist/economic 'hard' world of business does not make for a natural shared understanding between Western and Aboriginal organisational members.

With a "growing emphasis on competition, efficiency and technology, often at the expense of social awareness and community values" (Schwartz, Kassem, & Ludwig, 1991, p. 465), Western society is becoming 'harder' and less relational. Aboriginal people are also becoming 'harder' to meet the requirements of capitalist society. Listening to this Aboriginal Dreaming story while in the Pilbara, the researcher reflected on how we too are becoming 'harder', just as the earth has. We now come from a 'solid' world view of Western culture that is considered universalist within the business realm (Sanders, 2004) which creates a difficult and complex environment in which to form shared understanding.

The Australian civil construction sector in particular has "high levels of interpersonal and interorganisational conflict" (Loosemore & Galea, 2008, p. 125). The civil construction industry is known for its 'hardness' in that members operate in often unpleasant environmental conditions, with tight deadlines responding to short term pressures, with transient teams that espouse 'tough' male-dominated cultures to drive tasks down the 'critical path' (Lindebaum & Cassell, 2012). Everything must run like clockwork for a contract to be successfully fulfilled. Wheatley (2007, p. 17) critically describes this as "a story of forces of domination and control and all encompassing materialism" where we would "engineer it to do what we saw fit and we would fix it through our engineering brilliance".

The focus of this study is on shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within this 'hard' environment. The research context requires that both world views are to be recognised. In particular, we need to think of the earth when the sky was low and become softer and malleable as well as thinking of the needs of the 'hard' business environments. It is hoped this study will contribute to creating a new working future founded in strength and a shared understanding. One Elder interviewed as part of this research called children the "raw" people. Their innocence is yet to be moulded; they

are soft as the earth once was. In his interview he asked, how we can create this 'raw', 'softness' within adults in the workplace:

> *This is something that I envisaged…many, many years ago and never, ever thought it would come to fruition, until then. It was a vision that the whole idea of it was that we would capture the raw, the influential people. These guys they know nothing at this age [pointing to little children] and how do we, how do we get that to those guys?*

This research finds that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can achieve such a way of working together and understanding each other and suggests ways of facilitating this shared understanding. The next section provides background as to how the researcher came to select this research topic.

1.2   Creating Change in the Civil Construction Sector

In choosing this topic to study the researcher drew on her knowledge of the problems sometimes called 'wicked' (Horst & Melvin, 1973) of creating shared understanding and her knowledge of the expectations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people often have of each other. The researcher has spent over a decade working in the civil construction sector on Aboriginal employment and economic development. Observationally, there have been many different approaches to improving Aboriginal engagement and employment within the civil construction industry from cultural awareness training, mentoring programs, Aboriginal specific traineeships and apprenticeships, and yet it remains unclear as to really what 'works' or why it might work. There is substantial rhetoric around how to improve Aboriginal engagement within organisations. Some of which has now had some research foundation, such as cultural awareness training (Lumby, 2010; Ochieng, Price, Ruan, Egbu, & Moore, 2013).

This research aims to shed light onto some of the key enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within the civil construction industry in Western Australia and provide a way forward. This study seeks to emerge new and original insight into the difficulties of engaging and retaining Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector from both the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal perspectives by focusing on enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding.

This short introduction is followed by an overview of the research and then a summary of the structure of the thesis.

1.3   Research Overview

This research explores what Aboriginal people call the 'third space' or the space 'in between' cultures (Bhabha, 1994) within the context of the Western Australian civil construction industry. It explores the lived experiences of shared understanding in working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Development of shared understanding within business is universalist in philosophy and approach with rules and communications applied to "all people whatever their social identity or background". However "universalism has its limits" (Sanders, 2004, p. 4) in implying individuals and performance are consistent and leadership concepts and behaviours are relevant everywhere (Bass, 1996, p. 731).

The research question to be addressed is:

What are the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding?

Research objectives related to this research question are to:

1. gather Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;

2. gather non-Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;

3. compare and analyse perception commonalities and differences collected from items 1 and 2;

4. identify the factors which affect an Aboriginal worker's regard for his team leader and whether these differ from the non-Aboriginal perspective;

5. identify the issues and insights that would create shared understanding and thereby improve working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; and

6. identify emerging constructs to inform how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people socially construct meaning in the civil construction industry.

Behavioural objectives operationalise the research question. Therefore, this study is relational and gathers perceptions and meanings attributed to the organisational phenomena from four perspectives:

1. Aboriginal team leaders
2. non-Aboriginal team leaders
3. Aboriginal employees (workers); and
4. non-Aboriginal employees (workers).

Leaders influence sense-making to create shared understanding through social construction of meaning (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999) as it is only through shared understanding industry moves toward the 'third space' of mutual understanding (Bhabha, 2011). The espoused 'universalist' approach of transformational leadership has been questioned in relation to the ethics of leadership influence and relevance for Aboriginal people. A new form of leadership is required to better relate to the Aboriginal workplace needs and the creation of shared understanding between the two cultures and this is built on the foundations of servant leadership. This is likely the first body of research into Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal shared understanding in an Australian business context. Therefore, this research adds to the theoretical knowledge around building shared understanding with Aboriginal people.

The research focuses on personal constructs of reality, informed by symbolic interactionist theory (Blumer, 1969)with the intent of emerging meaning and sense-making of organisational culture, relationships, policies and practices. A constructivist ontology, interpretive epistemology and qualitative methodology have been adopted. Data were collected by personal interview, with mutuality and interpersonal interaction with participants selected using theoretical sampling. A familiarisation study informed procedures, personal presentation and relevance or acceptability of research questions. Data were analysed using grounded theory procedures and the constant comparison process (Charmaz & Bryant, 2010; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Theoretical insights are drawn on shared understanding and its enablers and inhibitors from the respondent's perspectives.

The research has been conducted in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (*National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007*, 2013) and was undertaken with the values of respect, integrity, justice and

beneficence. As the study involved Aboriginal participants, a rigorous ethical examination was undertaken. Participants were informed and voluntarily participated with safeguards established to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants.

The research was conducted between 2013 and 2017, with a systematic approach to the research design and implementation (Whiteley, 2012). Meticulous records have been maintained of the interviews and an audit trail has been created (Armson & Whiteley, 2010).

This research adds to the theoretical body of knowledge as well as practically improves knowledge as to what creates shared understanding to assist leaders in facilitating improved engagement and retention of Aboriginal people. This body of work is presented as pioneering in adding to the limited (and non-existent in the civil construction context) theoretical knowledge around building shared understanding with Australian Aboriginal people in the workplace.

There is evidence of large research 'gaps', particularly in providing Aboriginal perspectives. This research in part to addresses this academic/theoretic knowledge gap as well as provides leaders with useful workplace concepts, tools and advice to improve shared understanding.

1.4   Structure of this Thesis

This research was a mission of discovery and exploration of the research question. This is a complex research question, so the work was narrowed into three parts:

1. To identify the enablers and inhibitors of positive working environments or shared understanding;
2. To identify factors affecting regard for team or team leader
3. To identify issues or insights that would create or prevent shared understanding and improve working relationships.

These parts focus the research question and admittedly this body of work provides a small window into the larger body of research required in this space. However, it remains globally unique and the research design aims at emerging high quality and rich data from which to inform the existing body of knowledge. This study will enable others to look more deeply into how we can create shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace.

The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides an exploration of the literature in two parts:

1. A review of literature relevant to the research question and objectives going into the study; and
2. A review of literature relevant to the research question revealed by the research data.

The first part of Chapter 2 offers a literature review initially drafted prior to entering the field and commencing the research. It focuses on theory around sense-making and shared understanding, leadership in the civil construction sector and Aboriginal people in the workplace. This was briefly updated with more recent research on these topics after the data collection process. The second part of Chapter 2 was guided solely by the data revealed in the research relevant to the research question. This data-directed literature review covers theory of organisational justice and prejudice; cultural awareness; spiritual intelligence; trust; expectancy theory and conflict management.

Chapter 3 describes the theoretical framework and methodology of this body of research. It describes how this research is founded in a philosophic perspective of becoming and has therefore taken the theoretical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. This research uses a constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology. This is a qualitative methodology as it deals with the "analysis of social problems, issues or settings." (Charmaz, 2007, p. 79). Chapter 3 also provides the research design and process followed by a description of the manner in which data were analysed. Analysis of the trustworthiness and rigour of this process is then explored.

Chapter 4 details the findings. These are documented by the hermeneutic units of:

- Aboriginal Team Leaders
- Aboriginal Workers
- Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
- Non-Aboriginal Workers

Then within each hermeneutic unit, the data were divided into six categories directly related to the research objectives being:

A. Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding
B. Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding
C. Factors creating positive regard for team or team leader
D. Factors creating negative regard for team or team leader

E. Issues or insights that would create shared understanding and improve working relationships

F. Issues or insights that would prevent shared understanding and improve working relationships

This detailed information is analysed and presented in a condensed view in Chapter 5, Insights into Similarities and Differences between Hermeneutic Units. Chapter 5 lifts and consolidates the detailed data presented in Chapter 4. It explores where Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers have similarities and differences in relation to each of the six categories above. It is this work that has predominantly been used to inform the Discussion chapter.

The Discussion chapter (Chapter 6)examines the findings from this research in relation to Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004) Conceptual Framework for Shared understanding. It then explores the inhibitors to shared understanding identified from the data. Finally, it looks at emerging theory of leadership that will facilitate shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector.

Finally, the conclusion offers some pragmatic suggestions for businesses wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people based on the findings of this research.

This introduction has provided an overview of the background and context of the thesis. The core structure of the thesis has been outlined. The next chapter explores the literature surrounding firstly the research question and then subsequently the data revealed in the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser, 1978) is a mission of discovery and exploration and the researcher needs to be familiar with the theory surrounding the research context. This chapter contains two sections. The first provides a review of the current literature relating to the research question of:

> What are the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding?

This first section of the literature review was predominantly undertaken prior to the interviews. Care was taken to avoid the danger of fitting the data to existing theory. With this in mind, the literature reviewed related to the research objective covers leadership, shared understanding and sense-making as well as Aboriginal culture in the workplace.

However, the research needs to be open to other theory as is suggested by the data. As described in the methodology chapter, having written up the findings, Armson and Whiteley (2010) suggest returning to the literature to review new literature based on the findings. Therefore, the second section of this chapter provides such a review of literature that is relevant to the theory drawn out from the data. Chamaz (2005b) would encourage this practice of returning to the literature to position the research. Therefore, this second section provides a summary of the current theoretic context of some of the data that the interviews revealed as relevant to shared understanding and the working relationships in the civil construction sector context.

Steel and König (2006, p. 889) claim that our "progress toward understanding human behaviour has been hindered by discipline bound theories, dividing our efforts". This literature review has necessarily spanned a variety of disciplines including psychology, management, sociology and organisational behaviour among others to ensure a genuine reflection of the data and findings.

2.1   Literature Related to the Research Question

As there is no core body of literature relating directly to the research question, this section provides a summary of the literature that is considered key to understanding the

core concepts within the research question. Therefore, this section provides an overview of the relevant key literature and theory relating to:

- leadership and management in the global construction industry generally;
- leadership theory including creation and inhibitors of shared understanding, co-creation of meaning and sense-making generally; and
- Australian Aboriginal people and culture in the workplace.

2.1.1 Leadership and Management in the Civil Construction Industry

Civil construction has several unique features including the one-off nature of construction projects; responsiveness to short-term pressures; transient workforces; and being a male dominated culture (Lindebaum & Cassell, 2012; Loosemore & Galea, 2008). It is important to realise that the beginning of each construction project generally requires the formation of new project teams, each time a new project is awarded (Raidén & Dainty, 2006; Tabassi et al., 2014). Project leaders and their leadership play a critical role in creating project spirit and success (Aronson, Shenhar, & Patanakul, 2013).

Constant team 'rebirthing' calls for highly "effective teamwork management and leadership practices" (Tabassi et al., 2014, p. 1021). Despite this need for fast team formation and strong leadership to achieve deliverables, most leadership in the civil construction industry research has focused on the characteristics of Project Managers (Tabassi et al., 2014). Globally there has been research on differences between leadership and management (Toor, 2011); leadership legacy (Toor & Ofori, 2011); characteristics of successful leaders (Toor, 2010); ethical leadership (Carden & Boyd, 2012; Toor & Ofori, 2009); and leadership development (Skipper & Bell, 2008).

Perceptions of leadership in the industry are built around "power, authority and task orientation" (Toor & Ofori, 2008, p. 620). One study in the United Arab Emirates found that consultative and consensus leadership styles were prevalent in the industry (Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). However Toor and Ogunlana's (2009, p. 254) study in Thailand found that the "wrongful use of power, poor communication and low experience" inhibits effective leadership.

Randeree and Chaudhry (2012, p. 61) also found that "job satisfaction is strongly affected by leadership, with more than 50% of survey respondents stating that leadership strongly influences their job satisfaction" and leadership style affects organisational commitment. Lazányi and Dóka's (2015, p. 55) Hungarian research notes that the "style and toolset of a

leader should match the maturity and expectation of his/her employees". However it has been demonstrated that in the civil construction industry these leadership expectations, particularly around transformation leadership are generally not met (Lazányi & Dóka, 2015).

Research in Hong Kong revealed that civil construction workers generally find both participative and directive leadership styles are common (Rowlinson, Ho, & Yuen, 1993). The civil construction industry has different leadership styles employed by project leaders from task to relational-oriented depending on the situation (Ochieng et al., 2013; Rowlinson et al., 1993; Tabassi et al., 2014). Daft's (2009) transformational leadership qualities were strongly prevalent in civil construction leaders in Iran and it was considered the most applied leadership style (Tabassi et al., 2014).

Within the highly relational Aboriginal cultural context the civil construction industry's task-oriented leadership styles and methods might inhibit shared understanding. However, there is recognised need for authentic, people-focused leadership within the civil construction industry, particularly "to support and sustain collective situated learning and shared understanding of longer-term benefits of collaborative work" (Cicmil & Marshall, 2005, p. 523; Toor & Ofori, 2008). This indicates that leadership styles in the industry are changing and that future leaders are likely to use leadership styles which aid shared understanding.

However Lindebaum and Cassell (2012) discovered that the male dominance in civil construction had implications including that emotions were too difficult to discuss in the civil construction workforce as they were associated with weakness or considered unnecessary. This is aligned to Butler and Chinowsky's (2006) findings that the three weakest areas of leadership for executives are: empathy; interpersonal relationships and social responsibility. These are likely important within the highly relational Aboriginal culture and without improvement, shared understanding seems implausible.

Organisations tend to be a reflection of the societies within which they operate (Dombeck, 2003; Showunmi, Atewologun, & Bebbington, 2016) and the civil construction industry is notorious for under representation of minority groups, particularly in senior positions (Styhre, 2011). In order to manage cross-culturally, team leaders need to have substantial multicultural and interpersonal skills (Ochieng et al., 2013). However a survey has found Aboriginal representation across the industry of almost 5%, which exceeds the population average (Civil Contractors Federation WA, 2012). This result leads to

questioning whether there is a form of shared understanding between minority Aboriginal and other workers in the industry.

Table 2.1 Provides a summary of the leadership styles that have been found in the construction sector globally by previous research.

Table 2.1: Summary of Leadership Styles in the Construction Sector

Style	Description from Research
Authoritarian Leadership	Power, authority and task orientation (Toor & Ofori, 2008); At times wrongful use of power, poor communication (Toor & Ogunlana, 2009) Directive (Rowlinson et al., 1993) Task-oriented leadership (Ochieng et al., 2013; Tabassi et al., 2014)
Participative Leadership	Consultative and consensus building (Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012); Participative (Rowlinson et al., 1993)
Relational Leadership	Relationship oriented leadership (Ochieng et al., 2013) (Tabassi et al., 2014)

Having examined leadership in the construction sector, the next section will focus on the research in the Aboriginal context that relates to this study.

2.1.2 Aboriginal Context

Most research exploring Aboriginal perspectives focuses on health, education and justice and indicates that Aboriginal people are less healthy, less educated and more incarcerated than their peers. Australian 2011 census data reveal only 56% of the Aboriginal working age population participate in the workforce, whereas this was 76.4% for non-Aboriginal Australians and unemployment for Aboriginal people was over three times that of non-Aboriginal people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014; Bajada & Trayler, 2014).

Research relating to Aboriginal Australians in the industry is limited to land rights and heritage (O'Faircheallaigh, 2008; Strang, 2000). There is no industry specific research

offering Aboriginal perspectives on developing shared understanding or on leadership within this research context.

It first should be acknowledged that Aboriginal culture across the State of Western Australia is not uniform and therefore the leadership perceptions reflected from Aboriginal people may be as diverse as their cultures (Maddison, 2009). Limerick (2009) questions whether Western governance can be viable in Aboriginal communities. Research conducted with Canadian Aboriginal people revealed leadership "as a spiritual endeavour that is holistic and egalitarian in nature" (Julien, Wright, & Zinni, 2010, p. 114). This affects leadership style as it invokes indirect folklore, storytelling and imagery communication (Julien et al., 2010). This appears similar to Australian Aboriginal culture, where Elders also use folklore, storytelling and imagery in cultural leadership.

Indigenous leaders from the Americas and New Zealand say their inner strength and personal power comes from a deep spirituality based on "respect for the earth, ancestors, family and peaceful coexistence" (Christakis & Harris, 2004, p. 251). Observationally, this is also prevalent in Aboriginal cultural leaders. Table 2.2 explores potential leadership differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Generally Aboriginal leadership is more relational in style than its non-Aboriginal counterparts (Stewart & Warn, 2017).

However, Western Australian workplaces have rarely adapted to accommodate the sort of leadership style of an Aboriginal leader identified in Table 2.2. Research in other countries has found that people 'of colour' working in mostly white, male environments must forgo their own culture and adopt a new identity more pertinent to the dominant culture (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). This assimilation into the majority culture prevents individuals from bringing their entire identity to work and remains a key indicator of ethnic inequality (Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Ossenkop, Vinkenburg, Jansen, & Ghorashi, 2015). Research on challenges faced by Canadian Aboriginal leaders reveals the need to walk in 'two worlds': the Aboriginal and Western (Julien et al., 2010). This is also a common notion for Australian Aboriginal people participating in capitalist-led organisations. Many anecdotally encourage the possibility of a 'third space' where the two cultures can work together in shared understanding.

Table 2.2: Potential Differences between Canadian Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Leaders

Non-Aboriginal leaders	Aboriginal leaders
Individualistic leader (I)	community-oriented leader (We)
Leadership effectiveness narrow (e.g. unit performing tasks successfully and meeting goals; focus on action benefiting organisation)	Leadership effectiveness broad (connection to the creator, focus on action benefiting whole community)
Focus on short-term results (e.g. quarterly results)	Focus on long-term results (impact of decisions on future generations)
Spirituality slowly evolving into the workplace	Spirituality as the key driver of action and central to leaders' social identity
Story-telling is becoming a more important communication method	Story-telling central to leaders' communication style
Relationships: hierarchical historically, but evolving	Relationships: egalitarian
Focus on person as employee: what can I get from this person? Work–family seen as separate domains historically; slowly evolving to recognise importance of supporting employees with work and family responsibilities	Focus on whole person: mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being; recognition of importance of family

(adapted from Julien et al., 2010)

Nonetheless, disparities between Aboriginal and Western culture "constrain the prospects of Aboriginal assimilation into mainstream capitalist Australia" (Grant, Kleiber, & McAllister, 2005, p. 395). The word 'assimilation' itself implies unbending 'universalism'. Western values of "dominion over nature and present orientation run contrary to Indigenous beliefs in community, harmony with nature and time independence" (Grant et al., 2005, p. 395). Due to the Aboriginal preference to reinforce "community protocols and social relations", the Western management direction may be perceived as 'foreign' to Aboriginal workers (C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010, p. 323). These conflicting values are explored in Table 2.3, which portrays how these cultures are fundamentally 'unshared' and thereby highlighting the importance of a 'third space'.

Table 2.3: Differences in Business-Related Values

Attitudes Towards…	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
Possessions	Accumulate	Utilize
	Acquire	Share
Land	Ownership of	Relationship with
Interaction	Competitive	Co-operative
Rights	Individual rights	Kin obligations
Basic Operating Unit	Individual	Society

(adapted from Edwards (1988) by Schaper (1999, p. 89; Tabassi, Ramli, Bakar, & Pakir, 2014))

The profit value desired by the industry 'competes' with Aboriginal priorities such as family relationships, social obligation/reciprocity and preservation of cultural identity (Buultjens, 1997; Ellanna, Loveday, Stanley, & Young, 1988). However research into these differences and their impact on shared understanding is yet to occur.

In Finland it has been found that Indigenous entrepreneurship focuses on community, environment and being able to maintain a traditional lifestyle (Dana & Light, 2011) and in Canada Indigenous entrepreneurship has been found to take a more social entrepreneurship focus (Anderson, Dana, & Dana, 2006). However once again, research on these matters within the Australian context is close to non-existent.

Generally, Aboriginal people are marginalised in the workforce, usually employed in the lower occupational ranks and in lower income categories (Buultjens, 1997). This is also observationally true of the civil construction industry. Perhaps a reflection of what academics (Altman, Biddle, & Hunter, 2009; Chataway, 2002; C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010; Sanders, 2004) and Australian Aboriginal leaders (N. Pearson, 2007; Yunupingu, 2009) have highlighted that universalist approaches fail with Aboriginal people. Stewart and Warn (2017) believe that Aboriginal leaders are constantly interpreting and negotiating to work 'between two worlds', each with it's own leadership dilemmas.

In contrast to many Western perceptions of leadership, Aboriginal leadership is defined by the collective and new leaders are usually "careful not to assume their right to lead in new situations" (Maddison, 2009; Stewart & Warn, 2017, p. 4). Leadership for Aboriginal people is seen as a 'connectedness' where the self-identity is characterised by the

identity of the group (Maddison, 2009). This connectedness and collaborative behaviour is seen as important for leadership resilience (Jules, 1999; Stewart & Warn, 2017). In addition to connecting with people, a spiritual connectedness, usually with country, is also important to Aboriginal leadership (Crossman, 2011; Stewart & Warn, 2017). Through collective connectedness, leadership in Aboriginal culture is more about that of "a collective action rather than the work of a single powerful leader" (Stewart & Warn, 2017, p. 13).

2.1.3   Leadership Theory

Leadership is a complex, changing, well studied phenomenon, socially constructed (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Deetz, 2001; Thompson & Fine, 1999) by both the leader and followers. Perhaps because of this, its definition remains elusive. One definition from Lantis (1987, p. 192) is a leader "influences… attitudes and behaviour" of a group or many people. This ability to influence incorporates notions of sense-making (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005) and shared understanding (van Ginkel & van Knippenberg, 2012). Leaders must be able to create their own sense of a situation and share their understanding as well as influence and be influenced by the sense-making and understanding of others. Leadership is thereby reciprocal: leaders influence and are influenced (Daft & Priola-Merlo, 2009). This capability is part of a leader's ability to induce "self organising responses" and action (Wheatley, 2007, p. 70). Influencing the sense-making of others and therefore creating a shared understanding toward change is an essential part of a leader's role (Blomme, 2012; Nodeson, Beleya, Raman, & Charles Ramendran, 2012; Parry, 1998; Rost, 1993).

Hersted and Frimann (2016, p. 149) argue that leadership is a 'constructed identity' based on "the negotiation and co-construction of meanings, relationships and stories". A leader creates a mutual and shared purpose through social construction processes (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999) influencing sense-making toward shared understanding. If this is so, then the co-construction of meaning may be possible, but requires each collaborator to understand, appreciate and respect the other.

Leadership theory has evolved with contrasting constructs like transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leaders focus on "role and take requirements" (Bass, 1985, pp. 27-28) and greatly depend on acceptance of roles and rules and thereby tend to be process driven over relational in style. Transactional leadership focuses on the

economic/structural exchange of relationships whereas transformational leadership focuses on sense-making and construction of meaning. Burns (1978) believes transactional leadership is the dominant leadership model of exchanges in the workplace between team leader and subordinate.

Transformational leaders, by way of contrast, "induce additional effort by directly increasing the follower's confidence" and "elevating the value outcomes through expanding his/her transcendental interests" (Bass, 1985, p. 31). Transformational leadership alters the motivations, values, beliefs and norms of followers and structures of organisations (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Rost, 1993). Transformational leaders build cultures where 'norms' align and empower towards achievement of a vision (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Through focusing on "vision, shared values and ideas for developing relationships" transformational leaders provide latitude for teams to achieve together (Tabassi et al., 2014, p. 1020).

Although transformational leadership is predominantly based on "personal morals, values, beliefs" (Tabassi et al., 2014, p. 1021), there is little evidence that this extends to the fusion of different visions and values which might be the case between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. This research aims to investigate this phenomenon to garner emerging insights leading to shared understanding between cultures to create shared and aligned 'norms'.

Transformational leadership relies on the transformation of "perceptions and expectations of members" (Parry, 1998, p. 86). Sense-making is therefore core to transformational leadership as it is how perceptions and expectations are created and sense is made of the environment. Northouse (2007) believes transformational leadership involves creating a connection with others and elevates both leader and follower motivation and ethics. It has been demonstrated that leaders can deliberately, using interaction and effort, generate inspiration in others (Searle & Hanrahan, 2011).

Therefore, leadership is a "relational and discursive process in which communicative behaviors enable and constrain the agency of both leaders and co-workers" (Hamrin, Johansson, & Jahn, 2016, p. 224). It is by nature, intrinsically connected to sense-making. However, Mulder et al. (2004) found poor questioning and reflective behaviours inhibit sense-making in the workplace, thus questioningt the power of transformational leadership. Bass (1996) believes transformational leadership (as he defines it) is universal.

However, this has not been tested in the Aboriginal context. There are also ethical criticisms of transformational leadership in its use of sense-making (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Snyder, 1991); manipulation (Stevens, D'Intino, & Victor, 1995; White & Wooten, 1986); disempowerment of followers (McKendall, 1993); and its lack of cross-cultural applicability (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). As with any form of leadership, the ethics and morality of application require constant consideration.

Nørreklit (2011, p. 265) believes that "conventional management control models are rooted in the symbolic form of science, but are at risk of getting caught in assumptions of the form gliding into the symbolic form of religion and myth, where all the forms tend to oppress essential aspects of individuality". Potentially, the lack of cross-cultural applicability of transformational leadership does not allow for Aboriginal individuality both as leader and follower.

2.1.4   Shared Understanding and Sense-making

Like leadership itself, significant research exists on shared understanding and sense-making (Craig-Lees, 2001; Magala, 1997; Obstfeld, 2002; Sammon, McAvoy, & Owens, 2009; Seligman, 2006; Thompson & Fine, 1999; van Ginkel & van Knippenberg, 2012; Weick, 1993; Weick et al., 2005). The concepts are inextricably connected: to be shared something must be commonly understood and 'make sense' to those involved. Cultures of empowerment and commonly held vision are built through individual and collective sense-making creating shared understanding which evolves depending on culture and the team's purpose (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2004). This collective sense-making creates an environment where "leaders and employees work together fluidly and interchangeably" (Hersted & Frimann, 2016, p. 149). It stems from overlapping explicit and tacit knowledge (Banks & Millward, 2007) held between leader and the group allowing coordination (Sycara & Sukthankar, 2006). This implies that it is not only knowledge or 'understanding' that is shared, but also actions.

One of many definitions of shared understanding is how meaning is socially constructed and shared between people and utilised in creating understanding (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999), particularly in the workplace. In situations of diverse cultures, assumptions behind relationships and understanding are not usually shared. Thompson and Fine (1999) define 'shared' as:

"experienced" or "held in common" knowledge of or ideas around a task or responsibilities, meanings, and commonly transforming experiences (Thompson & Fine, 1999, p. 280); and

"partaking in agreement" including (among other things) shared recognition of social meaning and normative relativity (symbolic interactionism) (Thompson & Fine, 1999, p. 280).

Shared understanding therefore is founded in symbolic interaction and social construction of meaning and encompasses a sharing of agreement to mutually participate.

Shared understanding assumes that "questioning, conceptual learning, feedback, and the expression of affect are central in the process" (Mulder, Swaak, and Kessels 2004, 143). Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004, p. 143) conceptual framework for shared understanding explains the interaction and influence of "prior background and knowledge", leading to:

• Conceptual learning
• Feedback
• Expression of affect
• Questioning

which finally result in shared understanding. This interaction and influence of prior experience and it's affect cannot be underestimated, particularly in the Aboriginal context of historic discriminatory policies and attitudes (*Bringing Them Home Report*, 1997; *Lost Lands Report*, 1997).

Without shared understanding, negotiation and problem solving becomes poorly explained with one way communication and culturally incompetent engagement leading to unsustainable outcomes (Bauman, 2007; C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010); poor organisational change (Stensaker, Falkenberg, & Grønhaug, 2008); and less innovation (Obstfeld, 2002). It is therefore important for Australian business to understand enablers and inhibitors to creating shared-understanding, to be sustainable and innovative.

Interconnected with shared understanding is the sense-making process of the individuals involved. Many interpretations of the process of sense-making exist (Craig-Lees, 2001; Sammon et al., 2009). It is a way that we structure the unknown (Waterman, 1990).

Sense-making is a cycle of acting upon information from a stimulus and incorporating information from it into a mental framework (Goleman, 1985) to guide further action (Seligman, 2006). Sense-making recognises that reality "emerges from efforts to create order and make retrospective sense of what occurs" (Weick, 1993, p. 635) and allows us to express a situation as we comprehend it (Weick et al., 2005). How we 'make sense' of our own reality will influence our ability to build shared understanding. A leader's ability to influence sense-making through transformational leadership underpins creation of shared understanding.

Shared meaning, according to Thompson and Fine (1999), is achieved as described in Figure 2.1.

Through a sense-making process, shared understanding and consistent action is achieved (Stensaker et al., 2008).
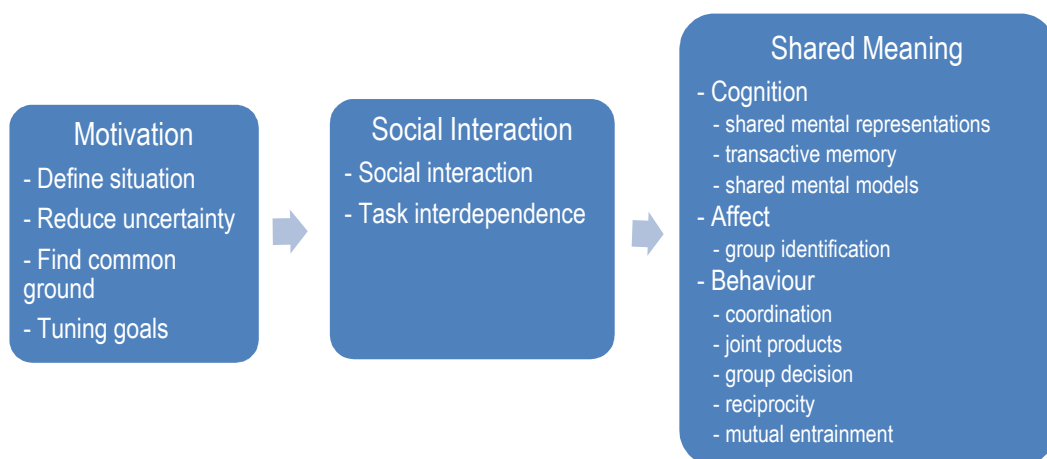
Figure 2.1: Achievement of Shared Meaning through Social Construction

Koskinen (2012, p. 40) found "sensemaking and negotiation of meaning are ongoing processes in project-based companies", such as is found in the Western Australian civil construction sector. It is individual sense-making and then the influence of social interaction upon each other's sense-making that leads to shared meaning and understanding.

Important to sense-making is the use of metaphors, framing and narration within the context of others' expectation and the commitments of the individuals' role (Cornelissen,

2012). Narrative, both formal and informal can enable counter-framing and assist with sense-making of organisational systems (Boje, 2001). Islam (2013, p. 43) argues that narrative may be used "as mediating mechanisms to work between and patch over differences between different epistemic frameworks". Mediating between epistemic frameworks is core to successfully creating shared understanding through sense-making within a team.

It is well known that team leaders will use story or narration to 'evoke leadership' and in particular to motivate, inspire, resolve conflict, influence, focus and generate trust (Auvinen, Aaltio, & Blomqvist, 2013). Auvinen et al. (2013, p. 496) found that team leaders will use stories to effectively build trust and at times "as a means of self development". Hersted and Frimann (2016, p. 150) found that discourse, metaphors and other methods of communicating were common in sense-making, particularly "in complex and ever-changing social and organizational contexts", such as is seen in the civil construction sector.

Leaders are known to deliberately draw on relevant context including verbal, symbolic and socio-cultural systems when encouraging sense-making, particularly around change (Teulier & Rouleau, 2013). Furthermore Hall (2011) found that cultural and historical contexts are significant to the discursive construction of leadership. This is particularly important in the Western Australian environment where there are significant cultural and historical contexts coming into effect in the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Hamrin (2016) has found that through sense-making leaders are able to consider the Indigenous culture within the context of the forces of the more dominant cultural context.

This researcher assumes that creation of shared understanding through sense-making is common to both cultures: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. When considered in relation to Table 2.3 the differences in values could affect motivation as defined by Thompson and Fine (1999), particularly 'defining the situation' and reaching 'common ground'. Furthermore, emotion has found to play a key role in the sense-making process, both during the process and in determining its conclusion (Maitlis, Vogus, & Lawrence, 2013; Shahzad & Muller, 2016). The emotions individuals, or in this case, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people bring to the workplace are likely to be different and this may impact on the sense-making process.

2.2   Data-directed Literature

The researcher has used a constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) in the design of this research, in that the original posture (and therefore literature review) was tentative and as the data emerged an "analytic scaffolding" is formed (Charmaz, 2005b, p. 517). Through the patterns revealed in the interviewee's words (Glaser, 2012a), further potentially applicable and relevant theory is unveiled. This section explores the literature revealed as being relevant to this research by the data gathered.

As with other studies, this research also has a deeply founded concern regarding the cultural differences between Western and Aboriginal cultures in business (see for example Dang, Vitartas, Ambrose, & Millar, 2016; Lombardi, 2016). These cultural differences present barriers to engagement of Aboriginal people in business and "could clash with their values and identity" (Dang et al., 2016, p. 29; Lombardi, 2016). Western business systems focus on "'wealth accumulation in a capitalist society', which conflicts with the underpinnings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societal systems with an obligation to share with community" (Dang et al., 2016, p. 29; Lombardi, 2016). In addition, this research concerns itself with informing non-Aboriginal leaders of possible successes and causes of action that may encourage shared understanding between the two cultures.

As with comparisons between any cultures similarities and connections exist through symbols, values and practices and this has led (or potentially forced) many Aboriginal people to adopt many non-Aboriginal processes (Lombardi, 2016). This adoption is reflected in the data of this research, where Aboriginal people have adapted to their workplace surroundings. There is however, little evidence of "mainstream, non-Indigenous Australian society challenging it's materialistic world view and embracing indigenous cultural values" (Parsons, 2008, p. 100). This is supported by this research which reveals that those Aboriginal people most successful in the workplace have adapted themselves more than non-Aboriginal counterparts in the workplace and acknowledge that adaption through statements such as "it is different for me" because I was raised differently (outside of traditional culture by at least one parent). However, despite the prevalence, of cultural awareness training, most of the moves towards creation of shared understanding has been through the shift of the individual, rather than systemic shifts within organisations.

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This section on data-directed literature will cover a variety of theories relating to:

- Organisational justice and prejudice
- Cultural awareness and competence
- Spiritual intelligence
- Trust
- Conflict management
- Motivational theory

The above theories, through this research, have been found to have a role in creation (or in inhibition) of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in civil construction.

2.2.1   Organisational Justice and Prejudice

Consideration of organisational justice and prejudice theory and research is important to this study as the findings reveal strong evidence of racism, both blatant and subversive, within the construction sector and, in addition, how organisational systems such as leave management can impact on shared understanding. There were many utterances that evidence the importance of organisational justice and prejudice. As one Aboriginal Team Leader explained:

> *People were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than we were fighting against…the whole company in different areas, because they didn't understand what was going on and why we were doing it…it was a big battle, when it could have been avoided.*

Organisational justice was founded on the discussion of equitable resource distributions and outcomes in social contexts (J. S. Adams, 1965; Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961) and also in terms of people management (French, 1964). It is a framework to consider how people will measure fairness in judgements (Greenberg, 1987).

Organisational justice requires that authority, systems, and their enforcement be based on perceived impartiality, equity, and fairness (Cavanagh, Moberg, & Velasquez, 1981). Organisational justice is historically founded on distributive justice (J. S. Adams, 1965; Leventhal, 1976), which is the "perceived fairness of the amount and allocation of rewards among individuals" (Robbins, Judge, Millett, & Walters-Marsh, 2008, p. 198) and applies the principles of distributive justice to the workplace. However organisational

justice is also influenced by notions of procedural justice (Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975) and interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Bies & Shapiro, 1988) as shown in Figure 2.2 along with examples from the data of this study. Procedural justice is the perception of fairness of the process used to make a decision or deliver an outcome (Robbins et al., 2008).

Critics of procedural justice claim that compassion will undermine the intent due to the potential for personal favours and moralistic fallacy (Hoffer-Gittell & Douglass, 2012; Shahzad & Muller, 2016; Tang & Sarsfield-Baldwin, 1996; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Generally though, organisational justice refers to perceptions of fairness held about relationships at work, particularly in relation to making decisions and allocation of resources (Fortin, 2008). Perceptions of fairness are shown to impact on constructive outcomes at both the individual and organisational levels (Baker, Hunt, & Andrews, 2006; Shahzad & Muller, 2016).

Distributive Justice

Definition: perceived fairness of outcome

Example: I got the pay rise I deserved

Procedural Justice

Definition: perceived fairness of process used to determine the outcome

Example: I had input into the process used to give raises and was given a good explanation of why I received the raise I did

Interactional Justice

Definition: perceived degree to which one is treated with dignity and respect

Example: When telling me about my raise, my supervisor was flattering and complimentary

Organisational Justice

(adapted from Robbins et al., 2008, p. 199)

Figure 2.2: Model of Organisational Justice

Rupp (2011, p. 72) argues that "a full understanding of justice phenomena requires consideration of individual differences; contextual influences; affective, cognitive, and social processes; as well as person-centric orientation that allows for both time and memory to influence the social construction". This is reflected in the contradicting

outcomes of this research whereby participants believe everyone should be bound by the same rules, but sometimes there needs to be flexibility around cultural leave or leave for family matters. This 'flexibility' is reflective of Shahzad and Muller's model of compassionate organisational justice an extract of which is shown in Figure 2.3.

It is important to note that compassionate organisational justice was designed to bring a more humanistic and related administrative models as "suffering and misery are inevitable aspects of organizational life" (Shahzad & Muller, 2016, p. 146) to the workplace and was not born out of paternalistic concerns (Ford, 2017), but more out of empathy.

This is important theory to this study as at times there is a perception from non-Aboriginal employees that the flexibility their Aboriginal counterparts receive as 'favouritism' and is therefore perceived as unfair. Prevention of this perception of unfairness calls for a level of compassion from all parties to achieve perceived fairness. As can be seen from Shahzad and Muller's (2016) model, sense-making and creating collective understanding become integral to achievement of compassionate organisational justice.

Social Environment of the Organisation

Sense-giving

Organisational Compassion
Sense-making
collective noticing, feeling and responding

Compassionate Organisational Justice

Organisational Justice
Sense-making
Formation of shared perceptions of fairness

Sense-giving

Management Model of the Organisation
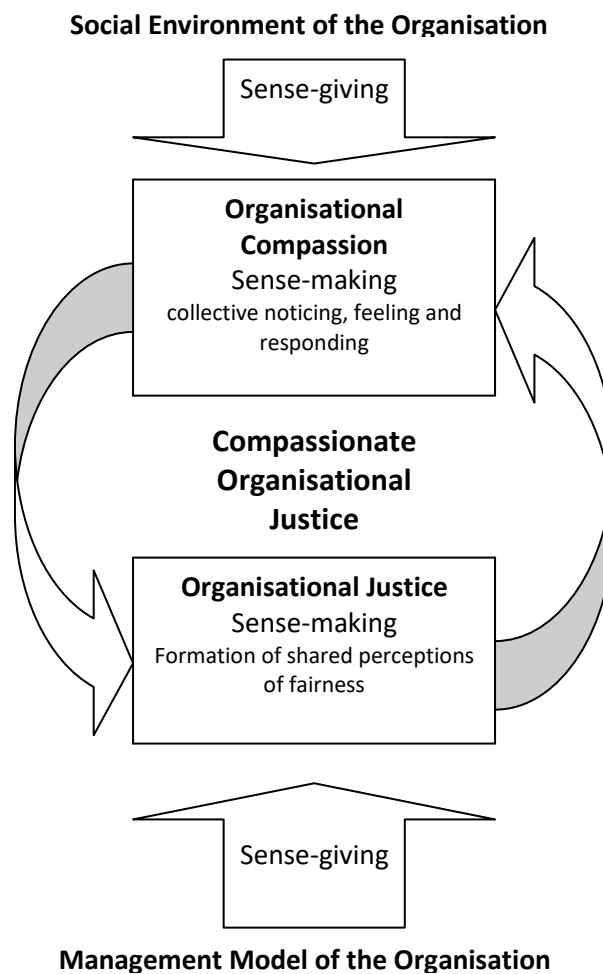
(adapted from Shahzad & Muller, 2016, p. 150)

Figure 2.3: Compassionate Organisational Justice: An Integrative Conceptualisation

However, the rules within any organisation are open to interpretation and therefore may not be implemented as originally intended. This is called decoupling and is due to varying "levels of acceptance and implementation of rules, which is associated with the process of sense-making and sense-giving" (Austen, 2016, p. 235; Whiteley, 2006). Austen (2016, p. 230) believes that although managers are usually aware of what has occurred, they bow to stakeholder pressure or self-interest to "distort, trim or radically misinterpret reality" leading to voices calling for uniformity in rules being regarded as intolerant or ideological.

However, organisational justice has generally been shown to be lacking in treatment of minority groups in the workplace (Ghorashi & Sabelis, 2013; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Ossenkop et al., 2015). As this research demonstrates Aboriginal people are often

perceived to be 'inferior to the norm' and this impacts on the "individual's feelings and experiences" as well as "negatively affects a potential evaluator's perception of the individual", including in relation to career progression (Ossenkop et al., 2015, p. 521; Özbilgin & Woodward, 2004). This process of 'othering' is reflected in sense-making of individuals, interactions with each other, as well as in organisational norms (Ossenkop et al., 2015). Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants observed this impact in the workplace. It is in part, a team leader's responsibility to ensure the skills and strengths of each of their team members are known and well utilised by the team.

Vasconcelos (2015) claims this is potentially a result of institutional bias creating barriers, albeit perhaps unintentionally, which in this case impedes the progression of Aboriginal people. The culture of most civil construction organisations in Western Australia is driven by white, male leadership, thereby forming the dominant workplace culture. To minimise the sense of being the 'other', this research confirms the findings of Ossenkop et al. (2015), in that the minority (Aboriginal people), in order to 'fit in', reproduce the dominant workplace culture, rather than challenge it. Ossenkop et al. (2015, p. 522), notes that this results in "ethnic identity salience, together with experiences of depreciation and exclusion" (also Acker, 2006; Appo & Härtel, 2003). These feelings of exclusion and depreciation would understandably form barriers to creation of a 'third space' (Bhabha, 2011)of shared understanding.

Acker (2006, p. 441) would argue it is an 'inequality regime' with "interlocked practices and processes that result in continuing inequalities" and that jobs are still segregated (perhaps unconsciously by the dominant culture) on the basis of race. This is also reflected in this research where many participants (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) note that an Aboriginal person has to work harder to be recognised for promotion. This "discrimination is ambiguous and often involves disempowerment through apparent empowering behaviour" (VanLaer & Janssens, 2011, p. 1203). Van Laer and Janssens (2011) also claim that this is reflective of society's structure and discourses being reproduced in the workplace. Aboriginal participants seem conscious of this with some noting that recent race-related media events often have impact on group behaviours in the workplace towards them as individuals. This research reaffirms that of Van Laer and Jassens (2011) findings that discrimination is ambiguous; based on power (including legitimisation of self and other) and is reflective of societal attitudes. The normalisation of subtle discriminatory culture and 'othering' needs to be specifically addressed in terms of individual career consequences, through addressing the issue it becomes recognised and

problematised (Ossenkop et al., 2015), particularly for Aboriginal people in the construction sector.

There is substantial and ongoing literature in relation to Aboriginal people being subject to racism and experiencing many impediments to success in Western culture (Appo & Härtel, 2003; Beresford, 2012; Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2013; Bodkin-Andrews, Denson, & Bansel, 2013; Brown et al., 2003; Cutcliffe, 2006; Dang et al., 2016; Deitch et al., 2003; Rigney, 1999). Within Australia, there is an overreliance on the dominant race perspectives which have generally excluded participation of Aboriginal people (Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2013; Rigney, 1999). It can be argued that decades of racist policies of government, educational institutions and companies have produced intergenerational trauma and underachievement (Beresford, 2012; Deitch et al., 2003).

In the mid-1990s Pedersen and Walker (1997) conducted research in Perth, Western Australia which revealed strong prevalence of both blatant (21% of respondents) and subtle or modern (58% of respondents) racist attitudes towards Australian Aboriginal people. A later study (Pedersen, Dudgeon, Watt, & Griffiths, 2006) of several locations across Western Australia found that over one third of people held a negative view of Aboriginal Australians. It has been found that the greatest limitation on career expectations for Aboriginal students was racism, both at school and in the workplace (Lester, 2000).

The pervasive levels of racism, particularly contemporary racism within Western Australian culture, will naturally permeate into organisational culture and thereby influence perceptions of organisational justice. Particularly given over half of Aboriginal people who experience racism report feeling psychological distress and potentially develop anxiety and depression (Zubrick et al., 2010). Hogg's (2015) findings show that managing or reducing team prejudice is a matter of leadership focusing on a collaborative intergroup relational identity. This study affirms that finding with Aboriginal participants emphasising the importance of the team leader (or their colleagues) speaking out against the derogatory comments of their peers. Hogg (2015, p. 200) recommends strategies such as "rhetoric to accurately communicate intergroup relational identity" and use of messaging which demonstrates the benefits of cooperation, collaboration and the whole being greater than the parts. Other research has demonstrated that when groups desire the same goal, but one cannot achieve it without the other, they will naturally cooperate

to achieve the goal (Hogg, 2015; Sherif, 1966). This is also reflected in this research through commentary such as "we're all here to do a job".

Existence of social categorisation, including that of race creates competitive group behaviours (Otten & Wentura, 1999). This is reflected in this research with both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders noting the importance of avoiding these categorisations. As one Aboriginal Team Leader put it we "need to stop pointing out the fact that I'm Aboriginal and you're European". Creating or allowing this cultural divide within teams can lead to perceptions of lack of organisational justice through favouring or dehumanising others (Haslam, 2006; Hogg, 2015; Mummendery & Otten, 1998). Once again this is reflected in the commentary of Aboriginal Workers in this research. Unfortunately team leaders are often perceived to associate with one group within the team over others (Hogg, 2015), reflecting an inability to 'walk in two-worlds' or perhaps even a lack of awareness or appreciation that there are two world views that need to be embraced.

Interestingly Hogg (2015) also recommends the appointment of a team leader who can 'span the boundaries' of both cultural groups. Aboriginal people colloquially call this 'walking in two worlds'. Hogg (2015) notes the best way of achieving this is to select a leader from outside the two cultural groups. Interestingly Aboriginal participants in this research note it is easier to work for a Team Leader who was not born and raised in Australia. Such a Team Leader could be seen as coming from neither of the two cultural groups, although often these non-Australian team leaders still come from a European-based background.

However, when Team Leaders have a reputation for equity and fairness, they are afforded "greater benefit of the doubt in ambiguous interracial interactions" (Offermann, Basford, Graebner, DeGraaf, & Jaffer, 2013, p. 374). This is also reflected in commentary from both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders in relation to the importance of not being drawn in to disagreements and taking the 'high road' facilitating shared understanding.

Vasconcelos (2015) argues that there is a moral and social imperative to reduce the organisational injustice that is inflicted by discrimination as to not do so is a demonstration of unethical leadership. A transformational leadership style would facilitate the intergroup relational identity as well as be able to manage the use of key messaging around creating culture of cooperation and collaboration. Transformational

and ethical leadership have been shown to be effective tools in reducing workplace bullying and avoiding bullying from occurring (Appelbaum, Semerjian, & Mohan, 2012). However, this was not tested in the Australian Aboriginal context and it could potentially argued that a transformational leader is capable (depending on the leader's ethics and goals) of using charisma to lure Aboriginal team members into the non-Aboriginal world, rather than creating a 'third space' of shared understanding.

Ely and Thomas (2001, p. 266) found that when a workplace embraces diversity from a learning and adaptive perspective on how best to accomplish core business, the team "negotiate expectations, norms and assumptions about work in service of their goals". Furthermore, this bringing of both cultural and technical knowledge into the workplace leads to feelings of being valued and respected. However if diversity is undertaken from a discrimination and fairness perspective it can become a source of intergroup conflict (Ely & Thomas, 2001). This is reflected in this research where all Aboriginal participants note the disrespectful attitudes of their colleagues toward their work performance and some being conscious of the underlying thinking that they only have their job 'because' they're Aboriginal, rather than bringing core skills to the business.

Affirmative action is aimed at addressing society's inequalities, usually towards a minority or disadvantaged group (Augoustinos, Tuffin, & Every, 2005). It is often opposed as it is seen as problematic due to the perception that it is a violation of equality; not very effective; and negatively influences an Aboriginal person's ability to grow by promoting reduced effort, rather than merit (Augoustinos et al., 2005). Interestingly Aboriginal people in this study felt the need to justify and prove their merit and that their appointment was not due to affirmative action.

From an organisational justice perspective, Ghorashi and Sebelis (2013, p. 79) suggest assimilating "the difference into sameness by introducing 'colour blind policies'". As the perception of organisational justice and trust in management determines organisational engagement (Malinen, Wright, & Cammock, 2013). However, as noted earlier decoupling of procedure from practice makes the intent of such policies and practices difficult particularly in ensuring uniform application.

2.2.2   Cultural Awareness and Competence

Aligned with the philosophies of organisational justice, is a workplace providing a culturally safe environment. Bodkin-Andrews et al. (2013) found that cultural safety

occurs when there is cultural respect and no racism. Providing a culturally safe environment requires consideration of matters of cultural awareness and competence. Cultural awareness and competence were mentioned by every participant in this study as being important to shared understanding.

Hofstede (1980) describes culture as a collective programming that distinguishes one group from another. Culture has an outwardly visible existence (symbols), values and norms as well as assumptions (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). Cultural knowledge is having the relevant information to facilitate understanding of appropriate behaviours and body language (Shultz, 2005). Romney (2008, p. 142) discusses the importance of having a culturally competent workforce and describes cultural competence as having "the knowledge, attitude and skills required to work with people from different cultures". Cultural competence within the civil construction sector is key to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people due to their substantial cultural differences. Cultural competence increases "awareness and knowledge of contextual factors that can improve the project managers' ability to establish relationships, communicate and approach challenges and opportunities more effectively" (Dale & Dulaimi, 2016, p. 232).

Becoming culturally competent requires awareness generally of cultural differences. This can be improved with provision of information and training. Cultural awareness "moves from educating individuals to recognise their own values, to analysing contrasts with other cultures and finally to applying the insights gained to improving the effectiveness of the interaction" (Bennett, 1986, p. 127; Park & Kline Harrison, 1993). Training in cultural awareness is effective in facilitating cultural adjustment, inspiring confidence in cross cultural situations and improving relational skills, integration and job performance in cross cultural settings (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Park & Kline Harrison, 1993; Simcoe, 2015). This has proven particularly effective in relation to Aboriginal culture where cultural awareness training and immersion have led to gaining "positive insight into the culture of a community of Aboriginal people" and assisting with "sensitivity and understanding", including improved communications with Aboriginal people (Wilkinson, Fogarty, & Melville, 1996, p. 78). These findings regarding cultural awareness training have been overwhelmingly re-affirmed in the Aboriginal context by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants in this research.

Family matters and lack of cultural awareness has been found in the mining industry of Western Australia to be one of the primary reasons an Aboriginal person leaves an employer (Brereton & Parmenter, 2008). This is affirmed by this research by Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders observing loss of Aboriginal talent from a worksite and Aboriginal participants retelling their own experiences.

Cultural competence is an ongoing process, which involves not just cultural awareness, but also cultural knowledge, skills, a desire to understand others and have 'encounters' with another culture (Campinha-Bacote, 2002). These five dimensions are inextricably interconnected.

However even with training, the experience in reality can be quite different from what is taught in a classroom (Dale & Dulaimi, 2016). Townsend, Regan and Li (2015) found that a blended learning approach of experience and educational methods are required to improve cultural competence. This is also reflected in this research where participants found cultural immersion and classroom style cultural awareness training effective, with the former building on the knowledge of the latter.

Improving cultural competence is required because as Lloyd et al. (2012, p. 1079) highlight, the Aboriginal culture is "an ontology of connection, where everything is not only understood as connected, but brings with its relationships expectations of an ethics of responsibility and reciprocity" and it requires acknowledgement of this connection to each other and the active agency of the spiritual world. This research shows cultural awareness and cultural competence are considered valuable in enhancing shared understanding from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives.

2.2.3   Spiritual Intelligence

Spirituality for Aboriginal people, differs from most Western understandings of spirituality. A lack of understanding of the importance of place in Aboriginal spirituality came up as inhibiting shared understanding within this study. As one Aboriginal Team Leader explained:

> *The cultural aspect to it, the spiritual connection to it is virtually where it is. We don't own it. We don't know how that connection worked, or where it worked, we just believe that it can. It can happen. By doing that, we make all the possibilities for that to happen…better if you know what I mean.*

Improving understanding of the 'agency' of the spiritual world in Aboriginal culture "requires a deeper commitment, one that means opening oneself to different ways of being in, and understanding the world" (Lloyd et al., 2012, p. 1079). This requires a level of spiritual intelligence (SQ). Spiritual intelligence is the ability to consider issues of meaning and purpose within life (Zohar & Marshall, 2001). It sits at the nexus of intellect and emotional intelligence and is founded in neurological and anthropological research (Deacon, 1998; Zohar & Marshall, 2001). Zohar and Marshall (2001, p. 16) go on to claim that spiritual intelligence is "low in modern society. We live in a spiritually dumb culture characterised by materialism, expediency, narrow self-centeredness, lack of meaning and dearth of commitment".

While some may consider spirituality as an intelligence (Emmons, 2000; Zohar & Marshall, 2001), Mayer (2000), describes it as less of an intelligence and more a 'heightened consciousness'. As it involves "structuring consciousness, through meditation, contemplation and other means, so that it focuses on oneness, transcendent states, and ultimate concerns" (J. Mayer, 2000, p. 47).

Research (Fry, 2003; Ramachandaran, Krauss, Hamzah, & Idris, 2017; Smircich & Morgan, 1982; Vasconcelos, 2015; Wolf, 2004) shows that leaders who integrated spiritual intelligence into their leadership style created:

- improved belief in the vision by employees;
- more harmonious and more respectful relationships with staff;
- increased credibility and long-term sustainability of the organisation;
- heightened moral values; and
- reduced ethical issues.

While this research neither confirms nor disputes Ramachandran et al.'s (2017) findings, it has shown the importance to Aboriginal people of acknowledging their spirituality and where necessary adapting to accommodate their beliefs (e.g. Welcome to Country ceremony where an Elder welcomes new comers to the land and introduces them to that land and asks the land to care for and protect them).

Lloyd et al. (2012, p. 1078) believe that in order to address power differences between a dominant and Indigenous culture, attention to responsibility is needed for appropriate "spaces, rituals, negotiations and 'boarder crossings' regarding knowledge production". Furthermore that these differences require appreciation of differing priorities and long-term relationship development (Lloyd et al., 2012). This research confirms the importance

of building long-term relationships and understanding competing or differing priorities, including spirituality.

However Izak (2012) found that organisational spirituality is inconsistent with the rationalism that drives most organisations and can be perceived as a classification tool. This conflict between rationalism and spirituality is played out in some of the commentary of participants in this research.

2.2.4 Trust

Although trust "may be considered the single most important ingredient for the development and maintenance of happy, well functioning relationships", it manifests differently for each individual and remains poorly defined and understood (Simpson, 2007, p. 264). This study has found, and will explore further in the Discussion chapter, there are differences in the formation of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Despite a number of studies, there is a lack of clarity as to the definition of trust and the relationship between risk and trust as well as confusion as to it's antecedents (R. Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998; Simpson, 2007; Smollan, 2013; Tuan, 2012). Nonetheless trust is generally considered to be "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Casimir, Waldman, Bartram, & Yang, 2006; R. Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712).

Trust in the work environment, is dependent on the behaviours of the leader showing open and supportive communications (Tuan, 2012). Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) proposed a model of trust relying on ability, benevolence and integrity in the creation of trust modified by the trustor's propensity for trust with the perceived risk.

Trust is often at the mercy of the actions of another and involves an expectation that others will behave in a particular way whether or not they are monitored or controlled (Nienaber, Hofeditz, & Romeike, 2015; Rousseau et al., 1998). Hence ability, benevolence and integrity (including ethical behaviour) become important in ensuring the 'expectation' of trust is fulfilled (Casimir et al., 2006; Engelbrecht, Heine, & Mahembe, 2017; R. Mayer et al., 1995). These factors of trustworthiness would create enough confidence that the other party will act in a fair manner (Casimir et al., 2006; Jaiswal &

Dhar, 2017; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). This level of confidence is dependent both on the psychological state of the person trusting, a willingness to be vulnerable and demonstration by the leader of empowering behaviours (Gao, Janssen, & Shi, 2011; Jaiswal & Dhar, 2017).

It is generally agreed that trust has two parts: cognitive or calculus based trust (a rational assessment of trustworthiness) and affective trust (developed through interpersonal interaction) (Lewicki, Tomlinson, & Gillespie, 2006; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995; Nienaber et al., 2015; Smollan, 2013). Organisational identification is effected by both cognitive and affective trust (Cremer, Dijke, & Bos, 2006). However, only affective trust mediates "the relationship between procedural justice and organizational identification" (Cremer et al., 2006, p. 554). It is therefore integral to creating shared understanding to hold at least affective trust.

Leaders use this interpersonal interaction to generate and sustain trust through their own behaviours (Joseph & Winston, 2005), particularly through communication and supportive behaviours (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Respondents in this research note the difference between the cognitive trust around task orientation and affective trust in terms of entrusting personal particulars.

Trust within the leader-subordinate relationship is key to knowledge sharing (Wickramashinghe & Widyaratne, 2012) and subsequently creating shared understanding. Simons (1999) found that behavioural integrity as modelled through enacting espoused values, is important to employee trust and transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is considered to increase trust, through realigning values to make them consistent with the leader's espoused values creating loyalty and respect (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000; Jung, Yammarino, & Lee, 2009). Furthermore, it has also been found that a leader's negative behaviour, particularly when the leader is perceived as responsible for a negative event, is also related to lack of trust and lower organisational citizenship (Korsgaard, Brodt, & Whitener, 2002). Leader handling of a negative event is, in part, related to procedural justice. Employee trust of their manager can be substantially predicted by procedural justice (Flaherty & Pappas, 2000; Joseph & Winston, 2005; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Smollan, 2013). This trust between employee and leader in connection with perceived procedural justice is consistent with this research.

Casimir et al. (2006, p. 68) found, however, that "levels of trust in leaders may vary across cultural contexts for several reasons such as differences in implicit theories of leadership

and in attitudes to formal authority" (Casimir et al., 2006, p. 68). Ang (2013) found that trust can be expedited by demonstrating work competencies and credentials, furthermore that this trust is increased by culturally intelligent behaviours of the leader. This research confirms differences in foundations of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, however reaffirms Ang's finding in relation to work competence positively impacting trust.

Lewis and Weigert (1985) argue that trust is a social construction and pervades social order and society's constructs. Trust in itself is reliant on the sense-making of small and incremental cues that accumulate over time (Adobor, 2005). Aboriginal respondents in this research viewed time together as an integral foundation of trust. Use of poetry, metaphors and storytelling can assist a leader in building both trust and empathy to communicate and inspire more effectively (Grisham, 2006). This use of storytelling was particularly prevalent in Aboriginal leaders in this research.

In contrast, Fairholm and Fairholm (2000) identified a number of forces that may prevent the development of trust. These include individual, organisational, societal and cultural forces. These are detailed in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Forces that Hinder the Development of Trust

Individual	*Organisational*	*Societal*	*Institutional Culture*	*Personal Culture*
Interpersonal communication Apathy and alienation The risk of trusting others Personal selfish interest Leader sensitivity to follower needs	Authority structure The lack of effective accountability mechanisms A history of negative trust events Organizational structure	The general decay of moral values	Survival beyond effective need Traditionalism Uncontrolled growth Office politics	Power usage Status Dysfunctional sociopathic behaviour Cynical behaviour The enemy within The burned-out employee

(adapted from Fairholm & Fairholm, 2000)

These forces will also impact on creation of shared understanding, as in part having a shared understanding relies on at least some semblance of trust among the team. Many of these hindrances of trust are found within the data of this research, including interpersonal communication, alienation, self-interest, leader sensitivity, structure, poor accountability, a history of negative trust events, traditionalism, office politics and burned-out employees.

2.2.5   Conflict Management

How conflict is managed, minimised and resolved in the workplace can have a substantial impact on creating of shared understanding. Generally, conflict resolution in the workplace is founded in a Western perspective of conflict management. However, there has been research of the mechanisms and techniques used by Aboriginal cultures in resolving disputes (Gendron & Hille, 2013). Gendron and Hille (2013, p. 349) found Arctic Aboriginal peoples' conflict resolution focuses on "saving face, to maintain one's personal honour, group consensus, and the maintenance of good relationships between individuals in the broader community". This research has echoed the findings of Gendron and Hille (2013) in relation Aboriginal conflict resolution practices through the recollections of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal interviewees.

Osi (2008, p. 194) found that globally Indigenous conflict resolution practices to be "characterized by flexibility, utilization of cyclical time, qualitative measurement of success and people-orientation". This flexibility and people orientation is reflected in the descriptions provided in this research. This includes flexibility in approaches, such as conflict avoidance techniques, use of humour to diffuse conflict and use of third parties to allow for saving of face in developing a resolution.

Victor (2007) explains that Canadian Aboriginal conflict resolution needs to take into account Aboriginal concepts of life as an indivisible whole, time, modes of social organisation and kinship, land guardianship, leadership and reciprocity. This is because "all life is connected and inter-related, ensuring 'balance' and 'harmony' is paramount" in conflict resolution (Victor, 2007, p. 28). There is therefore greater emphasis on relationship and maintaining relationships than the Western perspective of conflict resolution (Gendron & Hille, 2013). The resolution needs to "balance the needs and interests of the parties as well as to ensure that the relationship between the parties is restored" (Gendron & Hille, 2013, p. 350). The importance of maintaining relationships and 'saving face' is also reflected in the data of this research.

The Inuit use conflict management strategies include modesty, avoiding direct confrontation, using non-threatening jokes instead of direct requests. They avoid direct answers, promises and hesitation in questioning ("Inuit of Utkuhikhalik and Qipisa Communities,"). A similar approach can be seen in this research in terms of conflict avoidance, jokes and direct answering and questioning.

The Western perspective of conflict is that it can be beneficial to groups performing non-routine tasks (Jehn, 1995). However unresolved conflicts can damage team relationships and restrict performance over time (Jehn, 1995). This is also shown in this research where stories of irretrievably damaged relationships have been caused by intra-team conflict. Based on the differences in conflict management preferences, there is potential for Aboriginal people to perceive Western processes as uncomfortable and therefore unfair or inequitable (Ford, 2017).

Clearly, how conflict is handled within a team will impact on members' ability to develop shared understanding.

2.2.6 Motivational Theory

Motivation is a complex and personal phenomenon that is well studied from a variety of disciplines. However it is generally considered to be the a combination of forces, both internal to the individual and externally placed that generate enthusiasm or persistence towards action or outcome (Daft & Priola-Merlo, 2009). Team performance and inherently motivation, is affected by leader sense-making within the team (Burke, 2000; Daft & Priola-Merlo, 2009). A team leader's understanding of what motivates individuals within the team allows the leader to instigate actions which have greater influence over individual motivation (Daft & Priola-Merlo, 2009).

While there are numerous theories of motivation, the researcher has selected Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory as this is the most pertinent to the research data. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal expectations of a team or team leader differ. Aboriginal participants spoke of the importance of community and family in motivation and the impact of this on workplace behaviours and norms.

Expectancy Theory

Backman (1985) argues that it is only through rules and shared understanding as well as a common expectation of these rules that a co-construction of reality and aligned team performance is possible. Expectations are foundational in social encounters both in the

workplace and generally and enable prediction and explanation of social interaction (Burgoon, 1993). In the workplace certain behaviour is 'expected' of the team and team leader and certain behaviour on the part of the individual is 'expected' to be rewarded in some way. "Individuals generally expect something in return for their performance" and a reward relative to the task at hand or outcome (Dodge & Ramsey, 1981, p. 44).

Vroom's (1964) foundational work on motivation explored these "symbolic acts" and "symbolic practices result in certain behaviours" (Petelle, Slaughter, & Jorgensen, 1988, p. 295). According to Vroom (1964) motivation to perform in the workplace depends on the:

1. Likelihood of achieving the targets for which they are accountable;
2. Perceived likelihood of that effort being perceived as achieving work related outcomes; and
3. Value that individuals attach to work outcomes.

Expectancy theory, according to Smith (2009, p. 476) has four components:

- the "compulsion of an individual to behave in a given way" (force);
- "the preference for consequent reward" (valence);
- "the perceived likelihood that the behaviour will result in the intended outcome" (expectancy); and
- "the perception that the intended outcome will lead to consequent reward" (instrumentality).

It acknowledges that in any situation there are a number of potential behaviours an individual could choose. However these are (perhaps subconsciously) evaluated on the basis of "desirability of the outcomes associated with each behaviour (valence), the impact of each behaviour on those outcomes (instrumentality), and the likelihood that attempting the behaviour will result in successful execution of the behaviour (expectancy)" (Baumann & Bonner, 2017, p. 407). These choices are evaluated concurrently (the "behaviour's motive force") and then the behavioural decision is made (Baumann & Bonner, 2017, p. 407). "People choose to engage in the behaviour with the strongest positive (or least negative) force (Vroom, 1964)" and this choice would depend on their own values and attitudes (valence) (Dodge & Ramsey, 1981, p. 44).

Expectancy theory sums the valences applying negative values to undesirable or demotivating outcomes and positive values to motivating or positive outcomes. However this adding and subtracting of valences has not been "enough to explain why some

people are highly motivated and others are not" (Dodge & Ramsey, 1981, p. 45). The same principle of addition and subtraction is applied to the likelihood the outcome will occur (instrumentalities) with a minus being performance that will lead away from motivating outcome; zero representing an outcome is not related to performance and a positive being that performance is definitely related to an outcome. A multiplication of the values assigned to the outcomes and likelihood, provides the most likely motivating course of action.

This model has been adapted and evolved by many researchers (Reinharth & Wahba, 1976) including to allow for:

• adapting for context (Kesselman, Hagen, & Wherry Sr, 1974);

• self esteem and job performance (Gavin, 1973);

• perception of role (Porter & Lawler, 1968);

• performance feedback (Seybolt & Pavett, 1979);

• ability (Lawler III & Suttle, 1973);

• varying reward (Graen, 1969); and

• sales team environments (Evans, Margheim, & Schlacter, 1982).

Expectancy theory is generally considered to be a sound explanation of motivation, despite these adaptations. A team leader's expectations and how the team leader treats team members are a key determinants of how the team will perform (Livingston, 1969). This research shows that respect and empathy are key to a team leader's success in creating shared understanding. Outstanding team leaders who create high expectations of performance often had these expectations fulfilled as team members tend to do as they believe they are 'expected' to do. To be effective, "supervisors and subordinates may share ideas, feelings and information; they may share experiences; they may share trust and respect; but perhaps most importantly they share the feeling that they understand each other" (Cahn, 1986, p. 20). This shared understanding and "congruity of expectations between supervisors and subordinates", is therefore significant in terms of workplace relationships and motivation (Petelle et al., 1988, p. 296) and this is congruent with the outcomes of this research.

However, research has shown that often team leaders are unaware of what their subordinates expect of them and in fact, some discourage discussion of these expectations (Petelle et al., 1988; Wernimont, 1971). Such lack of discussion between

team leaders and subordinates was evident in this research. Surprisingly, team leaders had greater difficulty than the workers in answering the how their team could work with them better than the workers.

There are, nonetheless, criticisms of expectancy theory as it relates to motivation. These include:

- All three characteristics are considered as equal, weighted evenly and considered in any order (Baumann & Bonner, 2017; Steel & König, 2006).
- The evaluation process is not usually a conscious process (Baumann & Bonner, 2017).
- There is a context to each of these decisions that "may impose certain constrains" and "influence the individual's perception of expectancies" (Petelle et al., 1988, p. 297).
- The models are "abstract and susceptible to different interpretations" (Eerde & Thierry, 1996, p. 576), lack theoretical classification (Wabba & House, 1974) and are difficult to understand (Dodge & Ramsey, 1981).
- There is researcher disagreement on definitions and measurement (Eerde & Thierry, 1996; Wabba & House, 1974).
- There is questionable applicability to work situations (Wabba & House, 1974) as it omits "normative, habitual and other motivational elements" (Walker & Thomas, 1982, p. 187).
- The additivity or non-additivity of expectancies is questionable (Wabba & House, 1974) and weak with usually low variances (Kopelman, 1976) and of little use to a manager wanting to know how to motivate higher performance (Dodge & Ramsey, 1981).

Furthermore some studies have found the theory cannot predict effort nor performance and "that the theory may explain only a limited portion of behaviour on the job" (Reinharth & Wahba, 1976, p. 257). Baumann and Bonner (2017, p. 408) found that "the assessments and choices involved in expectancy theory may be influenced by group discussion". This calls into question the genuine effectiveness of applying expectancy theory to motivation in the workplace.

When applied to a racially diverse situation in South Africa, however, it was found that while "correlations between self-esteem and the effort-performance belief and between internal-control and the performance-outcome belief were both significant in the white group", this was not the case for their black African counterparts (Orpen & Nkohande,

1977, p. 192). It is possible that the applicability of expectancy theory to non-Western cultures, such as the Australian Aboriginal culture, is questionable. Orpen and Nkohande " (1977, p. 192) found that "white managers were significantly more internally oriented and had significantly higher levels of self-esteem than the black managers". Although this was explained at the time by the socio-political differences occurring in South Africa, it is clear that despite both cultures having "the two beliefs correlated significantly together and equally with the self-esteem and internal control" it is suggested that self-esteem and effort-performance belief "may not be as independent as is implied by expectancy theory" (Orpen & Nkohande, 1977, p. 192). This is yet to be tested in the Australian Aboriginal context. However, this research suggests there are other aspects not considered by expectancy theory may be impacting an Aboriginal person's motivation in the workplace.

The reflection in Orpen and Nokhande's (1977) study that the outcome may have been due to the apartied in South Africa at the time, demonstrates the importance of time and circumstance in relation to motivation. Drucker (1954, p. 15) claims time is critical to management as "management is concerned with decisions for action". It is possible that Australian Aboriginal people have a different paradigm of time. For example, Julien et al. (2010) found that Canadian Aboriginal people had a more cyclical view of time (as opposed to the Western linear view). This has the potential to impact on relationships and performance. It is clear from this research that time is important to Aboriginal people in terms of creating trust and loyalty.

2.3   Conclusion of Literature Review

This literature review has found that there is no specific literature relating to enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction industry in Western Australia. It has therefore explored the available research globally on leadership in the industry, finding that it is predominantly task-oriented, however is shifting towards more of a transformational leadership style. This chapter then explored leadership in the Australian Aboriginal context, for which there was also next to no research. However relevant literature from Canada and New Zealand was explored, which identified Indigenous leaders as being more relational, community and spiritually driven than their Western peers. The review then explored the literature in relation to Aboriginal people in the workplace, which was also found to be limited, however generally revealed that Aboriginal people are required to 'assimilate' into the

Western workplace context and are usually more marginalised in terms of employment opportunity. Finally, the literature review related to the research question explored leadership theory, particularly transformational leadership along with theoretical constructs for shared understanding and sense-making. Transformational leadership has sense-making at its core and focuses on how shared meaning can be achieved through social construction.

The data-directed literature section discussed the existing research available that is relevant to the theoretic constructs revealed in this study. This section reveals that organisational justice has historically been poor in treatment of minority groups, such as Aboriginal people, in the workplace. The research relating to institutional bias and pervasive levels of racism in the Western Australian workplace context were also discussed as being relevant to the findings of this study. Furthermore, compassionate organisational justice, which may offer a way forward, relies on leaders' abilities to assist their teams in sense-making around organisational decisions.

Cultural awareness and competence and spiritual intelligence were also found to play a key role in creation of shared understanding by this study, so an overview of key research in these areas to date was also provided. This research found that cultural competence improves awareness of cultural differences and facilitates cultural adjustment. Research into spiritual intelligence found that leaders with spiritual intelligence improved team belief in vision and could develop more respectful and harmonious relationships with staff.

Trust was then identified as being an important contributor to positive working relationships (Simpson, 2007). The research identified factors effecting trust such as ability, benevolence and integrity. This study has found the foundations of trust for Aboriginal people may be different to their Western counterparts and this is explored further in the discussion chapter.

Conflict management theory was then reviewed, particularly in relation to how Indigenous people resolve conflict. While there is once again, no research specific to the Australian Aboriginal context, research from Canada and the Arctic offered some potential insights into how Australian Aboriginal people may resolve matters of conflict.

Finally, theory relating to motivation, particularly expectancy theory was explored as the expectations around performance and reward systems may potentially be different for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in this study.

This existing literature will be used alongside the findings of this study, as detailed in the Findings chapter (Chapter 4) to form the Discussion chapter of this thesis. It is clear, however, that a range of theories and factors will impact on a leader's ability to create shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector. These have been explored in this literature review.

The next chapter will discuss the theoretical framework and methodology of this research.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

A pluralist argues that variety in values and ways of knowing is not simply inevitable but that a society in which variety of views is held and those holding differing perspectives are not simply tolerant of one another but seek to engage one another is superior to a society in which one opinion is binding everyone (Schwandt, 2012, p. 128).

3.1   Introduction

This study explores enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding in the Western Australian civil construction sector. Central to the study are issues of meaning making as gained from experiences in the workplace of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees and team leaders. The methodology chosen to explore understanding and related issues needs to reflect the personal accounts of respondents, the way they accrue and interpret knowledge about themselves and others. This research design allows for stories and narratives to flow while, at the same time, employing systematic, replicable and transparent procedures.

This chapter addresses the deeper levels of theoretical perspectives, in this case symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. Guided by the principles involved, the chapter will proceed to describe and discuss the research framework (refer to Table 3.1) from the ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives. This includes the reasoning for choices and examples of research actions resulting from the reasoning. Following the framework, the research paradigm is discussed (refer to Table 3.2) focusing on the perspectives of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology.

Founded in the theoretic framework of the research, the research design is then discussed in terms of framing of the research questions and objectives, the research process to be undertaken and how the literature review will be conducted so that it informs the study. This section will go on to detail the process of the familiarisation study and how that shapes the main study involving questioning of participants as to their experiences and understanding. The analysis methodology is detailed which utilises the constant comparative methods of grounded research and this then forms the basis for a written account contained in the findings and discussion chapters.

As Schwandt (2012) notes above, the research methodology for this thesis must allow for the variety of views and perspectives held within society around shared understanding. According to Sandberg (2005) all researchers must demonstrate how their research outcomes have been controlled and checked, from developing the research question, to selecting interviewees and analyzing and reporting on the results. This section will provide sufficient exploration of the research method to demonstrate a well controlled and checked research practice.

3.2   Theoretical Framework

This section considers the theoretical and philosophical rationale leading to the research methodology chosen. The theoretical framework has evolved as described by Whiteley (2012) in Table 3.1. Theoretical Framework will explore these perspectives and reasonings founded in the philosophic perspective of 'becoming' being the "process of ongoing transformation based on multiple dynamic interactions" (Tedlock, 2011, p. 333). This research allows for the multitude of interactions that can enable and inhibit shared understanding and therefore a perspective of 'becoming' is deemed to be appropriate.

In considering the research question, the appropriateness of using either quantitative or qualitative research was contemplated. Quantitative research is founded in a positivist ontology, whereas qualitative founded in a constructivist ontology. An extract from Lincoln et al. (2011) summarises the polarity of the positivist and constructivist beliefs and inquiry paradigms in Table 3.2.

Table 3.1: Design Issues and Perspective, Reasoning and Action (Whiteley, 2012, p. 263)

Design Issue	Perspective	Reasoning	Researcher Action
Philosophy	Becoming	As yet no facts or concrete observations have been established	Allow emergence Resist closure
Sociology	Symbolic interactionist	A search for meaning, theory of respondent	Ask questions like: What does this mean to you?
	Phenomen-ological	A search for the respondent's account of the life-world experience	How did it feel to experience the phenomenon?
Ontology	Constructivist	To study a social setting and gather multiple meanings	Go into the field, suspend researcher "reality"
Epistemology	Interpretivist	Nature of knowledge it interpretive; the stance of the researcher needs to be resolved.	Respondents' knowledge comes first. Adopt a range of relationships from mutual to facilitative
Methodology	Qualitative	Search for understanding and interpretation	Reflect this in the data collection and analysis methods and approach.
Data collection	Triangulation of data sources	Take a critical look at triangulation. Diverse sources of data may improve interpretation of data	Seek organisational documentation, collect interview data from target groups. Refer to cultural mentor.
	Theoretical sampling	Respondents' theories can point to important groups	Follow respondent suggestions
	Emergent Discovery-oriented	Understanding is embedded within the tacit dimension	Use data collection methods to "dredge" tacit knowledge

Design Issue	Perspective	Reasoning	Researcher Action
Data analysis	Systematic procedures	To ensure replicability of procedures and transparency	Unit of analysis is an utterance related to the research question Coding employing in vivo coding Categorisation Constant comparison, Theoretical sensitivity. Comprehensive audit trail Identify deviant cases
Data management	Technology – aided	Software allows construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of codes and categories to aid conceptualisation and theory	Verbatim transcription Learn the software Use it to support researcher reasoning Adhere to data analysis procedures Where it allows use it for authentic inputs of responses by respondents.

Table 3.2: Basic Beliefs of Alternative Inquiry Paradigms – Updated (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 100)

	Positivism	Constructivism
Ontology	Naïve realism – "real" reality but apprehensible	Relativism and specific co-constructed realities
Epistemology	Dualist / objectivist; findings are true	Transactional / subjectivist; co-created findings
Methodology	Experimental / manipulative; verification of hypotheses chiefly quantitative methods	Hermeneutical / Dialectical

This research is founded on a constructivist ontology, interpretive epistemology and qualitative methodology as it explores the relativist and co-constructed realities of shared

understanding between two cultures. The following sections will further explore this choice of the ontology, epistemology and methodology.

3.2.1 Constructivist Ontology

Ontology is the "pre-determined understanding of what is real" (Storberg-Walker, 2006, p. 231). 'Real' can be both a subjective and objective matter. Positivism is founded on the assumption of a "stable, unchanging reality that can be studied with the empirical methods of objective social science" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b, p. 2). However, the lived experience is neither stable, nor unchanging. Quantitative research emphasises "the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). This research question seeks to draw out the lived experience through exploring tacit knowledge revolving around sense-making, shared meaning and understanding. Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 202) argue that what is 'real' can only exist within the "human experience" of the world. The constructivist ontological view is that knowledge is created socially, subjectively and together through human interaction and interpretation. This ontology is appropriately related to the research topic of enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding in the civil construction industry, which forms through human interaction and interpretation.

This research will therefore take a constructivist ontology. Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 198) describe the axiology of constructivism as: *"propositional, transactional knowing is instrumentally valuable as a means to social emancipation, which as an end in itself, is intrinsically valuable".*

A constructivist ontology acknowledges that what is real is founded in "subjective and intersubjective social knowledge and the active construction and co-creation of such knowledge by human agents that is produced by human consciousness" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 203). A constructivist ontology is relevant to study the 'social' setting of the workplace and to garner the multiple meanings, interpretations or 'constructions' of reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Whiteley, 2012), particularly around the shared understanding between the two cultures.

Research exploring leadership often takes a constructivist, interpretive approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b). This philosophy is appropriate as there are not as yet facts or concrete observations (Whiteley, 2012) of how to create a 'third space'.

Constructivist ontology has an anti-foundational relationship with truth and knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Schwandt, 1996) in that it refuses "to adopt any permanent, unvarying (or "foundational") standards by which truth can be universally known" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 204). The standards of 'understanding' between two cultures are not likely to form a universal truth. This research acknowledges the lack of permanency and transient nature of our complex world and our relationships within it. It views relationships between cultures as ever changing. This research explores the "collective construction of meaning" and how this may be used to improve shared understanding in the workplace (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999, p. 292) between two cultures. A collective construction of meaning cannot be 'permanent' or 'unvarying' as the meaning changes as the group (the collective) grows or shrinks or evolves. This research explores how shared meaning and perceptions of leadership qualities influencing this are constructed. A constructivist ontology is therefore appropriate.

Although, there is a clear bias of scientific and political communities on specific ways of knowing such as the effect and impact of intervention and the calculating and measuring of goal attainment (Schwandt, 2012), this bias is reliant on a single objective reality. There are also claims that constructivism is a "backdoor approach to studying the professional problem" as it contains echos of researcher interpretation and is thereby "diluted" (Glaser, 2012a, p. 36). Koch and Harrington (1998, p. 882) would agree that the researcher brings the subject to be researched, the data generated and analysis, selects and structures the literature surrounding the research and also positions the research within "moral socio-political contexts".

Sandberg (2005, p. 43) argues that the "ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying the interpretive research tradition reject the existence of an objective knowable reality". What constitutes 'reality' is clearly dependent on the perspective and the lived experience of each individual bearing witness or experiencing that moment. Schwandt (2012, p. 127) believes there is real value in "acquiring practical wisdom and recognising the difference between searching for optimal versus satisficing solutions to our problems of making sense of the world." This research aims to tap this 'practical wisdom' in order to make sense of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and find optimal workplace solutions to encouraging or improving this understanding.

It is acknowledged that the nature of research questions can be a product of the researcher's ontological perspective (Storberg-Walker, 2006). As Schwandt (2012, p. 126) also observes there is an "inescapable tension between moral reaction and scientific observation". He goes on to explain that the researcher's most difficult duty is knowing when to examine or embrace; to calculate or contemplate; intervene or listen and learn; water or relate; empathise or analyse and so on.

Shared understanding between two cultures can only be constructed through the lived experiences and moral socio-political contexts of those who participate in creating and experiencing this level of understanding. Therefore their perceptions of enablers and inhibitors can only enrich our knowledge on the subject.

This knowledge is delimited in terms of generalisation which is a goal of positivist research other with parsimony and strength of numbers. It is the nature of the research question that has lead to a more contextual and qualitative investigation.

Although an ontology explores the understanding of what is real, how we know this is real is also important. Constructivist ontology is often aligned with an interpretive epistemology which will now be explored further.

3.2.2   Interpretive Epistemology

Epistemology is "how we can know what is real" (Storberg-Walker, 2006, p. 231). It is the "the theory of knowledge" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 46) "that justify the knowledge building process that is actively or consciously adopted by the researcher" (Carter & Little, 2007; Gringeri, Barusch, & Cambron, 2013, p. 55). This research is shaped by the epistemology of the researcher (Anastas, 2004), including her underlying assumptions about the process of knowing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Demonstration of epistemological engagement is encouraged through explicit discussion of the research paradigm in which the qualitative research is founded (Anastas, 2004; Gringeri et al., 2013). This section aims to provide this thorough discussion.

Gringeri et al. (2013, p. 56) advise that "practical epistemology encourages us to reflect on the connections between how we do research and the credibility of any research product". To understand the 'theory of knowledge' there are three important questions:

1.   how can we achieve meaning and thereby knowledge about the reality in which we live?

2. how is this knowledge formed?

3. under what conditions can this knowledge be claimed as true (Sandberg, 2005)?

The interpretivist research approach is founded in ideas from Weber (1964) and developed by phenomenologists such as Schutz (1967); and Berger and Luckmann (1966) among others, which leads to a research tradition with diversified approaches but with emphasis on the "lived experience as the basis of human action" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 41). This leads to the conclusion that "interpretive research is committed to the broad philosophy of social construction (Berger & Luckman, 1966), which sees social reality as a constructed world built in and through meaningful interpretations" (A. Prasad & Prasad, 2002, pp. 6-7). An objectivist epistemology on the other hand, would stipulate "that beyond human consciousness, there is an objective reality" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 43).

This research uses an interpretivist epistemology. The interpretivist approach to research has increased in areas of organisational behaviour and management and has produced new knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 2011b; Myers, 2013; A. Prasad & Prasad, 2002; Sandberg, 2005; Zald, 1996). Organisational behaviour and management are relevant contexts to the creation of shared understanding in the workplace. Sandberg (2005) believes this is due to dissatisfaction with methods and procedures from the positivist tradition which are limited in informing our understanding of individual and organisational phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; A. Prasad & Prasad, 2002). According to Prasad and Prasad (2002, p. 6) "contemporary interpretive research refuses to play by the rules of positivist, or to be confined policed and disciplined by outdated notions of its limits". This for some researchers can be debilitating, however in terms of exploring the complexities of shared understanding it provides a construct to research the lived experience and learn from this experience.

Knowledge is only useful within the context of the world in which we live, which is influenced by our own histories, cultures and understanding of reality. Sandberg (2005, p. 44) goes onto claim that the interpretivist approach is "socially constructed by continuous negotiation between people about the very nature of reality". The 'continuous negotiation' here is relevant to understanding. It is fluid and highly dependent on the perception of the individuals involved and how they have interpreted the 'reality' of what has occurred between them. Our world, is "never a world in itself; it is always an experienced world, that is, a world that is always related to a conscious subject" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 43). This research delves into the experiences and interpretations of

what has enabled and inhibited understanding and therefore an interpretivist approach is appropriate.

An interpretivist epistemology was taken as the researcher assumes that "human beings do not passively react to an external reality but, rather, impose their internal perceptions and ideals on the external world and in so doing, actively create their realities" (Morgan & Smircich, 1980; Suddaby, 2006, p. 636). The subject matter of the research question and objectives are internal to each individual and subjective due to their personal experiences (Suddaby, 2006). In this context an interpretivist epistemology is appropriate.

This research, as Sandberg (2005) suggests, relies on the interpretation of an experience to be an 'inherent' reality in itself, which can be reflected in language. It assumes that the individual interpretation of an experience can 'mirror' reality through language in an objective manner (Rorty, 1979; Sandberg, 2005). Language is therefore the only representation of reality that we have of our objective reality through the way we define and use it socially (Sandberg, 2005). It is anticipated that through using interviewee's interpretations of 'reality' that a representation of shared understanding and its enablers and inhibitors may be achieved.

3.2.3   Qualitative Methodology

This research is founded on a constructivist ontology, interpretive epistemology and qualitative methodology as it explores the relativist and co-constructed realities of shared understanding between two cultures. Methodology is how the research or inquiry is undertaken. Qualitative methodology usually begins with **"**analysis of social problems, issues or settings." (Charmaz, 2007, p. 79). Qualitative research is a diverse form of research inquiry with many forms and methods. One of many definitions is that qualitative research "consists of a set of interpretive material practices that make the world visible" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a, p. 3).

Dilthey (1972) noted the importance of "re-experiencing [Nachfühlen]" and challenged the assumption that "such recomprehension [Nachverständnis] of individual existence can be raised to objective validity" (Dilthey, 1972, pp. 230-231). He acknowledged that researcher and researched were interconnected and this, through interaction, changes over time. Dilthey (1972, p. 234) considered research into understanding (such as this research) takes place beside analysis of "inner experience, and both demonstrate the possibility and the limits of the validity of human studies". Social inquiry seeks an

explanatory theory (Schwandt, 1996). This study seeks explanatory theory of the social interactions behind shared understanding (verstehen) between two cultures. Qualitative research is founded on the social construction of meaning and reality individual or social constructs of reality.

Interviewing is one of the richest sources of qualitative data and is a common form of research for understanding humanity, however it is an "interactional encounter" which can "shape the nature of the knowledge generated" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 699). This research uses semi-structured interviews to allow for a dynamic and continuing discussion with respondents (Fay, 1996). Based on Bruner's (2004) philosophy that only through narrative can the 'lived experience' be revealed, the researcher endeavoured to interpret and make sense of the socially constructed meaning (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999) interviewees provided around shared understanding and its enablers and inhibitors.

The aim was to create an environment of familiarity. 'Intimate familiarity' (Blumer, 1969) where the research question could be understood in the context of the interviewee's worlds and actions and meanings to the best of the researcher's ability (Charmaz, 2007, p. 79). In the case of Australian Aboriginal people, it is important for the researcher to build relationships and context. This required researcher interrogation of her personal assumptions and with the assistance of the cultural mentor, adaption of behaviour and thinking to quickly generate 'familiarity' in interviews.

Research exploring leadership often takes a constructivist, interpretive approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b). This philosophy is appropriate as there are not as yet facts or concrete observations (Whiteley, 2012) of how to create a 'third space'. To summarise, this is a constructivist, interpretive and qualitative study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b). The next section will discuss the research paradigm surrounding the study.

3.3   Research Paradigm

As with all fields of inquiry, study of organisational contexts is paradigmatically anchored. A paradigm is a general perspective or way of thinking that reflects fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the nature of organisations (Kuhn, 1970; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The research paradigm guides the question of research method (Gringeri et al., 2013) and therefore this section will explore the research paradigms chosen relative to the research question. The research paradigm is the 'mind-set', which reflects "the dominant ontology,

axiology and epistemology of an intellectual community" (Rayner, 2011, p. 258). Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue that choices made in selecting a research problem, the paradigm to guide the problem, theoretical framework, data gathering and analytic methods are all guided by researcher's values and axiology. Discussion of the paradigm informing the research assists in understanding the philosophy and assumptions framing the research (Gringeri et al., 2013).

Gioia and Pitre (1990, p. 591) explain that the interpretivist paradigm aims to "describe and explain in order to diagnose and understand". They go on to explain that it is concerned with the "social construction of reality and process of interpretation" and that theory building is approached from the perspective of discovery through code analysis.

The theoretical perspectives of this research are symbolic interactionism (SI) (Blumer, 1969; Dennis & Martin, 2005) and phenomenology (S. Adams, 2009; Davis, 1971; Schutz, 1967). The next section will discuss the theoretical perspectives for the research framing the research paradigm. It will provide an overview of the theoretical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology.

3.3.1   Theoretical Perspectives

The qualitative methodology of this research is supported by two theoretical perspectives being symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. This section will explore these two perspectives in more detail.

Symbolic Interactionism

Descartes separated the material world from the thinking mind, creating the dualistic perspectives of interaction (Gillespie, 2005). How the mind comes to know the material world is through conscious perception. Symbolic interactionism is founded in Mead's (1913) views of the social self and the ideals of mind and self and the social and communication processes between people. Mead's (1913, p. 377) thinking around the 'social self' recognises that in our social environment we have an "inner response to our reaction to others" and that this is as varied as our social interactions themselves. Blumer (1980) noted that Mead's pragmatic philosophy was that the world only becomes known in the context of how it is perceived by people. This perception or 'reality' will change as people change and develop new perceptions.

Influenced by the work of Mead, Blumer (1966) extends the discussion in terms of the self; the act; social interaction; objects and joint action forming a foundation for our society. On this foundation, Blumer later coined the term symbolic interactionism. According to Blumer (1969) symbolic interactionism is based on three principles being:

1. people act toward things (people, objects, guiding ideals and activities) on the basis of the meaning they have for them;
2. this meaning is derived from the social interaction one has with others; and
3. these meanings are managed and adapted through an interpretive process by the individual.

Woods (1992, p. 338) explains that "symbols are signs, language, gestures, or anything that conveys meaning, and the meaning is constructed in social interaction". Understanding this meaning making is integral to creating shared understanding between two cultures and therefore symbolic interactionism is an appropriate theoretic perspective for this research.

Symbolic interactionism focuses on "subject-object relativity, participant observation and perspectival approach to truth" (Shalin, 1993, p. 303). It supports questions of meaning making as the social processes of leadership and shared understanding are not easily observed (Craig-Lees, 2001; Parry, 1998). This research is interested in the social process of leadership pertaining to Aboriginal Australians and creation of understanding (both 'real' and perceived) between Aboriginal and other Australians. Particularly the "meaningful co-presence of individuals within arenas of action" (Thompson & Fine, 1999, p. 291) within a workplace and how they should or should not act or behave to create understanding. Symbolic interactionism suggests that meaning is generated through interaction and is therefore a useful perspective for this research.

Woods (1992, p. 354) notes that groups, such as the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups in this study, develop a "large number of symbols imbued with interrelated meaning that collectively constitute a culture or sub-culture". This research therefore needs to adopt the participant's own interpretations and understanding of these symbols and the meanings they have attributed to them to truly understand the enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding. The focus on understanding differences in sense-making between the two cultures, provides an analytic construct which "requires the individual to be the

unit of analysis and for data to be collected via narratives and/or discourse" (Craig-Lees, 2001, p. 515).

Symbolic interactionism purports that meaning is created from and then modified through interaction and argues that collective meaning is an essential feature of life as "coordinated action is achieved through the construction of collective meaning" (Thompson & Fine, 1999, p. 291). However Magala (1997, p. 517) warns that with symbolic interactionism there is insufficient knowledge about the "factors that influence how individuals in organizations interpret data, set out reasoning and evaluation and use stored knowledge to select and shape incoming information". It is therefore important that the research process and design (e.g. the specification of categories, relationships between data, explanatory concepts and interpretive frameworks) are evaluated in terms of closeness of fit (Woods, 1992).

Drawing out personal narratives and discourse surrounding leadership and experiences within the industry and how this leads to or inhibits shared understanding is important to the success of this research. Parry (1998) suggests unstructured or semi-structured (qualitative) interviewing as the predominant form of data gathering to identify the symbolic interactions in leadership, such as this research seeks. Semi structured interviews are therefore the selected forum for researching these issues.

Through this research, it is hoped this sense-making process toward shared understanding may be explored and better understood. Given sense-making is ingrained in symbolic interactions (Blumer, 1969; P. Prasad, 1993; Sammon et al., 2009) it provides the first theoretic perspective of this research.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a significant "philosophical tradition which has had substantial impact on the social sciences, and especially on the development of qualitative research methods" and it is therefore diverse (King, 2004, p. 12). Phenomenology was founded in the works of Husserl (1963), Heidegger (1962), Sartre (1956, 1964), Merleau-Ponty (2012) among others and connects issues of intentionality, consciousness, qualia and human experience. It is a study of structures of experience.

Bruzina (2012) who calls on the philosophies of Husserl (1963) and Brentano (1995) believes there are four essential features of phenomenology:

1. it clarifies the origin or the source of human experience

2. it is founded in a naturalistic view of the way a human being exists in nature and the physical universe;

3. it is a transformational experience of sensemaking; and

4. consists of transcendental consciousness and its absolute subjectivity.

Phenomenology is a complex system of ideas (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b) which causes researchers to restrict their viewpoints to one that "simply targets the intentionalities themselves" (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 49). The phenomenological perspective acknowledges that individuals and their lived experiences are inextricably intertwined (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Sandberg, 2005; Schutz, 1967). To understand these 'intentionalities' the research will include questions of the participant's lived experiences. Key to the phenomenological perspective is the need for the researcher to "consciously set aside her presuppositions about the phenomenon under investigation – a process sometimes referred to as 'bracketing'" (King, 2004, p. 12). This 'bracketing' of the researcher's beliefs and what is 'known' of the world (Sokolowski, 2000) will be required to create an openness to the beliefs and world views of others. Having worked in the Aboriginal engagement field for many years 'bracketing' was a particularly important technique in terms of researcher openness to the views of others.

The phenomenological perspective contrasts with symbolic interactionism in that questions asked of respondents are about their experiences, rather than the sense and meaning they make of them (as in symbolic interactionism). Direct research involvement in the phenomenon being investigated will be reduced through the use of in-depth interviewing with little participant observation as source data (Parry, 1998). However Alvesson's (1996) warns of over-reliance on interviews; as multiple sources of data is essential (Alvesson, 1996; Parry, 1998). Silverman (1989) advises that interview data are only as sound as the interviewee's capacity to reflect 'reality' and their own beliefs and attitudes. Interviewees are "truth teller" and they "use their language to do things, to order and request, persuade and accuse" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 32). The researcher looked for observed positive bias of the phenomenon in interviews as interviewees wish to make a 'good impression' (Alvesson, 1996). The researcher considered these potential influences during interviews and within the analysis phases of the research.

The theoretical foundation for the research concludes that a qualitative approach will underpin the research design. The research design will now be discussed in more detail.

3.4   Research Design

The research design describes how the researcher will "deploy whatever strategies, methods or empirical materials" that are at hand (Becker, 1998, p. 4; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a). This section will discuss how the research question and objectives were framed, the research process and how the main study was informed by a familiarisation study. It will then proceed to how the data were collected and analysed.

Research design "situates the investigator in the world of experience" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b, p. 243). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) go on to suggest there are five areas to consider in designing research:

1.   How the design connects to the theoretical framework and perspectives being used.
2.   How the material collected will allow the researcher to write about the research question.
3.   Who or what will be studied.
4.   The strategies of inquiry that will be utilised.
5.   The methods or tools for collecting and analysing the material collected.

The Theoretical Framework detailed above leads to the conclusion that a qualitative methodology will form the foundation of the design and addresses the first point that Denzin and Lincoln (2011) suggest is considered. This Research Design section provides the 'who' and 'what' will be studied; the strategies of inquiry used and the methods of collecting and analysing material collected.

Interviewing is one of the most commonly used forms of data collection for understanding humanity, however it is an "interactional encounter" which can "shape the nature of the knowledge generated" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 699). This research used semi-structured interviews to allow for a dynamic and continuing discussion with respondents (Fay, 1996). Based on Bruner's (2004) philosophy that only through narrative can the 'lived experience' be revealed, the researcher intends to interpret and make sense of the socially constructed meaning (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999) interviewees have around shared understanding and its enablers and inhibitors. Interviews were as Fontana and Frey (2005) suggest: starting with general questioning to

allow personal stories to be told and moving to the specific to check the veracity of the statements made. Interviews were conducted in interviewee's workplace or choice of location, and relied on coaching from key contacts in these organisations and the Aboriginal mentor as to how to fit in terms of dress and language of the questions asked as part of the familiarisation study (Whiteley, 2012; Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006).

This section explains the research design in more detail, including framing of the research, the outcomes of the familiarisation study and how this has informed the main study.

3.4.1   Framing of Research Question and Objectives

Framing of the research question and objectives is an important process. Starting with a narrow research question risks "losing contextual richness because relevant contexts may lie beyond the frame of inquiry" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 79). In this research the researcher wanted to discover what would improve working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within the civil construction sector. While the factors that improve relationships are broad, the key to any relationship is a commonality of understanding. The real question was what enables or inhibits this understanding. Therefore, the research question was clear before research commenced.

The research objectives support the investigation of the question. The research question and associated objectives are as follows:

Research Question - What are the factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding?

Research Objectives are to:

- gather Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;
- gather non-Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;
- compare and analyse perception commonalities and differences collected from items 1 and 2;

- identify the factors which affect an Aboriginal workers' regard for their team leaders and whether these differ from the non-Aboriginal perspective;

- identify the issues and insights that would create shared understanding and thereby improve working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; and

- identify emerging constructs to inform how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people socially construct meaning in the civil construction industry.

3.4.2   Research Process

The stages of the research design followed that of Armson and Whiteley (2010) depicted in Figure 3.1 and Whiteley (2012) and included:

1. A modest (ongoing) literature review conducted throughout the research process.

2. A familiarisation study – including asking respondents' advice on procedure, style, content and clarity of proposed questions.

3. Data analysis of familiarisation study used to inform interview design.

4. Main study of semi-structured interviews with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents, with the unstructured element coming first to allow respondents to tell their stories.

5. Data analysis and findings.

6. Discussion and future research agenda.

```
Literature (modest)
Familiarization study
Preliminary fieldwork

            Data analysis

Confirm research question/
Data collection methods

        Data collection/
        Data analysis

            Theoretical sampling?

    Findings and comment
    on first  literature
                        Literature
                        matched to data
    New literature       Theoretical
    From findings        sensitivity

Insights or grounded theory
```
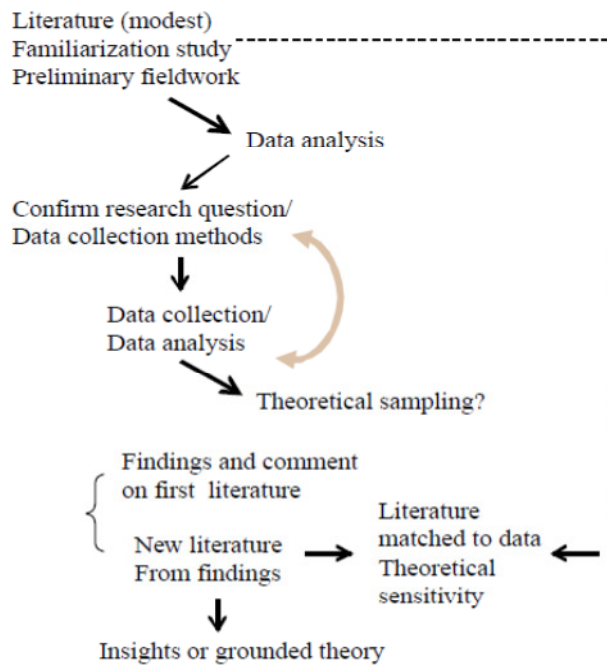
Figure 3.1: Stages of Research Design

All elements of the research process have not only been overseen by two academic supervisors at professional level, but also by a volunteer Aboriginal mentor and advisor who is a Whadjuk and Ballardong man of the Noongar Nation of Western Australia.

Each of these stages of the research process is explored further below.

3.4.3   Literature Review

The first and ongoing stage of the research process was a modest literature review. The purpose was to familiarise the researcher with the research context without preferring any theory that data might fit. This commenced on candidacy and was updated with relevant literature as the data revealed need and as the body of literature was added to over time. The outcome of this is in the previous chapter.

Charmaz (2007, p. 80) encourages beginning with a literature review as it sensitises the researcher to "concepts that alert us to look at what occurs". This literature review is contained in the Literature Related to the Research Objective section of Chapter 2. As the research progresses extant literature and concepts must "earn their way" into the body of supporting literature (Charmaz, 2007, p. 81). This form of literature review is contained in the Data-directed Literature section of Chapter 2. This is how the literature review progressed throughout the research.

3.4.4 Familiarisation Study

The second stage of the research process described previously is a familiarisation study. The familiarisation study seeks respondents' advice on procedures, style, content and clarity of proposed questions. The objective was to explore the researcher's needs in terms of making respondents comfortable.

Qualitative research is founded on two assumptions:

1. The more "comfortable the respondent is and the closer the researcher can come to his/her ways of communicating" (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006, p. 10); and

2. "the research context in qualitative research is best considered a mystery" (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006, p. 11).

A familiarisation study can shed light on the research context and improve the researcher's ability to create an environment comfortable to the respondent. This research, was therefore be prefaced with a short familiarisation study to build the researcher's skills in these areas. This section explores the procedures and content of the familiarisation study.

The familiarisation study recognises the researcher's existing familiarity with the civil construction industry and experience in working with and understanding of Aboriginal culture.

This was a planned familiarisation study, guided by the theoretic basis of the data collection methods, and the research and respondent experiences. The familiarisation study focused on the research question and objectives.

3.4.5 Procedures

Procedures are the "physical procedures for data collection" (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006, p. 12). The familiarisation study or preliminary fieldwork comprised a small sample to garner the feedback of each group being interviewed, being:

1. An Aboriginal worker
2. An Aboriginal team leader
3. A non-Aboriginal worker
4. A non-Aboriginal team leader.

Fontana and Frey would recommend (1994, pp. 707-708) a procedure which considers how the researcher will:

- understand the culture and thereby language of the respondents;
- present oneself physically;
- locate the respondents;
- gain trust;
- establish rapport; and
- collect material.

The familiarisation study procedures are therefore framed in this context to enable an exploration of the researcher's needs to make respondents feel comfortable. The researcher's ability to achieve a comfort, particularly with the Aboriginal respondents was integral to the research success. Darou, Kurtness and Hum (2000) have found the behavior of researchers has resulted in the non-participation of Canadian Aboriginal peoples in research. They found that Western-based research-related protocols around self-disclosure, perception of dishonesty, lack of social value of the research inhibited Canadian Aboriginal trust in the researcher. For many "Aboriginal peoples [the term research] has meant centuries of violation, disrespect, subjectivism and intolerance" (Pidgeon & Hardy Cox, 2002, p. 96). Australian Aboriginal people report feeling repeatedly researched with no positive outcome (Bainbridge et al., 2015). Aboriginal mentor, Danny Ford, said in conversation that researchers "take some of me away and I'll never see them again" (Ford, 2014). The familiarisation study assisted the researcher in garnering techniques to overcome some of this mistrust and to find ways of reassuring, particularly Aboriginal respondents, that the outcomes will be worthwhile and disseminated in a culturally appropriate way.

Culture and Language

As the research was conducted via interview the use of language is a central focal point. Alvesson (1996) warns researchers to be wary of the power of language as it is both "an important area of reflection as well as being an object of study before producing interpretations and conclusions that aim to go 'beyond' language". He also notes the "significance of the local, compared to the universal" in terms of contextual meaning and associated ambiguities (Alvesson, 1996). The researcher needed to ensure her language mimics that of her respondents and questions are adjusted in terms of nomenclature

(however not intent) to allow for these differences. Whiteley (2012) suggests that it is not uncommon for a researcher to adopt both the informal and formal language of business or the organisation. The researcher found this was necessary throughout the interviews to reflect the language of pipe-fitters and large machinery drivers as well as the language of senior Project Managers.

At each company, the researcher needed to check with the company 'mentor' the nomenclature workers use to describe their supervisor. Do they use 'supervisor', 'team leader', 'manager', 'boss'? This was very important for quickly building rapport to use the same language to describe this relationship with which the respondent is familiar.

Physical presentation

The researcher took advice from the company as to the appropriate physical presentation for the interviews. However, given many interviews took place in offices or on civil construction sites, the researcher generally presented dressed modestly and specifically in trousers and safety boots to allow access to the work sites. This dress was changed to that more of a smart casual nature for an office environment. The researcher endeavoured to dress and present physically in a manner similar to that of her respondents.

Participants

Participants were self selecting or suggested by existing participants or industry contacts. However the conditioning criteria were that all participants are currently working within the civil construction industry or have had substantial experience in working in civil construction. In all cases participants had the research discussed with them, a chance to read the informed consent form and provided written informed consent. Participants held control of the interview circumstances through being able to choose the timing and venue for the interview.

Status

The researcher endeavoured to be mindful of status, not only status from a Western perspective of age or role within industry, but also cultural status for Aboriginal participants. A cultural leader is not necessarily much different in age to the researcher and may not be a team leader in terms of industry context. However, the researcher was mindful of demonstrating reverence for cultural leaders.

Gender

Gender remains an issue in the civil construction sector. Despite women being 45% of the Australian employed workforce, in the construction industry only around 12% are women (Australian Bureau ofAustralian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). This meant that the researcher was a clear minority within the industry and there were the associated gender issues around respect which occur within any industry where women are a minority. In addition, there are cultural gender issues in dealing with Aboriginal people. In some Aboriginal cultures it is inappropriate for an unrelated man and woman to be alone in a room and eye contact should generally be avoided with a male interviewee. The researcher managed these gender differences in terms of ensuring culturally sensitive behaviour was displayed and maintained throughout the interview process.

Proxemics

Generally interviews would be conducted in a closed (inside) environment at a small table. This may have been in a site office, a small office meeting room or at a coffee shop. Therefore the proxemics were close to allow for intimate conversation, but not so close that the interviewee feels their personal space is being intruded. The researcher watched for signals of discomfort in these situations such as attempts to move the chair back or lean back to ascertain if personal proxemics were too close for the individual being interviewed.

Paralinguistics

Language is one of the "most important considerations because the data collection method was the face to face qualitative interview" (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006, p. 22). Woods (1992, p. 355) notes that one of the methodological implications of symbolic interactionism is the researcher must learn the "language of the participants, with all its nuances and perhaps special vocabulary" as well as other means of communication through body language such as looks and gestures. Questions were adjusted to cover the varying levels of language within the civil construction industry, from the minimalist language of a site worker to the story-telling language of traditional Aboriginal culture to the direct language of a project manager.

Gaining Trust and Rapport

Woods (1992, p. 351) notes that "if we are to understand the social life, what motivates people, what their interests are, what links them to and distinguishes them from others, what their cherished values and beliefs are, why they act as they do and how they perceive themselves and others, we need to put ourselves in their position and look out at the world with them". Verhoef Kowalsky, Thurston and Rutherford (1996) developed a number of guidelines for entry into Canadian Aboriginal community which the researcher used as guide to develop rapport and trust with Aboriginal respondents. Some of these recommended guidelines, which were used by the researcher include:

1. being prepared for uncertainty and the unexpected;
2. recognise that Aboriginal people are in charge;
3. be honest about motives behind the research;
4. be oneself;
5. allow for time; and
6. show sensitivity, respect and confidence.

Other techniques the researcher used to build trust and rapport is to briefly discuss her own background in the civil construction sector to demonstrate a commonality and understanding of the industry generally.

Collecting Material

Qualitative research methods of collecting data have been heavily criticised from the positivist perspective which claims that qualitative research claims "social facts as things" (J. Smith, 1983, p. 7). Positivist writers argue that the researcher needs to eliminate bias and not be emotionally involved in the data. It should follow a "systematic and methodical process for acquiring genuine, positive scientific knowledge" (Schwandt, 1996, p. 60). However our humanistic interactions in the data collection process are difficult to separate from any data collection methodology.

Positivism makes, the perhaps unrealistic assumption, that our environment is "stable, unchanging reality that can be studied with empirical methods of objective social science" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b, p. 2). However our experiences in life are not stable, nor unchanging. The research question relates to understanding. Our understanding is built from our life experiences. Dilthey argues that research into understanding takes place

through analysis of "inner experience, and both demonstrate the possibility and the limits of the validity of human studies".

In challenge to the positivist perspective, Dilthey (1972) confirms the importance of "re-experiencing [Nachfühlen] of alien states" and that "recomprehension [Nachverständnis] of individual existence can be raised to objective validity" (Dilthey, 1972, pp. 230-231). This research therefore, focuses on encouraging respondents to re-experience and recomprehend their experiences for the purposes of extrapolating meaning.

To explore the experience that is working relationships and the critical factors to success or otherwise, material was collected from respondents through semi-structured interviews. The researcher believes this form of data collection enables the lived experience to be drawn out and respondents to define the relevant factors in their own terms.

Positivist writers question, particularly with a semi-structured interview, if such a data collection method can deliver real, objective and meaningful results. Guba and Lincoln (2005) claim that only the community or group reliant on the social phenomena of meaning making can define whatever has meaning and is 'real' in their context. After all, human interaction is not always from a rational foundation and therefore how can 'clarity' be gained regarding social interactions if "rationality founded in the desire for objectivism" (Schwandt, 1996, p. 59) continues.

Content

Charmaz (2007, p. 79) warns that researchers must ask analytic questions in their data collection; otherwise, "thin and unfocussed data often result". To avoid a superficial investigation into enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding questions needed to be tailored and adapted to explicate the participant's own meaning and understanding (Charmaz, 2007). Delving deeper into participant's understanding required 'what' and 'how' questions to direct their thinking to consider what it means to them (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011; Sandberg, 2005).

King (2004, p. 15) clarifies this need for flexibility in that the "qualitative research interview is not based on a formal schedule of questions to be asked word-for-word in a set order". He says the schedule is more a guide of what might attempt to be covered in the interview. Further probing questions are then used to uncover a greater detail (King,

2004). In this regard, while the interview schedules below contain questions which were in most cases covered within each interview in the order presented. Their framing and probing questions were certainly adapted according to the context of the interview.

King (2004) states that there are three sources for selecting questions:

- the literature;
- the researcher's personal knowledge and experience; and
- preliminary work such as discussions with people who have experience of the research topic.

This interview schedule took guidance from all three of these sources in developing the questions and the order in which they are asked.

The interview content was slightly adjusted according to which of the following groups the respondent represented:

- Aboriginal 'Worker'
- Non-Aboriginal 'Worker'
- Aboriginal 'Team Leader'
- Non-Aboriginal 'Team Leader'.

An overview of the intended interview schedules for each group is provided in the tables below as follows:

Table 3.3: Research Questions for Non-Aboriginal Workers

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
5 mins	- Thank you for coming - Small chat – have you been busy, weather, projects working on - Collect signed informed consent form (if not already received) and respond to any questions regarding the research - Decide whether to proceed
5 min	Tell me about your typical day at work? You come in each morning I assume and…
5 mins	Talk to me about the level of understanding between yourself and Aboriginal members of your team? Follow-up questions - What makes you feel that way? - Tell me more about it?
10 mins	Please tell me about the best experience you've had in working with Aboriginal people where everyone seemed to get along and get the job done?

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
	Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it worked well? • Did the team do anything specific to help it go well? • Did the team leader/supervisor do or not do anything to help it go well? • How do you think your Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	Please tell me about the worst experience you've had working with Aboriginal people where things went badly and everyone didn't get along and/or the job didn't get done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it didn't work? • Did the team try to do or not do anything to make it better? Did it work? • Did the team leader/supervisor do or not do anything create this situation? • Did the team leader/supervisor do anything to try to make it better? Did it work? • What do you think should have been done differently? • How do you think your Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	How would you describe your relationship with your team leader/supervisor? • What is it specifically about them that makes you feel that way? Is it things they do or say? Tell me more about it. • What could they do (or not do) to work with you better? • What are the main things that affect your regard for your team leader?
10 mins	What advice would you give a team leader/supervisor or a company wanting to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace? So, if you were the boss what would you do? • Do you think your team leader/supervisor does this well?
5 mins	For you, what is the most important issue in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
5 mins	Is there anything else you would like to share with me or you feel I should know about working with Aboriginal people and how we work together?
5 mins	Close out - Thank you for your time - I will now write out what we said in the interview and can provide you with a copy of the transcript if you wish. Would you like a copy? If yes, where is the best place for me to send it. - In typing up the conversation, I will remove any references you have made to people's names and companies, so that you can not be identified in any way. I will be the only person who can connect your transcript with you as a person. - If you have anything you would like to add or to change about what has been said, please feel free to contact me to discuss (provide contact details).

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
	- Would you like a copy of the findings, when the research is finally complete?

Table 3.4: Research Questions for Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
5 mins	• Thank you for coming • Small chat – have you been busy, weather, projects working on • Collect signed informed consent form (if not already received) and respond to any questions regarding the research • Decide whether to proceed
5 min	• Tell me about your typical day at work? You come in each morning I assume and…
5 mins	Talk to me about the level of understanding between yourself and Aboriginal members of your team? Follow-up questions • What makes you feel that way? • Tell me more about it?
10 mins	Please tell me about the best experience you've had in working with Aboriginal people where everyone seemed to get along and get the job done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it worked well? • Did the team do anything specific to help it go well? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do or not do anything to help it go well? • How do you think your Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	Please tell me about the worst experience you've had working with Aboriginal people where things went badly, and everyone didn't get along, and/or the job didn't get done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it didn't work? • Did the team try to do or not do anything to make it better? Did it work? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do or not do anything create this situation? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do anything to try to make it better? Did it work? Not work? • What do you think should have been done differently? • How do you think your Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	How would you describe your relationship with your team? • What is it specifically about them that makes you feel that way? Is it things they do or say? Tell me more about it. • What could they do (or not do) to work with you better?

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
	• What are the main things that affect your regard for your team?
10 mins	What advice would you give a team leader/supervisor or a company wanting to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace? • Do you think you as team leader/supervisor do this well?
5 mins	For you, what is the most important issue in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
5 mins	Is there anything else you would like to share with me or you feel I should know about working with Aboriginal people and how we work together?
5 mins	Close out - Thank you for your time - I will now write out what we said in the interview and can provide you with a copy of the transcript if you wish. Would you like a copy? If yes, where is the best place for me to send it. - In typing up the conversation, I will remove any references you have made to people's names and companies, so that you can not be identified in any way. I will be the only person who can connect your transcript with you as a person. - If you have anything you would like to add or to change about what has been said, please feel free to contact me to discuss (provide contact details). - Would you like a copy of the findings, when the research is finally complete?

Table 3.5: Research Questions for Aboriginal Workers

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
5 mins	• Thank you for coming • Small chat – have you been busy, weather, projects working on • Collect signed informed consent form (if not already received) and respond to any questions regarding the research • Decide whether to proceed
5 min	• Tell me about your typical day at work? You come in each morning I assume and…
5 mins	Talk to me about the level of understanding between yourself and the non-Aboriginal members of your team? Follow-up questions • What makes you feel that way? • Tell me more about it?
10 mins	Please tell me about the best experience you've had in working with non-Aboriginal people where everyone seemed to get along and get the job done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it worked well? • Did the team do anything specific to help it go well? • Did the team leader/supervisor do or not do anything to help it go

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
	well? • How do you think your non-Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	Please tell me about the worst experience you've had working with non-Aboriginal people where things went badly and everyone didn't get along and/or the job didn't get done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it didn't work? • Did the team try to do or not do anything to make it better? Did it work? • Did the team leader/supervisor do or not do anything create this situation? • Did the team leader/supervisor do anything to try to make it better? Did it work? • What do you think should have been done differently? • How do you think your non-Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	How would you describe your relationship with your team leader/supervisor? • What is it specifically about them that makes you feel that way? Is it things they do or say? Tell me more about it. • What could they do (or not do) to work with you better? • What are the main things that affect your regard for your team leader?
10 mins	What advice would you give a team leader/supervisor or a company wanting to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace? • Do you think your team leader/supervisor does this well?
5 mins	For you, what is the most important issue in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
5 mins	Is there anything else you would like to share with me or you feel I should know about working with Aboriginal people and how we work together?
5 mins	Close out - Thank you for your time - I will now write out what we said in the interview and can provide you with a copy of the transcript if you wish. Would you like a copy? If yes, where is the best place for me to send it. - In typing up the conversation, I will remove any references you have made to people's names and companies, so that you can not be identified in any way. I will be the only person who can connect your transcript with you as a person. - If you have anything you would like to add or to change about what has been said, please feel free to contact me to discuss (provide contact details). - Would you like a copy of the findings, when the research is finally complete?

Table 3.6: Research Questions for Aboriginal Team Leaders

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
5 mins	• Thank you for coming • Small chat – have you been busy, weather, projects working on • Collect signed informed consent form (if not already received) and respond to any questions regarding the research • Decide whether to proceed
5 min	• Tell me about your typical day at work? You come in each morning I assume and…
5 mins	Talk to me about the level of understanding between yourself and non-Aboriginal members of your team? Follow-up questions • What makes you feel that way? • Tell me more about it?
10 mins	Please tell me about the best experience you've had in working with non-Aboriginal people where everyone seemed to get along and get the job done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it worked well? • Did the team do anything specific to help it go well? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do or not do anything to help it go well? • How do you think your non-Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	Please tell me about the worst experience you've had working with non-Aboriginal people where things went badly and everyone didn't get along and/or the job didn't get done? Follow-up questions: • Why do you feel it didn't work? • Did the team try to do or not do anything to make it better? Did it work? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do or not do anything create this situation? • Did you as team leader/supervisor do anything to try to make it better? Did it work? Not work? • What do you think should have been done differently? • How do you think your non-Aboriginal team members felt? How do you know this?
10 mins	How would you describe your relationship with your team? • What is it specifically about them that makes you feel that way? Is it things they do or say? Tell me more about it. • What could they do (or not do) to work with you better? • What are the main things that affect your regard for your team?
10 mins	What advice would you give a team leader/supervisor or a company wanting to improve relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace?

Estimated Time	Discussion/question
	• Do you think you as team leader/supervisor do this well?
5 mins	For you, what is the most important issue in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
5 mins	Is there anything else you would like to share with me or you feel I should know about working with Aboriginal people and how we work together?
5 mins	Close out - Thank you for your time - I will now write out what we said in the interview and can provide you with a copy of the transcript if you wish. Would you like a copy? If yes, where is the best place for me to send it. - In typing up the conversation, I will remove any references you have made to people's names and companies, so that you can not be identified in any way. I will be the only person who can connect your transcript with you as a person. - If you have anything you would like to add or to change about what has been said, please feel free to contact me to discuss (provide contact details). - Would you like a copy of the findings, when the research is finally complete?

3.4.6   Conducting the Familiarisation Study

Whiteley and Whiteley (2006) believe there are two possible ways to refine procedures for data collection:

• to learn from advice from the literature and other researchers and research skills; or

• to undertake a familiarisation study.

As this was the researcher's first substantial research undertaking, it was decided to conduct a small familiarisation study. Figure 3.2 describes the relevant elements of a familiarisation study to this research according to Whiteley and Whiteley (2006).
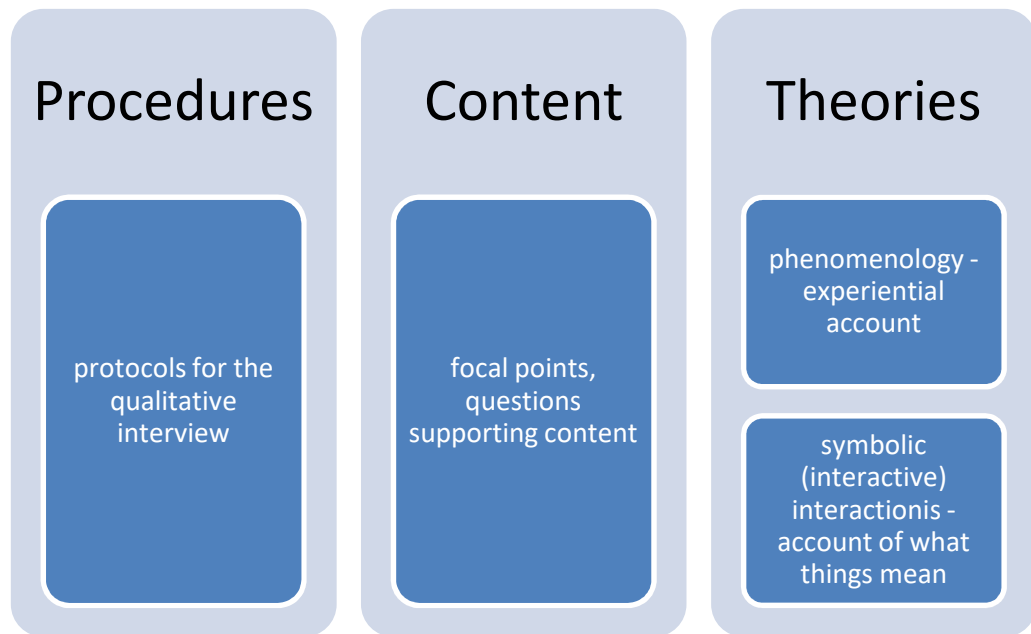
Figure 3.2: Elements of a Familiarisation Study

Familiarisation Study Participants

Using the research process described above, three familiarisation interviews were conducted with:

1. A non-Aboriginal man who has worked in civil construction in Western Australia for over 20 years. He has focused his career particularly on mentoring of Aboriginal people into the workplace with particular attention given to Aboriginal people who might be working for the first time; who may be coming out of prison or from other adverse circumstances. His knowledge and understanding of the civil construction industry and Aboriginal culture are outstanding. He was able to offer both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspective due to his experience and to offer advice on how to approach the interviewees who are possibly the most distanced from my own personal circumstances. This ability to offer two perspectives is why only three interviews were undertaken in the familiarisation study.

2. A young Aboriginal man (in his early 20s) who had worked in the civil industry for several years. He offers not only the Aboriginal perspective, but also an opportunity to test techniques in overcoming the shyness of (particularly young) Aboriginal men due to the male-female cultural relationship sensitivities.

3. A middle-aged, highly experienced Aboriginal woman. This lady has worked with civil and mining companies for decades on Aboriginal employment and engagement. Her knowledge of the industry as well as ability to offer a strong Aboriginal perspective on the questions, line of questioning and context made her an outstanding candidate for the familiarisation study.

Prior to conducting the interviews each of the interviewees were asked to not only undertake the interview, but to also provide direct and honest feedback after the interview on:

1. whether the questions were easy to understand and made sense;
2. if the questions were appropriate;
3. if the questions could be improved in terms of how they are asked, words used or if there were questions that were missed;
4. whether the body language was appropriate; and
5. whether they were quickly made to feel comfortable.

The interviewees were asked to provide this feedback immediately after the interview and then were contacted a few days later to see if there were any further thoughts on the interview, once they had time to reflect.

Feedback from the Familiarisation Study

Feedback from the non-Aboriginal respondent to the familiarisation study was that:

- The interview questions were good and the style of asking was very good.
- It needed to be recognised that some team leaders may not have had experience with Aboriginal people.
- If an Aboriginal respondent is quiet, it can sometimes be a sign of disapproval.
- To be cautious of male–female relationship cultural issues for Aboriginal employees. However, most will likely be comfortable with the situation.

Feedback from Aboriginal respondents to the familiarisation study included:

- It is important for the researcher to spend significant time introducing herself. This introduction is to include some background as to how the researcher came to be researching this issue; naming and identifying Aboriginal people the researcher is connected to so that the participants can locate the researcher 'culturally'.

- Advice was also provided that in dealing with young men in particularly, the respondents may experience some nervousness and may need some further explanation of the some of the questions in more detail.

Listening back to the first interviews, the researcher noted a propensity to interrupt the respondents and became increasingly mindful of her extroverted behaviours in this regard throughout the data collection process.

As the familiarisation study was undertaken by conducting the interview and then asking for advice and feedback afterward, the advice of the research supervisor was that this data could be utilised as part of the main study as the data were not contaminated by asking for the advice first.

Changes to Data Collection Approach for Main Study

The short familiarisation study was valuable in informing the main study and the research process was amended as follows as a result of the feedback:

- Culture and Language:
  - The researcher was made more mindful of cultural protocols around male–female relationships and, thus, avoided eye contact and dressed respectfully.
  - The researcher was mindful of the importance of Elders in interviewing Aboriginal people and where a group of Aboriginal people came from the one employer or from the one town, endeavoured to ensure the most culturally senior was interviewed first.
  - the researcher adopted the language of the respondents. Words such a 'whadjulla' were used in Aboriginal interviews to describe 'white people', which is a term local Aboriginal people use to describe what people and culture. In the same way 'blackfella' is used to describe their people and culture. Use of words such as these that form part of the natural lexicon demonstrates an understanding on the part of the researcher of Aboriginal perspective and offers familiar terms and language which hopefully provided comfort.
  - The researcher developed a series of alternative ways of asking some of the questions to be able to swiftly respond to respondent body language of confusion. For example the question of "What are the main things that affect

your regard for your team?" was often swiftly followed by: "so what make

you think well of your team or what makes you think poorly of your team?".

- Gaining Trust and Rapport: with Aboriginal interviewees prior to commencing the research and often even prior to requesting informed consent, the researcher provided participants with her personal background and journey to coming to study a doctorate. This included what cultivated her interest in the topic and her hope that industry would become a more welcoming place for Aboriginal people as a result.

Data Analysis of the Familiarisation Study

As the familiarisation study was so small, data analysis of the familiarisation study was incorporated into the data analysis of the main study and will be discussed in the Data Analysis section of this Methodology chapter.

3.4.7   Main Study

The main study was conducted as proposed with the familiarisation study, however, with the changes around culture, language and building trust and rapport as detailed above. The interview plan for the main study was the same as that described in the tables above for the familiarisation study.

The main study and analysis described in this and the next section occurred concurrently. This "joint build of an interactive, interpreted, produced data – is an epistemological bias to achieve a credible, accurate description of data collection" (Glaser, 2012a, p. 30). However this does depend on the data collected and how that is guided by the line of questioning and observations proffered by the researcher (Glaser, 2012a). In this research the concurrent approach was appropriate.

Sampling

The main study used a mixture of theoretical and purposeful sampling. The interviewees were chosen based both upon their employment context (being the civil construction industry) and whether or not they were Aboriginal. Aboriginal interviewees were identified through a process of self-identification. An Aboriginal interviewee's self-identification as Aboriginal was not questioned. Throughout the course of conducting interviews, interviewees were asked or volunteered colleagues or acquaintances that they believed would add value to the research content. If these suggested interviewees

provided their informed consent, they were also interviewed. Thereby purposive sampling was also utilised.

For the purposes of sampling a 'team leader' was considered to be someone who had people reporting directly to them and that the interviewee has to undertake typical managerial responsibilities for such as goal setting and performance management. A 'worker' was considered to be someone who didn't have any direct reports. For clarification a team leaders and workers may have worked in either an office or a construction site environment (or potentially both) depending on the nature of their role within the industry. They may also have worked close to home or as a fly in – fly out role.

Although Glaser (Glaser, 1978, 1998) accepted small data samples, Charmaz (2007, p. 79) warns that "early closure of data collection fosters analytic foreclosure". Charmaz (2007, p. 79) continues to warn that is can contribute to "thin or mundane, but perhaps focused analyses". To avoid a situation a small amount of data were collected (a couple of interviews) after the researcher's perceived saturation point to confirm that there indeed was no further data to collect.

This process led to the total number of interviews undertaken to that shown in Table 3.7, which was the final sample taken.

Table 3.7: Sample at Data Saturation

	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Total
Team leaders	7	15	22
Workers	9	5	14
Total	16	20	36

The small number of non-Aboriginal workers may perhaps be of concern; however, these interviews were not revealing data already present already and therefore after persisting beyond 'saturation' it was decided to not pursue further.

Cultural Sensitivities in Sampling

As noted at candidacy, Smith (1999) advises that research in the minds of Aboriginal people is heavily linked to colonialism and may create distrust and poor response rates or limited responses. Many Aboriginal interviewees were obtained through recommendation from others. This had to be handled carefully, particularly around the

informed consent, due to the reciprocity and obligation requirements of Aboriginal culture. There was a risk that because an Elder or family member had recommended a potential interviewee as a potentially insightful respondent, that the individual would then feel obliged to participate. In these cases, the researcher prefaced the informed consent process with strong counselling of the potential interviewee that the person who had recommended they participate, would never know whether or not they did actually participate. It was reiterated to the potential interviewee that because the other person would never know, that the interviewee truly had a freedom to choose whether or not to participate.

Advice was taken from the researcher's Aboriginal cultural mentor, Danny Ford and the familiarisation study respondents on appropriate cultural responses. In interviewing Aboriginal respondents, the researcher had an awareness of discrepancies between the ways Aboriginal English and Australian English speakers conceptualise their experiences (Sharifian, 2010). Aboriginal people "operate on the basis of conceptualizations that embody their spiritual world view" (Sharifian, 2010, p. 3367). The researcher observed this particularly in older Aboriginal interviewees who were more likely to use analogies and storytelling to make a point, rather than discussing the issue at hand directly.

The researcher was also made aware by her cultural mentor and reminded in subsequent interviews of differences in perceptions of power. Aboriginal people are more likely to be wary and distrusting of people who are in suits or even very well dressed. Without any building of trust, the interview could be impacted at many levels by such distrust. The researcher therefore managed her presentation according to interview circumstance to try to avoid Aboriginal respondents feeling intimidated.

Procedures

Data collection was undertaken predominantly as described for the familiarisation study with the interview plan remaining unchanged from the tables described in the familiarisation study. Charmaz (2007) warns against an over-reliance on interviewing as the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach can lead to the method driving the research rather than addressing the research problem. The interview process described in the familiarisation study was that of semi-structured interviews. In practice, while all the questions in the interview schedule were asked of respondents, as with many social constructionist interviews, the interviews also had a "loose structure" and "probes to

follow up points of interest, and the need for reflexivity on the part of the researcher" (King, 2004, p. 13). This flexibility allows for further insights to be drawn from the interviewee's experiences and also allowed the researcher to draw out the interviewee's perceptions and understandings as to why something was an enabler or inhibitor and how that might work again in future or different circumstances.

As King (2004) notes phenomenological interviews can be long and it is not uncommon for collection and analysis activity to overlap. This allows for preceding interviews to influence those that occur subsequent. This occurred in this research around perceptions of trust and conflict management, particularly with Aboriginal people. Where opportunity fluently arose (as in the interviewee had lead the discussion into these areas already), further questioning was added to the interview plan around:

- What makes you trust someone and why; or
- How conflict is managed in terms of process and parties involved.

There are benefits to leveraging researcher experience to increase her ability to draw out more complex descriptions and deeper insights from the interviewees, provided there is room for negotiation of meaning between interviewer and interviewee, to create a more informed understanding (Alvesson, 1996; Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, & Keil, 1988).

Throughout the data collection process field notes were kept to remind the researcher of key body language or other reflections on the interviews. These also contributed to the audit trail which in turn allowed for researcher reflexivity.

This interaction of data collection and analysis leads us to needing to further clarify the analysis process.

The analysis strategy therefore follows a process similar to that used in grounded theory analysis to enable the iterative development of concept and facilitate constant comparison. Through analysis and memoing, more mature concepts will be formulated in preparation for drafting of findings. The next section will discuss the analysis strategy in detail, including memoing.

3.4.8 Analysis

Analysis Introduction

There are a variety of methods that may be applied to reading and analysing the qualitative data collected and with large volumes of qualitative data the researcher must find ways of managing and interpreting this it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b; A. Prasad & Prasad, 2002; Sandberg, 2005). This Analysis section will discuss how both "tacit and overt interpretations" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 82) of the qualitative data collected are to be analysed.

In analysing the interviews "it is assumed that language has the capacity to represent reality, it is treated as a representational system available to the researchers in their endeavour to describe reality objectively" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 43). Charmaz (2007, p. 82) claims that "by grappling with both tacit and overt interpretations of their data, researchers can get beneath the surface and construct a frame for building nuanced analysis". This allows for points of view to be defined and identification of areas of convergence and divergence that reveal hidden hierarchies of meaning (Charmaz, 2007).

This Analysis section will describe the process undertaken to reveal meaning in terms of shared understanding to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Analysis Theory

The phenomenological perspective recognises "that the text produced in the interview situation is shaped by that context" (King, 2004, p. 13). The context of shared understanding is an emergence in the relationships between individuals. As Whiteley (2012, p. 254) explains "qualitative research is emergent, responding to the unfolding meaning contributed by respondents". The analysis therefore must also be emergent in order to respond to the intent of the respondents. Grounded theory coding and analysis strategies allows for this emergence and constant comparison. This method of analysis encourages researchers to look at their data in a particular way that links the words of participants with the events and ideas (Charmaz, 2007; Glaser, 2013). "Grounded theory has long been touted as a method of discover – of data and of theory" and it "can give us tools for new understandings" such as what creates shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (Charmaz, 2005b, p. 371).

Whiteley (2012, p. 255) notes that qualitative analysis must be "iterative" and combine "elements of constant comparison, looking for the deviant case, applying data to theory and possibly during this process come up with insights that were not initially considered". Charmaz (2005b) supports this view that variation within findings and analysis need to be handled in a way that strengthen the analytic usefulness.

Content analysis began with the unit of analysis being an utterance meaningful to the research question. Although codes are "abstract models that emerge" (Glaser, 2013, p. 3), the coding of data was as described at university approval of the proposed research approach through candidacy presentation and examination, involving in vivo coding initially so the participants' words became code labels. Charmaz suggests using gerunds to code for actions so that process and action are visible (Charmaz, 2005b). Category building was done through deconstruction and recoding. Throughout, the researcher used a constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) in that the posture was tentative and categorisation grew and was developed as the data and literature evolved. As Glaser (2013) notes, these codes can be easily forced and therefore the researcher's awareness and cross-checking with the research supervisor were integral to ensure genuine emergence.

Using a comparative method "in which the researcher compares data with data, data with categories and category with category" the "analytic scaffolding" is formed (Charmaz, 2005a, p. 517).

Analysis Process

Hermeneutics offer a way to understand and interpret meaning and is regularly used in research relating to sense-making and learning, which draw on hermeneutics to explain "human action, intentionality and meaning in the context of organizations" (Barrett, Powley, & Pearce, 2011, p. 182). In this research four hermeneutic units (or sub contexts) were chosen as Dilthey (1972) would argue that action is guided by the experiences, motivation or intention of those undertaking it. It is assumed by the researcher that these four hermeneutic units (or groups of participants) will each have their own "familiarity, various particular coping skills that hang together in coherent, coordinated ways, intermeshed with referential totality of equipment, roles and norms; these holistic coping skills are our understanding that enable us to get around in the world and allow us to make sense of everything we encounter" (Barrett et al., 2011, p. 186). They will offer their

own unique perspective on the research question and objectives. Analysis within these four Hermeneutic units offers ease of comparison of these perspectives to ascertain similarities and differences. In this research, data were collected from four hermeneutic units being:

- Aboriginal team leaders
- Aboriginal workers
- non-Aboriginal team leaders
- non-Aboriginal workers

Data were managed and analysed using ethnographic-style software, Atlas Ti. This allowed flexibility in terms of construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of codes and categories using the constant comparative method. ATLAS.ti software is a "workbench for the qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio and video data" (Friese, 2015, p. 10). Within ATLAS.ti a new Hermeneutic Unit (or project) was created for each of the four hermeneutic units described above as shown in Figure 3.3.

As data was collected it was transcribed from the recording and the transcriptions were imported into ATLAS.ti by adding a document as shown in Figure 3.4. This then allowed for the analysis of utterances to commence.
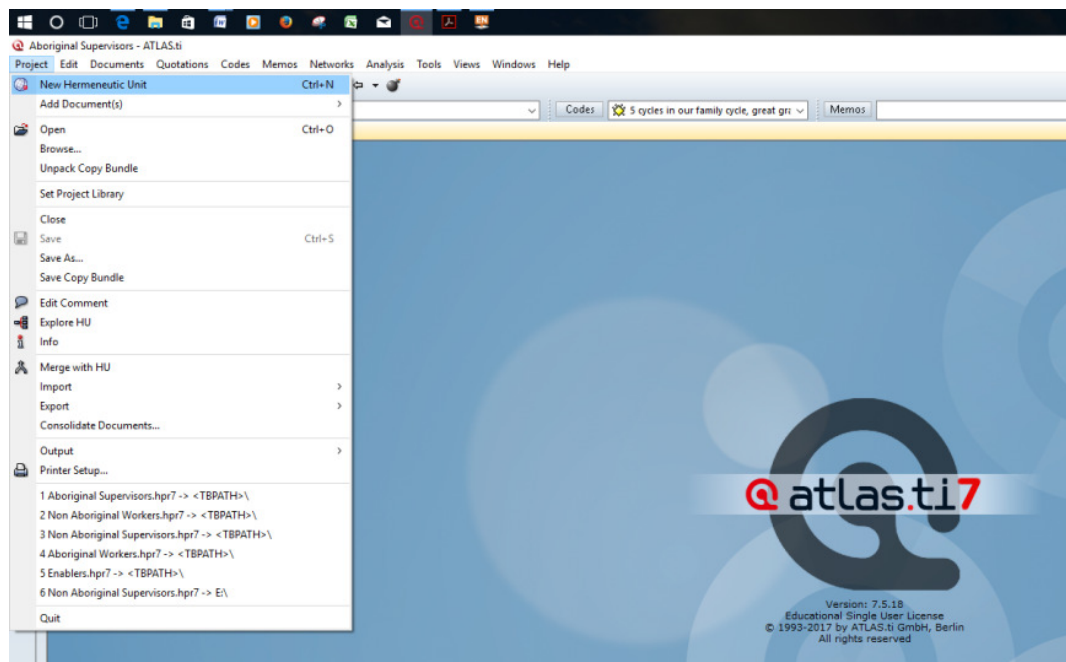
Figure 3.3: Creation of a New Hermeneutic Unit in ATLAS.ti
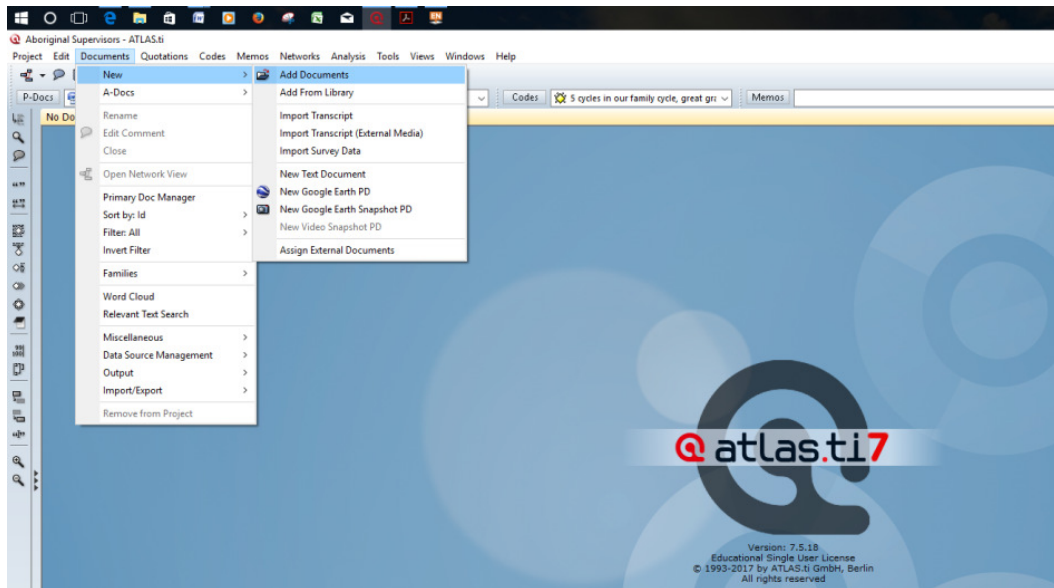
Figure 3.4: Adding a Transcription to a Hermeneutic Unit

Data collection and analysis were undertaken simultaneously as an iterative process. As the focus of this research is on understanding the differences in sense-making between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures, the analytic construct required "the individual to be the unit of analysis and for data to be collected via narratives and/or discourse" (Craig-Lees, 2001, p. 515). It was therefore important to not only draw out the narratives and discourse surrounding leadership and how this leads to or inhibits shared understanding, but also for the analysis process to remain true and representative of the utterances and intent of the participants.

The governing process of analysis followed and applied to these findings is depicted in Figure 3.5. As described in Figure 3.5, content analysis began with the unit of analysis being an utterance meaningful to the research question. The coding of data was undertaken using in vivo coding so that participants' words became code labels. Chamaz (2005b, p. 369) argues that "in vivo codes use research participants' terms as codes to uncover their meanings and understand their emergent actions".

Utterance
- Each utterance relevant to the research question was identified

In vivo code
- Utterances were given an in vivo code within Atlas Ti

Code
- In vivo codes of the same context and meaning were then merged within Atlas Ti to create codes with grounded code

Category
- Codes were grouped into one of the six categories
- This was done using the Family functionality of Atlas Ti

Theme/Insight (Subcategory)
- Some categories contained large volumes of complex responses
- For ease of analysis and discussion subcategories were created based on key themes or insights
- This was undertaken using Atlas Ti's Network Mapping functionality

Figure 3.5: Analysis Process to Develop Findings

Using ATLAS.ti, utterances were highlighted and coded using in vivo coding as shown in Figure 3.6.

H: Well that's good. And…what did, what could [manager] do or not do to work with you better?

NW4: …less micromanagement when he's really stressed

BOTH: [laugh]

Figure 3.6: Example of In Vivo Coding in ATLAS.ti

In vivo codes were then placed into categories. Category building was undertaken through both interpretation of the research question and objectives and later through deconstruction and recoding. Categories themselves are founded on the research question and are consistently applied to all hermeneutic units. These categories were created in ATLAS.ti as "Families", as shown in Figure 3.7 and were consistent across all hermeneutic units.
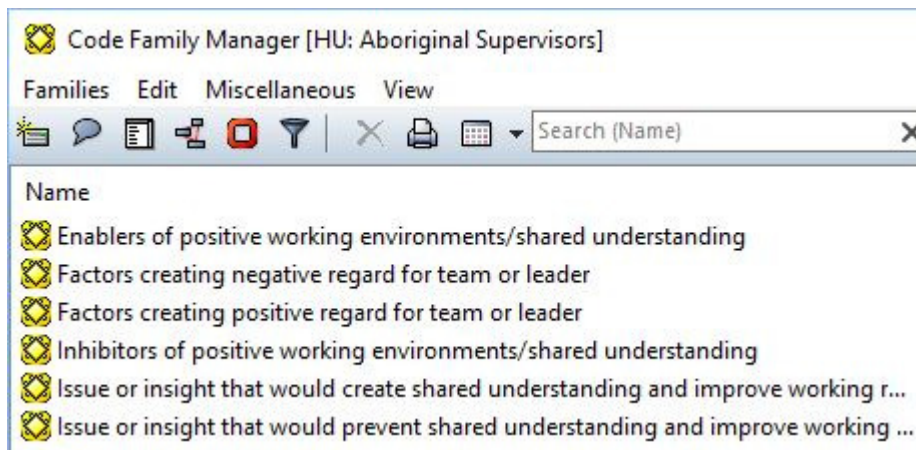
Figure 3.7: Categories Applied Using Family Functionality of ATLAS.ti to all Hermeneutic Units

In vivo codes were then placed into the category to which they most closely related. Within a Category, in vivo codes of the same meaning or intent were then merged within Atlas Ti to create codes or grounded codes. Where in vivo codes were merged within Atlas Ti, names were chosen based on a combination of the selected in vivo code names that were merged, so that the code name continued to convey the narrative or discourse of the participants. An example of the merging of in vivo codes into grounded codes is shown in Figure 3.8. All merging of codes occurred only with codes within the same category.
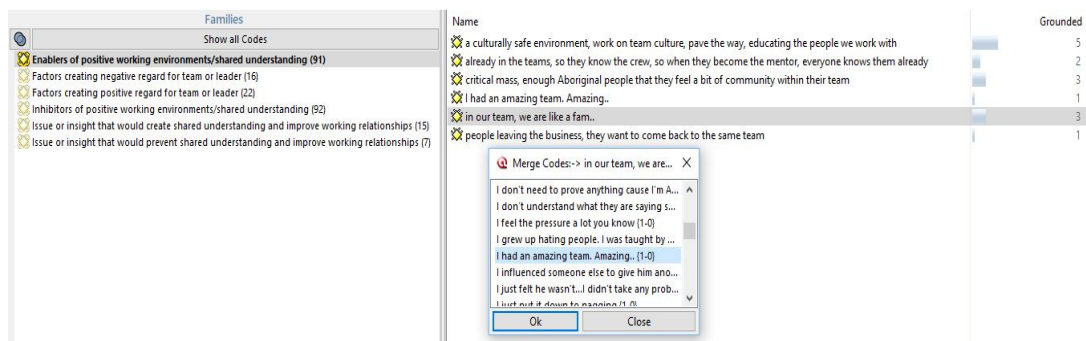
Figure 3.8: Merging of In Vivo Codes with Grounded Codes

Where in vivo codes were merged to create grounded codes, the grounding, or the count of the number of utterances contained within that code is provided in each network view, this is shown in Figure 3.9. As Chamaz (2005b, p. 369) notes grounded codes "preserve the character of the data, provide a precise handle on the material and point to places that need further elucidation".

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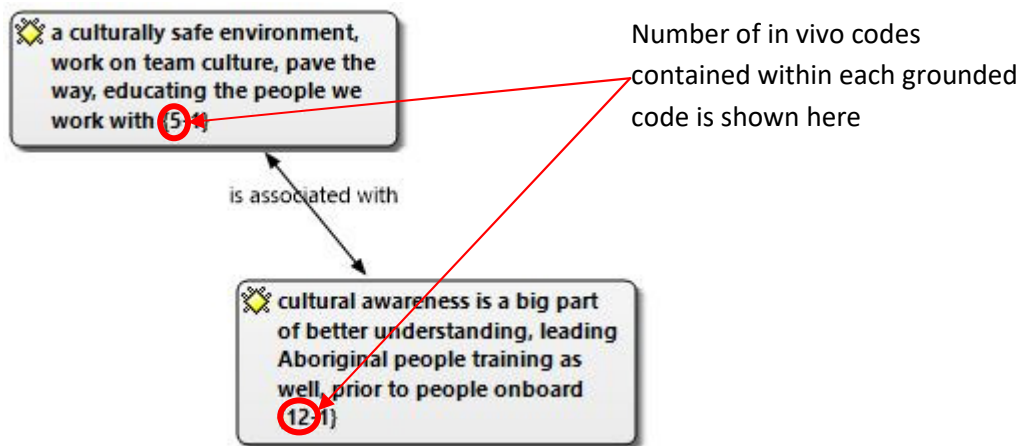
Figure 3.9: Network View Showing Grounding

Coding occurred concurrently with the data collection. As Charmaz (2007, p. 81) notes the "principle of simultaneous data collection and analysis exists more as an abstract goal". In reality, a group of interviews were conducted (data collected) and then weeks later analysed in relation to previous data collected. So the improvement and constant comparison occurred in tranches. Charmaz (2007, p. 81) goes on to claim that such practice may lead to problems of "unfocused data, ignored leads and missed possibilities". However, this was not evident within the course of this research.

This process naturally leads to a variety of codes, each having a use and perspective (Glaser, 2013). Patterns and variations in the data were noted on an ongoing basis to give the data order and assist with integration (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). This method unveiled latent patterns in the various interviewee's words (Glaser, 2012a, p. 29). Theoretical sensitivity happened concurrently as (Armson & Whiteley, 2010) the analysis proceeded.

Subcategories were created using a constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) and evolved and develop as the data and literature revealed themes and insights. The codes within a category were examined and put together in new ways to make connections between concepts. Patterns and variations in the data are noted on an ongoing basis to give the data order and assist with integration (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

Theoretical sensitivity occurred concurrently as recommended by Armson and Whiteley (2010).

Atlas Ti also allowed connection of grounded codes within a network to identify and connect grounded codes that were:

- A part of each other ("is part of");

- Associated with each other ("is associated with"); or

- Contradictory statements or experiences ("contradicts"),

using black arrows between grounded codes to identify these relationships. This process was undertaken predominantly in the Network View of ATLAS.ti by dragging a connection from one box to the other and then selecting the relationship type. This process is shown in Figure 3.10.
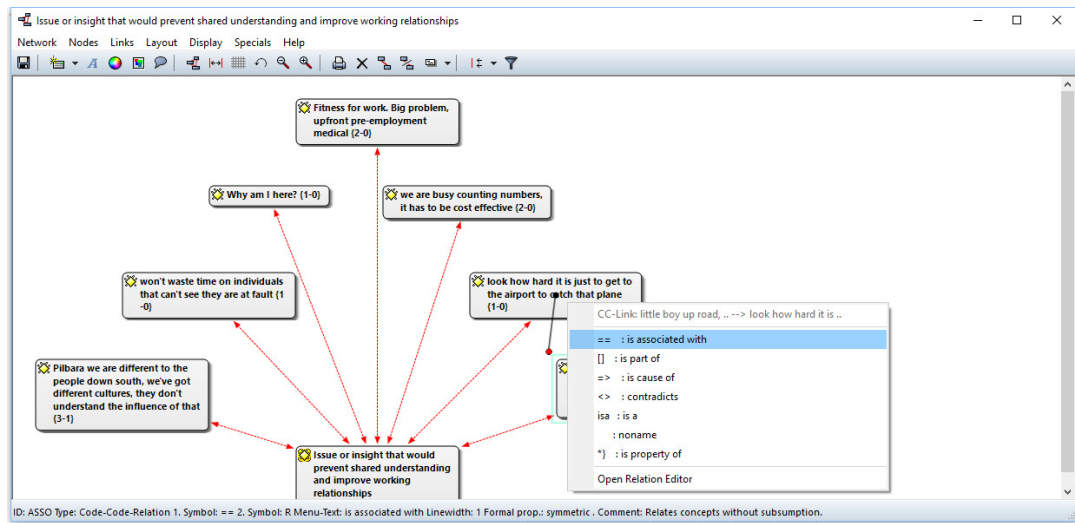
Figure 3.10: Creating a Relationship between Grounded Codes

An example of how this relationship is displayed in the network maps is shown in Figure 3.11.
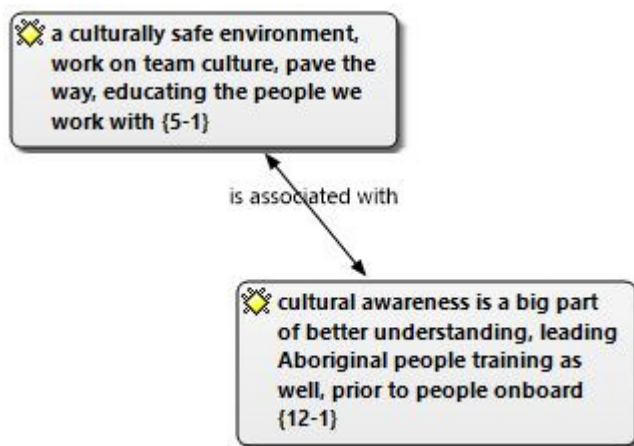
Figure 3.11: Network Map Showing an 'Is Associated With' Relationship

Glaser (1978) and Charmaz (2007) suggest questions to consider during the data collection and analysis being:

1. What is happening?
2. What is this a study of?
3. What theoretical category does this indicate?
4. What does the data suggest? Pronounce?
5. From whose point of view?

These were considered throughout the analysis process. Acknowledging both implied and stated interpretations, researchers are able to build comprehensive analysis (Charmaz, 2007).

Memoing

Throughout the data analysis process, memoing was used to record theoretic codes and models that can integrate categories into concepts or theory. Memoing commenced at the start of the analysis process and became more analytic as the research progressed (Charmaz & Bryant, 2010).

Glaser (2013, p. 4) defines theoretic codes as "abstract models that integrate categories and their properties into a theory". Theoretic codes will be used throughout the memoing process to facilitate emergence of connections during the analysis phase and form part of the audit trail. Codes were defined using the properties they contain from within the data (Charmaz & Bryant, 2010). Memoing was also used to "maintain their analytic momentum" and then become "the content of the first draft of the report" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 82; Glaser, 2013).

It is therefore through sorting of the memos written throughout the analysis process will prepare for the final stage of the research, being the writing up (Glaser, 2012b).

Drafting of Ideas

The written account of qualitative research reveals the long evident tensions "between writing descriptions of the empirical world and constructing theories of it" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 81). Through its foundation in the in vivo coding the researcher's analytic insight remain "embedded in the narrative and enrich the story in descriptive works whereas abstract categories and relationships between them take precedence in theoretical

works" (Charmaz, 2007, p. 81). Sandberg (2005) describes this as a 'relationship of correspondence' as it holds an underlying assumption that "language has the capacity to represent reality, it is treated as a representational system available to the researchers in their endeavour to describe reality objectively" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 43). Glaser (2013) notes that the point is to work out what is contained within the data and what is not.

Charmaz (2007) identifies that writers adopt two different processes:

1. Writing for discovery which is active, emergent and open ended; and
2. Writing to reporting which is reporting on the findings.

She says that the reporting stage of the writing will come substantially after the full exploration of ideas and concepts (Charmaz, 2007). Sandberg (2005) warns that this phase can come with significant confusion to the researcher with the rejection of some knowledge produced through objective methodology process occurs and the interpretive approach needs to be justified.

The 'writing to report' on this study is contained within the Findings chapter. The 'writing for discovery' is within the Discussion chapter of this thesis.

Data Management and Privacy

Data management was in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. This includes retaining research data for at least 5 years from publication of the thesis (*Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, 2007).

Safeguards were taken to ensure protection of individuals privacy and identity (Christians, 2011). These safeguards include removing identifying factors (such as names, places, project site names, employers) from interview transcripts and participants have all been offered to review their own transcripts.

Data were managed and analysed using ATLAS.ti software. Transcripts are managed via this software and will be kept along with manual notes such as memos and notes about the research of the study. During the research process, data were stored on the computer in the candidate's home office. This computer is password protected and only contains de-identified responses although were allocated codes to be able to identify them as Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal and worker/team leader. Once the thesis is accepted the research material will be transferred to an external storage device and then deleted from

the computer. The external storage device will then be stored in accordance with the policies of Curtin University at the time.

3.5   Trustworthiness and Rigour

Often, qualitative research is considered "unscientific, only exploratory or subjective" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a, p. 2) and has met with resistance (Whiteley, 2012). This is perhaps because qualitative research is fraught with 'perspectives' and opinions which are often extrapolated into theory which has its critics and its flaws. Therefore qualitative research struggles with criticisms of "objectivity, validity, reliability and replicability" (Altheide & Johnson, 2011; Charmaz, 2007, p. 77; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Kvale, 1995; Sandberg, 2005). This is particularly so in areas of data gathering, theory development, analysis of the study and the writing process (Charmaz, 2007). However supporters of interpretive research believe it is impossible to genuinely produce objective knowledge (Sandberg, 2005). Despite this we can still "develop, apply and test criteria of knowledge that give us enough reliable evidence or rational assurance to claim in multiple cases that we in fact know something and do not just surmise or pine that it is the case" (Wachterhouser, 2002, p. 71). Kvale (1995, p. 19) argues that the "post modern understanding of knowledge [is] as a social construction".

In considering evidence from a symbolic interactionist perspective, "evidence is seen as part of a communication process that symbolically joins an actor, an audience, a point of view, assumptions and claims about the relations between two or more phenomena" or otherwise known as the "evidentiary narrative" (Altheide & Johnson, 2011, p. 582). However, narrative is open to perspective in interpretation. Kvale (1995, p. 23)argues that the "issue of what is valid knowledge of the social world involves the philosophical question of what is truth". This section will explore ways this research has endeavoured to improve the 'truth' and therefore trustworthiness and rigour of the research outcomes.

Data are rarely free from interpretive bias or points of view (Altheide & Johnson, 2011; Alvesson, 1996). Having worked in the Aboriginal employment sector for ten years, the researcher commenced the research with personal theories around the importance of mentoring, flexibility and cultural competency to build shared understanding. The researcher is also influenced by her own (albeit very distant and not culturally practiced) Aboriginal ancestry.

The researcher acknowledges that ongoing self-reflection, understanding and disclosing personal biases is an important part of this research (Suddaby, 2006). After all "values shape what stands as fact" (Charmaz, 2005b, p. 366) and it will be important to the validity and rigour of this study to be mindful of such potential bias.

There are benefits to be gained by the researcher's experience as it increases her ability to draw out more complex descriptions and deeper insights from the interviewees as to their experiences and ideas (provided there is room for negotiation of meaning between interviewer and interviewee) to create a mutual understanding (Bryman et al., 1988; Martin & Turner, 1986). The researcher took great care in interpretation of meanings and used caution and reflection to create awareness of subjectivities triggered by her language (Alvesson, 1996). This will be explored further in the Interpretive Awareness section of this chapter.

It is increasingly common for qualitative researchers to acknowledge perspectives and experiences which have led to their substantial knowledge about the topic they are researching and most likely even form the foundation of the motivation for undertaking the research (Charmaz, 2007). As acknowledged in the Introduction it is exactly the researcher's experience of observing the civil construction industry grappling with Aboriginal engagement that led to the undertaking of this research.

Altheide and Johnson (2011, pp. 586-587) described five elements in attempting to understand 'evidence' in qualitative research being:

1. "The relationship between what is observed (behaviour, rituals, meanings) and the larger cultural, historical, and organizational contexts within which the observations are made (the substance).
2. The relationship between the observer, the observed and the setting (the observer).
3. The issue of perspective (or point of view), whether that of the observer or the member(s), used to render an interpretation of the ethnographic data (the interpretation).
4. The role of the reader in the final product (the audience).
5. The issue of representational, rhetorical, or authorial style used by the author(s) to render the description or interpretation (the style)".

These five elements require pragmatic resolution within any piece of qualitative research. Kvale (1995) discusses this in relation to the "craftmanship" of the research in terms of

the quality of the theoretical presuppositions, research design, interviewing processes, transcription of interviews, interpretation and verification. With regard to the observations of Altheide and Johnson (2011) and Kvale (1995) rigour activities include:

- a full description of the theoretical context of the research;
- a systematic approach to the research design and implementation (Whiteley, 2002);
- utilising theoretical sampling (Glaser 1992);
- maintaining meticulous records of interviews; and
- recording of all assumptions and reasons for decisions made during the study (via audit trail) (Armson & Whiteley, 2010; Whiteley, 2012).

Sandberg (2005, p. 55) claims that validity is really how researchers can justify that their interpretations are "truthful to lived experience within the theoretical and methodological perspectives taken". Research outcomes and conclusions of qualitative research need to be able to be verified through methodological transparency, so that there is confidence in the results; further analysis may be undertaken and the study may be replicated to prove there was no fraud or misconduct in the research (Huberman & Miles, 1998). To be of benefit to industry and to Aboriginal people (the genuine intent of this research) it is important that the research outcomes are 'truthful' to the lived experience.

Table 3.8 provides an audit of the rigour activities undertaken in this study.

Table 3.8: Audit of Rigour Activities

Rigour Activity	Occurred?	Comment
Self-reflection on bias	Yes	Self-reflection was undertaken internally by the researcher as well as in discussion with academic supervisors, cultural mentors, other Doctoral students and key industry contacts.
Disclosing personal bias	Yes	Personal bias has been disclosed to both participants in the study and within this thesis by explaining the history and reasoning behind choosing to undertake this research.
Questioning interpretation of meaning	Yes	Research interpretations have been questioned by the researcher with: • participants both within and post interview. • academic supervisors throughout the study. • cultural mentor throughout the study. • key industry contacts in analysis of interviews.
Caution with language subjectivities	Yes	Researcher was cautious and mindful with language subjectivities in all contact with participants to prevent researcher language leading participants.
Full description of theoretical context of the research	Yes	A full description of their theoretical context of this research was provided in the research approval process as well as within this thesis.
Systematic approach to research design and implementation	Yes	A systematic approach to research design and implementation is documented in this thesis and by the audit trail.
Theoretical sampling	Yes	A combination of theoretical and purposive sampling was undertaken to suit the needs of this study.

Rigour Activity	Occurred?	Comment
Meticulous records of interviews	Yes	All interviews were digitally recorded. They were transcribed by the researcher and then each transcription checked against the audio recording. Transcriptions were then issued to participants and participants offered the opportunity to review, comment and change their advice provided. All further commentary was documented in writing.
Recording all assumptions made during the study	Yes	Assumptions made within the study are recorded in this thesis and particularly in this chapter.
Remaining truthful to the lived experience	Yes	Use of in vivo coding and then grounded code names which utilise the utterances of participants has ensured a genuine translation from the lived experience to the outcomes of this study.

3.5.1   Interpretive Awareness

One of the ways of achieving research reliability is through the researcher's interpretive awareness (Sandberg, 2005). "Interpretive awareness means to acknowledge and explicitly deal with our subjectivity throughout the research process instead of overlooking it" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 55). This section discusses how interpretive awareness was used to improve trustworthiness and rigour.

The researcher was cautious to look for statements that both supported and refuted her own (previously stated) personal theories around the importance of mentoring, flexibility and cultural competency to build shared understanding. Throughout the research, the researcher was mindful of "exercising perspectival subjectivity" in terms of being aware of her own "interpretations are influenced by the particular disciplinary, theoretical and methodological perspectives" (Sandberg, 2005, p. 55). Sandberg (2005, p. 55) believes that this approach "becomes a strength rather than a threat to reliable results".

In support of Sandberg (2005), Whiteley (2012, p. 251) states that "conversing on rigour in the interpretive/qualitative framework encompasses contestation and critical

questioning. The encouragement of reflection and reflexivity is an essential…simply because there is no one right way". Reflexivity is where the researcher "articulates personal and political dimensions of the research enterprise so both researcher and audience can recognize it" (Anastas, 2004, p. 60). The researcher regularly reflected on her personal background and how this may "shape interactions with participants and may contribute to dynamics in the relationship" (Gringeri et al., 2013, p. 57) and discussed these reflections with her supervisor and cultural mentor.

Whiteley (2012) warns that this reflexivity holds within an inherent bias, which requires challenging. Part of the supervisory discussions revealed to the researcher that bias was a real danger (Whiteley, 2012). This discussion encourages the researcher to "think deeply about what is acceptable in terms of the important practice of data analysis and interpretation" (Whiteley, 2012, p. 256). Due to the researcher's previous experience in the field of Aboriginal engagement, these discussions commenced prior to candidacy and continued throughout the research, analysis and written account phases.

Through supervisory and mentor challenge to put aside any researcher bias (Alvesson, 1996; Whiteley, 2012) and the use of bracketing (Pollio, Henly, & Hompson, 2002; Sandberg, 2005) where required, the researcher improved the trustworthiness of the research. Furthermore, an audit trail containing the insights, thoughts, impression and personal learning to address biases, decisions and dilemmas (Whiteley, 2012) of the researcher along the research process was maintained. This was an important step towards replicability of procedure and process within similar civil construction contexts.

3.5.2   Member Checks

Kvale (1995, p. 30) discusses member checks in terms of "communicative validity" being the "testing of the validity of knowledge claims in a dialogue". This has occurred throughout the research by discussing the 'reality' of the outcomes of the research with Aboriginal mentor, doctoral supervisor, other key observers from the civil construction industry of the shared understanding 'phenomena', as well as at times with the interviewees themselves after their own interviews. The discussions queried if the analytic conclusions of the research are a genuine reflection of 'reality' in their experience. Although not all 'respondent validation' is worthwhile as there is a need to distinguish between individual conceptions of reality and the theory through which it may

be interpreted (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Woods, 1992). However, member checks have been a key tool in ensuring accuracy of interpretation of the data.

3.5.3 Triangulation

Triangulation, in its most general sense, refers to searching "for consistency of findings from different observers" and it "embraces the methods of replication and includes the practices usually followed to estimate the validity and reliability of research findings" (Chadwick, 1984, p. 40). Richardson and St Pierre (1994) though dispute the usefulness of triangulation as they believe the use of several methods by a researcher to substantial research all carry the same broad assumptions. However according to Chadwick (1984) there are other forms of triangulation. This section will explore how these forms triangulation have been used within the analysis to improve trustworthiness and rigour.

As Chadwick (1984, p. 40) suggests the data itself can be triangulated in "time, space and person". Through delving deeper into responses during an interview the researcher was able to see if each individual had different or similar experiences. Due to the diverse employers, locations and interviews undertaken, these experiences would most likely have occurred at a different time and a difference space (workplace) and to a different person (interviewee). Where the participant's experiences 'agree' the data were to an extent triangulated. Where they conflicted, it was not.

Source triangulation was used in this study through 'matched pairs' and informal sources of information such as the cultural mentor and key industry contacts.

Furthermore as interviews progressed as Sandberg (2005) suggests, the researcher checks the findings from previous interviews by checking participants reactions of her interpretations of it. This form of triangulation was also undertaken. Where the reactions were affirmative, then the data once again was consistent between participants.

Researcher triangulation was not utilised in this study as this was a single researcher study and there have been no similar studies undertaken previously by other researchers.

3.5.4 Peer Debriefing

According to Sandberg (2005, p. 52) another way of demonstrating trustworthiness and rigour is to discuss "findings with other researchers and professionals in the practice being investigated". The researcher discussed her findings with other researchers,

including her supervisor, other academics and doctoral students regarding organisational behaviour observations as well as observations particularly in relation to trust. The researcher also discussed her observations around specific Aboriginal differences to the dominant culture with her Aboriginal mentor who provided feedback as to whether this was consistent with his own experiences and observations.

3.5.5   Independent Checks

Charmaz (2005a) encourages researchers to question why they have raised codes in the analysis process. Charmaz (2005a, p. 519) believes that "coding practices can help us to see our assumptions, as well as those of our research participants". To improve trustworthiness of data the researcher worked closely with her supervisor throughout the coding process and as per Whiteley (2012) supervisory discussions were held around objective coding and how to ensure genuine connection with data.

3.6   Methodology Conclusion

Research into shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector requires a methodology that allows stories and narratives to be told, while engaging systematic, replicable and transparent procedures.

The discussion of theoretical framework alternatives concluded that a constructivist ontology was relevant as this research seeks to draw out the lived experiences through exploring tacit knowledge of sense-making, shared meaning and shared understanding. It also led to an interpretive epistemology as the subject matter of the research question is internal to each individual and subjective due to personal experiences (Suddaby, 2006). The discussion of theoretical framework then explored the theoretic perspectives of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. Symbolic interactionism supports questions of meaning making such as enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding. Phenomenology acknowledges that the lives experiences of individuals and their understanding of them are inextricably intertwined. This concluded that a qualitative methodology was appropriate for exploring the co-constructed realities of shared understanding between the two cultures.

A qualitative research design was then proposed, including the framing of the research question being:

What are the factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding?

The research process was described as consisting of an ongoing literature review, familiarisation study leading to a main study along with associated procedures around language, presentation, proxemics and paralinguistics, and sampling.

An overview of the constant comparative methods of analysis was then provided, which was followed by processes to ensure trustworthiness and rigour such as interpretive awareness, member checks and peer debriefing.

The next chapter will present the findings as revealed by following the research framework and process outlined in this Methodology chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1   Introduction

This chapter details the findings from the interviews conducted as described in the Methodology chapter. Findings are provided initially within each of the hermeneutic units of:

- Aboriginal Team Leaders
- Aboriginal Workers
- Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
- Non-Aboriginal Workers

Using ATLAS.ti, a hermeneutic unit was established for each of the above groups of interviewees. Using ATLAS.ti, "Families" functionality, six categories were created based on the original research objectives. These six categories held relevance in all four hermeneutic units. The categories chosen were:

A. Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding
B. Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding
C. Factors creating positive regard for team or team leader
D. Factors creating negative regard for team or team leader
E. Issues or insights that would create shared understanding and improve working relationships
F. Issues or insights that would prevent shared understanding and improve working relationships

These categories relate to the research objectives in the following ways:

Categories A and B respond to:

- Gather Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;
- Gather non-Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people including identifying enablers of and inhibitors to this;

- Compare and analyse perception commonalities and differences from the two items collected above.

Categories C and D respond to:

- Identify the factors which affect an Aboriginal worker's regard for their team leader and whether these differ from the non-Aboriginal perspective.

Categories E and F respond to:

- Identify issues and insights that would create shared understanding and thereby improve working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

An overarching map of the findings for each of the categories of each hermeneutic unit will be provided. Where categories have contained too many codes to clearly depict a network map, the category has been divided into subcategories of themes and insights, with codes of like subject matter in that category being grouped into a relevant subcategories. Subcategories may or may not be consistent across hermeneutic units, as the research reveals. Where grounded codes are contained within a subcategory, an example of the utterances within one of the grounded codes is provided to demonstrate authenticity to the participants' intent. Individual utterances within the grounded code are delineated by //.

Grounded codes were named using a combination of the original utterances that they contain, thereby furthering the sense of authenticity of respondent's comments.

Where codes within a network map relate to each other or contradict each other, these relationships have been shown in the network maps by an arrow between the codes and the nature of the relationship identified as being "is associated with"; "is a part of"; or "contradicts". These relationship indicators assist with showing the complexity of views around shared understanding.

In each subcategory the number of in vivo codes will be stated and where it was possible to merge in vivo codes that contained the same meaning in the context into grounded codes, the resulting number of grounded codes will also be stated in a format such as this below:

- In vivo codes: [number]
- Grounded codes: [number]

The detailing of the findings will commence with those from the Aboriginal Team Leader hermeneutic unit.

4.2   Aboriginal Team Leaders

This hermeneutic unit of Aboriginal Team Leaders comprises the seven Aboriginal people interviewed who have staff. This hermeneutic unit was chosen to reflect the world view of Aboriginal Australians working within the civil construction sector who supervise employees. This hermeneutic unit specifies respondents who hold leadership roles within their organisations and theoretically have a role in creating shared understanding within their teams. The number of people each person manages can vary from a few to a hundred. They are usually experienced in the civil construction industry and usually only in the Western Australian civil construction industry. While all are Aboriginal Western Australians, they come from different cultural backgrounds within the Aboriginal community and different language groups. Some are very connected to their traditional cultures and speak several languages and others have been disconnected from their traditional culture through historic interventionist policies.

This diversity of cultural background within this hermeneutic unit shows an observed (albeit unexplored for the purposes of this research) difference in attitudes between Aboriginal people more immersed in culture and those who have been raised with Western philosophies. Some of these differences are observed in terms of conflicting utterances. Despite their various backgrounds the consultative, consensus building, and desire to be a leader sanctioned by the team appears to be consistent of Aboriginal leadership and seems to be practiced across the hermeneutic unit. These matters will require further research.

Within this hermeneutic unit, there were:

- In vivo codes: 546
- Grounded codes: 243

The most grounded codes are:

Codes	Grounded
People come from different backgrounds, actually care, just be respected and treated right and fairly	17

Always working on our merits, everyone just wants and honest days work, do a good job, get more work, experience is what everyone respects	16
Cultural awareness is a big part of better understanding, leading Aboriginal people training s well, prior to people on board	12
You need to know the person, who they are culturally, share stories, be open to local knowledge, knowing country, no matter what part of Australia there has to be custodians	12
Mentor, support person and person that is going to lead them have to be very important, give them specific training, mentors work with leaders	12

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Unconscious bias and all that stuff just flows through non-Indigenous you know. We are not a racist country but…" contains the following utterances:

> *the guy we were dealing with came across as racist. // Once you start using your personal experiences at something like this, it tends to waver your sense of direction I suppose. // even the Aboriginal community, their views on Aboriginal people are…are not very good because they see things on TV and all the negative stuff and unfortunately everybody's tarred with the same brush // the way that they are taught how to see stuff and what their perceptions of Aboriginal people are. A lot of their perceptions are based on bad events happening on TV or to their families based on other areas and other people and unfortunately for those people they think that everybody is the same // bullying and racism and that sort of stuff is all the same and they would try and maintain that for everybody // perceived ideas about Aboriginal people influence the way they interact with them // unconscious bias and all that stuff…that just flows through non-Indigenous, you know. We are not a racist country but // maybe there is a hint of racism or something like that and they're being not looked at properly or respected or…yeah, something like that*

Following the process described earlier in this chapter, these codes were divided into categories and then subcategories where appropriate. This section will proceed to discuss the more detailed findings from the Aboriginal Team Leaders by each of the six categories.

4.2.1 Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Enablers")

Within the category of Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding (hereafter called "Enablers") there were:

- In vivo codes: 261
- Grounded codes: 91

Grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.1.

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for this chapter:

- Racism and tolerance (red)
- Team leader matters (dark purple)
- Team influence (light purple)
- Recruitment, retention and advancement (grey)
- Goal setting and performance (yellow)
- Mentors, buddies and role models (blue)
- Cultural awareness (green)
- Organisational culture and systems, commitment (orange)
- Relationships, understanding each other's backgrounds (olive)
- Conflict management (pink)
- Self-respect/pride (white)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored in detail.

Figure 4.1: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Enablers

Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding

- Takes a lot of integrity {1-0}
- we are honest, when we're talk.. {2-0}
- I influenced someone else to give him another opportunity {1-0}
- can understand why narrow the field, because you're wanting people to see Aboriginal people improve their lot {1-0}
- Indigenous guys wanting to get treated like everybody else given the same opportunities, don't want to be treated differently {3-1}
- we love achieving what we set out to do and I feel a small part of that success of the job {1-0}
- I wasn't the driving force because the guys were driving that as well {2-0}
- most leaders are reasonable people, most people are reasonable {1-0}
- communicate not just what we are doing, but why we are doing it {1-0}
- I don't need to prove anything cause I'm Aboriginal, they haven't pidgeon holed me, I don't think they look at me as being Aboriginal {5-0}
- made it easier because we saw ourselves as individual. Not Aboriginal individual {1-0}
- We try to make up our own mind, reputation is everything to us, we usually like to find out about someone before we deal with them {3-0}
- had some success stories, recruited good people early in the piece {3-1}
- everybody has to perform to the same standard. Rules are there for everybody {4-1}
- connection and knowledge that what I do and how I do it influences others, so they empower {1-0}
- the product, was not my game, it was me giving the product so that people could go in act do what they have to to make it work {1-0}
- I refer to them as my lad, my blokes and my son {1-0}
- take the chance with the person who had the experience {1-0}
- always working on our merits, everyone just wants an honest days work, do a good job get more work, experience is what everyone respects {16-0}
- critical mass, enough Aboriginal people that they feel a bit of community within their team {3-0}
- not only helping one another out but staying back to work together, a good atmosphere, good morale {3-0}
- they are all there for the same thing as in to work to support the family and have a better life {1-0}
- someone so young, no knowledge of race or whatever be direct...our job is done {2-0}
- my experience as an Aboriginal person different, high value on education, work is a lot easier for me {2-3}
- make the best of the opportunity and make them see that it is worthwhile {1-0}
- Sometimes it's that one to take the chance on that wants to give it a go {1-0}
- it is about get them to explain back what you want them to do {2-0}
- I had an amazing team. Amazing.. {1-0}
- how we unified what needed to happen {1-0}
- radio, the moods always help.. {1-0}
- not really, experienced much racism, but look at me, they probably think I'm a ding {3-1}
- Everyone wants to work for us... {1-0}
- they give them security. They .. {1-0}
- in our team, we are like a fam.. {3-0}
- we'll help you...generally we will be the ones that help them do it {1-0}
- important to make way through life on what you could achieve, not your Aboriginality {3-0}
- My mother, said it was very important for Aboriginal people to become assimilated, we would be better off {1-1}
- don't have dramas communicating with non-Indigenous people because I've had a long working life, link between {2-1}
- right people for those roles, need someone quite extroverted, able to walk in both worlds {2-0}
- mentor, support person and person that is going to lead them have to be very important, give them specific training, mentors work with leaders {12-1}
- people buying houses, aboriginals don't know about how to go bout that sort of stuff, help them set up online bank accounts they generally form lifetime friendships {2-0}
- If I had to deal with him, it was just to the point {1-0}
- diffusing the situation, if heated come back and have a rational conversation, try to work through, what are we working towards, how could be done differently {4-0}
- similarities we can leverage and move foward, also a lot of difference that we need to acknowledge {1-0}
- we aint going no where, for us, that means we've got to work together and live here together {1-0}
- pull him aside and be pushy, one on one and offer assistance {1-0}
- mentor has to be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture, taking educator type role, the person in the mddle {5-1}
- already in the teams, so they know the crew, so when they become the mentor, everyone knows them already {2-0}
- don't say to that person, that is enough, but they do not encourage any more discussion on it, they didn't get drawn in {5-0}
- need to have connection to the community that they can find that information out {2-0}
- knowing that they can do it with the support {2-0}
- Respect in the way you speak. Treat people the way you want to be treated/how they would like to be treated {9-1}
- sometimes can be intimidating, but you have to sort that out in a good way of showing {1-0}
- Education...last line of defense (important issue) {1-0}
- don't be afraid, respect means if you don't know something dont' be afraid to ask {3-1}
- guys gone out of their way trying to learn and change their thinking, sort of support us best they can, they develop these friendships {4-1}
- words that Aboriginal community use, it's good if a white person uses {1-0}
- cultural experience better than cultural awareness, changes the whole attitude of how staff are dealing and connected to the people {5-0}
- willing to learn on both parts...from both parties, needs to be a two way dialogue {4-0}
- cultural awareness is a big part of better understanding, leading Aboriginal people training as well, prior to people onboard {12-1}
- people grown up around Indigenous guys, those fellas come to the fore, lead the way {1-1}
- Everyone is checking up on each other, we know if someone is having a down, everyone's involved in that {3-0}
- working around more Aboriginal people, understand what they are going through {3-0}
- Rather than excuses like they can't do this, we took the opposite approach, we know they can't read, that their behavioural skills are not what we're used to {1-0}
- achieving things that previous people didn't achieve, awareness is really getting out there {2-0}
- once they buy into it, doing this because the company needs for its development {2-0}
- Aboriginal people influenced by Western ways as well {1-0}
- people getting along {4-0}
- time and spending it with both, getting out there and being visible {2-1}
- people leaving the business, they want to come back to the same team {1-0}
- non-Indigenous are the teachers they seem very accommodating {1-0}
- health and wellbeing of all my staff is paramount, given them all possible avenues to be comfortable at work {1-0}
- a culturally safe environment, work on team culture, pave the way, educating the people we work with {5-1}
- people come from different backgrounds, actually care, just be respected and treated right and fairly {17-0}
- out side of work, go and spend a bit more time with us. Those interactions go a long way {10-1}
- it is all around the relationships...i put a lot of time and effort in just spending time with those people and find out about them {7-3}
- people were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than fighting against it, passionate about Indigenous employment {4-0}
- main focus is the Aboriginal employees, sort of retention {1-0}
- Governance. Policy, procedures follow that {1-0}
- tool box meetings are always the best things {1-0}
- find an Aboriginal person who can do the minimum requiriements of the job. Give them that job. Our policy {1-0}
- you build it as a friendship as well as a working relationship {4-0}
- you need to know the person and who they are culturally, share stories, be open to local knowledge, knowing country, no matter what part of Australia there has to be custodians {12-0}
- we bring them to site, show them what a truck looks like and what they would be doing {2-0}
- don't expose yourself as a boss, I been taken for a ride sometimes. People are very genuine about things, you need to be able to allow them {1-1}
- cultural leave and compassionate leave we acknowledge those extended families may have the same relationship as your mother, so we don't deny them {1-1}
- I'll hear stuff, just by being there and talking {1-0}
- built relationships now they trust each other {6-1}
- Humour is really helpful {2-0}
- work particular well because they wanted an Aboriginal contractor, as many Aboriginal {1-0}
- having a RAP that is driven from the top down. Leaders openly voice that {1-0}

Connector labels: is associated with; is part of

Racism and Tolerance(red)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory was created with the themes around racism and tolerance. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 19
- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in detail in the network map shown in Figure 4.2. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the red coloured codes only.

Figure 4.2: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism and Tolerance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Can understand why narrow the field, because you're wanting people to see Aboriginal people improve their lot	1
Don't have dramas communicating with non-Indigenous people because I've had a long working life, link between	2
I don't need to prove anything cause I'm Aboriginal, they haven't pigeon holed me, I don't think they look at me as being Aboriginal	5
Made it easier because we saw ourselves as individual. Not Aboriginal individual	1

Codes	Grounded
My experience as an Aboriginal person different, high value on education, work is a lot easier for me	2
My mother said it was very important for Aboriginal people to become assimilated we would be better off	1
Not really, experienced much racism, but look at me, they probably think I'm a ding	3
Similarities we can leverage and move forward, also a lot of difference that we need to acknowledge	1
Someone so young, no knowledge of race or whatever be direct…our job is done	2
We ain't going nowhere, for us, that means we've got to work together and live here together	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Not really, experienced much racism, but look at me, they probably think I'm a ding" contained the following utterances:

> *not that I've had a lot of racism against me. Actually, I've had practically none // there is cases when there's not…in saying that like when I was talking about our tracking system…we don't see racism and that coming up lots // not really, experienced much racism, but look at me. They probably think I'm just a ding*

Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) revealed the importance of tolerance and acknowledgement of difference which will make a difference on construction sites:

> *"lots of similarities and we can leverage that to move forward. But there's also a lot of difference that we need to acknowledge."*

Researcher Comment:

More than half of the Aboriginal respondents in this hermeneutic unit have been raised by at least one 'non-Aboriginal parent' as a result of inter-racial marriages or historic policies. Hence the 'my experience is a bit different' responses and some do not look as people may imagine an Aboriginal person to look and therefore may not be considered as

Aboriginal by their colleagues. This is acknowledged in the responses. Nonetheless the importance of reduction of racial bias and general tolerance themes are common across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Team Leader Matters (dark purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team leaders. This subcategory had

- In vivo codes: 11
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are provided in detail in the network map in Figure 4.3. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the dark purple coloured codes only.
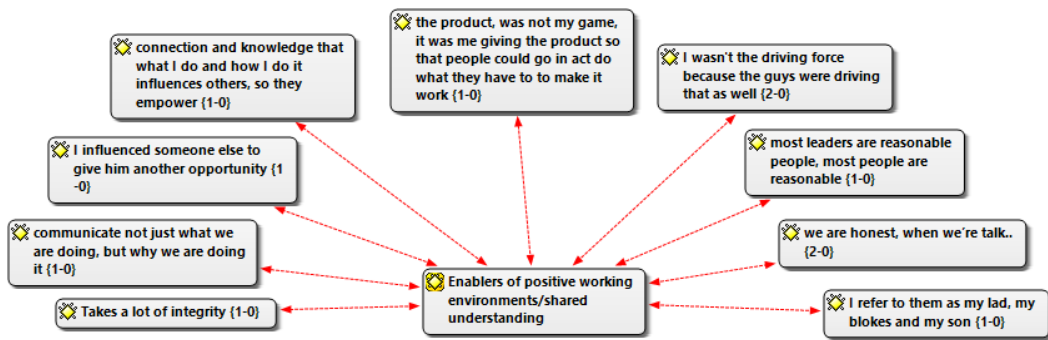
Figure 4.3: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Supervisor Matters Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Communicate not just what we are doing but why we are doing it	1
Connection and knowledge that what I do and how I do it influences others, so they empower	1
I influenced someone else to give him another opportunity	1
I refer to them as my lad, my blokes and my son	1
I wasn't the driving force because the guys were driving that as well	2
Most leaders are reasonable people, most people are reasonable people	1
Takes a lot of integrity	1

Codes	Grounded
The product, was not my game, it was me giving the product so that people could go in act do what they have to make it work	1
We are honest, when we talk	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "We are honest, when we talk" contained the following utterances:

> *most of the guys and girls on our local programs are fairly open and honest with me // we are honest, when we're talking*

This subcategory highlights the leadership style in Aboriginal leaders, as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) explained *"I wasn't even the driving force because the guys were driving that as well".*

Another noted (SA2) the importance of influence and empowerment in the Aboriginal engagement program as integral to success:

> *having that connection and knowing that what I do and how I do it, influences others rather than makes me the centre target. So they empower. When they come up to me they talking to me and they say, you know…and then, all of a sudden, it's like [name], he has got this understanding, you got to go to him and talk to him.*

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory, while it is a little reflective of the passion seen in the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders this is less of a focus. Aboriginal Team Leaders seem to focus more on influence and empowerment. The familial language of one respondent in this group is interesting in relation to some of the insights' commentary around linking work colleagues with family relationships to better understand the level of respect to be afforded to the individual in the workplace.

Team Influence (light purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team influence. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 14
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.4. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the light purple coloured codes only.
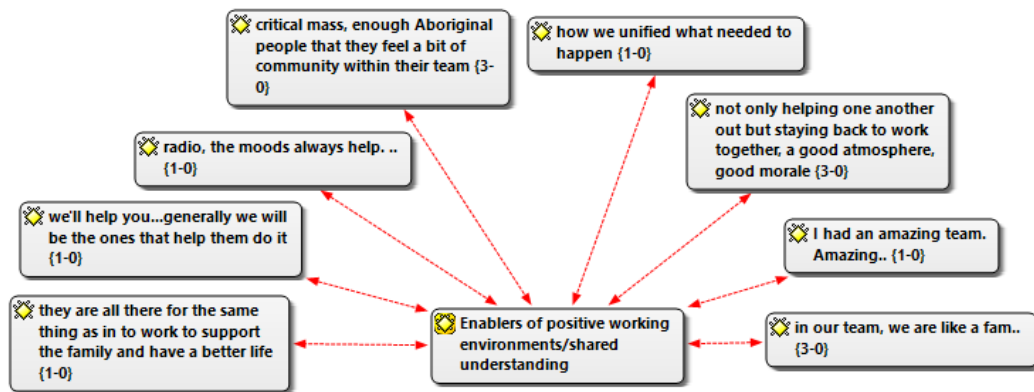
Figure 4.4: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Influence Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Critical mass, enough Aboriginal people that they feel a bit of community within their team	3
How we unified what needed to happen	1
I had an amazing team. Amazing…	1
In our team we are like a family	3
Not only helping one another out but staying back to work together, a good atmosphere, good morale	3
Radio, the moods always help	1
They are all there for the same thing as in to work to support the family and have a better life	1
We'll help you…generally we will be the ones that help them do it	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Critical mass, enough Aboriginal people that they feel a bit of community within their team" contained the following utterances:

> they've got more support in terms of other Indigenous people in the team // Separating from their own teams and putting them with…you know non-Indigenous with Indigenous // critical mass as well. So having enough Aboriginal people that they feel a bit of community there, within their teams

As with the non-Aboriginal commentary, there is a strong theme that the team is like a family. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) explained:

> it is like a family, so again, my team has changed a little bit over my…but my main team that I had again I've got an elderly woman that is probably…and she is my best mentor. She is the best mentor across our business. She's probably my mum's age, so every time we leave we hug

Another (SA3) highlighted the importance of the team working together and helping each other out:

> we all get given our jobs and when things…when you finish your job, you would always…or you had difficulty, there was always someone there to give you a helping hand so…with a small team like that, we had about 5 or 6 on a shift, we managed to quite regularly finish our tasks and then start a new one and things like that so you all were…things were discussed and things were done. We always, not only helping one another out but staying back to work together, so there was a good atmosphere, good morale, we understood each other

Researcher Comment:

Themes around supportive teams and teams being like a family as integral to shared understanding are common across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (grey)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around recruitment, retention and advancement. This subcategory had

- In vivo codes: 9

- Grounded codes: 6

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.5. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the grey coloured codes only.
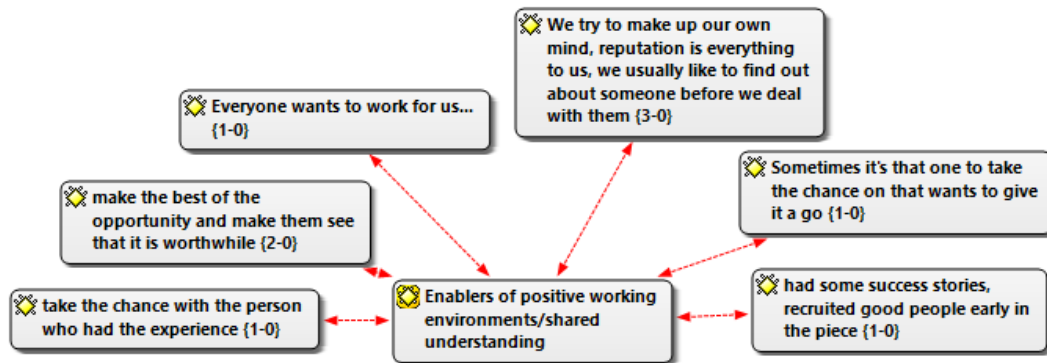
Figure 4.5: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Everyone wants to work for us	1
Had some success stories, recruited good people early in the piece	1
Make the best of the opportunity and make them see that it is worthwhile	2
Sometimes it's that one to take the chance on that wants to give it a go	1
Take the chance with the person who had the experience	1
We try to make up our own mind, reputation is everything to us, we usually like to find out about someone before we deal with them	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "We try to make up our own mind, reputation is everything to us, we usually like to find out about someone before we deal with them" contained the following utterances:

> *we usually like to find out about someone before we deal with them. // We try to make up our own mind. I mean reputation is everything with us as well. So…it's just like anything else in industry. // they know us before we employ them*

The Aboriginal Team Leaders focus on the relationships with their recruitment as well as experience. In addition to the commentary on reputation and knowing someone before employing them, as one Aboriginal Team Leader described it: *"I've just got to try and make that…the best of the opportunity and make them see that it is worthwhile".*

There is also a focus on recruiting good people early being key to success, as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) said:

> *We've had some success stories come through. We went and recruited some really good people to help with that process. So what I mean by that is…you know the people you recruited early on the piece had really good work experience.*

Researcher Comment:

Unlike the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, this hermeneutic unit contained business-owners, who substantially influence the approach to recruitment within their own businesses and perhaps this has influenced the highly relational 'getting to know the person' before employing them. Whether this is as a result of business ownership or of Aboriginal culture is unclear. On the other hand, the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders were predominantly inheriting their recruitment policies and therefore there is more commentary in that space. Aboriginal-owned businesses tend to have greater success with retention of Aboriginal staff due to their cultural understanding being pervasive in the business.

The Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders commented on the cultural complexities of promoting someone less culturally senior over an Elder and how that can be managed. This was not a concern of Aboriginal Team Leaders possibly because around half of the Aboriginal Team Leaders interviewed also hold Elder responsibilities or it was simply due to greater awareness and management techniques for these situations. From the data, the reason for this finding is unclear.

Goal setting and Performance (yellow)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around goal setting and performance. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 26
- Grounded codes: 5

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.6. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the yellow coloured codes only.

Figure 4.6: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Goal Setting and Performance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Always working on our merits, everyone just wants and honest days' work, do a good job get more work, experience is what everyone respects	16
Everybody has to perform to the same standard. Rules are there for everybody	4
Indigenous guys wanting to get treated like everybody else given the same opportunities, don't want to be treated differently	3
It is about get them to explain back what you want them to do	2
We love achieving what we set out to do and I feel a small part of that success of the job	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Everybody has to perform to the same standard. Rules are there for everybody" contained the following utterances:

> *he was like that to everybody // in the work sense, yeah, everybody has to*
> *perform to the same standard. As in the rules are therefore everybody // the*
> *best bosses I've had was…he was a bit of an arse hole, but he was an*

135

arsehole to everybody, you know what I mean. So he treated everybody the
same // just treat everyone equal

As shown in the above utterances, there is a general (and strongly grounded) theme of there being 'no difference' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff in terms of treating them fairly and with respect.

Aboriginal Team Leaders focus on the work delivery and that the work is what earns respect. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA7) commented: *"we just keep doing what we're supposed to be doing and they themselves see…what…how our work ethics"*.

SA 7 continued: *"experience at the end of the day is what saves and everyone respects who knows"*.

Researcher Comment:

There is much less focus on task orientation than among the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders; however, the same focus is found on working on merit, that work is what people respect and treating everyone equally under the same rules.

Mentors, Buddies and Role Models (blue)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around mentors, buddies and role models. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 27
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.7. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the blue coloured codes only.

Figure 4.7: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Mentors, Buddies and Role Models Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Already in the teams so they know the crew, so when they become the mentor everyone knows them already	2
Knowing that they can do it with the support	2
Mentor has to be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture, taking educator type role, the person in the middle	6
Mentor, support person and person that is going to lead them have to be very important, give them specific training, mentors work with leaders	12
People buying houses, Aboriginals don't know about how to go about that sort of stuff, help them set up online bank accounts, they generally form lifetime friendships	2
Pull him aside and be pushy, one on one and offer assistance	1
Right people for those roles need someone quite extroverted, able to walk in both worlds	2
They give them security	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Already in the teams so they know the crew, so when they become the mentor everyone knows them already" contained the following utterances:

> *people that they identify with. Well, they can identify them and some of them have already been through the traineeships or apprenticeships they are going through, so they not only have got the Aboriginal aspect, but you've got the training and the … and the work side of things that they also identify with // they are already in the teams so they have been working as a mobile operator. So they know the whole crew the leaders and so forth. So when they become the mentor, everyone knows them already*

Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge the importance of mentors and the role, as Aboriginal Team Leader SA5 expresses: *"mentor has to be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture".*

Or in other words the mentor is *"taking that sort of educator type role to both parties to sort of…the person in the middle".*

SA3 expands on this commentary in terms of the mentor's responsibility in playing a dual role within the business:

> *they can't be just the advocate for just the Aboriginal employee. Otherwise the leader won't go to them. If the leader thinks, oh if I engage him and all he is going to do is back up the Aboriginal employee then there is no trust that way. The mentor has to be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture.*

Researcher Comment:

While this subcategory is consistent across all hermeneutic units, unlike their non-Aboriginal counterparts, there is no debate over the usefulness of mentors and role models for Aboriginal team members. The grounding of codes relating to the importance of a mentor and the role they play in this hermeneutic unit demonstrates how significantly important this hermeneutic unit believes mentors are in creating shared understanding. The commentary from Aboriginal Team Leaders on mentors, very much

reflects the concept of 'third space' (Bhabha, 2011; Rutherford, 1990) between the two cultures.

Cultural Awareness (green)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around cultural awareness. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 40
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.8. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the green coloured codes only.
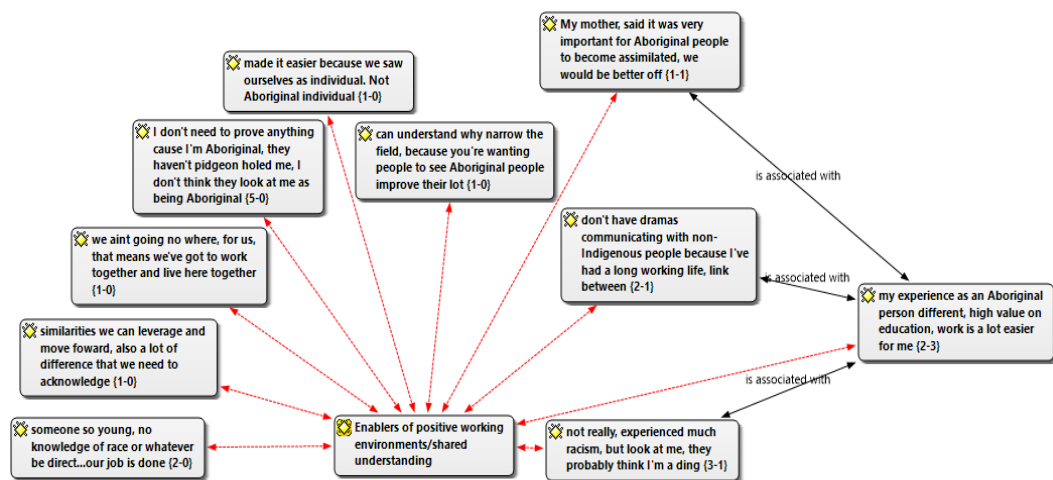

Figure 4.8: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Awareness Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people influenced by Western ways as well	1
A culturally safe environment, work on team culture, pave the way, educating the people we work with	5
Cultural awareness is a big part of better understanding, leading Aboriginal people training as well, prior to people being on board	12
Cultural experience better than cultural awareness, changes the whole attitude of how staff are dealing and connected to the people	5
Don't be afraid, respect means if you don't know something don't be	3

afraid to ask	
Education…last line of defence	1
Respect in the way you speak, treat people the way you want to be treated/how they would like to be treated	9
Willing to learn on both parts…from both parties, needs to be two way dialogue	4

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Don't be afraid, respect means if you don't know something don't be afraid to ask" contained the following utterances:

> *everyone gets to know who is how and you can ask, whatever. If something is not understood, that is where you need to ask the question instead of just check oh, of course, they're at the toolbox meeting // ask the question…if you need to ask, ask…it's asked every day…ask the question // don't be afraid, I think the…the respect also means, if you don't know something, don't be afraid not to ask, especially if you're a non-Indigenous person coming into a, you know, a boss position on job sites*

In addition to the value of cultural awareness training and discussions around culture, there is also a very strong theme around respect that came through from Aboriginal Team Leaders. They acknowledge the need for this to be a two-way learning process. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA1) says: *"It's just a willing to learn on both parts I guess. From both parties, I guess"*.

The importance of creating a culturally safe environment is also highlighted as this Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) comments: *"we have been trying hard with the business. It's about education the people that we are working with. We have had to do a lot of ground work in that area"*.

Researcher Comment:

Both the matters of cultural awareness training and respect are common among all the hermeneutic units. The ground of cultural awareness being a big part of better understanding, along with respect in the way that you speak demonstrates how significantly important Aboriginal Team Leaders believe this is a shared understanding.

Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge the role they have to play in working with business to educate and create change.

Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment (orange)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around organisational culture, systems and commitment. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 22
- Grounded codes: 16

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.9. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the orange coloured codes only.

health and wellbeing of all my staff is paramount, given them all possible avenues to be comfortable at work {1-0}

achieving things that previous people didn't achieve, awareness is really getting out there {2-0}

having a RAP that is driven from the top down. Leaders openly voice that {1-0}

tool box meetings are always the best things {1-0}

Governance. Policy, procedures follow that {1-0}

we bring them to site, show them what a truck looks like and what they would be doing {2-0}

main focus is the Aboriginal employees, sort of retention {1-0}

Rather than excuses like they can't do this, we took the opposite approach, we know they can't read, that their behavioural skills are not what we're used to {1-0}

people were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than fighting against it, passionate about Indigenous employment {4-0}

non-Indigenous are the teachers they seem very accommodating {1-0}

find an Aboriginal person who can do the minimum requriements of the job. Give them that job. Our policy {1-0}

people leaving the business, they want to come back to the same team {1-0}

cultural leave and compassionate leave we acknowledge those extended families may have the same relationship as your mother, so we don't deny them {1-1}

is associated with

once they buy into it, doing this because the company needs for its development {2-0}

Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding

don't expose yourself as a boss, I been taken for a ride sometimes. People are very genuine about things, you need to be able to allow them {1-1}

work particular well because they wanted an Aboriginal contractor, as many Aboriginal {1-0}

Figure 4.9: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Achieving things that previous people didn't achieve, awareness is really getting out there	2
Cultural leave and compassionate leave we acknowledge those extended families may have the same relationship as your mother, so we don't deny them	1
Don't expose yourself as a boss, I been taken for a ride sometimes. People are very genuine about things, you need to be able to allow them	1
Find an Aboriginal person who can do the minimum requirements of the job. Give them that job. Our policy	1
Governance, policy procedures, follow that	1
Having a RAP that is driven from the top down. Leaders openly voice that	1
Health and wellbeing of all my staff is paramount, given them all possible avenues to be comfortable at work	1
Main focus is the Aboriginal employees, sort of retention	1
Non-Indigenous are the teachers, they seem very accommodating	1
Once they buy into it, doing this because the company needs for its development	2
People leaving the business they want to come back to the same team	1
People were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than fighting against it, passionate about Indigenous employments	4
Rather than excuses like they can't do this, we took the opposite approach, we know they can't read, that their behavioural skills are not what we're used to	1
Toolbox meetings are always the best things	1
We bring them to site, show them what a truck looks like and what they would be doing	2
Work particular well because they wanted an Aboriginal contractor, as many Aboriginal	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "We bring them to site, show them what a truck looks like and what they would be doing" contained the following utterances:

> say to the leaders, right I've got these green people coming in, so no experience with mining… they are saying well bring them to site. So we bring them to site, we show them what a truck looks like. We show them what they would be doing if they were working in [department], you're going to get dusty, you are operating these hoses, it's hot. It's this…because people here go, I want to do that, I want to do that and they get there and go, oh…no this is // it's good to get out in the field a bit and actually see what things are really like.

Although several topics were covered in this subcategory, it is generally about inclusiveness and the individual's site preparedness. This includes supporting policies and procedures, accommodating teaching of skills and a culture safe and welcoming of Aboriginal employees. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) expresses:

> people were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than we were fighting against…the whole company in different areas, because they didn't understand what was going on and why we were doing it…it was a big battle, when it could have been avoided

SA3 continued that the people involved need to be *"passionate about Indigenous employment and Indigenous programs"*.

Researcher Comment:

The importance of buy-in and support of Aboriginal engagement along with head contractor support is common to all hermeneutic units.

Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds (olive)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around relationships and understanding each other's backgrounds. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 77
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.10. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the olive coloured codes only.
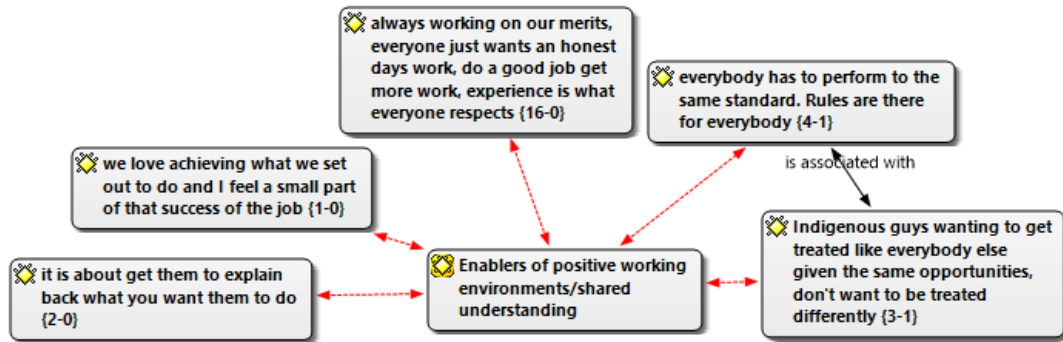
These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Built relationships now they trust each other	6
Everyone is checking up on each other. We know if something is having a down, everyone's involved in that	3
Guys gone out of their way trying to learn and change their thinking, sort of support us best they can, they develop those friendships	4
Humour is really helpful	2
I'll hear stuff just by being there and talking	1
It is all around relationships…I put a lot of time and effort in just spending time with those people and find out about them	7
Outside of work, go and spend a bit more time with us. Those interactions go a long way	10
People come from different backgrounds, actually care, just be respected and treated right and fairly	17
People getting along	4
People grown up around Indigenous guys, those fellas come to the fore, lead the way	4
Time and spending it with both, getting out there and being visible	2
Words that Aboriginal community use, it's good if a white person uses	1
Working around more Aboriginal people, understand what they are going through	3
You build it as a friendship as well as a working relationship	4
You need to know the person and who they are culturally, share stories, be open to local knowledge, knowing country, no matter what part of Australia, there has to be custodians	12
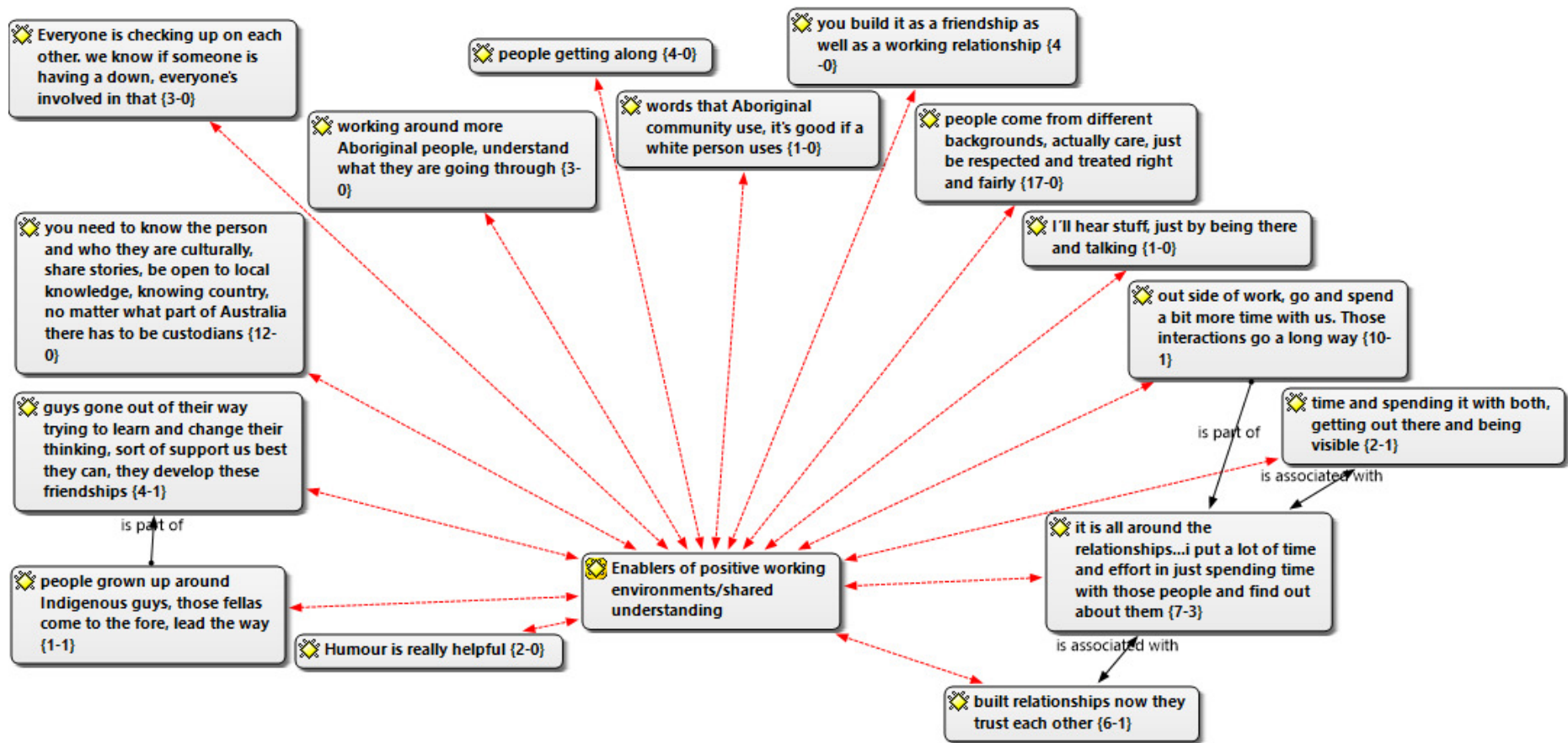
Figure 4.10: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "You build it as a friendship as well as a working relationship" contained the following utterances:

> *you build it as a friendship as well as a working relationship. // had fun as well. // they invest so much of themselves into the employee's lives. They become part of everything // they love my old man's cooking and they know that the job is going to get done and they know…you know. I mean I've done things like…there's been guys in the camp, they're all guitarists and everything else, so you go and buy the amplifier thing, you know…it's only us, but we have our own little gig and…*

There are many interrelated codes within this theme around caring for each other, spending time together outside of work, getting to know each other and what they are going through. This is exemplified in the following statement by a Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3): *"good morale between the team and they actually care and respect each other"*.

Researcher Comment:

Themes around mateship, trust, building relationships, and creating a genuine understanding between each other are common among all hermeneutic units. What is revealed by the Aboriginal interviews is the different way trust is built between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Aboriginal Team Leaders emphasised the importance spending time together as being very important in building relationships. There was less emphasis from the Aboriginal Team Leaders on listening whereas, for Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, this was another focus area.

Conflict Management (pink)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around conflict management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 13
- Grounded codes: 5

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.11. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the pink coloured codes only.
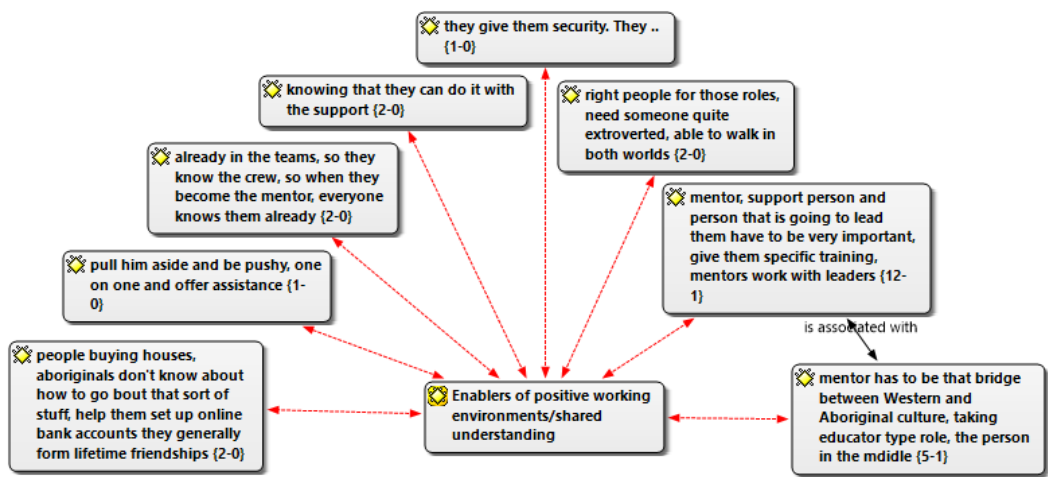
Figure 4.11: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Conflict Management Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Diffusing the situation, if heated come back and have a rational conversation, try to work through, what are we working towards, how could be done differently	4
Don't say to that person, that is enough, but they do not encourage any more discussion on it, they didn't get drawn in	5
If I had to deal with him it was just to the point	1
Need to have connection to the community that they can find that information out	2
Sometimes can be intimidating, but you have to sort that out in a good way of showing	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Don't say to that person, that is enough, but they do not encourage any more discussion on it, they didn't get drawn in" contained the following utterances:

> *the situation where one is talking about one…the others don't get involved // They do not encourage the conversation. // They don't say to that person, that is enough. But they do not encourage any more discussion on it. // I wouldn't say gun for trouble… you know, make trouble about it // the team did help the situation because they didn't get drawn in*

While this is a very small subcategory, it is interesting that Aboriginal Team Leaders seem to prefer conflict avoidance ("do not encourage any more discussion on it") and/or resolving conflict in a non-confrontational 'good' way. This is reflected in one Aboriginal Team Leader's (SA7) comment: *"sometimes can be intimidating, but you have to sort that out in a good way of showing well, I know what you're doing".*

Researcher Comment:

While lightly touched on in this research, this conflict management preference and style, most likely requires further in-depth research in its own regard. However, across most hermeneutic units, there is an acknowledgement that conflict is rarely dealt with directly within Aboriginal culture, in this hermeneutic unit it is referred to as having the connection with community; however, with Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, they refer to resolving conflict through the involvement of third parties.

Self-Respect/Pride (white)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around self-respect and pride. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 3
- Grounded codes: 1

This is provided in detail in Figure 4.12. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.1, showing the white coloured codes only.
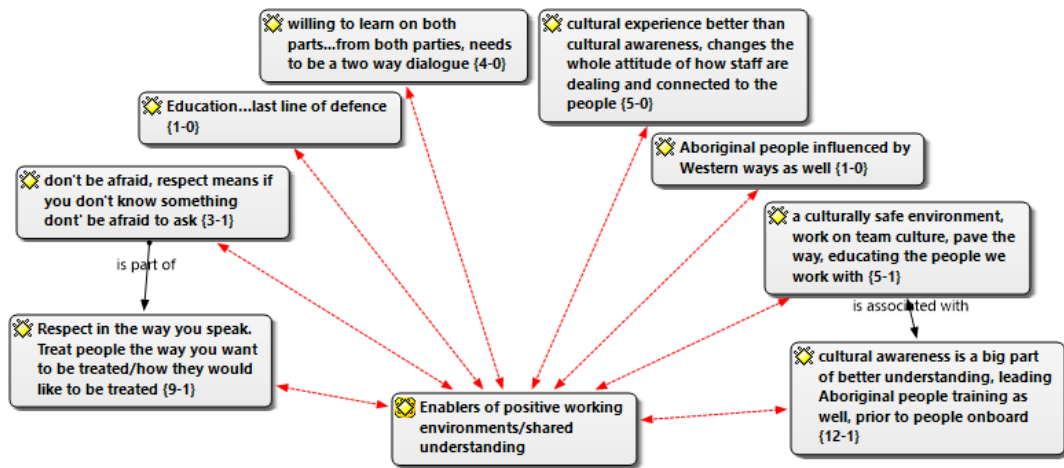

Figure 4.12: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Self Respect/Pride Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Important to make your way through life on what you could achieve, not your Aboriginality	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Important to make your way through life on what you could achieve, not your Aboriginality" contained the following utterances:

> *I want to be judged on what I do, not what I am. // I want to win the job on my own merits. // more important to make your way through life on what you could achieve, not your background. Not your Aboriginality*

Although this subcategory is very small, it is important to note Aboriginal peoples' desire to be accepted on the merit of their performance, not because they are an Aboriginal person.

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge the importance of work performance and merit in terms of achieving in life. Interestingly, Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders see the need to offer more faith and support in their Aboriginal colleagues' abilities.

4.2.2 Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Inhibitors")

Within the category of Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding (hereafter called "Inhibitors") there were:

- In vivo codes: 169
- Grounded codes: 92

These grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.13. For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories:

- Racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions (red)
- Team leader matters (purple)
- Performance management matters (yellow)

- Shame and confidence matters (turquoise)

- Recruitment and retention matters (grey)

- Relationship building matters (olive)

- Cultural matters (green)

- Conflict Management (pink)

- Team culture and support matters (white)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored detailing codes and grounding.
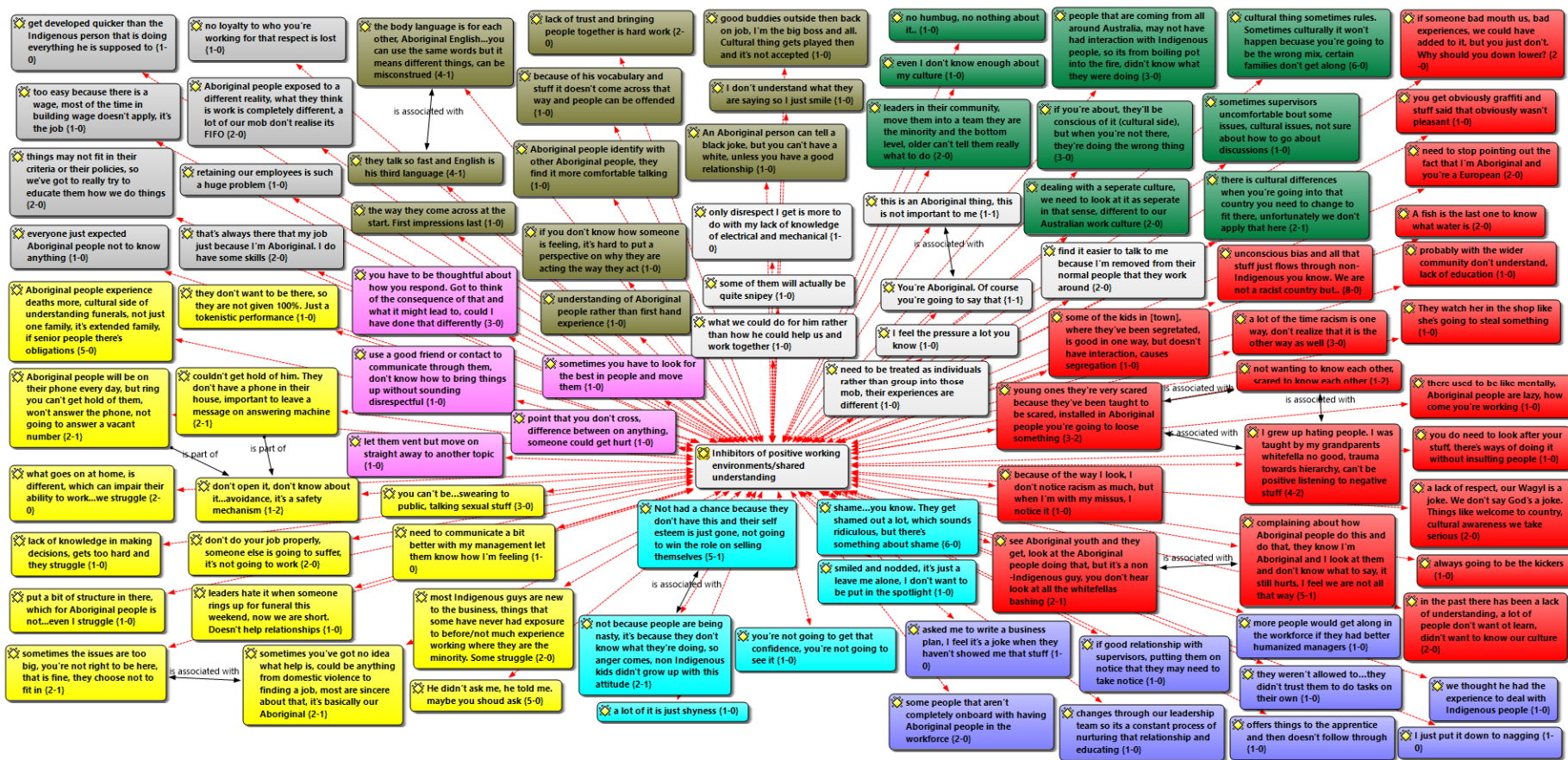
Figure 4.13: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments, Shared Understanding

Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with themes around racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 44

- Grounded codes: 20

These grounded codes are provided in detail in the network map below (Figure 4.14). These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the red coloured codes only. These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
A fish is the last one to know what water is	2
A lack of respect, our Wagyl is a joke. We don't say God's a joke. Things like welcome to country, cultural awareness we take serious[ly]	2
a lot of the time racism is one way, don't realise that it is the other way as well	3
Always going to be the kickers	1
Because of the way I look, I don't notice racism as much, but when I'm with my missus, I notice it	1
Complaining about how Aboriginal people do this and do that, they know I'm Aboriginal and I look at them and don't know what to say, it still hurts, I feel we are not all that way	5
If someone bad mouth us, bad experiences, we could have added to it, but you just don't. Why should you down lower	2
I grew up hating people. I was taught by my grandparents whitefella no good, trauma towards Hierarchy, can't be positive listening to negative stuff	4
In the past there has been a lack of understanding, a lot of people don't want to learn, didn't want to know our culture	2
Need to stop pointing out the fact that I'm Aboriginal and you're European	2
Not wanting to know each other, scared to know each other	1
Probably the wider community don't understand, lack of education	1

Codes	Grounded
See Aboriginal youth and they get, look at the Aboriginal people doing that, but it's a non-Indigenous guy, you don't hear look at all the whitefellas bashing	2
Some of the kids in [town] where they've been segregated, is good in one way, but doesn't have interaction, causes segregation	1
There used to be like mentally, Aboriginal people are lazy, how come you're working	1
They watch her in the shop like she's going to steal something	1
Unconscious bias and all that stuff just flows through non-Indigenous you know. We are not a racist country, but…	8
You do need to look after your stuff, there's ways of doing it without insulting people	1
You get obviously graffiti and stuff said the obviously wasn't pleasant	1
Young ones they're very scared because they've been taught to be scared, installed in Aboriginal people you're going to lose something	3

there used to be like mentally, Aboriginal people are lazy, how come you're working {1-0}

you get obviously graffiti and stuff said that obviously wasn't pleasant {1-0}

complaining about how Aboriginal people do this and do that, they know I'm Aboriginal and I look at them and don't know what to say, it still hurts, I feel we are not all that way {5-1}

unconscious bias and all that stuff just flows through non-Indigenous you know. We are not a racist country but.. {8-0}

need to stop pointing out the fact that I'm Aboriginal and you're a European {2-0}

you do need to look after your stuff, there's ways of doing it without insulting people {1-0}

if someone bad mouth us, bad experiences, we could have added to it, but you just don't. Why should you down lower? {2-0}

always going to be the kickers {1-0}

is associated with

see Aboriginal youth and they get, look at the Aboriginal people doing that, but it's a non-Indigenous guy, you don't hear look at all the whitefellas bashing {2-1}

because of the way I look, I don't notice racism as much, but when I'm with my missus, I notice it {1-0}

in the past there has been a lack of understanding, a lot of people don't want to learn, didn't want to know our culture {2-0}

not wanting to know each other, scared to know each other {1-2}

a lack of respect, our Wagyl is a joke. We don't say God's a joke. Things like welcome to country, cultural awareness we take serious {2-0}

is associated with

is associated with

some of the kids in [town], where they've been segregated, is good in one way, but doesn't have interaction, causes segregation {1-0}

A fish is the last one to know what water is {2-0}

Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding

young ones they're very scared because they've been taught to be scared, installed in Aboriginal people you're going to loose something {3-2}

I grew up hating people. I was taught by my grandparents whitefella no good, trauma towards hierarchy, can't be positive listening to negative stuff {4-2}

a lot of the time racism is one way, don't realize that it is the other way as well {3-0}

associated with

probably with the wider community don't understand, lack of education {1-0}

They watch her in the shop like she's going to steal something {1-0}

Figure 4.14: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Unconscious bias and all that stuff just flows through non-Indigenous you know. We are not a racist country, but…" contained the following utterances:

> *the guy we were dealing with came across as racist. // Once you start using your personal experiences at something like this, it tends to waver your sense of direction I suppose. // even the Aboriginal community, their views on Aboriginal people are…are not very good because they see things on TV and all the negative stuff and unfortunately everybody's tarred with the same brush // the way that they are taught how to see stuff and what their perceptions of Aboriginal people are. A lot of their perceptions are based on bad events happening on TV or to their families based on other areas and other people and unfortunately for those people they think that everybody is the same // bullying and racism and that sort of stuff is all the same and they would try and maintain that for everybody // perceived ideas about Aboriginal people influence the way they interact with them // unconscious bias and all that stuff…that just flows through non-Indigenous, you know. We are not a racist country but // maybe there is a hint of racism or something like that and they're being not looked at properly or respected or…yeah, something like that*

In addition to the unconscious bias of the population explained in the utterances above, Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge the bias within their own community and how ingrained the perception of white culture is reflected in the following comments by Aboriginal Team Leaders (SA6):

> *installed in Aboriginal people from a young age, or even before they are born in they're handed down that there is a chance that you're going to lose something to the Government*

This fear of loss and being taken away from family or to jail among the Aboriginal community forms a potent combination with the lack of respect from non-Aboriginals of Aboriginal culture as explained by one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA6) when asked if he thought there is a good understanding of each other's culture:

> *No. No…and I don't…yeah…Not sure what the key is in that, but, there is not…there's like a lack of respect you know. Like…yeah, our Wagyl is a joke*

you know? We don't say God's a joke. You hear people laugh about the big

snake that made the river and stuff, no more stupid than Moses building the

ark, or whoever built the ark you know…

Researcher Comment:

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders have recognised the internal systemic/cultural barriers to Aboriginal people succeeding at work. Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge this within their own culture and upbringing as well. This taught fear of loss and being taken away from family or to prison among the Aboriginal community combined with the prejudices of the broader population expose a gulf of racism that is difficult and complex to address and as acknowledge by a couple of Aboriginal Team Leaders, this is so ingrained and often hidden from view as reflected in the statement by SA5: *"a fish is the last one to know what water is"*.

Team Leader Matters (purple)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around team leaders. This subcategory embraced codes that were regarding the team leader's understanding and behaviour that impacted negatively on working relationships. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 10
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.15. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the purple coloured codes only.
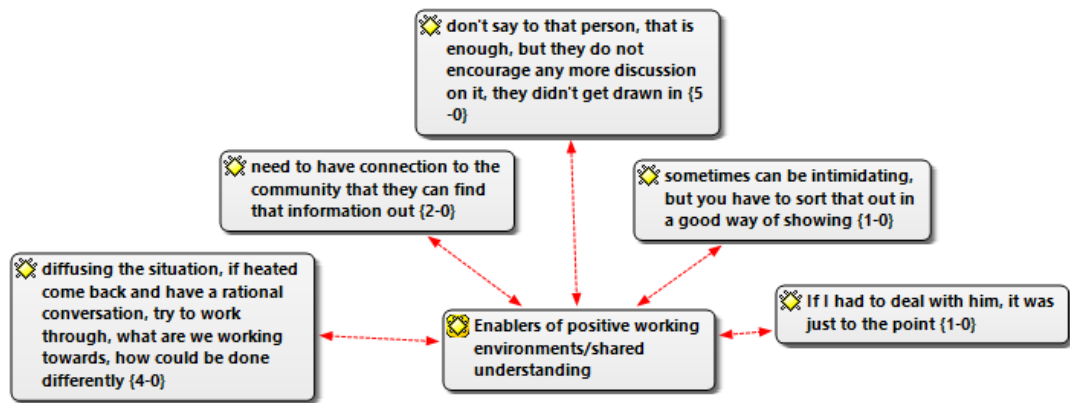

Figure 4.15: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Supervisory Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Asked me to write a business plan, I feel it's a joke when they haven't showed me that stuff	1
Changes through our leadership team so it's a constant process of nurturing that relationship and educating	1
I just put it down to nagging	1
If good relationship with supervisors, putting them on notice that they may need to take notice	1
More people would get along in the workforce if they had better humanised managers	1
Offers things to the apprentice then doesn't follow through	1
Some people that aren't completely on board with having Aboriginal people in the workforce	2
They weren't allowed to…they didn't trust them to do tasks on their own.	1
We thought he had the experience to deal with Indigenous people	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Some people that aren't completely on board with having Aboriginal people in the workforce" contained the following utterances:

> *some people that aren't…completely onboard with having Aboriginal people*
> *in the workforce // direct, no I'm not going to hire Aboriginal people*
> *because they are Aboriginal. You know, they have, they've grouped*
> *everyone together and they've just said, nup*

As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) observes, some team leaders do not recognise that Aboriginal people have the required skill sets and experience:

> *they weren't allowed to…they didn't trust them to do tasks, on their own. So*
> *there was a lot of boredom I suppose in the early years, because the guys*
> *weren't getting used, or utilised as much as they could have*

Researcher Comment:

The codes in this subcategory are reflective of the varying experiences of Aboriginal Team Leaders in managing and also in being managed in part revealing ingrained attitudes towards Aboriginal people regarding the activities allocated to them. These codes are quite consistent with those from the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders.

Performance Management of Aboriginal Matters (yellow)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the theme of performance management matters. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 33
- Grounded codes: 16

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.16. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the yellow coloured codes only.
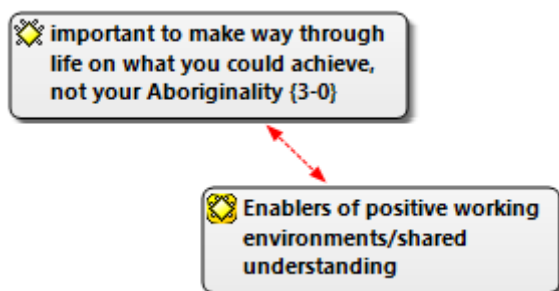
Figure 4.16: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people experience deaths more, cultural side of understanding funerals, not just one family, it's extended family, if senior people there's obligations	5
Aboriginal people will be on their phone every day, but ring you can't get hold of them, won't answer the phone, not going to answer a vacant number	2
Couldn't get hold of him. They don't have a phone in their house, important to leave a message on answering machine	2
Don't do your job properly, someone else is going to suffer, it's not going to work	2
Don't open it, don't know about it…avoidance, it's a safety mechanism	1
He didn't ask me, he told me. Maybe you should ask	6
Lack of knowledge in making decisions, gets too hard and they struggle	1
Leaders hate it when someone rings up for a funeral this weekend, now we are short. Doesn't help relationships	1
Most Indigenous guys are new to the business, things that some have never had exposure to before/not much experience working where they are the minority. Some struggle	2
Need to communicate a bit better with my management let them know how I'm feeling	1
Put a bit of structure in there, which for Aboriginal people is not…even I struggle	1
Sometimes the issues are too big, you're not right to be here, that is fine, they choose not to fit in	2
Sometimes you've got no idea what help is, could be anything from domestic violence to finding a job, most are sincere about that, it's basically our Aboriginal	2
They don't want to be there, so they are not given 100% just tokenistic performance	1

Codes	Grounded
What goes on at home is different, which can impair their ability to work…we struggle	2
You can't be swearing to public, talking sexual stuff	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "He didn't ask me, he told me. Maybe you should ask" contained the following utterances:

> *If you ring up and you talk and they go…excuse me? And then you can explain it. Because often…like someone will complain about it and I'll go…ask and go oh, he was just trying to find this out, now he asked the wrong way, but his intention was thing // he told one of my boys, who was very offended, because he's…although he is highly educated…his father is probably one of one of the most…if not the best…respected artists in Perth…[artists name], so his…he went to [private school] and played rugby over there, so he knew straight away. And that bloke said to him get the shovel over there boy…he knew straight away and he said oh…he went and got the shovel, but then he, told me straight away and I said, hey mate, you do your own shoveling. He's not your boy. // I just said to him…you ask properly if you want him to dig your hole there. Ask him properly. Don't say can you get…get me the shovel boy // learn to talk properly // He didn't ask me, he told me. I said, there you go…maybe you should ask. And yeah, they got on alright after that*

Aboriginal Team Leaders explain the non-Aboriginal inability to contact them at certain times in terms of being nervous about the unknown. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) explained:

> *I can see it and I can make a judgement call on it. But when it's the unknown. And that's like when you get people to ring…to the leaders…where did you get them to ring from…it's like from the office. Don't get them to ring from the office because it shows up as a vacant number. They are not going to answer a vacant number. What do you mean? Well it could be the cops, it could be anyone…they're not going to answer it.*

This small communication issue, if better understood could resolve a deal of frustration within teams.

Researcher Comment:

Several of these codes relate to the Aboriginal Team Leaders' expectations around respect. Respect in the way you talk to each other, but also of cultural issues and level of competence. This is quite different to their non-Aboriginal counterparts who are struggling more with the performance management side of their role.

Shame and Confidence (turquoise)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the theme of Aboriginal shame and confidence being an inhibitor to an Aboriginal person at work. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 6

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.17. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the turquoise coloured codes only.

Figure 4.17: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Shame Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
A lot of it is just shyness	1
Not because people are being nasty, it's because they don't know what they're doing, so anger comes, non-indigenous kids didn't grow up with this attitude	2

Codes	Grounded
Not had a chance because they don't have this and their self-esteem is just gone, not going to win the role on selling themselves	5
Shame…you know. They get shamed out a lot which sounds ridiculous, but there's something about shame	6
Smiled and nodded, it's just a leave me alone, I don't want to be put in the spotlight	1
You're not going to get that confidence, you're not going to see it	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Not had a chance because they don't have this and their self-esteem is just gone, not going to win the role on selling themselves" contained the following utterances:

> *These are the kids that didn't go to school and really shit up life, shit upbringing, you know martyred by everything that sent them to one place. That was grooming them for the one place. // he had lost all…complete motivation // I can understand someone who is not as confident as me and just don't have the background I've got, as in the work background. There is no way an Aboriginal woman could come behind me and step into this role. Unless of course she has the same background or experience. // people aren't as confident, and they are not going to win a role based on selling themselves. They are going to win it because they are Aboriginal and they have the skill sets that you're looking for. // Not had a chance because they have…they've been up on a brick wall all the time. I don't have this, I don't have that and their self-esteem is just gone. So…if I can…If they can't do that…if they can't…know that person first up to be able to ask…you know…well…whatever they want to ask in an interview. That young person or that older person who everyone thinks…oh…there's a classic example I'll give you. Had two people on a job site. One had tickets, one didn't. One had 25-30 years of experience…he didn't have a ticket. And the young one says, but I've got the ticket…it's my machine…one tyre is two and a half grand…who would you put on the machine.*

There is a genuine observed 'shame' where the combination of not being able to talk about something, being frustrated and aware of perceptions of Aboriginal people, holds

an Aboriginal person back in the workplace. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA6) commented:

> shame…you know. They get shamed out a lot. Which you know, sounds
> ridiculous, but there's things…like…there's something about shame this
> morning, you know…it's probably why I haven't communicated with my
> bosses because I'm ashamed…I'm shamed how to bring it up.

Researcher Comment:

Direct communication, particularly at work is difficult for an Aboriginal person and is reflected in the Aboriginal Team Leader observations of shyness, inability to communicate and poor self-esteem. There is a 'shame' element in here experienced by Aboriginal people, which in observation, while described as shame, is also a lot like the Chinese concept of Guanxi, when described by Aboriginal participants. Although reflected from a different perspective, this subcategory is similar to that of the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders.

Recruitment and Retention System Matters (grey)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around the systems, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention which become barriers to understanding. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 11
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.18. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the grey coloured codes only.
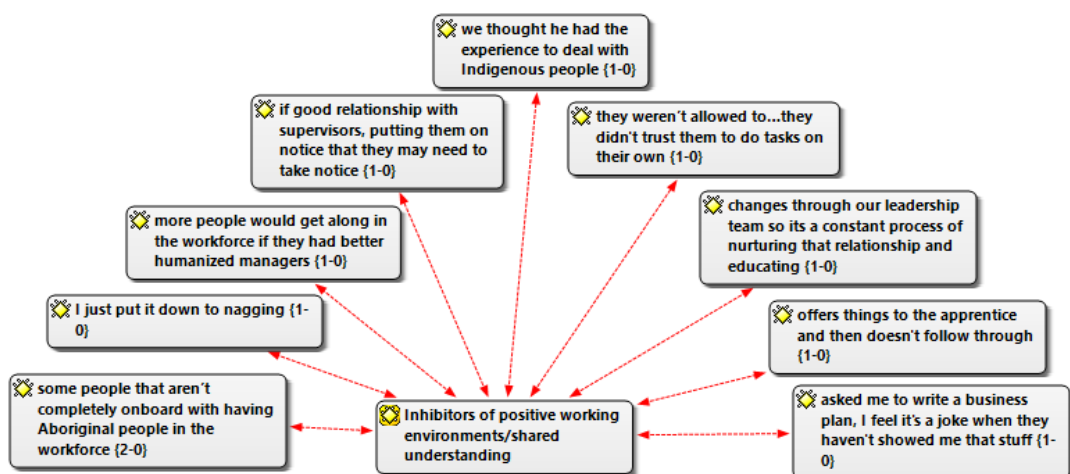

Figure 4.18: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment and System Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people exposed to a different reality, what they think is work is completely different, a lot of our mob don't realise its FIFO	2
Everyone just expected Aboriginal people not to know anything	1
Get developed quicker than the Indigenous person that is doing everything he is supposed to do	1
No loyalty to who you're working for that respect is lost	1
Retaining our employees is such a huge problem	1
That's always there that my job just because I'm Aboriginal I do have some skills	2
Things may not fit in their criteria or their policies so we've got to really try to educate them on how we do things	2
Too easy because there is a wage, most of the time in building wage doesn't apply, it's the job	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Aboriginal people exposed to a different reality; what they think is work is completely different, a lot of our mob don't realise its FIFO" contained the following utterances:

> *Aboriginal people have…been exposed to a different reality if you like, so what they think is work is completely different to here and you get that mismatch. That is when you get problems. // a lot of our mob want to work in the mining industry or wherever it is, because of the money, you know. But they don't really understand that it's, particularly if it is FIFO and those kinds of things, which is a little bit different*

Aboriginal Team Leaders are very conscious of the perception of others that they may only hold their job because they are Aboriginal. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) said: *"there's situations where people are going oh, you only kept your job because you're Aboriginal. You only got this job because you're Aboriginal."*

As with Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, they also note a difference between the non-Indigenous corporate world and the Aboriginal ways of doing things, as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA1) expresses:

> *culturally we apply for things…may be a certain way that doesn't fit in their criteria or their policies. So we've got to really try and educate them, I guess, how we do things and how we want things.*

Researcher Comment:

There are a few similarities between the Aboriginal Team Leaders and their non-Aboriginal counterparts in this subcategory around expectations at work, issues with retention and the notable differences between the corporate and Aboriginal worlds. However Aboriginal Team Leaders are extremely conscious of the perceptions of those around them of Aboriginal people and this comes through in their commentary.

Relationship Building Matters(olive)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of relationship building and communications. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 18
- Grounded codes: 11

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.19. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the olive coloured codes only.
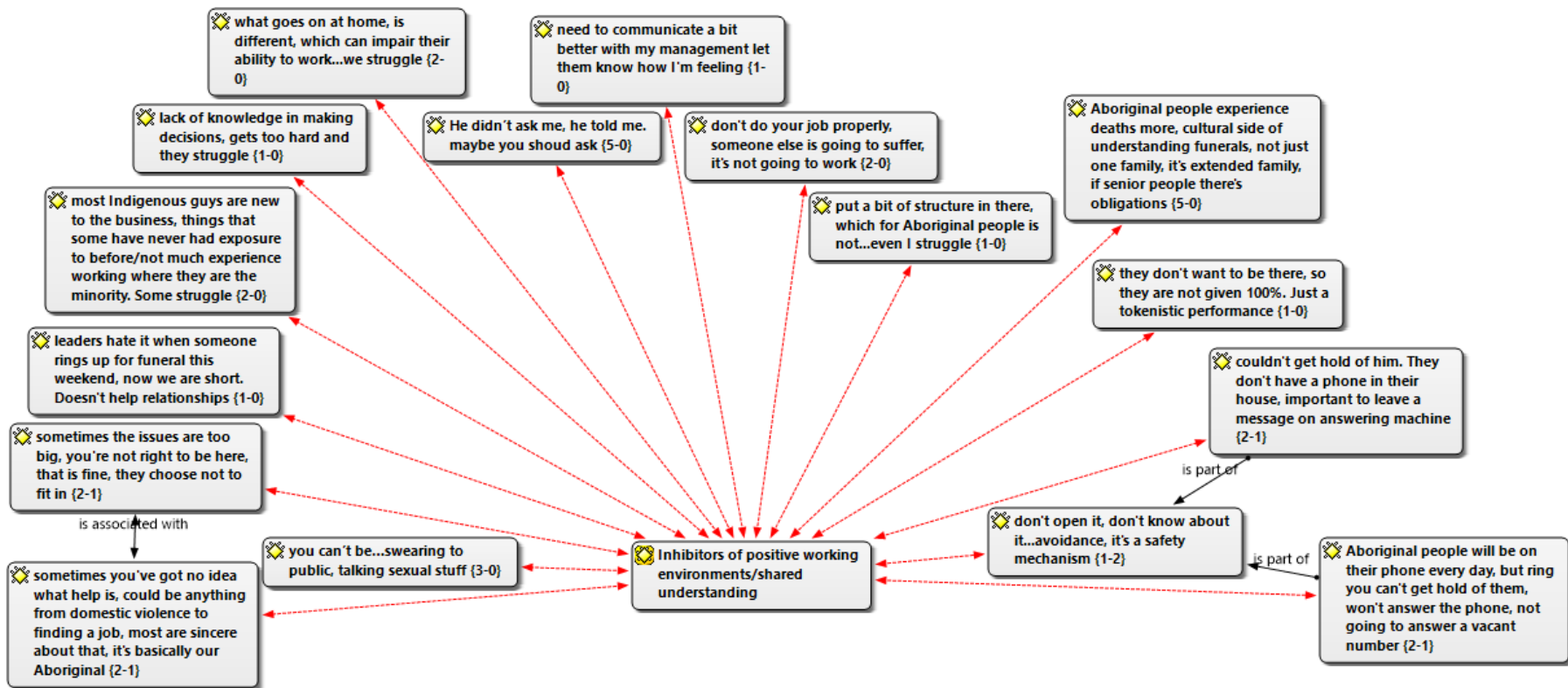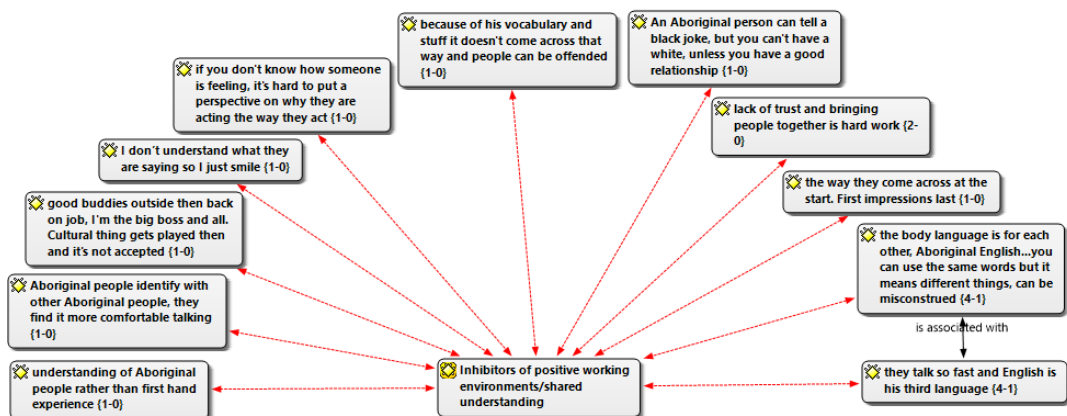
These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people identify with other Aboriginal people, they find it more comfortable talking	1
An Aboriginal person can tell a black joke, but you can't have a white, unless you have a good relationship	1
Because of his vocabulary and stuff it doesn't come across that way and people can be offended	1
Good buddies outside then back on the job, I'm the big boss and all. Cultural thing gets played then and it's not accepted.	1
I don't understand what they are saying so I just smile	1
If you don't know how someone is feeling it's hard to put a perspective on why they are acting the way they act	1
Lack of trust and bringing people together is hard work	2
The body language is for each other. Aboriginal English…you can use the same words but it means different things, can be misconstrued	4
The way they come across at the start. First impressions last	1
They talk so fast and English is his third language	4
Understanding of Aboriginal people rather than first-hand experience	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "They talk so fast and English is his third language" contained the following utterances:

> *another language, the four people we spoke to this morning, all different languages…I speak eight, seven. Seven languages. Seven yeah, fluent in six, fluent in five. // Particularly if it is someone from a community that is not very metropolitan or anything like that because English might be their second or third language // Because they talk so fast and again, English is his third language // Particularly with language and those types of things*

In addition to language barriers, the issue of Aboriginal people finding it easier to relate to other Aboriginal people was raised. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) observed, *"most Aboriginal people identify with the other guys…Aboriginal people, they find it more comfortable talking abound people that understand you more"*.

The lack of trust between the two cultures was also a prevalent theme. One Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) described it as: *"a lot of non-trust from both sides I think"*.

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Team Leaders put substantial emphasis on the language barriers for Aboriginal people in terms of building relationships. This was not as prevalent in their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Cultural Matters (green)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of culture. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 21
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.20. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the white coloured codes only.
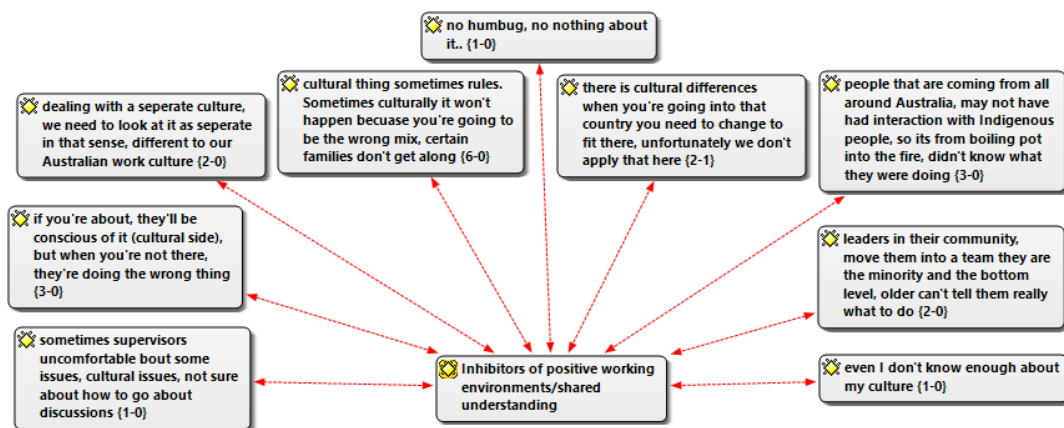
Figure 4.20: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Cultural thing sometimes rules. Sometimes culturally it won't happen because you're going to be the wrong mix, certain families don't get along	6
Dealing with a separate culture, we need to look at it as separate in that sense, different to our Australian work culture	2
Even I don't know enough about my culture	1
If you're about, they'll be conscious of it (cultural side), but then you're not there, they're doing the wrong thing	3
Leaders in their community, move them into a team they are the minority and the bottom level	2
No humbug, no nothing about it	1
People that are coming from all around Australia, may not have had interaction with Indigenous people, so it's from boiling pot into the fire, didn't know what they were doing	3
Sometimes Supervisors uncomfortable about some issues, cultural issues, not sure about how to go about discussions	1
There is cultural differences when you're going into that country you need to change to fit there, unfortunately we don't apply that here	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "People that are coming from all around Australia, may not have had interaction with Indigenous people, so it's from boiling pot into the fire, didn't know what they were doing" contained the following utterances:

> *people that are coming from all over Australia, so you have a…people we talk about…may not have had interaction with Indigenous people so it's from the boiling pot into the fire // they got the other people in who weren't from the region even. They didn't know what they were doing // it's only a bad sign because you don't have the normal people coming and doing the work. You've got people from all around the world coming and working here. You know, you've got…don't want to bag anyway, but our neighbours from across the ocean, you know, over past Melbourne, they're coming here and they don't care, but they would never do that in their own country.*

The diversity of Aboriginal cultures and the need to adapt behaviour according to the culture within which you are working was noted by Aboriginal Team Leaders: as one (SA5) stated:

> *there [are] cultural differences, where you're going in to and it's very much*
> *you're going into that country so you need to change to see and fit there.*
> *Unfortunately we don't apply that here because it's our country, we're*
> *doing it our way*

However, another notes not even knowing their own culture due to being taken from their parents as a child as was the Government policy at the time.

The issue of Elders or senior people being placed in junior positions in the workplace was also noted as being difficult to manage and requires sensitivity as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) commented:

> *leaders in their community, one of the majority, and respected. Move them*
> *into a team and they are the minority, they are just at the bottom level, they*
> *have to answer to younger people when they're leaders and all that, so it's*
> *quite…again that is where you are talking to the leaders and going, you*
> *have to understand that. You know…challenge for these people…and if you*
> *can help*

Researcher Comment:

Among Aboriginal Team Leaders there is a resoundingly common message around the requirement to acknowledge and properly manage cultural sensitivities between families and with relationships within families in the workplace.

Conflict Management (pink)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of conflict management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 7
- Grounded codes: 5

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.21. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the white coloured codes only.
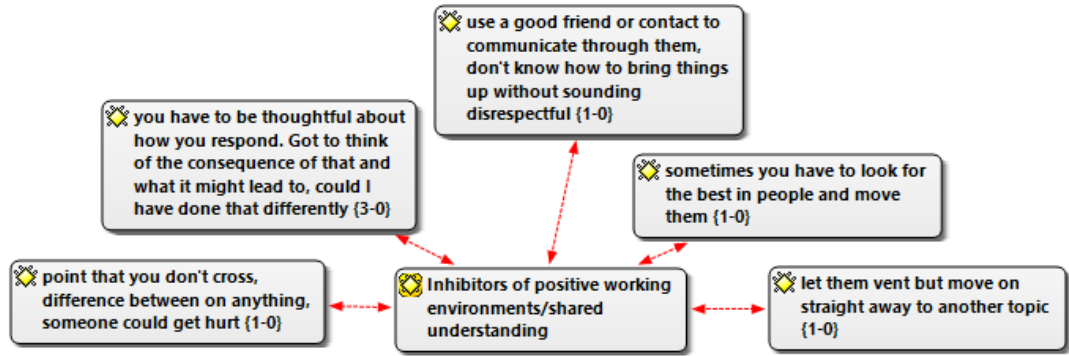
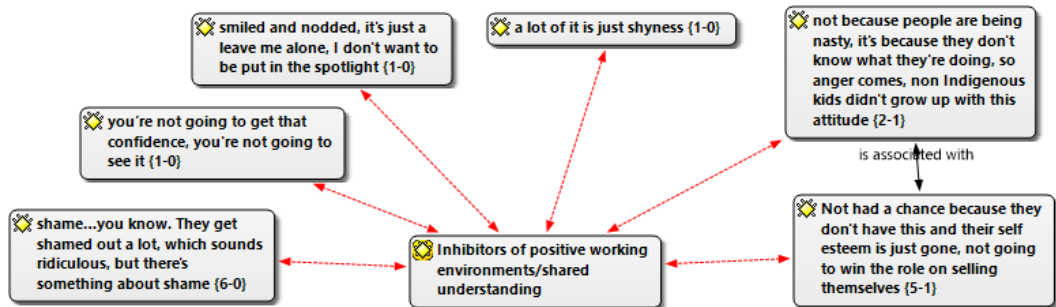*Figure 4.21: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Conflict Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors*

These codes are grounded are:

Codes	Grounded
Let them vent but move on straight away to another topic	1
Point that you don't cross, difference between on anything, someone could get hurt	1
Sometimes you have to look for the best in people and move them	1
Use a good friend or contact to communicate through them, don't know how to bring things up without sounding disrespectful	1
You have to be thoughtful about how you respond. Got to think of the consequence of that and what it might lead to, could I have done that differently	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "You have to be thoughtful about how you respond. Got to think of the consequence of that and what it might lead to, could I have done that differently" contained the following utterances:

> *you have to be reflective and go…so…if I do have situations that fail and crash and burn and that…it's about being self-reflective and going…alright, could I have done that differently? Could I have…you know…we got into a yelling match or something like that and…we got nowhere so // you have to be thoughtful about how you respond. Because you've got to think of the consequence of that and what that might lead to // he's like, oh why you doing that like that? You know? While you're putting your profile up down*

the other end. You know? I just switch off and go yeah, wave to him and just

carry on. Because, it's just not worth getting in an argument with him.

There is an element of conflict avoidance from the careful consideration of responses as detailed above to allowing people to have their say and then moving the discussion on. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA4) commented:

I do let them vent but we move on straight away to another topic. Or if I'm

clever enough and most times I'm not…cause you know if you are thinking

off the cuff too often and sometimes I'm not even listening because I'm

thinking of the day ahead.

Researcher Comment:

The commentary from Aboriginal Team Leaders speaks of allowing the team to air their views and then 'moving on' from the discussion. Addressing conflict through a third party is also reflected in the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader commentary around speaking with someone they are comfortable with. There seems to be an understanding between the two different groups of Team leaders that conflict cannot be addressed directly in these instances.

Team Structure and Support Matters (white)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of team structure and support. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 9
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.22. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.13, showing the white coloured codes only.
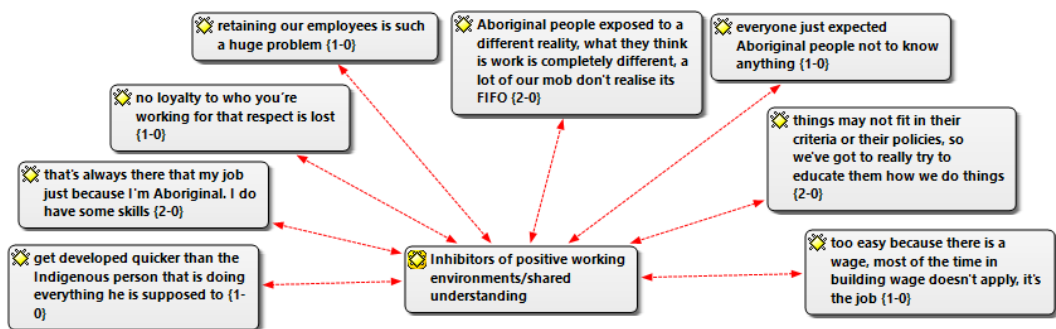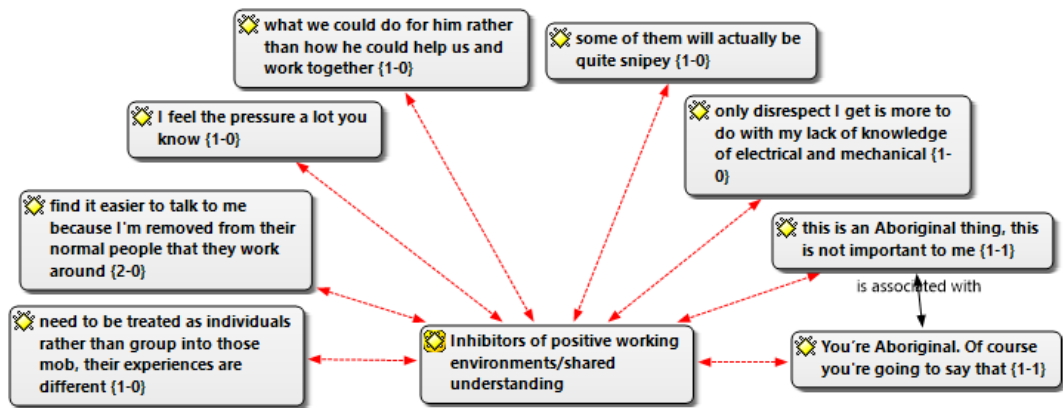
Figure 4.22: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Structure and Support Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

These codes are grounded as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Find it easier to talk to me because I'm removed from their normal people that they work with	2
I feel the pressure a lot you know	1
Need to be treated as individuals rather than group into those mob, their experiences are different	1
Only disrespect I get is more to do with my lack of knowledge of electrical and mechanical	1
Some of them will actually be quite snipey	1
This is an Aboriginal thing, this is not important to me	1
What we could do for him rather than how he could help us and work together	1
You're Aboriginal, Of course you're going to say that	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Find it easier to talk to me because I'm removed from their normal people that they work with" contained the following utterances:

> they find it easier to talk to me because I'm removed from their normal
> every day routines and people that they work around. So they feel
> comfortable because I'm sort of removed from that and they can talk openly
> you know about issues or whatever it is they are going through….that they

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> *want to talk about // they feel that if they are having problems at that level,*
>
> *because they sometimes think they're mentors, they can't talk to a*
>
> *superintendent, or they can't talk to a manager or even a GM…so they feel*
>
> *the hierarchical sort of*

From an Aboriginal perspective there is a need to be treated based on individual performance, as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) stated:

> *there needs to be an understanding about…that a lot of people and again*
>
> *not all people…but they need to be treated as individuals rather than*
>
> *grouping into oh those mob or…those Aboriginal mob…and understanding*
>
> *that how they grew up and their experiences are different to ours*

Researcher Comment:

The Aboriginal Team Leader commentary in this subcategory focuses on the respect and relationship elements of the team. This contrasted with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders who commented much more on a combination of team structural issues.

4.2.3   Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating positive regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 54
- Grounded codes: 22

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.23.

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
A team leader who will help them grow. I've had some wonderful leaders and they've all helped me grow	4
Able to tell each other what we think	1
Being clear and pulling them up when they don't, disrespectful you can't let it happen, address it straight and to the point	8
Building those relationships, you should be doing with your employees anyway	2
Go and see where they live, all the children, dysfunction and family set ups to manage, they get it	1
He's got an understanding of Aboriginal people and he's willing to learn, wanting to engage with mentors	2

How the governance is produced	1
If a problem they feel confident to come and ask you, we can deal with problems early	2
If I don't speak to them like that I lose my authority. I'm not a good leader	
If you had have handled that interaction a little bit differently it would have been a different outcome	2
Knowledge and my general knowledge of how it works	1
Leaders have to buy into the selection process	3
Leaders they just want someone who works and shows up every day and is about production	2
Management being a bit proactive and communicating and leading by example	5
More involved and getting out in the community, making them a bit more aware	2
No boss, I was in charge, but I wasn't the boss and I didn't tell them, I asked people to do things, talked like mates	4
People are older than him who he is in charge of, but they all respect him	1
Pick them up just quietly on the side, cause if you do it in front then they're embarrassed and ashamed	1
Talk about what the plan is, what is coming up, what we need to concentrate on, we need to do differently	2
Valued having an Aboriginal leader who was there for them, put themselves on the line	7
When he had to be hard, he was hard and we understood that was his role	1
Wouldn't have the mum side of the role, which I've discovered you actually need	1
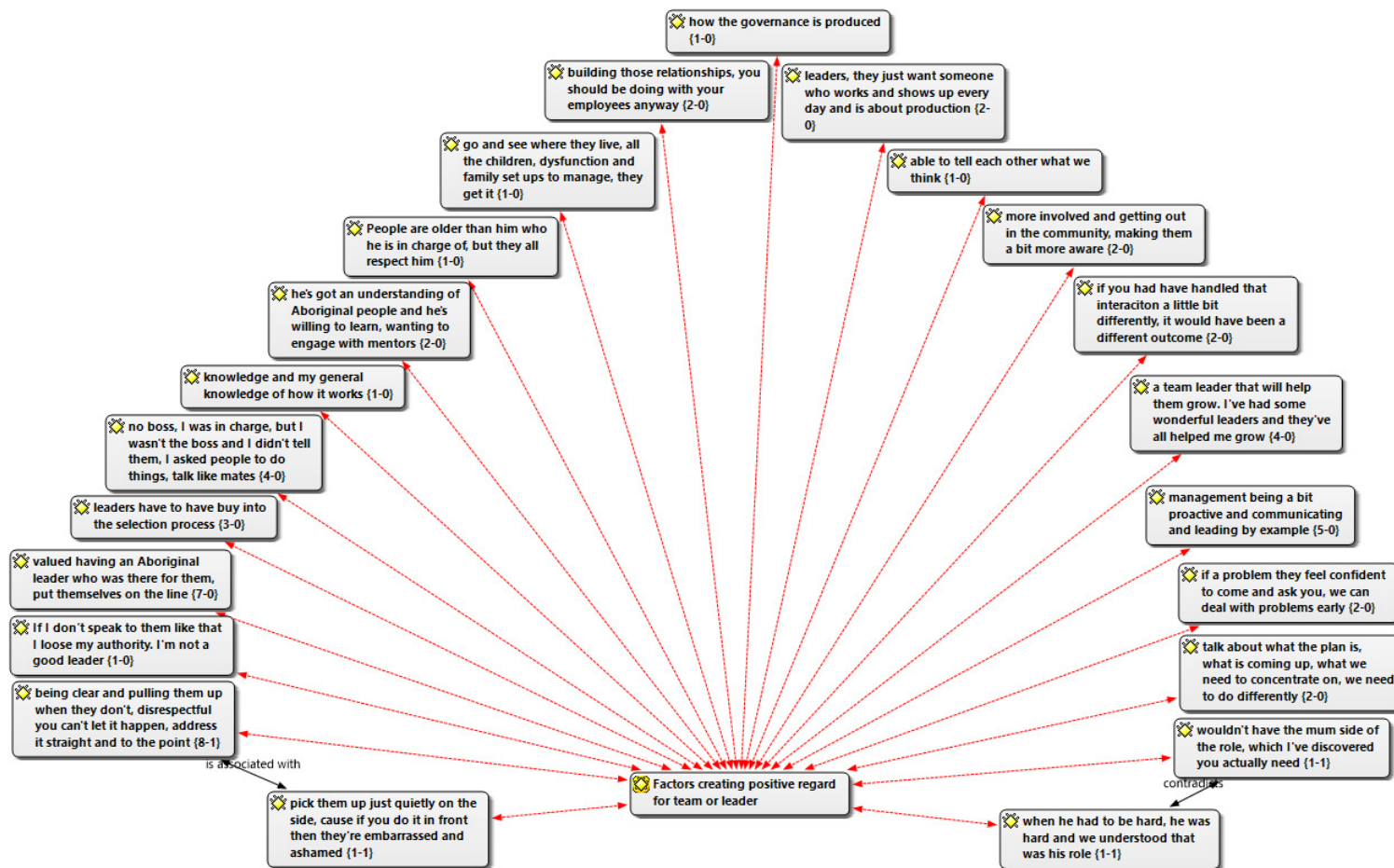
Figure 4.23: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Leaders have to buy into the selection process" contained the following utterances:

> *hiring leaders are. They have to have buy-in // leaders have to have buy into that selection process // the bosses themselves knew what they wanted…the older people and the experienced people on the job site, knew what they wanted*

Aboriginal Team Leaders talk about the importance of addressing poor behaviour immediately and in a direct way as SA6 explains: *"If he came out disrespectful then you couldn't…you can't, just let it happen, you have to address it straight away and say, look that's not on buddy".*

However, it is also suggested by SA5 that this not occur in front of other people for shame reasons:

> *not be in front of everyone at a prestart or something like that. It might be picking them up afterwards just quietly on the side cause if you do it in front, then their embarrassed and ashamed*

The other thing Aboriginal Team Leaders is the importance of how the leader speaks to others with respect and can build collaborative, equality-based relationships. As SA6 says: *"there was no boss. I was in charge, but I wasn't the boss and I didn't tell them…I asked people to do things".*

Researcher Comment:

The data here reflect the Aboriginal Team Leaders' views as to what constitutes a good leader which is one who can quietly pull you up on performance, that speaks with respect and does not behave like a 'boss'. There appear to be recurring themes throughout the four hermeneutic units of trust, attitude, being supportive and respect.

4.2.4 Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating negative regard for team or Team Leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 24
- Grounded codes: 16

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.24.

The codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Can't leave us in limbo, a lot of bosses are happy to be like that	3
Causing trouble for the rest, when Aboriginal person does it, the leader…they all do it	2
Could withdraw their knowledge overnight and refuse to feed me information	1
Don't want to be made examples of or anything like that	1
Get annoyed when treated differently because I'm Aboriginal. Not a racist thing	2
He just saw me as his lackey, I didn't accept that	1
I just felt he wasn't…I didn't take any problems to him, I went over his head	1
Leaders are risk averse	2
Leaders don't value what we are trying to achieve, they just don't understand	2
Leaders feeling that Aboriginal people can't meet the requirements of the job	1
More family history, more connection	1
Most men are terrible leaders, they don't have a mum side and not Dad's either…too touchy feely	1
People tell you they are going to do one thing and they just don't, you've just blown me off	1
The boss calling me names, I told him to get stuffed	2
Very patient and, a little too patient could be setting him up to fail	2
Where I have struggled with my management is it legitimate or just to get contracts	1

could withdraw their knowledge overnight and refuse to feed me information {1-0}

get annoyed when treated differently because I'm Aboriginal. Not as a racist thing {2-0}

don't want to be made examples of or anything like that {1-0}

the boss calling me names, I told him to get stuffed {2-0}

I just felt he wasn't...I didn't take any problems to him, I went over his head {1-0}

he just saw me as his lackey I didn't accept that {1-0}

can't leave us in limbo, a lot of bosses are happy to be like that {3-0}

Very patient and, a little too patient could be setting him up to fail {2-0}

where I have struggled with my management, is it legitimate or just to get contracts {1-0}

most men are terrible team leaders, they don't have a mum side and not Dads either. Too touchy feely {1-0}

leaders are risk averse {2-0}

people tell you they are going to do one thing and they just don't, you've just blown me off {1-0}

leaders don't value what we are trying to achieve, they just don't understand {2-0}

causing trouble for the rest, when one Aboriginal person does it, the leader...they all do it {2-0}

more family history, their family connection {1-0}

Factors creating negative regard for team or leader

leaders feeling that Aboriginal people can't meet the requirements of the job {1-0}

Figure 4.24: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

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To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Can't leave us in limbo, a lot of bosses are happy to be like that" contained the following utterances:

> *he would just leave me to the store // He was one of those absent managers // can't leave us in limbo, which quite a lot of bosses are happy to be like that.*

Aboriginal Team Leaders spoke a lot about what they expect of a leader and the factors that make them feel negatively towards that individual. A lot of this discussion is around treatment of the individual or the team, such as SA4 states: *"I get very annoyed when I get treated differently because I'm Aboriginal. Not as a racist thing, but it's...".*

Leader perceptions of Aboriginal people also were key in the discussion. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) expressed:

> *from the leaders, when they are identifying a group. They still sort of identify the group as having more issues than the other and you might have a…we had a guy and he had an incident on site and he goes, you're always doing that. And he goes, hang on a second, I've never missed a flight and they looked through and he had never missed. They had grouped him in with everyone else. So he goes this is the first one in four years, what do you mean, all the time? OK, yeah well. But that is the default. The leader's default*

Researcher Comment:

The data here is predominantly a reflection of the Aboriginal Team Leader's views of factors that would negatively affect their regard for their team leader as opposed to their teams. In contrast the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders focused on factors that cause them to have negative regard for their team. There is less of a focus on work-ethic and getting on with the job without politics and more of a focus on treatment, relationships and respect.

4.2.5   Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improvement of working relationships. there were:

- In vivo codes: 27
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.25.

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
5 cycles in our family cycle, great grandparents become your son	1
A system where we link like a third party with experience say with your mother or people that you know, what respects to give them	4
Before every second day I was getting calls because of their lack of understanding	2
Cultural aspect, the spiritual connection is virtually where it is, we don't own it, we just believe it can happen	1
Cultural knowledge of where we work, what I would see not to do here, I wouldn't go somewhere else as well, just our own ethics	1
Doesn't start with me and you, it starts with the raw people with no knowledge, we might have a chance. He's going to teach his kids	2
Don't' want to be the leader in the group, the nature, in the group is that they are drawn to you, wasn't going to trample over everyone to get there	4
Focus on the leaders because leaders have a certain expectation about what an employee should and shouldn't do	3
I'm only one in the mix, we all sit down	3
If I noticed negative behaviour or that person obviously got a problem. I didn't highlight it, I just ignored it	1
Listen to Noongar Radio	1
Long time to be away from home, role in the family, questions employees upfront	1
Probably comes from your personality as well, if you've got that sarcastic person it probably will be taken the wrong way	1
Use our Aboriginal grape-vine to find them	1
Working culture has really changed, now having a domino effect in Indigenous culture as well	1
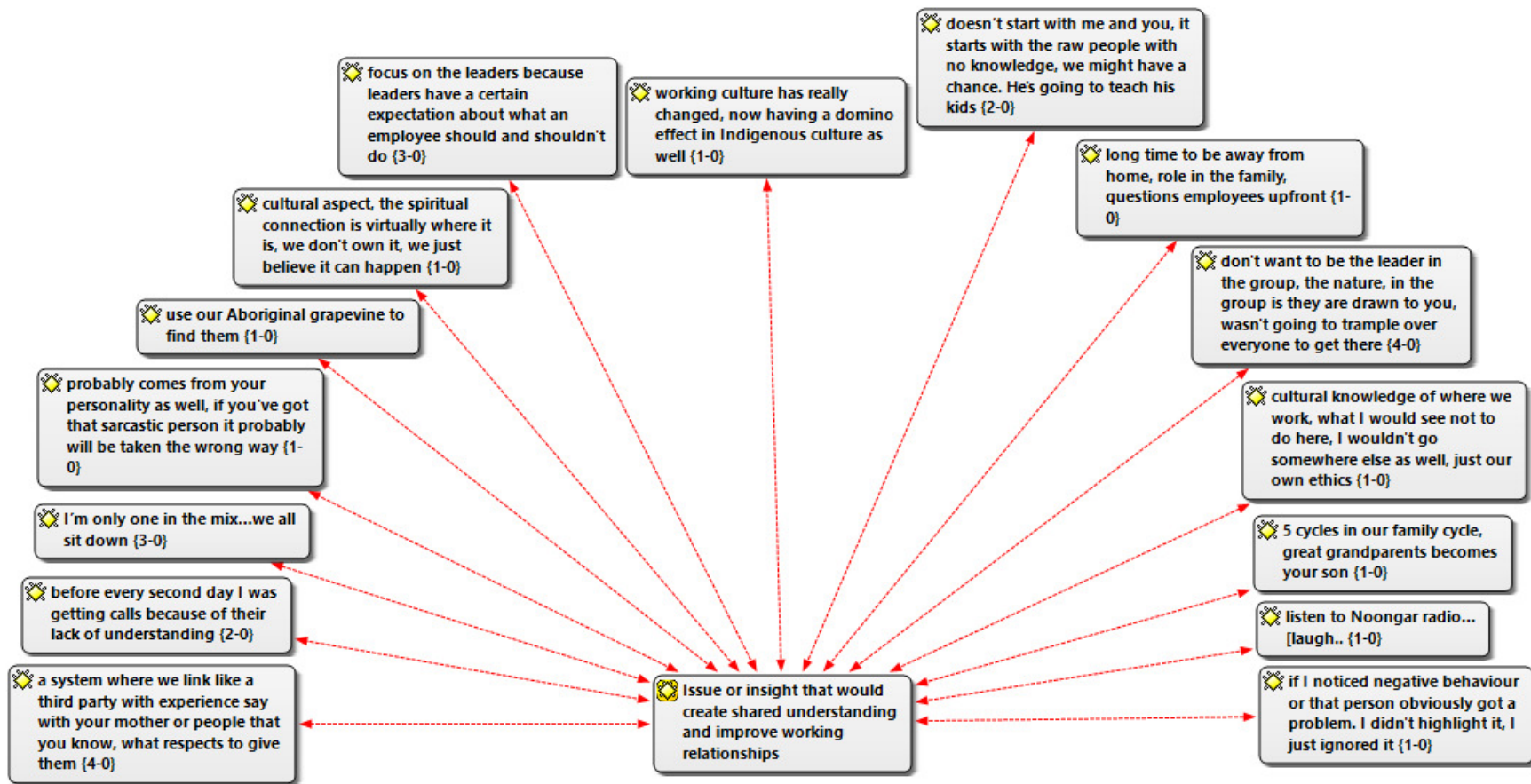
Figure 4.25: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "A system where we link like a third party with experience say with your mother or people that you know, what respects to give them" contained the following utterances:

> they haven't developed that relationship yet. They go through a process of trying to identify who they…trying to work out who they identify with // local guys, because of our skin system, they are trying to work out who they identify… meaning what skin groups they could give that person. Like if it's a good mate, they might give it a skin group that is either near or very close to them or…in law that…where they have an older relationship with. With supervisors [team leaders] they might have a sort of…like a…sort of a respectful distance sort of relationship. You know they talk to each other, but they are very stand offish and very quiet. So once they process takes place, they tend to work that out, you know that generally takes 2-3 months // they are comfortable around who they are working with, they know what respects to give them and they'll respect them according to how they…you know what skin group they have identified for that person // even though their supervisor [team leader] might have that cultural awareness, they usually like, when dealing with a contact, where you know… I've got a system where we link like a third party with experience say with your mother or people like that you know that they can connect that with. We use that type of method you know to communicate with people that they are not sure of from people that are they are a bit scared of I suppose.

Another notable insight is the desire to be endorsed by the team before taking on the leadership role. As one Aboriginal Team Leader explains, before applying for the promotion to team leader, they sought team endorsement of the approach. Our discussion of this process was as follows:

> SA4:   So then I spoke to all the lads and I made sure it was OK with them.
>   So I said, now seriously you guys, you really got to think about this.
>   Do you want me as your team leader? And they all said, yeah, it
>   would be great.
>
> Researcher: Oh that is nice. Really nice of you to ask too. A lot of people wouldn't
>   ask.

> SA4:　　　　Well it would defeat any…I wouldn't have got anywhere if I didn't
> have their approval.

> Researcher: Yeah

> SA4:　　　　Cause they could have just fought against me. And I'm not one
> to…what is the word…I'm not going to waste my time. I won't
> waste my time. If I'm going to be needed, I want to be needed.
> So then I told the boss [boss' name] oh, OK, I'll do it. So he had
> to actually advertise. After nearly 12 months and then I actually
> had to win the role. And I did go up against another team
> leader who had already had given the experience, but I
> managed to win it.

The final insight was around spirituality. One Aboriginal Team Leader (SA2) described this:

> the cultural aspect to it, the spiritual connection to it is virtually where it is.
> We don't own it. We don't know how that connection worked, or where it
> worked, we just believe that it can. It can happen. By doing that, we make
> all the possibilities for that to happen…better if you know what I mean. So
> we give that opportunity to have the best possibilities.

It is a highlight of the strong belief and spirituality within Aboriginal culture remaining within the business context.

Researcher Comment:

The Aboriginal Team Leaders are highlighting unfamiliar (from a Western perspective) ways of relating to each other in the workplace to better understand respect levels in relationships. In addition this potentially demonstrates a new leadership style. It appears the Aboriginal leadership style is one which prefers to be 'endorsed' and almost 'approved' by the team; ignores negative behaviour; and brings spirituality into the workplace.

4.2.6　Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that prevent shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes:　　　11

- Grounded codes: 7

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.26.
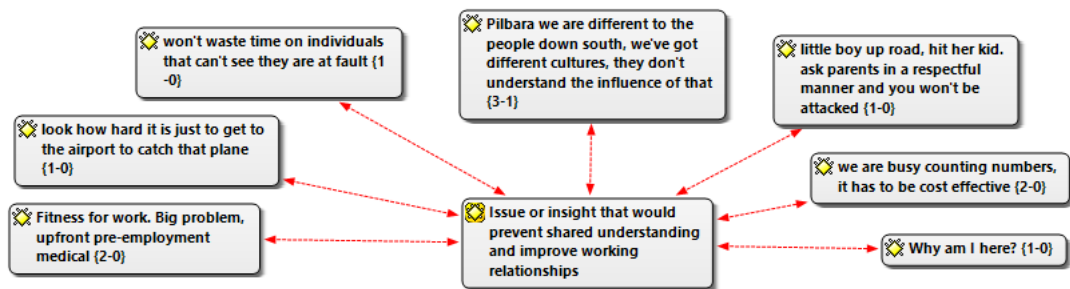
Figure 4.26: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

The codes in this category are as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Fitness for work. Big problem, upfront pre-employment medical	2
Little boy up road, hit her kid. Ask parents in a respectful manner and you won't be attached	1
Look how hard it is just to get to the airport to catch that plane	1
Pilbara we are different to the people down South, We've got different cultures, they don't understand the influence of that	3
We are busy counting numbers, it has to be cost effective	2
Why am I here?	1
Won't waste time on individuals that can't see they are at fault	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Fitness for work. Big problem, upfront pre-employment medical" contained the following utterances:

> *Fitness for work. Big problem for us, because we have such strict standards on that sort of stuff so…and they are going oh, but we wouldn't ask anyone else that // upfront, I'll be looking and I'll say you have to do a pre-employment medical*

The themes in this category are around better understanding the difficulties of an Aboriginal person in obtaining and remaining in employment as well as the prejudices and fear faced from the general community as one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA6) explained in the recount of this story:

> *and she says to me, oh, the little boy up the road…he's a Noongar boy…there's a little boy up the road and he hit [her kid] and I said to her…well…why don't you go and knock on the door and ask the parents? And she said, oh, she walks past here every day…I said why don't you call out and say, your little boy hit my little boy. And she said, because I'm scared that they will…that she'd want to attack me. I said why would she want to attack you? Because you're asking about your…your son…I said say it in a respectful manner and you won't be attacked. But if you're going to say, what the fuck are you doing…your kid is hitting my kid. Who the fuck does he think he is…what do you think she is going to say. Compared to our boys are fighting…*

Another Aboriginal Team Leader (SA2) explains the overwhelming nature of his life responsibilities:

> *when you're at home and you're going to bed, putting up the socks and the shoes for the night, you kind of wonder what you've done for the day and what's happened and what changes have you really made and what differences have you really put into the community and when you wake up the next morning and the community is the same and the people still have their heads down and walking in the backward direction…it's just like why am I here. Why is my time being wasted on something I cannot fathom any more. It just doesn't work.*

Researcher Comment:

The diversity of data in this category demonstrate the breadth of issues and thinking about what might prevent shared understanding in the industry, including the nature of our community as a whole.

4.3 Aboriginal Workers

This hermeneutic unit of Aboriginal Workers comprises the eight Aboriginal people interviewed who did not have staff. This hermeneutic unit was chosen to reflect the world view of Aboriginal Australians working within the civil construction sector who are employees. While all are Aboriginal Western Australians, they come from different cultural backgrounds within the Aboriginal community and different language groups. Some are very connected to their traditional cultures and speak several languages and others have been disconnected from their traditional culture through historic intervention policies.

This diversity of cultural background within this hermeneutic unit, shows an observed (albeit unexplored for the purposes of this research) difference in attitudes between Aboriginal people well connected with culture and those who have been raised with Western philosophies. Some of these differences are observed in terms of conflicting utterances.

Within this hermeneutic unit, there were:

- In vivo codes: 613
- Grounded codes: 223

The most grounded codes are as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Building friendships outside work, spend weekend crabbing, fishing, have a BBQ after work and a couple of laughs	22
I hear racist comments in a very direct and indirect manner every day. Things people say indirectly, aren't trying to be offensive. I deal with that constantly	21
People think they know and understand Aboriginal engagement or the issues, they don't, it's about how you engage, not all about the words spoken	15
Probably trust, respect, your honesty and integrity, if someone is going to show respect and acknowledge you, give it back, both be happy	13
Cop it on the chin, everyone, the jobs get done when they're getting along, just accept that is part of it, do I worry about this nitty gritty?	12

Codes	Grounded
As long as you can get along with everyone getting through the day is easy, do what is told	11
More training like cultural awareness, people need to be more culturally aware, every single worker needs cultural awareness	11

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "More training like cultural awareness, people need to be more culturally aware, every single worker needs cultural awareness" contains the following utterances:

> *cultural awareness training that we do. That is really good. Even I learn things from that. Seriously! Even through I've done it 3-4 times now so. // I think with training again, just like, how to deal with someone like that. You can't just go up to someone and say this guy thinks you're… // probably did learn a bit of things in cross culture. But not everything // we probably should have ensured that they had cultural training and cultural understanding before accepting…to take…our Aboriginal recruits // definitely needs to go broader. Because if it went broader…people would have a better understanding and they would be more open to employing people, because they would understand instead of just being scared of it // everybody to complete cultural awareness training. To just…engage more with Aboriginal people // any advice that I could give people…is to get the training, have an understanding // more training, when I say training, I mean like cultural awareness…not so much training but people need to be more culturally aware // I can't express enough I just think people just need to be more aware and have and understanding and there needs to be more Aboriginal people engaged in…every company I think // a lot of the management, the front line have been through cultural awareness and stuff like that but the people on the ground that we work with every day…our guys…there has been none. // all your main supervisors [team leaders] in how to deal with that and push through cultural awareness. I know it is big money. It is a very costly event to do, but I believe personally that every single worker that works for the [company] whether it [is] someone who is*

[job] or whatever I think it needs to have a cultural awareness as much as

the person right at the top.

As per the process described in the Introduction of this chapter, these codes were divided into categories and then subcategories where appropriate. This section will proceed to discuss the more detailed findings from the Aboriginal Workers by each of the six categories.

4.3.1 Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Enablers")

Within the category of Enablers, there were:

- In vivo codes: 211
- Grounded codes: 71

These grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.27.

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for discussion:

- Racism and tolerance (red)
- Team leader matters (dark purple)
- Team influence (light purple)
- Recruitment, retention and advancement (grey)
- Goal setting and performance (yellow)
- Mentors, buddies and role models (blue)
- Cultural awareness (green)
- Organisational culture and systems, commitment (orange)
- Relationships, understanding each other's backgrounds (olive)
- Self-respect/pride (white)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored by detailing the codes and grounding.
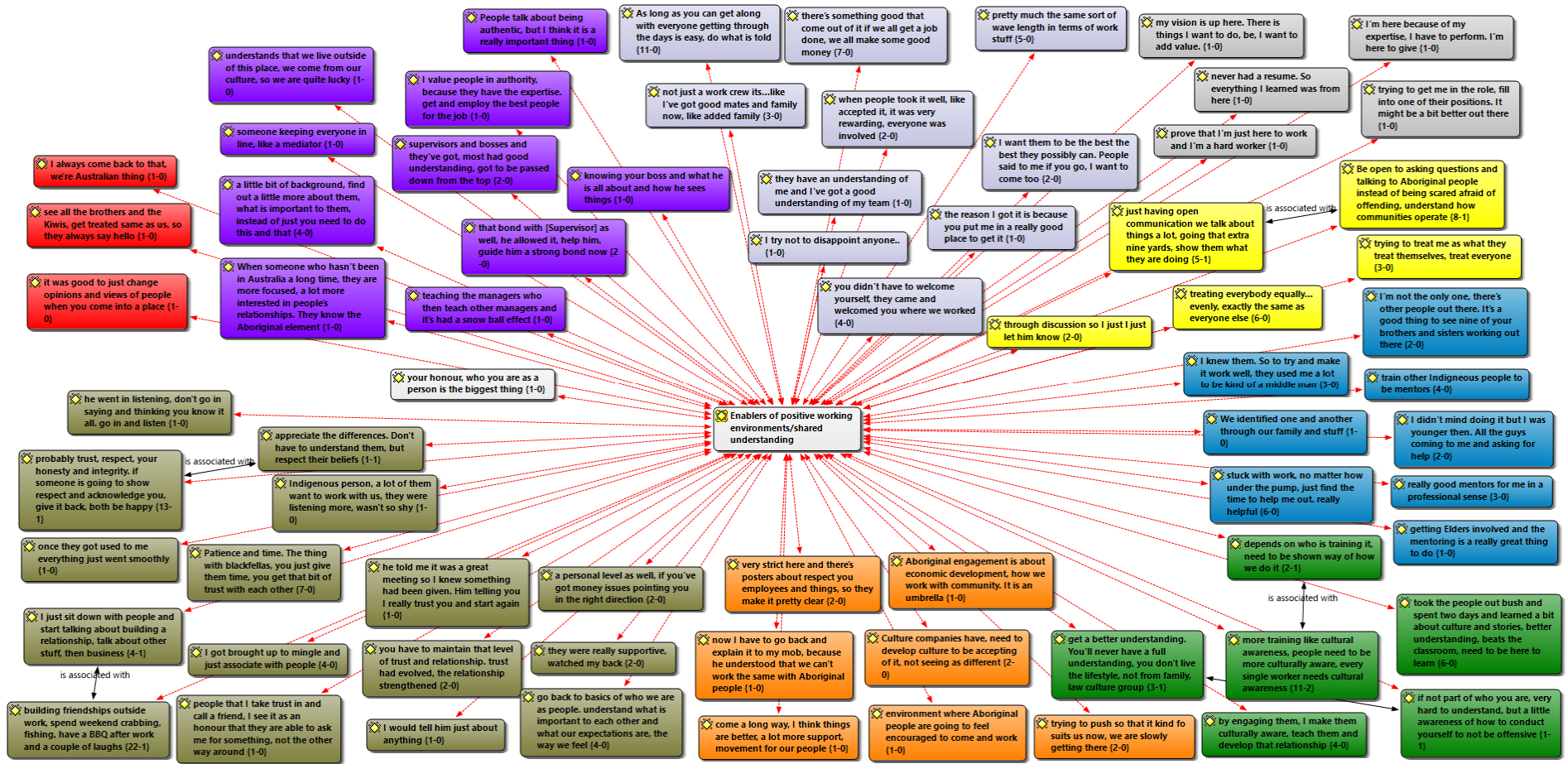
Figure 4.27: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Enablers of Positive Working Environments, Shared Understanding

Racism and Tolerance (red)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around racism and tolerance. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 3

It was not possible to ground these and they are shown in Figure 4.28. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the red coloured only.
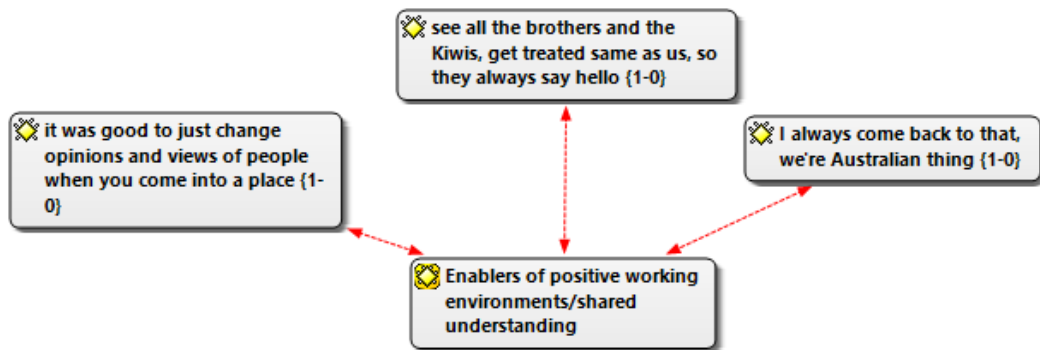
Figure 4.28: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism and Tolerance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
I always come back to that we're Australian thing	1
It was good to just change opinions and views of people when you come into a place	1
See all the brothers and the Kiwis, get treated same as us, so they always say hello	1

Researcher Comment:

The importance of changing opinions and views was common across hermeneutic units.

Team Leader Matters (dark purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around team leaders. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 15

- Grounded codes: 10

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.29. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the dark purple coloured codes only.

Figure 4.29: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A little bit of background, find out a little more about them, what is important to them, instead of just you need to do this and that	4
I value people in authority, because they have the expertise, get and employ the best people for the job	1
Knowing your boss and what he is all about and how he sees things	1
People talk about being authentic, but I think it is a really important thing	1
Someone keeping everyone in line, like a mediator	1
Supervisors [team leaders] and bosses and they've got, most had good understanding, got to be passed down from the top	2
Teaching the managers who then teach other managers and it's had a snow ball effect	1
That bond with (supervisor [team leader]) as well, he allowed it, helping him, guide him a strong bond now	2

Codes	Grounded
Understand that we live outside of this place, we come from our culture, so we are quite lucky	1
When someone who hasn't been in Australia a long time, they are more focused, a lot more interested in people's relationships. They know the Aboriginal element	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "A little bit of background, find out a little more about them, what is important to them, instead of just you need to do this and that" contained the following utterances:

> *sitting the person down and figuring out what is most important to that person. Cause everyone has different things and different priorities. Whereas mine is my family and if I need to go and do something for my family then I'll go and do something // where my successes have been is where you actually sit down and have a bit of a chat with somebody and then later it's like, oh OK, I'll send you that stuff and my…and my I'll send you that stuff is whole hearted, it is genuine // [other staff member] is just full on into like, I've got to get this job done and… // a little bit of background before you go and…background of not only the people but you want to find out a little bit more about them, instead of just full on, you know you need to do this and you need to do that*

This subcategory highlights the fact that most team leaders have a good understanding, as one Aboriginal worker (WA4) commented: *"supervisors [team leaders] and bosses and they've got…well most I've had good understanding with".*

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory was not present in the Non-Aboriginal Workers who did not express so strongly the importance of relationship and bond with the team leader. Furthermore, one Aboriginal Worker comments that team leaders not from Australia are better at these relationships. This is reflected in the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader commentary. Those not from Australia found it easier to understand the importance of the different needs of their Aboriginal Workers.

Team Influence (light purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team influence. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 37

- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in Figure 4.30. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the light purple coloured codes only.
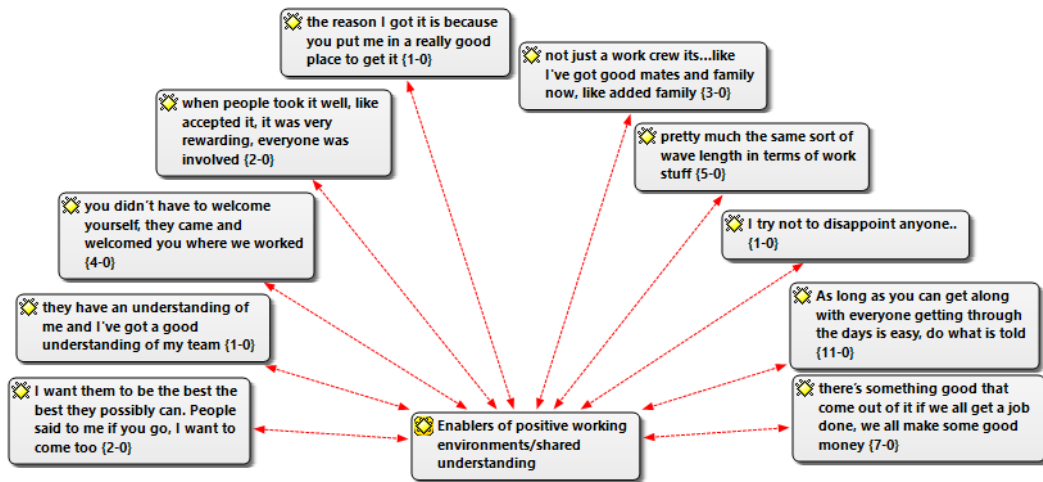
Figure 4.30: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Influence Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
As long as you can get along with everyone getting through the day is easy, do what is told	11
I try not to disappoint anyone	1
I want them to be the best the best they possibly can. People said to me if you go, I want to come too	2
Not just a work crew, it's…like I've got good mates and family now, like added family	3
Pretty much the same sort of wavelength in terms of work stuff	5
The reason I got it is because you put me in a really good place to get it	1
There's something good that come out of it if we all get a job done, we all make some good money	7
They have an understanding of me and I've got a good understanding of my team	1
When people took it well, like, accepted it, it was very rewarding, everyone was involved	2
You didn't have to welcome yourself, they came and welcomed you to	4

where we worked	

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "You didn't have to welcome yourself, they came and welcomed you to where we worked" contained the following utterances:

> *you didn't have to welcome yourself. You know they came and welcomed you…or a lot of the Americans did and the clients, where we worked. // a different crew as well, so a lot of the crew came and introduced them as soon as I…I think it was about a day or so // as pretty good. They…introduced me around with the safety and took me around and showed me everything and where you ought to know to go. // come up shake your hand and say oh you know, introduce yourself and…don't be so rude kind of thing.*

As with the Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Team Leader commentary, there is a strong theme that the team is like a family. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA3) explained: *"living at the camp was kind of almost become more of a family than just work".*

Another (WA5) highlighted the importance of the team getting along well: *"As long as you can get along with everyone. Everyone is approachable, you all get through the days easy and…I don't know.".*

Researcher Comment:

Themes around supportive teams and teams being like a family as integral to shared understanding are common across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (grey)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around recruitment, retention and advancement. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 5

It was not possible to ground these codes and they are provided in detail in Figure 4.31. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the grey coloured codes only.

Figure 4.31: Network Map of Codes of the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
I'm here because of my expertise, I have to perform. I'm here to give	1
My vision is up here. There is things I want to do, be, I want to add value	1
Never had a resume. So everything I learned was from here	1
Prove that I'm just here to work and I'm a hard worker	1
Trying to get me in the role, fill into one of their positions. It might be a bit better out there	1

The Aboriginal Workers focus on their ability to add value to the organisation. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA4) describes, he wants to: *"prove that I'm just here to work and I'm a hard worker and if I want to do work, I work".*

Researcher Comment:

It is interesting that Aboriginal Workers focus predominantly on working hard and adding value. The political difficulties mentioned by the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders did not feature in discussion.

Goal Setting and Performance (yellow)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around goal setting and performance management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 24
- Grounded codes: 5

197

These grounded are provided in detail in Figure 4.32. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the yellow coloured codes only.

Figure 4.32: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Goal Setting and Performance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Be open to asking questions and talking to Aboriginal people instead of being scared afraid of offending, understand how communities operate	8
Just having open communication we talk about thinks a lot, going that extra nine yards, show them what they are doing	5
Through discussion so I just let him know	2
Treating everybody equally, evenly, exactly the same as everyone else	6
Trying to treat me as what they treat themselves, treat everyone	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Just having open communication we talk about thinks a lot, going that extra nine yards, show them what they are doing" contained the following utterances:

> *just a verbal communications. So usually just get out and show them what they are doing // Do you know what you're gonna do? And he goes yeah, yeah. I says well show me. And then he goes oh, I don't know. I said well, I'll show ya, what we're going to do and then you do it. // I'm just all about open communication with them and they know that // just having open communication, we talk about things a lot // keeping that communication and going that extra nine yards.*

As shown in the above utterances, Aboriginal people are open to being questioned and talking about their culture in order to build understanding. This relates to the value that Aboriginal Workers place on openness of communications. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) said: *"I'm just all about open communication with them and they know that"*.

As with the other hermeneutic units, there is a general theme of there being 'no difference' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff in terms of treating them fairly and equally, as WA5 puts it: *"treat the person how you want to be treated pretty much"*.

Researcher Comment:

As with all the hermeneutic units, the focus is on treating people the same and using open communication. Aboriginal Workers have a more significant focus on communications and respect than their non-Aboriginal counterparts, who hardly mentioned the importance of communication.

Mentors, Buddies and Role Models (blue)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around mentors, buddies and role models. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 22
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.33. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the blue coloured codes only.
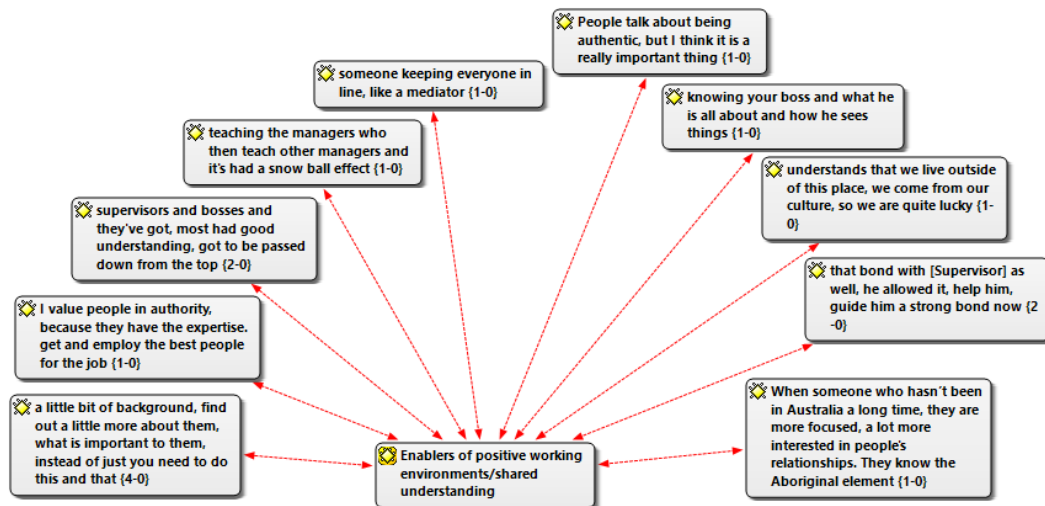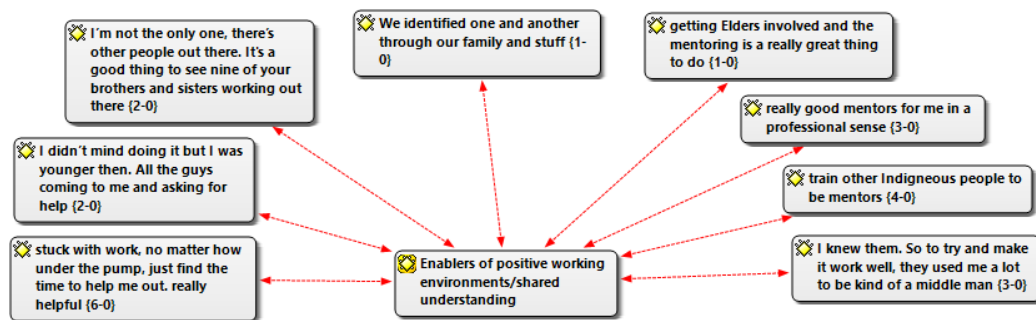

Figure 4.33: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Mentors, Buddies and Role Models Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Getting Elders involved and the mentoring is a really great thing to do	1
I didn't mind doing it but I was younger then. All the guys coming to me and asking for help	2
I knew them. So to try and make it work well, they used me a lot to be kind of a middle man	3
I'm not the only one, There's other people out there. It's a good thing to see nine of your brothers and sisters working out there	2
Really good mentors for me in a professional sense	3
Stuck with work, no matter how under the pump, just find the time to help me out, really helpful	6
Train other Indigenous people to be mentors	4
We identified one and another through our family and stuff	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Train other Indigenous people to be mentors" contained the following utterances:

> *train other Indigenous people to be mentors // when I was on my last job, they kind of…the boys took me into that role cause they know Dad done it so… // I enjoyed it but it would be nice to have a bit of training in that or something. // when we had the academy and we went to help out*

Aboriginal Workers, like other respondents, acknowledge the importance of mentors and the role they play, as one Aboriginal Worker (WA1) expresses:

> *automatically become my mentor. So they have a responsibility to make sure that I'm doing something and I yeah, make sure that I'm always at work and I'm always here in time for work type of thing*

Researcher Comment:

While this subcategory is consistent across all hermeneutic units, unlike their non-Aboriginal counterparts, there is no debate over the usefulness of mentors and role models for Aboriginal team members. As with the commentary from Aboriginal Team Leaders on mentors, very much reflects the concept of the mentor being the "kind of

middle man" as one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) described it. Creating that image once again of the 'Third Space' (Rutherford, 1990) between the two cultures.

Cultural Awareness (green)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around cultural awareness. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 27
- Grounded codes: 6

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.34. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the green coloured codes only.
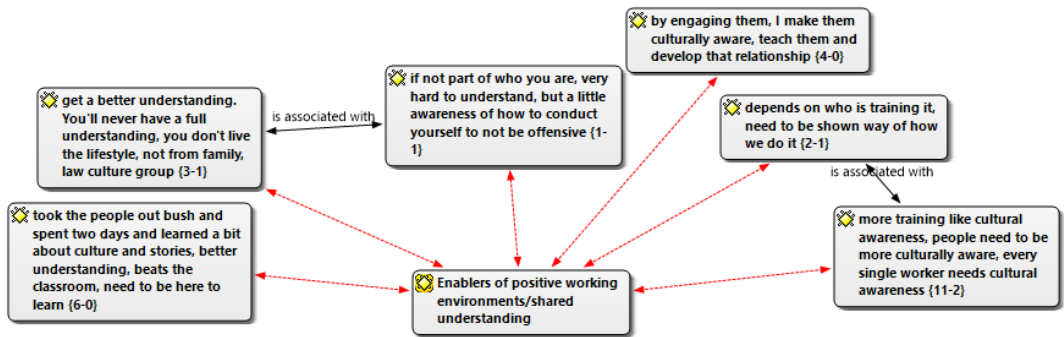
Figure 4.34: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Awareness Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
By engaging them, I make them culturally aware, teach them and develop that relationship	4
Depends on who is training it, need to be shown way of how we do it	2
Get a better understanding. You'll never have a full understanding, you don't live the lifestyle, not from family, law culture group	3
If not part of who you are, very hard to understand, but a little awareness of how to conduct yourself not be offensive	1
More training like cultural awareness, people need to be more culturally aware, every single worker needs cultural awareness	11

Codes	Grounded
Took the people out bush and spent two days and learned a bit about culture and stories, better understanding, beats the classroom, need to be here to learn	6

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "By engaging them, I make them culturally aware, teach them and develop that relationship" contained the following utterances:

> I said to the supervisor [team leader], I said, if you've got somebody coming in who's not your culture. // nice to be able to share that experience with…it was a really good experience. They were all non-Aboriginal and the outcome was fantastic. We all had a great week. So I'd probably say that. // I understand that they were being culturally sensitive and that is why they came to me I think. So that would be a positive thing. // by engaging them, then I will make them culturally aware. I will explain things. I will teach them and try and develop that relationship so that they understand and they accept and they feed that culture into their own companies

In addition to the value of cultural awareness training and discussions around culture, particularly if training is conducted in the local culture on their country, Aboriginal Workers acknowledge that it is very difficult to get a true understanding culturally. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA8) says:

> get an understanding, well it's not an understanding, it's a better understanding. I had to try to explain this to some big top dogs, who couldn't quite understand it…these cultural boys that were coming off the…they said, we want to have the full understanding. I said you'll never have a full understanding of what those guys…unless…how the hell are we supposed to deal with the day to day if we don't understand? I said you don't live in the lifestyle. You don't…you're not from the family, you're not in that law culture group and if you don't walk in the man's shoes, you'll never understand what that guy's life is all about. That goes for all of us.

Researcher Comment:

Cultural awareness training as an important component to creating shared understanding is common among all the hermeneutic units. Aboriginal Workers acknowledge their own role in this through educating their workmates, but also that a true understanding is almost impossible.

Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment (orange)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created which contains themes around organisational culture, systems and commitment. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 10
- Grounded codes: 7

These are provided in Figure 4.35. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the orange coloured codes only.
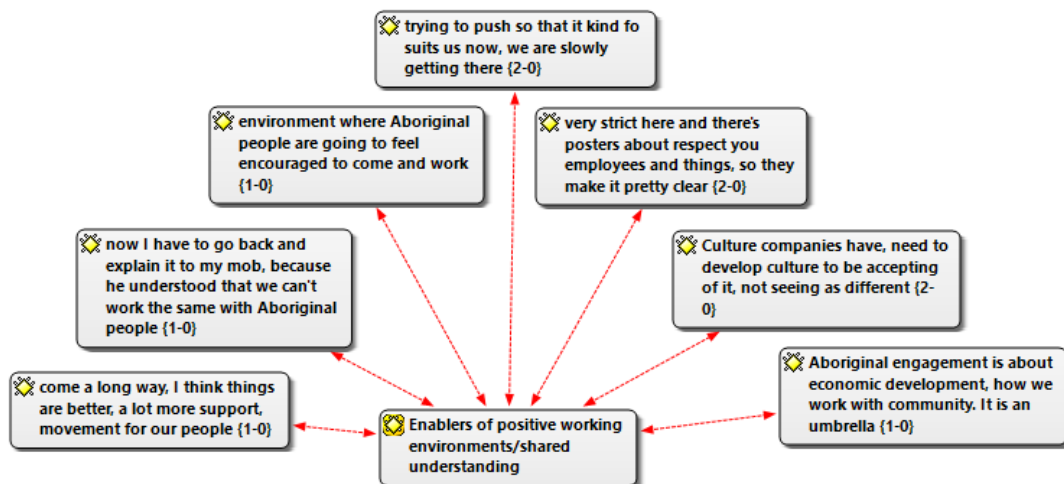
Figure 4.35: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal engagement is about economic development, how we work with community. It is an umbrella	1
Come a long way, I think things are better, a lot more support, movement for our people	1

Codes	Grounded
Culture companies have, need to develop culture to be accepting of it, not seeing as different	2
Environment where Aboriginal people are going to feel encouraged to come to work	1
Now I have to go back and explain it to my mob, because he understood that we can't work the same with Aboriginal people	1
Trying to push so that it kind of suits us now, we are slowly getting there	2
Very strict here and there's posters about respect you employees and things, so they make it pretty clear	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Very strict here and there's posters about respect you employees and things, so they make it pretty clear" contained the following utterances:

> *They are very strict here and they go over it all the time and there's posters about how to respect your employees and things like that. All the time there's…code of conduct and all that. So they make it very clear. // the [company] protects…well…with the code of conduct and what not, they take it quite seriously here. So anything that is upsetting then it gets addressed immediately and there is no tolerance*

Aboriginal Workers seem to acknowledge that things are changing within the work place, however there is still a way to go. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) states: *"got to be a culture that companies have. They need to develop their culture to be accepting of it. And not seeing it as something different"*.

Another noted that creating the right environment is important, as WA2 noted: *"an environment where Aboriginal people are actually going to feel like they are being encouraged to come in and work and be part of all of that"*.

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Workers seemed to focus more on creating the right culture and creating a welcoming environment and less about process-oriented organisational commitments.

Relationships and Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds (olive)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around relationships and understanding each other's backgrounds. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 67
- Grounded codes: 16

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.36. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the olive coloured codes only.
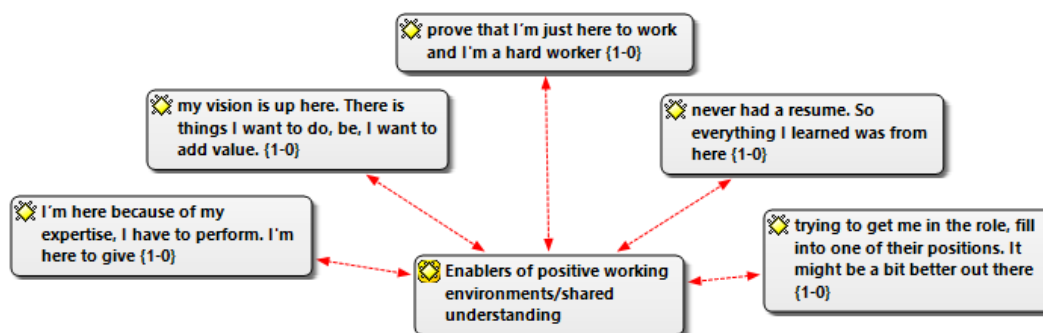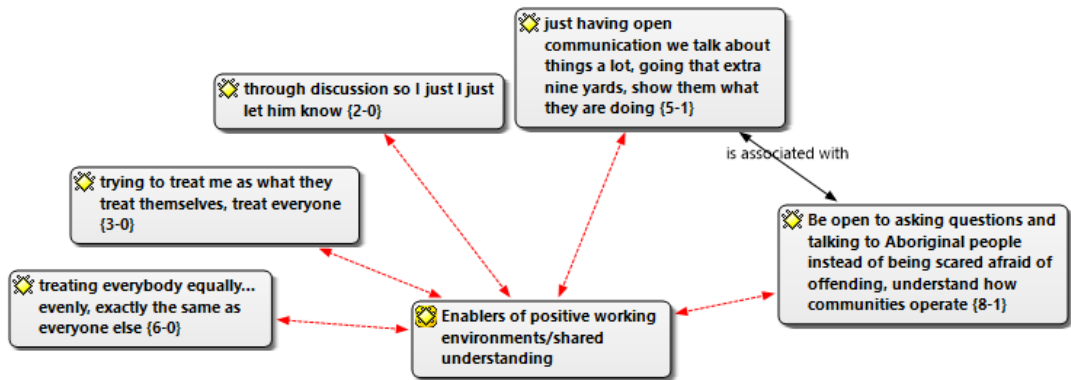
The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A personal level as well, if you've got money issues point you in the right direction	2
Appreciate the difference. Don't have to understand them, but respect their beliefs	1
Building friendships outside work, spend weekend crabbing, fishing, have a BBQ after work and a couple of laughs	22
Go back to basics of who we are as people, understand what is important to each other and what our expectations are, the way we feel	4
He told me it was a great meeting so I knew something had been given. Him telling you I really trust you and start again	1
He went in listening, don't go in saying and thinking you know it all. Go in and listen	1
I got brought up to mingle and just associate with people	4
I just sit down with people and start talking about building a relationships, talk about other stuff, then business	4
I would tell him just about anything	1
Indigenous person, a lot of them want to work with us, they were listening more, wasn't so shy	1
Once they got used to me everything just went smoothly	1
Patience and time. The thing with blackfellas, you just give them time, you get that bit of trust with each other	7

Codes	Grounded
People that I take trust in and call a friend, I see it as an honour that they are able to ask me for something, not the other way around	1
Probably trust, respect, your honesty and integrity, if someone is going to show respect and acknowledge you, give it back, both be happy	13
They were really supportive, watched my back	2
You have to maintain that level of trust and relationship, trust had evolved, the relationship strengthened	2
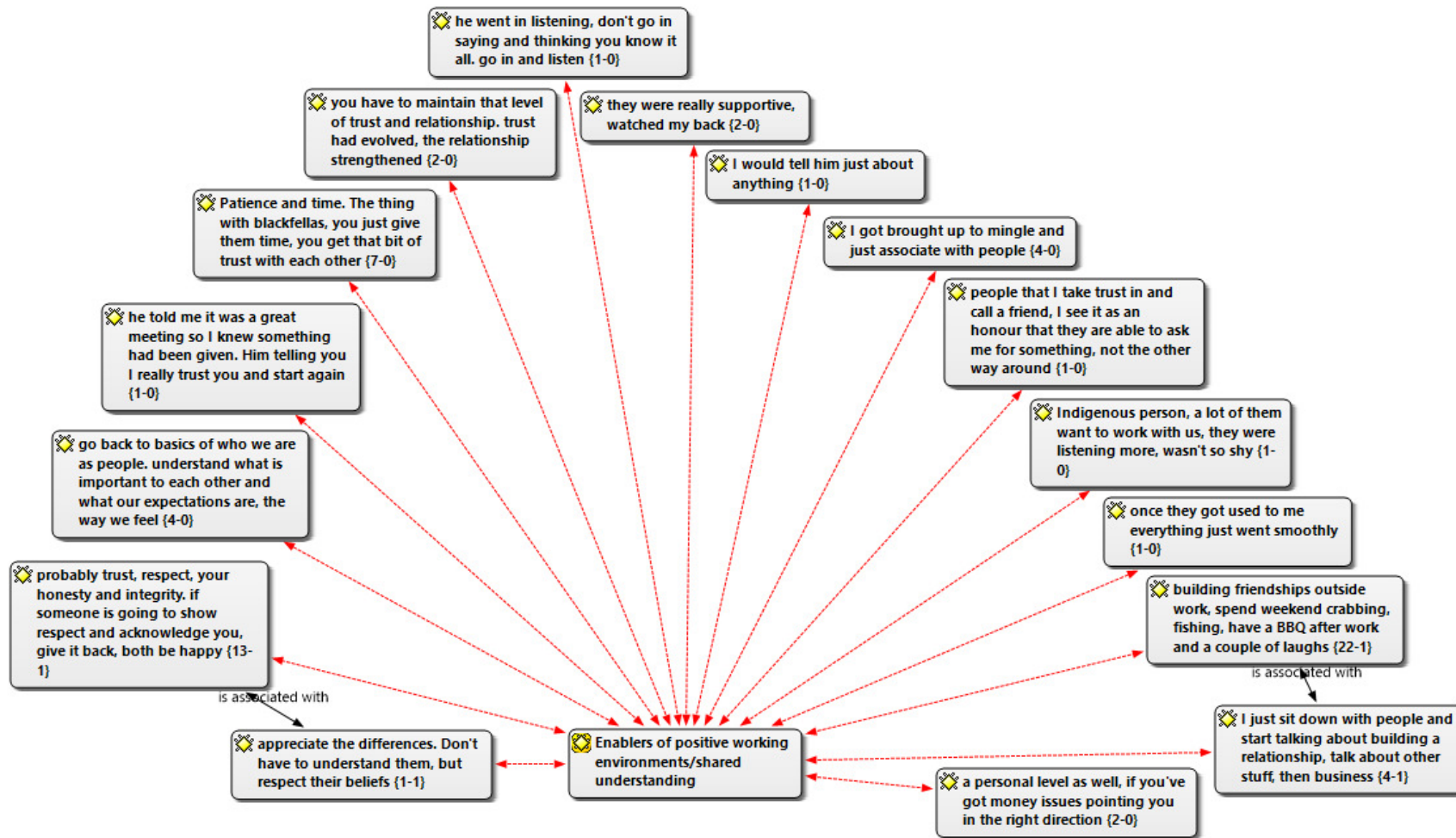
Figure 4.36: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Go back to basics of who we are as people, understand what is important to each other and what our expectations are, the way we feel" contained the following utterances:

> Let's go back to some basics of who we are as people. And understand what is important to each other and what our expectations are // as soon as you get to know 'em and they get used to you…they let a little bit out // getting people to know how we…to know us better as people. Like knowing how to approach us. How to work with us // have a little better understanding of why we feel sometimes the way we feel.

There are many interrelated codes within this theme around spending time together outside of work, getting to know each other and what they are going through, trust, respect and honesty. This is exemplified in the following statement by an Aboriginal Worker (WA1):

> with Indigenous people if you have a sort of like a mutual friendship with them, like or with us, and sort of have a friendship. It doesn't have to be outside of work, but just relate to them in something and you sort of get a bit more respect out of a person than you would if it was just based on a professional relationship

Another Aboriginal Worker (WA7) commented on the need for patience and spending time to create this trust: *"Patience and time. The thing with blackfellas like, you just give them time, you know".*

Researcher Comment:

Themes around mateship, trust, building relationships, and creating a genuine understanding between each other are common among all hermeneutic units. What is revealed by the Aboriginal interviews is the different way trust is built between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Aboriginal Workers emphasised that spending time together is very important in building relationships. As with their Team Leader counterparts, there was less emphasis from the Aboriginal Workers on listening whereas, for Non-Aboriginal Workers, this was another focus area.

Self-Respect/Pride (white)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created which contains themes of self-respect and pride. This subcategory had one in vivo code which it was not possible to ground. This is provided in Figure 4.37, which is an extract from the network map of Figure 4.27, showing the white coloured code only.
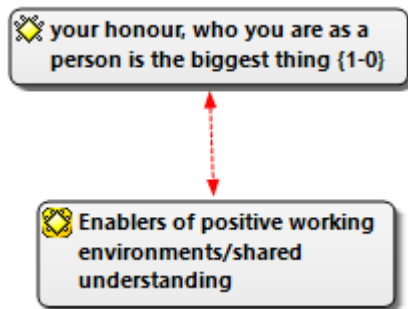
Figure 4.37: Network Map of Codes of the Self-Respect/Pride Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

Researcher Comment:

Although this is a very small subcategory, it is important to note the importance of honour to an Aboriginal person.

4.3.2 Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Inhibitors")

Within the category of Inhibitors, 254 in vivo codes were identified. It was possible to ground these in vivo codes by merging those that conveyed the same meaning in the context, resulting in 94 grounded codes. These are shown in the network map in Figure 4.38.

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for discussion:

- Racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions (red)
- Team leader matters (dark purple)
- Performance management matters (yellow)
- Shame and confidence matters (turquoise)
- Recruitment and retention matters (grey)
- Relationship building matters (olive)

- Team influence (light purple)

- Conflict management (pink)

- Organisational culture, systems and commitment (orange)

- Cultural matters (green)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored detailing the codes and grounding.
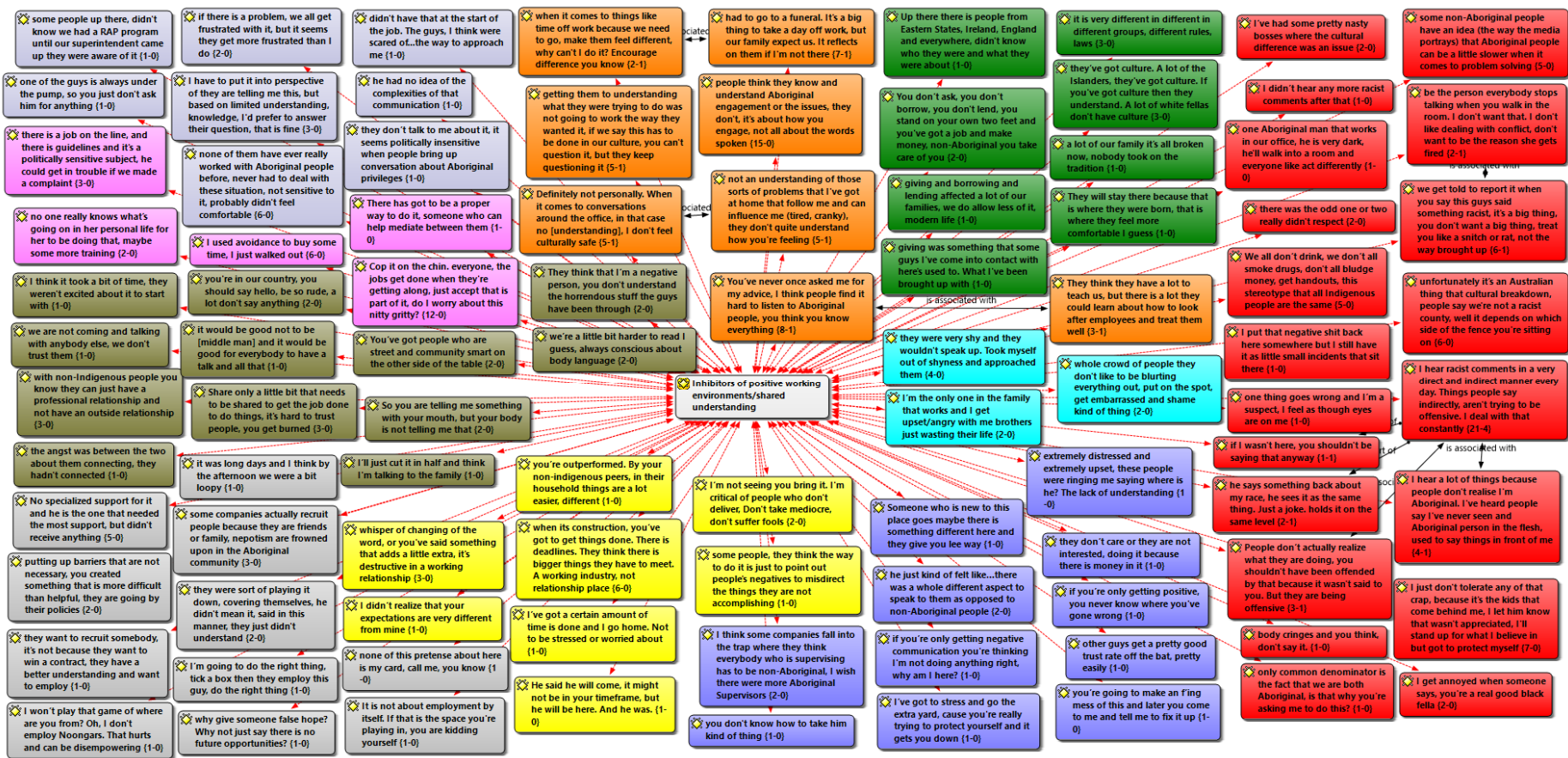
Figure 4.38: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments, Shared Understanding

Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions (red)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with the themes around racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 74

- Grounded codes: 20

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.39. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the red coloured codes only.

**I put that negative shit back here somewhere but I still have it as little small incidents that sit there {1-0}**

some non-Aboriginal people have an idea (the way the media portrays) that Aboriginal people can be a little slower when it comes to problem solving {5-0}

unfortunately it's an Australian thing that cultural breakdown, people say we're not a racist county, well it depends on which side of the fence you're sitting on {6-0}

I hear a lot of things because people don't realise I'm Aboriginal. I've heard people say I've never seen and Aboriginal person in the flesh, used to say things in front of me {4-1}

only common denominator is the fact that we are both Aboriginal, is that why you're asking me to do this? {1-0}

We all don't drink, we don't all smoke drugs, don't all bludge money, get handouts, this stereotype that all Indigenous people are the same {5-0}

I just don't tolerate any of that crap, because it's the kids that come behind me, I let him know that wasn't appreciated, I'll stand up for what I believe in but got to protect myself {7-0}

body cringes and you think, don't say it. {1-0}

one Aboriginal man that works in our office, he is very dark, he'll walk into a room and everyone like act differently {1-0}

I've had some pretty nasty bosses where the cultural difference was an issue {2-0}

is associated with

there was the odd one or two really didn't respect {2-0}

People don't actually realize what they are doing, you shouldn't have been offended by that because it wasn't said to you. But they are being offensive {3-1}

be the person everybody stops talking when you walk in the room. I don't want that. I don't like dealing with conflict, don't want to be the reason she gets fired {2-1}

is associated with

is associated with

we get told to report it when you say this guys said something racist, it's a big thing, you don't want a big thing, treat you like a snitch or rat, not the way brought up {6-1}

I get annoyed when someone says, you're a real good black fella {2-0}

if I wasn't here, you shouldn't be saying that anyway {1-1}

is part of

I hear racist comments in a very direct and indirect manner every day. Things people say indirectly, aren't trying to be offensive. I deal with that constantly {21-4}

Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding

one thing goes wrong and I'm a suspect, I feel as though eyes are on me {1-0}

I didn't hear any more racist comments after that {1-0}

is part of

he says something back about my race, he sees it as the same thing. Just a joke. holds it on the same level {2-1}

Figure 4.39: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

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The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Be the person everybody stops talking when you walk in the room. I don't want that. I don't like dealing with conflict, don't want to be the reason she gets fired	2
Body cringes and you think, don't say it	1
He says something back about my race, he sees it as the same thing. Just a joke, holds it on the same level	2
I didn't hear any more racist comments after that	1
If I wasn't here, you shouldn't be saying that anyway	1
I get annoyed when someone says, you're a real good black fella	2
I hear a lot of things because people don't realise I'm Aboriginal. I've heard people say I've never seen an Aboriginal person in the flesh, used to say things in front of me	4
I hear racist comments in a very direct and indirect manner every day. Things people say indirectly, aren't trying to be offensive. I deal with that constantly	21
I just don't tolerate any of that crap, because it's the kids that come behind me, let him know that wasn't appreciated, I'll stand up for what I believe in but got to protect myself	7
I put that negative shit back here somewhere but I still have it as little small incidents that sit there	1
I've had some pretty nasty bosses where the cultural difference was an issue	2
One Aboriginal man that works in our office, he is very dark, he'll walk into a room and everyone like act differently	1
One thing goes wrong and I'm a suspect, I feel as though eyes are on me	1
Only common denominator is the fact that we are both Aboriginal, is that why you're asking me to do this?	1

Codes	Grounded
People don't actually realise what they are doing, you shouldn't have been offended by that because it wasn't said to you. But they are being offensive	3
Some non-Aboriginal people have an idea (the way the media portrays) that Aboriginal people can be a little slower when it comes to problem solving	5
There was the odd one or two really didn't respect	2
Unfortunately, it's an Australian thing that cultural breakdown, people say we're not a racist country, well it depends on which side of the fence you're sitting on	6
We all don't drink, we don't all smoke drugs, don't all bludge money, get handouts, this stereotype that all Indigenous people are the same	5
We get told to report it when you say this guys said something racist, it's a big thing, you don't want a big thing, treat you like a snitch or rat, not the way brought up	6

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "I just don't tolerate any of that crap, because it's the kids that come behind me, let him know that wasn't appreciated, I'll stand up for what I believe in but got to protect myself" contained the following utterances:

> *I made it pretty clear and when he did sort of say a few things I really let him know that it wasn't appreciated // I said, 'mate, I thought I left all that stuff back at school. We're in the workplace, we are all bloody adults now'. //*
> *I get to my age and I'm just thinking well, no, I just don't tolerate any of that crap because it's the kids that come behind me // somebody says something on site that's inappropriate. I'll pull them up immediately. I don't have any problems with that // And then go to a supervisor [team leader] and say look mate, I wasn't happy. // I got to protect, so I stand up for my son who is going to have a working career in [company] // I'll stand up for what I believe in, but at the same time. I got to protect myself from my…*

Aboriginal Workers report racism both blatant and indirect on a very regular basis. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) stated: "*I've often heard things that can be offensive or that can*

be…you know that they would have absolutely no understanding as to why that might affect me".

WA6 continues:

> *I sometimes hear comments in a very direct manner and very indirect manner sometimes as well. So it can be things I hear it constantly, every single day so it could be things that people say indirectly, that aren't trying to be but they are very offensive so.*

And WA5 reinforces this:

> *The biggest issue would be…it is hard to think of just one issue. But I guess just like the racist remarks. The indirect remarks that people make because they are just ignorant. They don't have understanding. They…that is a huge issue, because I deal with that constantly.*

What is interesting is the propensity for forgiveness, as can be seen above it is written off to being "ignorant" (WA5) or that they "aren't trying to be but they are very offensive" (WA6). Although racist behaviour in the workplace is illegal and they are encouraged to (and know they should) report it, as one Aboriginal Worker (WA4) states: *"We get told to report it and…talking to the supervisor [team leader] about it and all pulled out in a group…but it was just not the way they were brought up."*

Others have experienced the organisational cultural consequences of as "you're not one of the boys anymore", as WA7 explains it: *"when you say something…and everyone knows you're going to say something. They treat you…everyone treats you like a snitch or a rat or a dog."*

Researcher Comment:

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have recognised the internal systemic/cultural barriers to Aboriginal people succeeding at work. Aboriginal Workers acknowledge the systemic Aboriginal (conflict avoidance, loyalty, consideration of whole of life issues for the perpetrator including consequences) and industry cultural values (isolation of complainant, it's only a joke, I didn't mean you attitudes) that prevent reporting and appropriate handling of these incidents.

Team Leader Matters (dark purple)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around team leaders. This subcategory embraced codes that were regarding the team leader's understanding and behaviour that impacted negatively on working relationships. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 14
- Grounded codes: 11

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.40. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the dark purple coloured codes only.
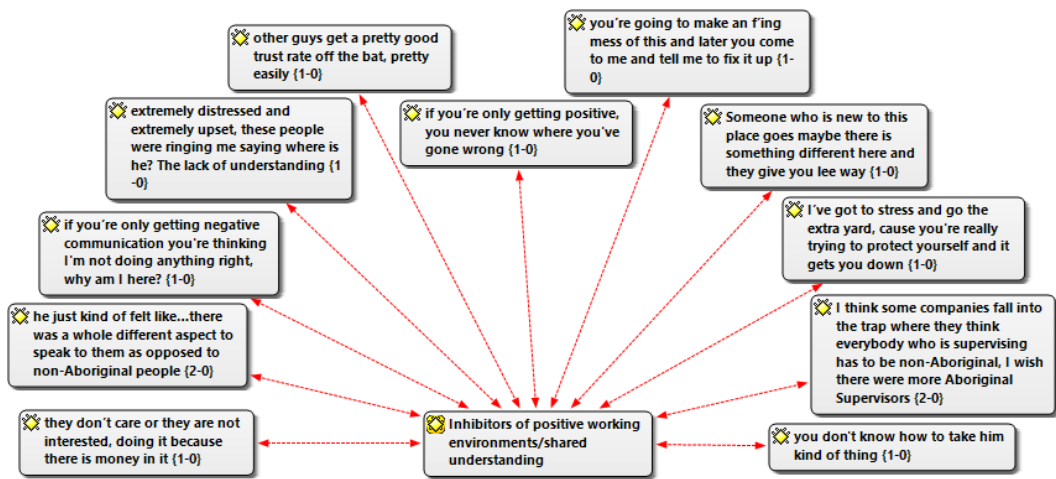
Figure 4.40: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Extremely distressed and extremely upset, these people were ringing me saying where is he? The lack of understanding	1
He just kind of felt like…there was a whole different aspect to speak to them as opposed to non-Aboriginal people	2
If you're only getting negative communication you're thinking I'm not doing anything right, why am I here?	1
If you're only getting positive you never know where you've gone wrong	1

Codes	Grounded
I think some companies fall into the trap where they think everybody who is supervising has to be non-Aboriginal, I wish there were more Aboriginal supervisors [team leaders]	2
I've got to stress and go the extra yard, cause you're really trying to protect yourself and it gets you down	1
Other guys get a pretty good trust rate off the bat really	1
Someone who is new to this place goes maybe there is something different here and they give you lee way	1
They don't care or they are not interested in doing it because there is money in it	1
You don't know how to take him kind of thing	1
You're going to make an f'ing mess of this and later you come to me and tell me to fix it up	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "He just kind of felt like…there was a whole different aspect to speak to them as opposed to non-Aboriginal people" contained the following utterances:

> *Project Manager came up and goes: I have no idea how to talk to the Aboriginal people // he just kind of felt like…there was a whole different aspect to speak to them as opposed to non-Aboriginal people.*

Aboriginal Workers feel they needs to work harder to earn trust and on the job respect/recognition as WA8 says: *"other guys get a pretty good trust rate of the bat, pretty easily."*

WA8 continues:

> *I've got to stress and go the extra yard and say…do you remember, I wrote it down in the diary, I gave that to you? It's right there. Yeah, yeah, well did you tell them I took it? 'Cause I did…those kind of things…mate, you really are trying to protect yourself and there are days where it just gets you down.*

Researcher Comment:

The codes in this subcategory are reflective of the varying experiences of Aboriginal Workers to being managed responses from other hermeneutic units.

Performance Management Matters (yellow)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes of performance management matters. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.41. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the yellow coloured codes only.
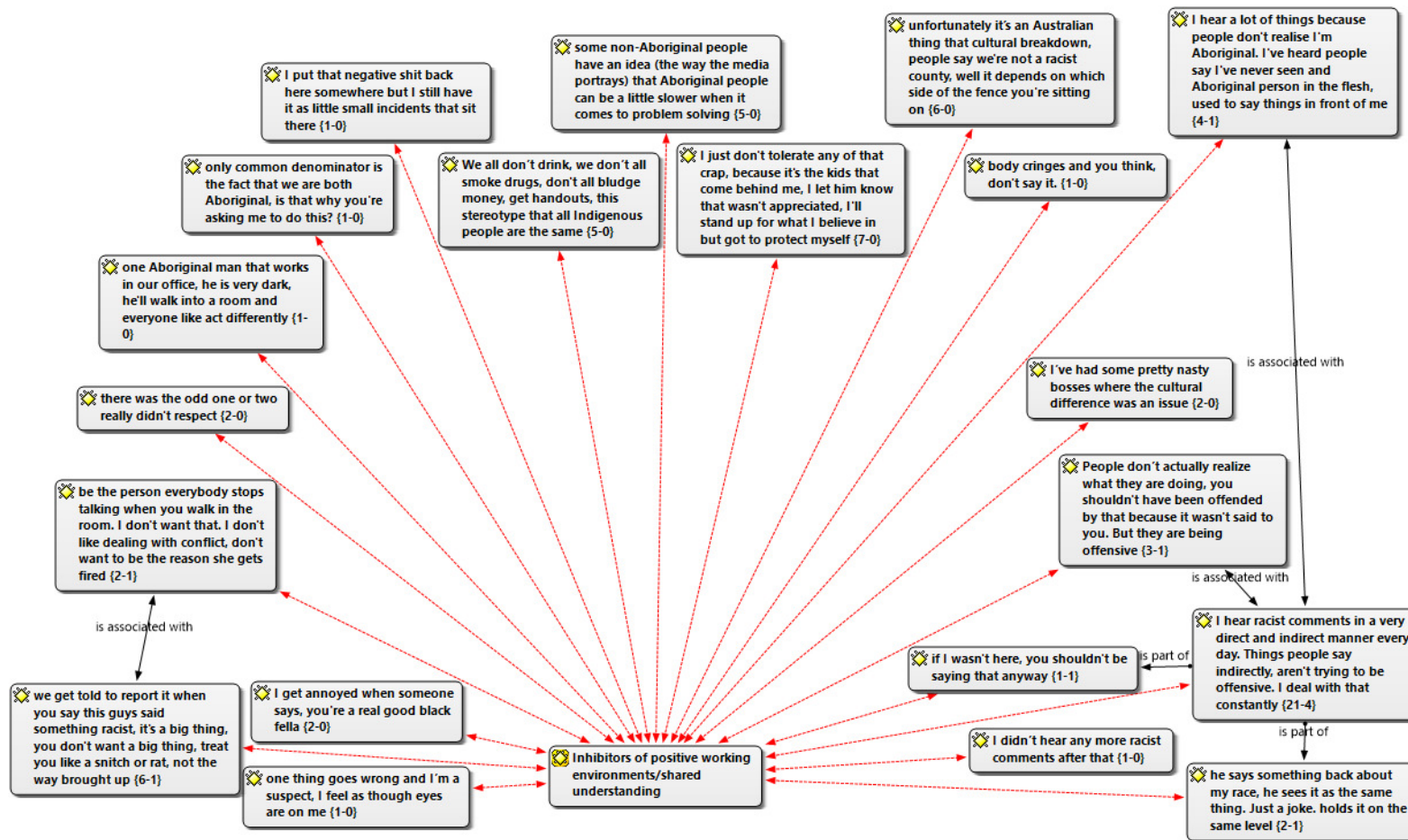

Figure 4.41: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
He said he will come, it might not be in your timeframe, but he will be here and he was	1
I didn't realise that your expectations are very different from mine	1
I'm not seeing you bring it. I'm critical of people who don't deliver. Don't take mediocre, don't suffer fools	2
I've got a certain amount of time is done and I go home. Not to be	1

Codes	Grounded
stressed or worried about	
Some people they think the way to do it is just to point out people's negatives to misdirect the things they are not accomplishing	1
When it's construction, you've got to get things done. There is deadlines. They think there is bigger things to meet. A working industry, not relationship place	6
Whisper of changing of the word or you've said something that adds a little extra, it's destructive in a working relationship	3
You're outperformed by your non-Indigenous peers, in their household things are a lot easier, different	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Whisper of changing of the word or you've said something that adds a little extra, it's destructive in a working relationship" contained the following utterances:

> *they can twist the story to make it suit them and you're not going to get the proper story unless you're actually seeing what's happening. // the little whispers that change. The Chinese whispers in this place [are] horrendous. // whisper of changing of the word, or you've said something that adds a little extra, it's destructive in a working relationship.*

Aboriginal Team Workers are conscious of the perception among their colleagues that getting the job done is the most important thing, as WA7 explains: *"when it's construction, you've got to get things done. You know. There is deadlines and there's bigger…they think that there is bigger things that they have to meet."*

Researcher Comment:

Several of these codes relate to the Aboriginal Workers' expectations at work around performance. This was not noted at all by their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Shame and Confidence (turquoise)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes of shame and confidence being an inhibitor to an Aboriginal person at work. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 8

- Grounded codes: 3

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.42. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the turquoise coloured codes only.

Figure 4.42: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Shame and Confidence Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
I'm the only one in the family that works and I get upset/angry with me brothers just wasting their life	2
They were very shy and they wouldn't speak up. Took myself out of shyness and approached them	4
Whole crowd of people they don't like to be blurting everyone out, put on the spot, get embarrassed and shame kind of thing	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Whole crowd of people they don't like to be blurting everyone out, put on the spot, get embarrassed and shame kind of thing" contained the following utterances:

> *Indigenous people, they don't like to be…they are not really…you know, they don't like blurting everything out. I mean they don't need a, they are not crowd…they don't like to be put on the spot kind of thing like. // whole crowd of people they get embarrassed and shame kind of thing*

The shyness acknowledged by other hermeneutic units is also noted by Aboriginal Workers. As stated by one worker (WA4): *"they were very shy and they wouldn't speak up. If they asked a question, they wouldn't ask a question".*

Researcher Comment:

Observations of shyness are consistent with other hermeneutic units. As with the Aboriginal Team Leaders, the 'shame' element here is experienced by Aboriginal people which, in observation and when described by Aboriginal participants, while it is described as shame is much like the Chinese concept of Guanxi.

Recruitment and Retention System Matters (grey)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes of the systems, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention which become barriers to understanding. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 18
- Grounded codes: 11

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.43. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the grey coloured codes only.

Figure 4.43: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment and Retention System Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
It is not about employment by itself, if that is the space you're playing in, you are kidding yourself	1
It was long days and I think by the afternoon we were a bit loopy	1

Codes	Grounded
I'm going to do the right thing, tick a box then they employ this guy, do the right thing	1
I won't play that game of where are you from? Oh, I don't employ noongars. That hurts and can be disempowering	1
None of this pretence, here is my card, call me, you know	1
No specialised support for it and he is the one that needed the most support, but didn't receive anything	5
Putting up barriers that are not necessary, you created something that is more difficult than helpful, they are going by their policies	2
Some companies actually recruit people because they are friends or family. Nepotism are frowned upon in Aboriginal community	3
They want to recruit somebody, it's not because they want to win a contract, they have a better understanding and want to employ	1
They were sort of playing it down, covering themselves, he didn't mean it, said in this manner, they just don't understand	1
Why give someone false hope? Why not just say there are no future opportunities?	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "No specialised support for it and he is the one that needed the most support, but didn't receive anything" contained the following utterances:

> *the support systems as well is a bit issue // never seen Indigenous Liaison Officer out on site or talking to the Indigenous people. // I don't' think there is a lot of support in that sense. // half of these Indigenous people, they don't get that help // No specialised support for it or anything. And he is the one that probably needed the most support, but he didn't receive anything.*

In addition to valuing the additional support of an Indigenous Liaison Officer or similar role, Aboriginal Workers are conscious of the barriers that internal policies and procedures can create, as on Aboriginal Worker (WA2) said: *"putting up barriers that are not necessary. And it's like well you actually created something that is actually more difficult than helpful."*

Others notice the nepotism in industry and how that is not consistent with their own upbringing/culture, as one Aboriginal Worker (WA2) states:

> *where they put people up into roles because they like them or they are on the same footy team or they do all these things that to me is almost like nepotism big time. Which is things that are frowned upon in the Aboriginal community. It just gets my back up. So when I see these people getting roles, it's like well, how the hell did you get into a role?*

Researcher Comment:

There is a small similarity between the Aboriginal Workers and their non-Aboriginal counterparts in this subcategory around the angst caused by certain people landing a job or being promoted. Both cultures of Team Leaders also noted the issues with policies and procedures identified by Aboriginal Workers.

Relationship Building Matters (olive)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of relationship building and communications. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 21
- Grounded codes: 12

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.44. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the olive coloured codes only.
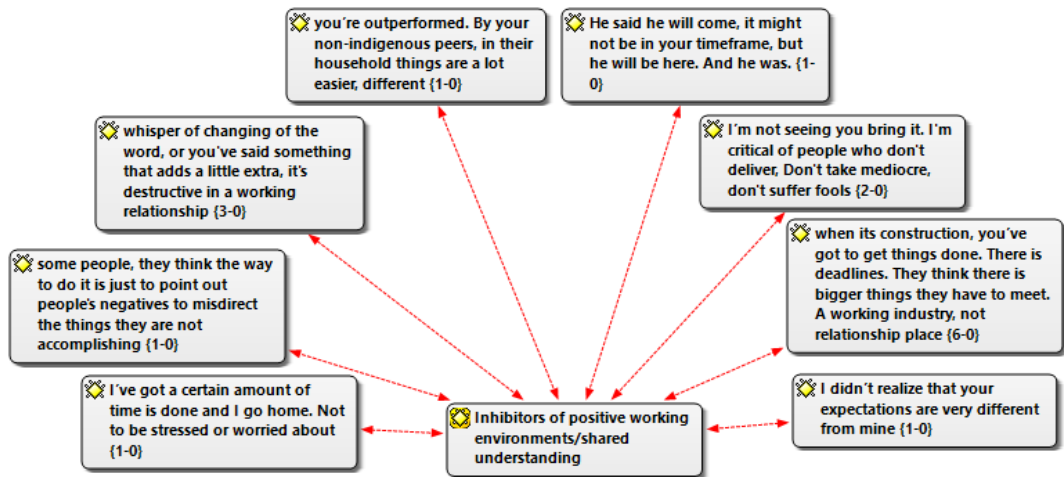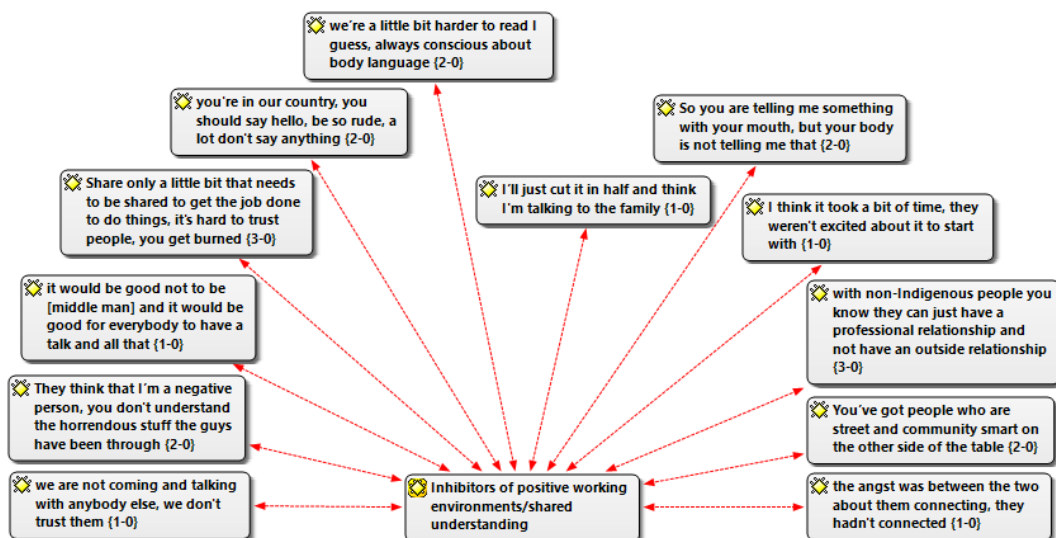
The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
I think it took a bit of time, they weren't excited about it to start with	1
I'll just cut it in half and think I'm talking to the family	1
It would be good not to be (middle man) and it would be good for everybody to have a talk and all that	1
Share only a little bit that needs to be shared to get the job done to do things, it's hard to trust people, you get burned	3
So you are telling me something with your mouth, but your body is not telling me that	2
The angst was between the two about them connecting, they hadn't connected	1
They think that I'm a negative person, you don't understand the horrendous stuff the guys have been through	2
We are not coming and talking with anybody else, we don't trust them	1
We're a little bit harder to read I guess, always conscious about body language	2
With non-Indigenous people you know they can just have a professional relationship and not have an outside relationship	3
You're in our country, you should say hello, be so rude, a lot don't say anything	2
You've got people who are street and community smart on the other side of the table	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Share only a little bit that needs to be shared to get the job done to do things, it's hard to trust people, you get burned" contained the following utterances:

> *Share only a little bit that needs to be shared, to get the job done to do*
> *things. // if you let out too much of who you really are, they might not*

see…they leave yourself open. Wide open to ridicule, criticism…and

someone might not like you. So just get in and get your bloody job done.

// it's hard to trust people. But you get burned.

In addition to difficulties trusting at work, Aboriginal Workers do understand that non-Aboriginal people don't need a relationship outside of work, as one Aboriginal Worker (WA1) observed: *"with non-Indigenous people you know they can just have a professional relationship with their manager or their people and not have an outside sort of relationship".*

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Workers agree with the other three hermeneutic units that trust is a barrier in terms of creating relationships. Language as a barrier is also consistent with Aboriginal Team Leaders' responses. However, the Aboriginal Workers focus particularly on their strong use of body language over formal language, with this not as prevalent in their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The importance of consistency of relationship within and outside of work is highlighted by the Aboriginal Workers.

Cultural Matters (green)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes of culture. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 13
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.45. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the green coloured codes only.
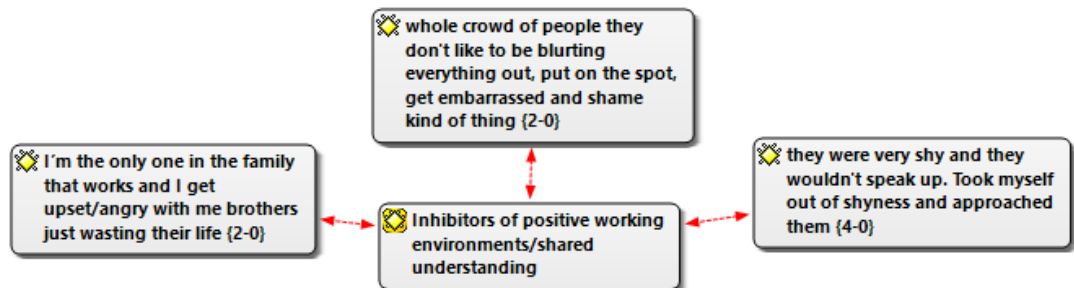
Figure 4.45: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A lot of our family it's all broken now, nobody took on the tradition	1
Giving and borrowing and lending affected a lot of our families, we do allow less of it, modern life	1
Giving was something that some guys I've come into contact with here's used to. What I've been brought up with	1
It is very different in different groups, different rules, laws	3
They will stay there because that is where they were born, that is where they feel more comfortable I guess	1
They've got culture. A lot of the Islanders, they've got culture. If you've got culture then they understand. A lot of whitefellas don't have culture	3
Up there there is people from Eastern States, Ireland, England and everywhere, didn't know who they were and what they were about	1
You don't ask, you don't borrow, you don't lend, you stand on your own two feet and you've got a job and make money. Non-Aboriginal you take care of you	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "It is very different in different groups, different rules, laws" contained the following utterances:

we're Sou Westerners…I found out different when I work like with the North people and they're pretty shy and they don't really get on // it is very different in different groups. There is different rules, different laws, different…it is different all over…like everywhere // How we go about it is a little different.

Aboriginal Workers perceive white-people don't have culture, as one Aboriginal Worker (WA4) put it: *"the Whadjullas don't have the culture and they don't have the…".*

However, as was expressed by Aboriginal Team Leaders, WA4 notes the "broken" nature of their family.

Researcher Comment:

As with Aboriginal Team Leaders, Aboriginal Workers are conscious of the diversity of their cultures and implications on the workplace. Aboriginal Workers are also cognisant of their obligation and reciprocal culture being different to that of non-Aboriginal people.

Conflict Management (pink)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes of conflict management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 24
- Grounded codes: 5

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.46. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the white coloured codes only.
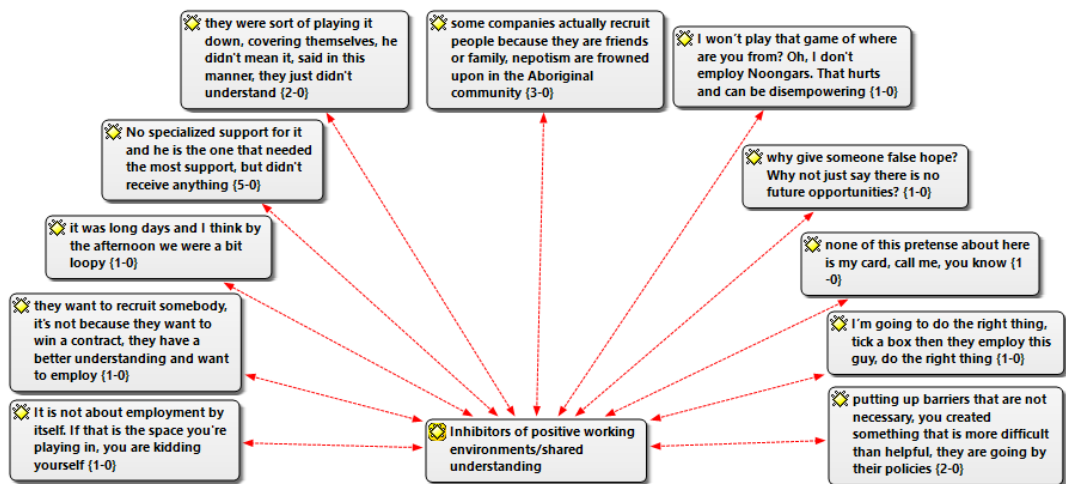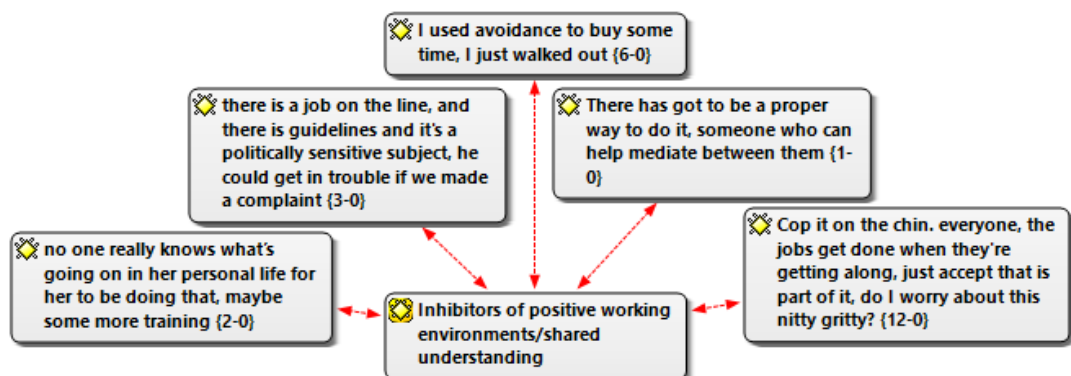

Figure 4.46: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Conflict Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Cop it on the chin. Everyone, the jobs get done when they're getting along, just accept that is part of it, do I worry about this nitty gritty	12
I used avoidance to buy some time, I just walked out	6
No one really knows what's going on in her personal life for her to be doing that, maybe some more training	2
There has got to be a proper way to do it, someone who can help mediate between them	1
There is a job on the line and there is guidelines and it's a politically sensitive subject, he could get in trouble if we made a complaint	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "I used avoidance to buy some time, I just walked out" contained the following utterances:

> *I played that one was that I spent time just saying yes, yes, well give it to me I'll do it and then just politely forgetting to do it. To the point where they couldn't let it go on and on and on, so they then decided that they needed to resolve it // I used avoidance to buy some time. // you just avoid them // I just walked out I said…I thought I'll just wait for him to come here …just waited for him outside and I just said what did you say that for mate? // Don't talk down to them // Before I…I used to just grab my gear and just walk away.*

As can be seen from the above commentary, an element of conflict avoidance is expressed within the Aboriginal Worker group: it appears that there is a very strong preference just to "cop it on the chin" and get on with the job. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA7) commented:

> *Cop it on the chin and sort of work with them. But everyone, the jobs get done and everyone has a good old time when they're getting along. If you just accept that is part of it, everyone is happy. The boss is happy because work is getting done. Everyone is happy but…yeah…*

Researcher Comment:

As with the Aboriginal Team Leaders conflict avoidance or ignoring conflict is reflected in the Aboriginal Worker responses.

Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment (orange)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with themes around organisational culture, systems and commitment. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 50
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.47. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the orange coloured codes only.
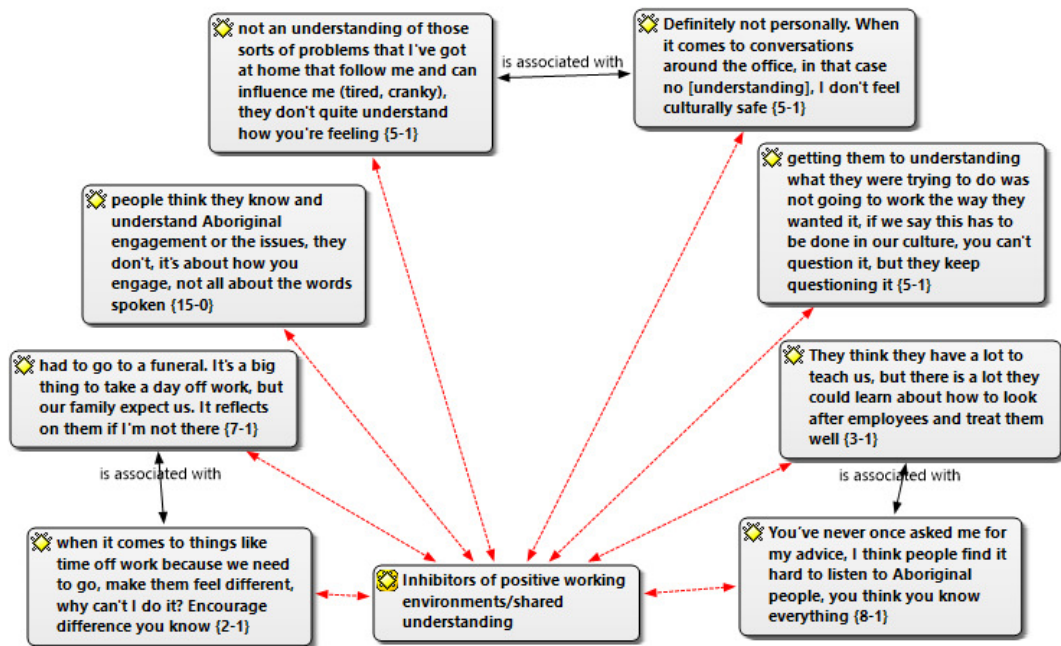
Figure 4.47: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Definitely not personally. When it comes to conversations around the office, in that case no [understanding], I don't feel culturally safe	5
Getting them to understanding what they were trying to do was not	5

Codes	Grounded
going to work the way they wanted it, if we say this has to be done in our culture, you can't question it, but they keep questioning it	
Had to go to a funeral. It's a big thing to take a day off work, but our family expects us. It reflects on them if I'm not there	7
Not an understanding of those sorts of problems that I've got at home that follow me and can influence me (tired, cranky), they don't quite understand how you're feeling	5
People think they know and understand Aboriginal engagement or the issues, they don't, it's about how you engage, not all the words spoken	15
They think they have a lot to teach us, but there is a lot they could learn about how to look after employees and treat them well	3
When it comes to things like time off work because we need to go, make them feel different, why can't I do it? Encourage difference you know	2
You've never once asked me for my advice, I think people find it hard to listen to Aboriginal people, you think you know everything	8

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "You've never once asked me for my advice, I think people find it hard to listen to Aboriginal people, you think you know everything" contained the following utterances:

> *I've said there is things that drive me crazy about what I'm doing or people aren't listening // Slowing him, slowing one person down to say you know what, your solutions and your answers aren't always the right one // You've never once asked me for my advice. You've never once asked me to any of your meetings. You think you know everything // I think people find it really hard to listen to Aboriginal people // I've been to meetings where I've said things and people just go…you know…oh ok she said something. And then afterwards, someone else will say exactly the same thing and they go oh that's a brilliant idea. // it's just they should ask me // ask me before they put a complaint in, instead of me getting a phone call about it on R&R. // To my explanation as to why it is important or anything like that. Whereas the*

others did. That is why we enjoyed it. Whereas she wouldn't really leave her

bubble

Aboriginal Workers observe a definite problem with organisations perceiving they understand how to engage Aboriginal people. They acknowledge it is more complex than most realise and how the engagement is undertaken is very important. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA2) explained:

They really don't understand. They don't understand the issues. They don't

understand what um…they talk and say they understand Aboriginal

engagement, but they don't.

Organisational culture and systems around leave for funerals was noted as another significant issue for Aboriginal Workers (WA3), as one states:

Being aware there is a bit of a cultural difference to start with like, obviously

like a funeral or something it is going to be a lot different you could lose

them for a week or something or if there's a cultural thing they need to be

aware of.

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Workers seem frustrated at the poor implementation of Aboriginal engagement. They feel a lack of understanding of their culture and what that requires as well as a lack of understanding of how complex their lives are outside of the workplace. However, they feel they could add more value to the business to assist in improving systems to manage these matters, however believe they are not invited to contribute their ideas or to teach others. Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge also the 'different reality' for Aboriginal people. Although Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge Aboriginal engagement takes more time, the complexity of it is not recognised within these findings.

Team Influence (light purple)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team influence. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.48. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.38, showing the light purple coloured codes only.
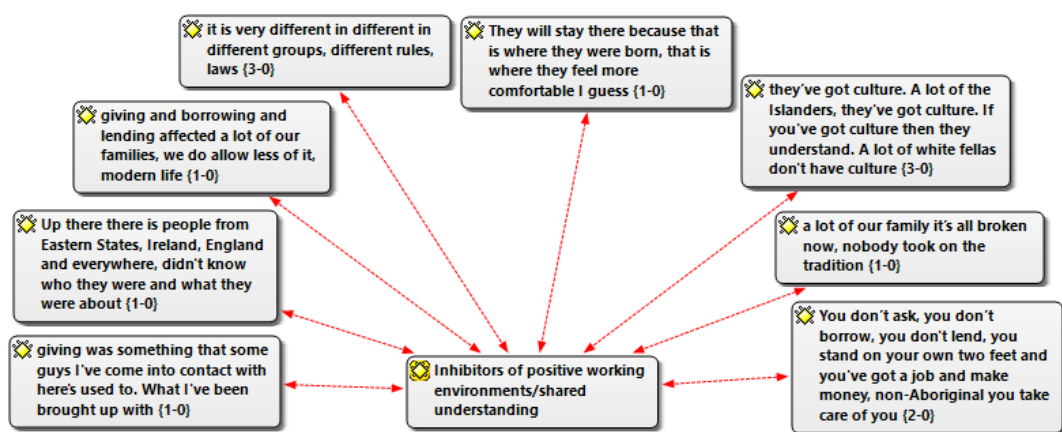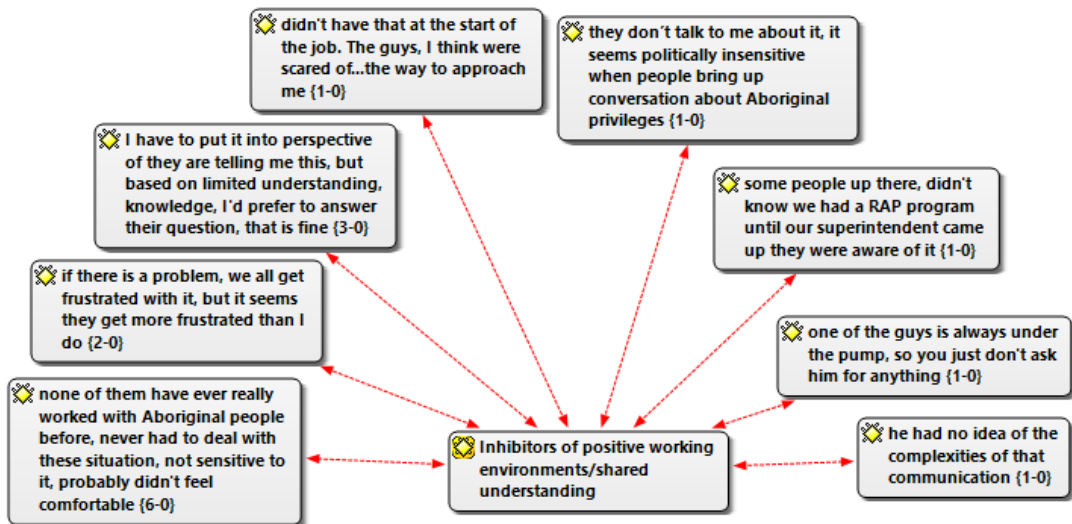

Figure 4.48: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Influence Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Didn't have that at the start of the job. The guys, I think were scared of…the way to approach me	1
He had no idea of the complexities of that communication	1
I have to put it into perspective of they are telling me this, but based on limited understanding, knowledge, I'd prefer to answer their question, that is fine	3
If there is a problem we all get frustrated with it, but it seems they get more frustrated than I do	2
None of them have ever really worked with Aboriginal people before, never had to deal with these situations, not sensitive to it, probably didn't feel comfortable	6
One of the guys is always under the pump, so you just don't ask him for anything	1
Some people up there, didn't know we had a RAP program until our superintendent came up they were aware of it	1

Codes	Grounded
They don't' talk to me about it, it seems politically insensitive when people bring up conversation about Aboriginal privileges	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "None of them have ever really worked with Aboriginal people before, never had to deal with these situations, not sensitive to it, probably didn't feel comfortable" contained the following utterances:

> *they are all non-Aboriginal // I'm only…there is myself and one other person in the whole office of about 65 people // they probably didn't feel very comfortable in some cases, because they didn't know any of the people that we were visiting in the communities // none of them have ever really worked with Aboriginal people before. They've never really had to deal with these sorts of situation so…they are just not sensitive to it. // Most of them have never worked with Aboriginal people // they haven't interacted with Aboriginal people*

Although feeling isolated due to their colleagues' lack of experience in dealing with their culture, there is a willingness to answer questions and educate their peers. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) explains: *"you know they just don't understand but…for…it can be frustrating, but I'd prefer to answer their question for them than not. That is fine."*

Researcher Comment:

Themes around frustration with their teams' lack of understanding are unique to Aboriginal Workers.

4.3.3   Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of Factors creating positive regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 65
- Grounded codes: 18

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.49.

if you walked in on him saying that what is he saying about us, even guys in the field were angry {2-0}

I don't mind the people who don't understand and will actually profess to that {2-0}

I would rather someone new to the game, who is going to come with fresh ideology {2-0}

you've stuffed up, instead of yelling he will show you how fix the mistake, professionally something I can work on and come back better {4-0}

always good when you're with a trusted person, a friend, pull them up on it....hearing the N word is never good, respect each other {6-0}

he always had an open door policy, a very open person, more approachable, has a laugh {6-0}

relationship...the first thing is the relationship between me and the team leader and understanding of me (where I want to go) {6-0}

always made sure that everyone was part of the team, knew where everyone was, kept everyone on the same page {5-0}

his understanding of the importance of my family and that if something happens I'm the most responsible person to go and deal with issues {6-0}

Feeling trusted, when they give you some responsibility. Makes a big different on how I perceive myself {6-0}

When something is not going well, he will defend us, with evidence will back you 100% {3-0}

Somebody who actually values the input that people bring {2-0}

blow up with him last week, spoke to him this morning like nothing had happened {1-0}

I don't like doing it. I can't come forward and say I've done this, but if someone else can on my behalf, then I like that {1-1}

he's different than a lot of bosses, come across with an understanding that there is a difference {2-1}

is associated with

there is just a connection that he has really good people skills, he get it. its very rare {2-1}

Factors creating positive regard for team or leader

not just from what they are saying, seeing for yourself what is happening {1-0}

is associated with

when something goes well he praises everybody, gives everyone feedback, should do it more often, given me a loose rein {8-1}

Figure 4.49: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

The grounded codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Always good when you're with a trusted person, a friend, pull them up on it. Hearing the N word is never good, respect each other	6
Always made sure that everyone was part of the team, knew where everyone was, kept everyone on the same page	5
Blow up with him last week, spoke to him this morning like nothing had happened	1
Feeling trusted, when they give you some responsibility. Makes a big different on how I perceive myself	6
He always had an open door policy, a very open person, more approachable, has a laugh	6
He's different than a lot of bosses, come across with an understanding that there is a difference	2
His understanding of the importance of my family and that if something happens I'm the most responsible person to go an deal with issues	6
I don't like doing it. I can't come forward and say I've done this, but if some else can on my behalf then I like that	1
I don't mind the people who don't understand and will actually profess to that	2
I would rather someone new to the game, who is going to come with fresh ideology	2
If you walked in on him saying that what is he saying about us, even guys in the field were angry	1
Not just from what they are saying, see for yourself what is happening	1
Relationship…the first thing is the relationship between me and the team leader and understanding of me (where I want to go)	6
Somebody who actually values the input that people bring	2
There is just a connection that he has really good people skills, he get it, it's very rare	2
When something goes well he praises everybody, gives everyone feedback, should do it more often, given me a loos rein	8

Codes	Grounded
When something is not going well, he will defend us, with evidence will back you 100%	3
You've stuffed up, instead of yelling he will show you how fix the mistake, professionally something I can work on and come back better	4

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "When something goes well he praises everybody, gives everyone feedback, should do it more often, given me a loos rein" contained the following utterances:

> *He would always let you know like when you've done like good // He didn't really…he didn't really think of himself as like a team…I mean you knew he was the manager, but he wasn't like strict. As much as any other manager would be. Because he knew the job was done or was getting done // I get a lot of positive feedback from them // I get my job done. He gives me positive feedback when I need to hear it…he sort of lets me on a bit of a loose rein. Doesn't really monitor everything that I do so…you know…it works well for both of us // he does give feedback, he does. But probably not…he probably should do it more often // when something goes well he praises everybody. He encourages everyone. Gives everyone feedback // When he mentions me…when he says to the big boss in meetings, oh yesterday [name] completed that work yesterday you know. He actually went in and he done a good job. And I observed him. // When he praises me you know he done that and that sort of thing.*

Aboriginal Workers talk about the importance of the relationship with their team leader and feeling trusted. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA6) states: *"He would probably trust me to do more work. He would probably give me bigger jobs to do because he would know that I am capable of them instead of just having this idea of me".*

WA7 emphasised the importance of trust and its impact on their self-esteem: *"Feeling trusted yeah. When they give you some responsibility…that's makes a big difference to myself and how I perceive myself."*

The other thing Aboriginal Workers value is their team or team leader defending them or their work. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA5) states: *"even [mate's name]*

got stuck into her and said: hey you can't talk like that because there is people here who will take offence to it."

Researcher Comment:

The data indicate similar findings to those expressed in the Aboriginal Team Leaders' views as to what constitutes a good leader which is one who can quietly pull you up on performance and speaks with respect and will defend you or your work. There appears to be recurring themes throughout the four hermeneutic units of trust, being supportive, being open and approachable, and respect.

4.3.4   Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating negative regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 29
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.50.

The grounded codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Australian bosses have an attitude of you're all the same, pain youse all with the same brush	2
Bit of competitive spirit that happens, sometimes it's good, but hasn't been a good thing in our crew	1
Construction managers that have 100s of employees, they are not going to listen	2
Dictating every part of that and then I have to be the person who goes and asks/presents	2
Every time change o guard, you have to prove yourself all over again	2
He doesn't always communicate well, directly say or give direction and things like that	2
I don't trust/respect someone, didn't like them then I wouldn't want to be working with them or around them. Hard to be motivated with people you don't trust	4

Codes	Grounded
I think poorly of my team where guys create their own little groups, or when he favours some, feels like school yard crap going on here	2
I would have like that someone/my manager had said something. I was very angry, I won't put up with this crap	2
If things didn't work out from the start, first time I met him, it wasn't going to work out at all	1
Just pull them aside and talk to them one on one instead of like a whole group	3
Last thing I want is someone who has been bought up just run blackfellas down the whole time. I don't want to work with a boss like that	2
My manager was one of the people who didn't want to do it	1
Never been asked where do you want to go from here, career wise or anything, or support with my studies	2
They never like him after that because it was just a bad thing to say you know.	1
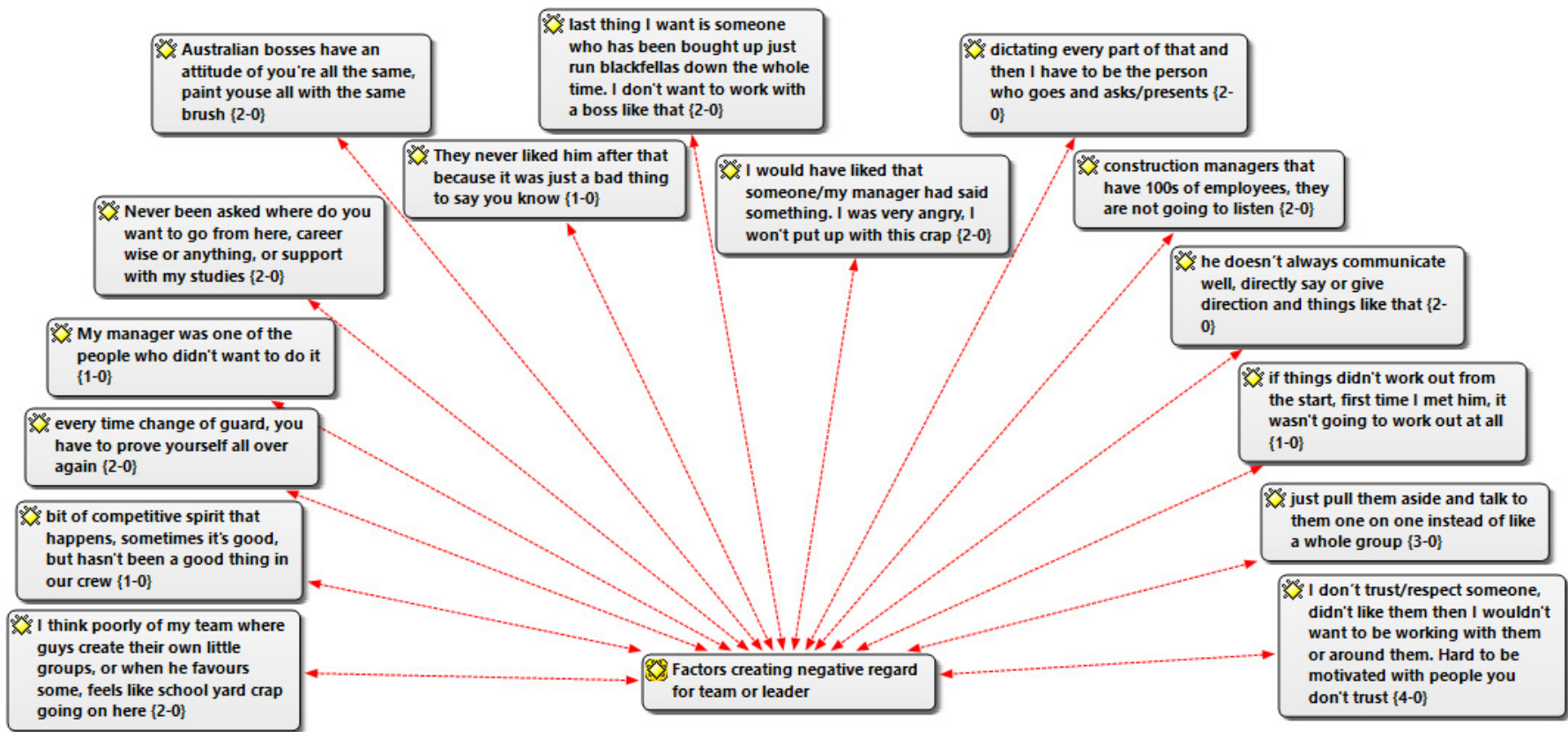
Figure 4.50: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "I don't trust/respect someone, didn't like them then I wouldn't want to be working with them or around them. Hard to be motivated with people you don't trust" contained the following utterances:

> *I just left. I just couldn't do… // I just lost respect for him. For working for him. // I don't trust someone, I sort of don't, I wouldn't like…and if I didn't like them then I wouldn't want to be working with them. Or around them. So and it is hard to sort of be motivated as well with people that you don't like or trust // I guess not respecting people. Respecting their boundaries, respecting them as a person…I don't know…*

Aboriginal Workers find it difficult to work with someone they do not trust or respect. Part of this is the Team Leader's ability to pull them aside, instead of addressing their performance in front of the broader group. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA2) says:

> *Are they actually chastising them in front of the group? If they are doing all these sorts of things it's like seriously, you do not understand. These things are things that we don't talk about but if you understand Aboriginal people or Aboriginal culture, these are major pho pars*

They also speak about leaders who have been raised to "run blackfellas down the whole time". As WA7 states:

> *the last thing I want is someone who has been brought up by that Dad or mum who has sat at the table and just run blackfellas down their whole life and then bought their kid up to feel exactly the same way, you know. I don't want to work with a boss like that.*

Researcher Comment:

As with Aboriginal Team Leaders, Aboriginal Workers focus very much on their relationship with their leader and the team with key themes of trust, respect and communication. The commentary around Australian bosses/bosses raise to "run blackfellas down" is consistent with the preference shared in the previous category around preferences for Team Leaders not from here with a "new ideology".

4.3.5 Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.51. The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Having someone to talk, obviously a lot of Indigenous don't want to go up and like have a centre person to go with	1
He can come and ask me and I felt that as a privilege, not disadvantage nor offence. Thanks for the honour because you feel you can ask me for something	3
I'd love to see more of our culture in the workforce instead of on the streets	1
Done deliberately because I wanted them to have that experience as men together	1
It needs to be dealt with. Discussed with the whole family. Not just one person, everyone has a say	1
More so because he had been given something this man spent time carving	1
Our people are starting looking more into the future. It was just day to day living. If you had something someone needed, you'd do it	2
Our people are very good at reading body language, part of our culture	3
Please don't go, you're our glue, you are putting me under pressure	1
The Aboriginal man who is a senior law-man brought a gift, he came with a sense of hope	2
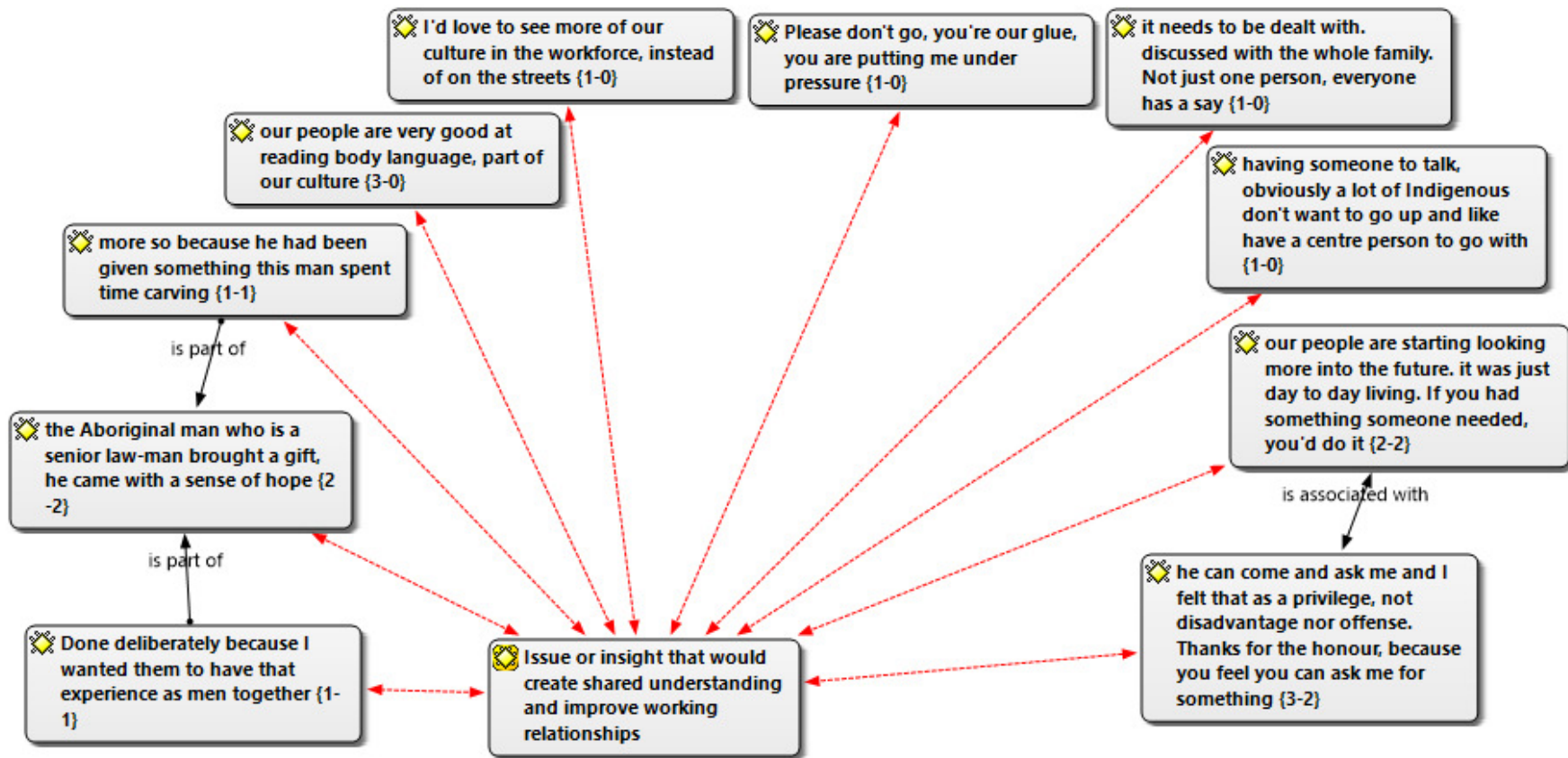
Figure 4.51: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Our people are very good at reading body language, part of our culture" contained the following utterances:

> *Body language is a big one // with our body languages and what not // If you are upset with someone else…it's quite easy to see that with the other guys. You can tell that they are really angry towards you or…whatever reason it's happened. Our people are very good at reading body language. It's part of our culture that we've had for so many thousands of years. When you stick something out that they don't see it as being obvious, we do.*

Aboriginal Workers discussed the issue of asking favours/borrowing and how this is a privilege and sign of trust from your colleague. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA8) states:

He can come and ask me, and I felt that as a privilege, not a disadvantage. I saw it as something well, thanks for the honour, because that…you obviously feel that you can ask me for something and that is what I…from a friend.

However, it is also acknowledged by WA8 that even the Aboriginal culture is changing:

> *A lot of our people are starting looking to more into the future with their super and their banks and plans and buying homes and things like that but…it was just a day to day, week by week living sort of thing and if you had something that someone else needed, you'd do it.*

Researcher Comment:

The Aboriginal Workers are highlighting unfamiliar (from a Western perspective) sharing practice of Aboriginal culture as well as their own strong use of body language in communications making them highly sensitive to the body language of their peers.

4.3.6 Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that prevent shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 38
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.52. The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Brought up with people that weren't even, didn't even know her culture, the background behind it, some cultures are dying, younger generation don't worry about culture	3
Didn't have a proper night's sleep something hanging around, I could talk to them. I can't say that to a non-Indigenous person	2
Diversity of our…of all our groups and how differently but similarly we look at things	2
Here there are four language groups, you are not allowed to talk to certain people, talk over them, sign of disrespect to look somebody in the eye, simple to explain	2
I feel more comfortable talking to Aboriginal people, the way we talk to each other, interact, is all about building relationships, blackfellas know how to talk to you	5
It was pretty sad that you leave your fellow man or relative and you're not making contact and they don't feel right and cannot ask you for a loan	1
Political stuff, gets people angry about stuff in the general sense, then it stems its way to the small people on the ground	2
They always made sure that I'm safe in the workplace, that made me feel and that is why I said maybe he is looking at the jokes as a normal joke	6
They are embarrassed and they would rather go without than to swallow a bit of their pride	1
This is somebody's land, native land, so you're going to have to look after it, respect it, you don't know, think back there was ancestors here before we were here	2
We are like, there is so much we can give you and tell you, but we can't tell you everything	1
We've got a livelihood we just go, no worries mate, if you think what you want, I'm here for my family	4

Codes	Grounded
When I drive up the road there I feel like I can hear laughter…may Dad said well, as long as they were laughing	1
When I got up there I just has goose bumps over me, the place is filled with anger and all kinds of different emotions	2
You're in the wrong country, if there is stuff there, don't touch it, don't go near it you might get in trouble/sick, but I have to work here	4

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "They always made sure that I'm safe in the workplace, that made me feel and that is why I said maybe he is looking at the jokes as a normal joke" contained the following utterances:

they wouldn't even be meaning…meaning to be rude // They didn't realise that it was as offensive as it was. Because they were offending each other on things that I thought was offensive as well. They were offending each other about…like one guy said something to this other guy about his wife, you know. And I thought well that's a bit offensive, but they took it as a joke. // Although they called me some nasty names. If I wasn't latched up properly on a harness. If I wasn't attached 100% hook up or stuff. They would actually come up and say no, do it this way. Being more experienced. They always made sure that I was safe. In the workplace. // They always made sure that I'm safe in the workplace, being a trainee, they always made sure that I was working safe and they would stop the job and make sure that I was working safe. So that made me feel. It makes me feel like…you know…and that is why I said that maybe he is looking at the jokes that he says to me as a normal joke because he treated…at the end of the day he kind of treated me the same as he treated non-Aboriginal people. // That is where I'm weighing up prioritise. Like should I…what am I more worried about? Being safe at work? Making a big thing out of…what if I was to kick up? Start a big…you know get someone sacked and this was…he would have saved me. He would have saved me if I was doing something dangerous and I got him sacked because he called me something. Because he called me something that maybe he wasn't aware of…or maybe he was. // should I get

> *him sacked over that? I mean should I get him sacked and he made sure*
>
> *that I went home to my kids at night? That is what I weigh up.*

The themes in this category are around the conflict an Aboriginal person experiences in reporting racism as well as awareness of the substantial cultural differences between them and their non-Aboriginal colleagues. As one Aboriginal Worker (WA7) states:

> *if we didn't have a proper night's sleep and we thought that there was*
>
> *something hanging around…that I could talk to them. I could say you know*
>
> *what? I think I got a visit last night. I think…because around Christmas time*
>
> *could have been law time. I see some old fellas come through. They*
>
> *understand that. I can't say to a non-Indigenous person, oh, I didn't get my*
>
> *sleep last night because there was spirits walking through my…I felt there*
>
> *was a spirit walking through my room last night. They mightn't understand*
>
> *it. But the Aboriginal group that I was with could understand that.*

WA7 talks about simply being more comfortable with other Aboriginal people, as he explains:

> *blackfellas have a…they know how to talk to you, you know. They know how*
>
> *to get along with you and the first thing we do is talk about our family. That*
>
> *is…we all sat together because we all kind of knew one another.*

Another Aboriginal Worker (WA4) explains it as:

> *"I don't know if the Whadjullas are the same, I said but I feel myself, I feel*
>
> *more comfortable if I'm talking to another Indigenous person"*

Researcher Comment:

The phenomenon of Aboriginal people being more comfortable talking to other Aboriginal people has been observed in all hermeneutic units. Aboriginal Workers explain this in terms of spirituality, but also that it is based on the understanding that the personal relationship must come before anything else.

diversity of our..of all our groups and how differently but similarly we look at things {2-1}

it was pretty sad that you leave your fellow man or relative and you're not making contact and they don't feel right and cannot ask you for a loan {1-1}

We are like, there is so much we can give you and tell you, but we can't tell you everything {1-0}

brought up with people that weren't even, didn't even know her culture, the background behind it, some cultures are dying, younger generation don't worry about culture {3-0}

is associated with

here there are four language groups, you are not allowed to talk to certain people, talk over them, sign of disrespect to look somebody in the eye, simple to explain {2-1}

is associated with

didn't have a proper night's sleep something hanging around, I could talk to them. I can't say that to a non-Indigeneous person {2-1}

is associated with

I feel more comfortable talking to Aboriginal people, the way we talk to each other, interact, is all about building relationships, blackfellas know how to talk to you {5-0}

They are embarrassed and they would rather go without than to swallow a bit of their pride {1-1}

you're in the wrong country, if there is stuff there, don't touch it, don't go near it you might get in trouble/sick, but I have to work here {4-1}

we've got a livelihood we just go, no worries mate, if you think what you want, I'm here for my family {4-1}

is associated with

this is somebody's land, native land, so you're going to have to look after it, respect it, you don't know, think back there was ancestors here before we were here {2-0}

They always made sure that I'm safe in the workplace, that made me feel and that is why I said maybe he is looking at the jokes as a normal joke {6-1}

When I drive up the road there I feel like I can hear laughters...my Dad said well, as long as they were laughing {1-1}

is associated with

Political stuff, gets people angry about stuff in the general sense, then it stems its way to the small people on the ground {2-0}

Issue or insight that would prevent shared understanding and improve working relationships

**When I got up there I just had goosebumps over me, the place is filled with anger and all kinds of different emotions {2-1}**

Figure 4.52: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

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4.4   Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders

This hermeneutic unit of Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders comprised the 15 non-Aboriginal people interviewed who had staff. This hermeneutic unit was chosen to reflect the world view of the majority 'of Australians' working within the civil construction sector who supervise employees. These people hold leadership roles within their organisations and theoretically have a key role in terms of creating shared understanding within their teams. The number of people each person manages can vary from a few to a few hundred. They are usually quite experienced in the civil construction industry, although not always with substantial experience in the Western Australian civil construction industry, as the industry employs experienced staff from global sources from time to time.

This diversity of cultural background within this hermeneutic unit, showed an observed (albeit unexplored for the purposes of this research) difference in attitudes towards Aboriginal people between Australian born and raised participants and those not born and raised in Australia. Some of these differences are observed in terms of conflicting utterances. This however, will be a matter which requires further research.

Within this hermeneutic unit, there were:

- In vivo codes: 585
- Grounded codes: 237

The most grounded codes are:

Codes	Grounded
No difference, deal with them like any other person, same expectations and boundaries	17
Treat everyone like a team: equal, fairly, respectfully on basis of culture	13
Team respect hard work, performance attitude (leads to acceptance)	12
Persisted too long before performance managing Aboriginal employee – manager felt couldn't (like a disease)	12
Mutual respect of others ideas, culture, no difference in cultures if there is respect	11
Cultural awareness training to be mindful and respectful helped	11

Codes	Grounded
Frank, open, honest upfront discussion about the job, expectations and environment	11
Be genuine to develop trust and relationship	11
Understand their background, values, history, what drives a person for their future	10
Building a relationship feel comfortable having a chat/giving feedback	10

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Building a relationship feel comfortable having a chat/giving feedback" contains the following utterances:

> *The most important things is relationship building // don't treat it like a transaction. It's actually working on just the relationships, understanding their constraints. Understanding all their internal cultural politics and seeing where you can fit into it // friendship and sort of working relationship as well and the great part about it was I've been instilling into my project managers…one of my project managers to try to develop his understanding of Aboriginal engagement. // friendship and sort of working relationship as well and the great part about it was I've been instilling into my project managers…one of my project managers to try to develop his understanding of Aboriginal engagement. // building a relationship with the guys so that they can feel comfortable in having a chat, and what can we do better? Getting some feedback from them // ongoing and regular feedback, catch-ups, like those informal chats, so I'd say when you said relationships…to me it's all around relationships. And those relationships to me are built on the communication // go out on site, you have that dialogue you have a bit of a jovial laugh and you kind of get feedback and that I've found…you know that they have built a level of comfort with yourself and they feel comfortable // so I go from there and ask them if they're married or where they live and then follow that queue, so we just go deeper and deeper into it that way and then every time I see them, I'd give them the thumbs up or a wave or whatever. If they're sitting in the thing by themselves, I go over and have a chat with them // sit with them and have a chat // how could they*

work with me better? I don't know really…probably…the more

communication you give the guys, the better feedback you get and the

better you work together. Sometimes we are not the best at this. So things

we could do better is be more…give more feedback about you know targets,

and how we are going and where we are heading and…

As per the process described in the Introduction of this chapter, these codes were divided into categories and then subcategories where appropriate. This section will proceed to discuss the more detailed findings from the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders by each of the six categories.

4.4.1 Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Enablers")

Within the category of Enablers, there were:

- In vivo codes: 321
- Grounded codes: 102

The grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.53.
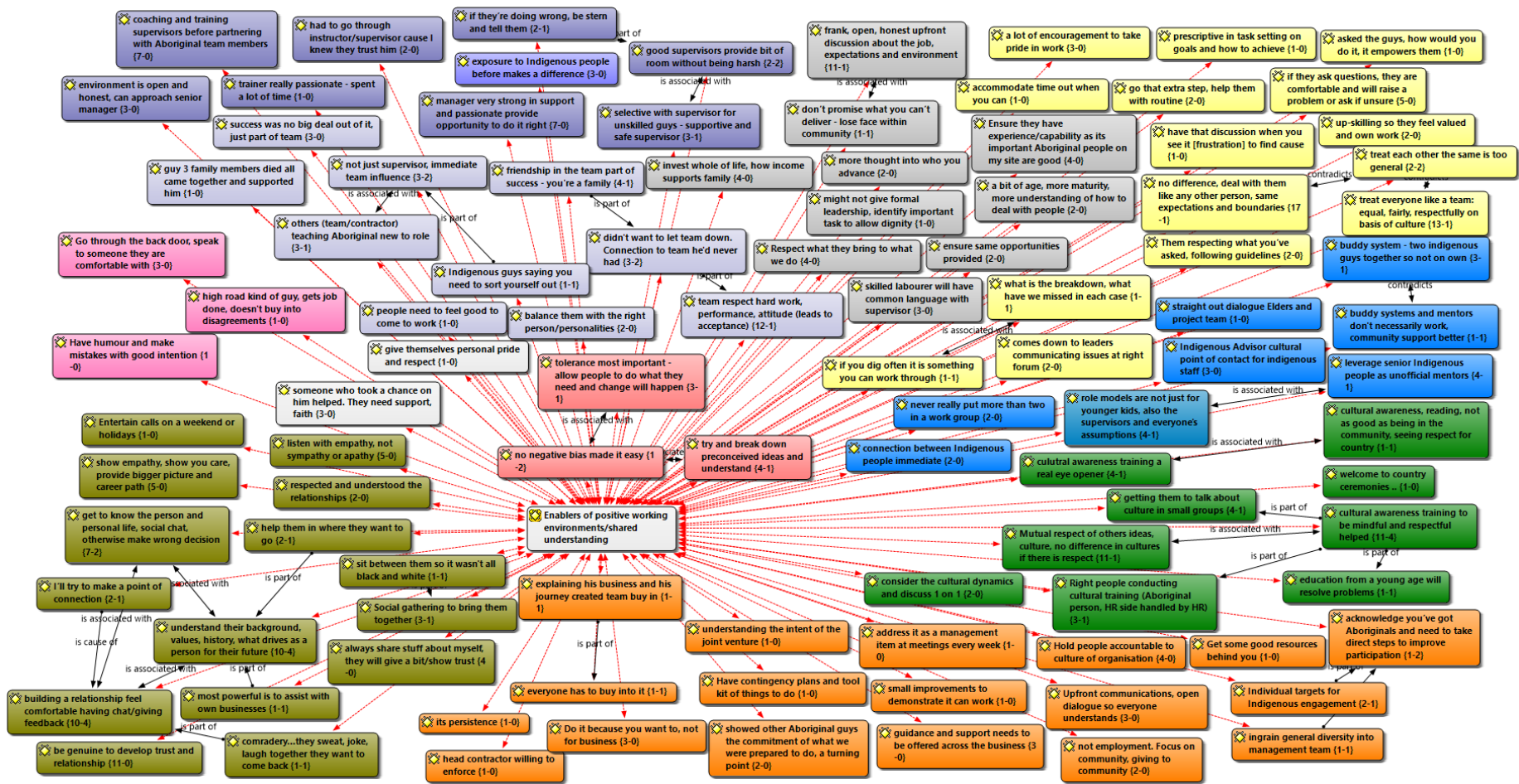
Figure 4.53: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Enablers

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for discussion:

- Racism and tolerance (red)
- Team leader matters (dark purple)
- Team influence (light purple)
- Recruitment, retention and advancement (grey)
- Goal setting and performance management (yellow)
- Mentors, buddies and role models (blue)
- Cultural awareness (green)
- Organisational culture and systems, commitment (orange)
- Relationships, understanding each other's backgrounds (olive)
- Conflict management (pink)
- Self-respect/pride (white)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored detailing codes and grounding.

Racism and Tolerance(red)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around racism and tolerance. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 8
- Grounded codes: 3

These grounded codes are detailed in Figure 4.54. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the red coloured codes only.

Figure 4.54: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism and Tolerance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Tolerance most important – allow people to do what they need and change will happen	3
Try and break down preconceived ideas and understand	4
No negative bias made it easy	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "try to break down preconceived ideas and understand" contained the following utterances:

> *The labourers, the operators, is to educate them to a degree. So that they understand, well Ok, there may be reasons why so and so didn't come in. And it's not just because he's lazy. He's chucking a sickie. It's getting an understanding that there could be other reasons why. I think some guys go off…if you didn't come in, maybe I should just not come in today. Things like that // we do all have preconceived ideas and sort of try and break those down and understand…you know what they're facing and all that sort of thing // drop or ignore as best you can preconceptions // drop or ignore as best you can preconceptions.*

Non-Aboriginal Team Leader, SN8 revealed the importance of tolerance and the change needed in the general population which will make a difference on civil construction sites:

> *The bigger driver, the bigger population can make that difference on the site. On the project it's those tolerances that allow people to do what they need to do and the changes will happen when that change has happened.*

Researcher Comment:

Reduction of racial bias and general tolerance themes are common across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Team Leader Matters (dark purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team leaders. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 30
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are detail in Figure 4.55. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the dark purple coloured codes only.

Figure 4.55: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Coaching and training team leaders before partnering with Aboriginal team members	7
Environment is open and honest, can approach senior manager	3
Exposure to Indigenous people before makes difference	3
Good team leaders provide bit of room without being harsh	2
Had to go through instruction/team leader 'cause I knew they trusted him	2
If they're doing wrong, be stern and tell them	2
Manager very strong in support and passionate provided opportunity to do it right	7
Selective with Team Leader for unskilled guys – supportive and safe	3

team leader	
Trainer really passionate, spent a lot of time	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Environment is open and honest, can approach senior manager" contained the following utterances:

> *it was a lot of honesty // environment is open and honest so that if someone has got an issue and wants to come and have a chat and I said it doesn't matter who it is, if someone wants to have a chat with me, I don't go well look you go talk to your line manager // honesty. Honest communications and a bit of humour doesn't go astray either.*

As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN8) attributed success at shared understanding on site to: *"Good supervisors [team leaders] that provided the guys with a bit of room to do their daily stuff without being too harsh on them".*

Another(SN13) noted the importance of the team leader being passionate about the Aboriginal engagement program as integral to success in creating shared understanding:

> *he was…very passionate about what he was doing…and…he really believed in that. He believed in the whole program, he believed in what we were trying to do and he really wanted it to be successful*

However as identified within the grounded code of "Manager very strong in support and passionate provided opportunity to do it right", senior executive support is also an important part of creating shared understanding.

Researcher Comment:

Interestingly, the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders focus more on the supportiveness and passion of the team leader, coaching and method of feedback than their Aboriginal counterparts.

Team Influence (light purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team influence. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 33

- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.56. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the light purple coloured codes only.
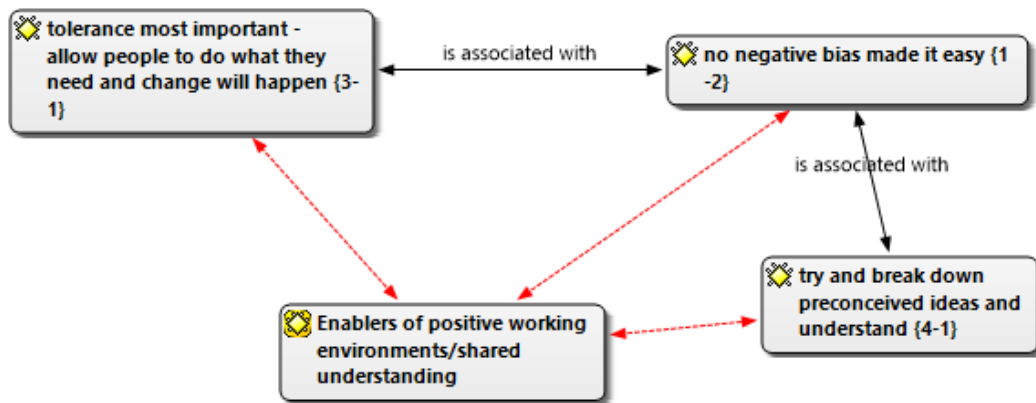

Figure 4.56: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Influence Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Balance them with the right person/personalities	2
Didn't want to let team down. Connection to team he'd never had	3
Friendship in the team part of success – you're a family	4
Guy 3 family members died all came together and supported him	1
Indigenous guys saying you need to sort yourself out	1
Not just supervisor [team leader], immediate team influence	3
Others (team/contractor) teaching Aboriginal workers new to role	3
People need to feel good to come to work	1
Success was no big deal out of it, just part of team	3
Team respect hard work, performance, attitude (leads to acceptance)	12

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Success was no big deal out of it, just part of team" contained the following utterances:

> *whole team feels that there is no cultural differences // the success of that was that we didn't need to make a big deal out of it, they were just all part*

of the same team and there were no issues around that cultural diversity. There was no…negativity around that. Just every person was there doing a good job and good people do good things. It was a good successful project // all one team really. There wasn't really any sort of separation that was going on

There is a strong theme that the team is like a family. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) explained: *"he didn't want to let the team down. So I think he found that connection to team and all that sort of stuff that he'd never had".*

Another (SN5) highlighted the importance of the respect of the team: *"He didn't want to be seen as an Indigenous guy working on the site, he wanted to be seen as a drainer's off-sider who does a good job and adds value and that sort of stuff".*

Researcher Comment:

Themes around supportive teams and teams being like a family as integral to shared understanding are common across Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents.

Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (grey)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around recruitment, retention and advancement. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 35
- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.57. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the grey coloured codes only.
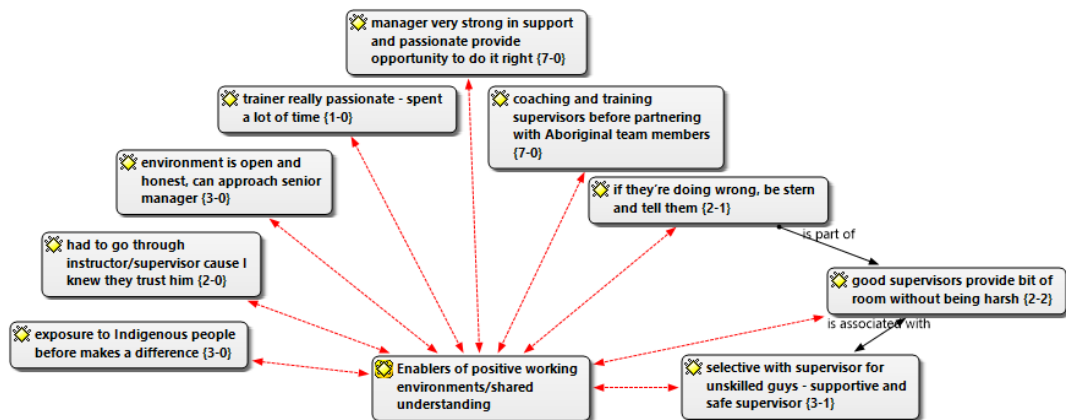

Figure 4.57: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A bit of age, more maturity, more understanding of how to deal with people	2
Don't promise what you can't deliver – lose face within community	1
Ensure same opportunities provided	2
Ensure they have experience/capability as it's important Aboriginal people on my site are good	4
Frank, open, honest upfront discussion about the job, expectations and environment	11
Invest whole of life, how income supports family	4
Might not give formal leadership, identify important task to allow dignity	1
More thought into who you advance	3
Respect what they bring to what we do	4
Skilled labourer will have common language with supervisor [team leader]	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Ensure they have experience/capability as it's important Aboriginal people on my site are good" contained the following utterances:

> *people that were given the roles and opportunities were there on their merits. Rather than any background at all. So when they came in they didn't have to sort of play catch up with respect for the fact that they had the role, for the fact that they could do the role and that was very obvious. So they were either a crane operator or rigger or tradesman. So they had a serious blue collar role that wasn't just an opportunity to give an Indigenous person a number to make up a percentage. // Make sure that they actually have relevant experience and capability for it you know, not just because they were nominated by the JV partner. He is here because he has the capability for it, you know, not just because they were nominated by the JV partner // the best person for the role or are they nominating someone who is their*

> *nephew or // it's a perception thing and that is why it is important, you*
> *know guys like [AW name], that all of sudden people go, yeah I've got [AW*
> *name] and he's good and so that...when supervisors [team leaders] go yeah*
> *I've got Aboriginal people on my site and they are good. The more they say*
> *that, the more when a new kid goes in, rather than saying...*

Many organisations struggled with successful recruitment and retention of Aboriginal people in the early years, and several reasons are provided, including better screening of the candidates to ensure success. Many Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders talk about spending a lot of time up front providing as much information as they can. As SN13 described it:

> *don't sugar coat it. Don't sort of say...and I think when we first got into it, it*
> *was look, you know...come and work in construction come and work for*
> *[company] we are great, the industry is great and all that. But the fact is*
> *that it is a really tough industry. It really is. It is exhausting. It's long hours.*
> *You go home on a Friday and you are shattered, you just can't go on*

Some also spoke about putting the role of having a job back into the context of the strong family values within Aboriginal culture. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3)said:

> *we invest in them more so with their whole of life, longer term, helping set*
> *up their family, how income supports the family. All of those sorts of things*
> *rather than just we're going to give you a job for 6 months and we will never*
> *see you again.*

Researcher Comment:

There are clearly specific recruitment and retention strategies that Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders use to recruit Aboriginal people to ensure the best cultural fit and greatest chance of success in terms of retention. They also speak about the cultural complexities of promoting someone less culturally senior over an Elder and how that can be managed. This issue was not raised as much with Aboriginal Team Leaders, possibly due to a greater awareness of these relationship obligation issues prior to making these decisions.

Goal Setting and Performance Management (yellow)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around goal setting and performance management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 54
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.58. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the yellow coloured codes only.

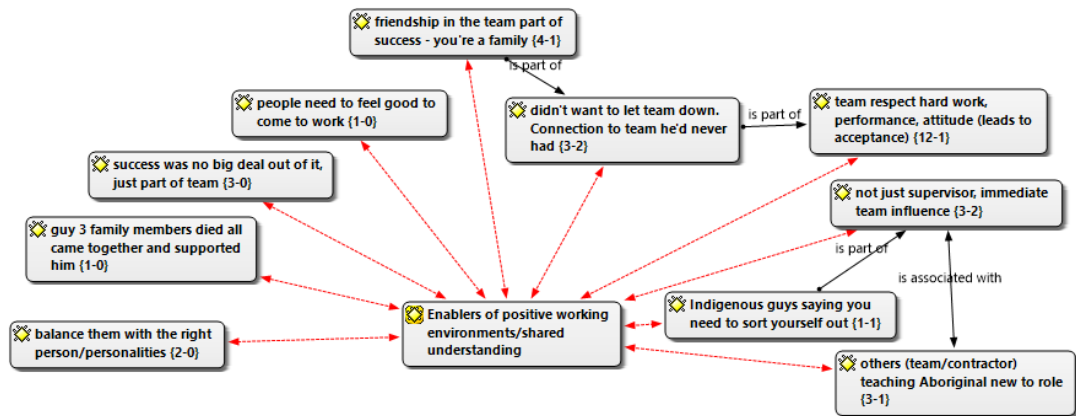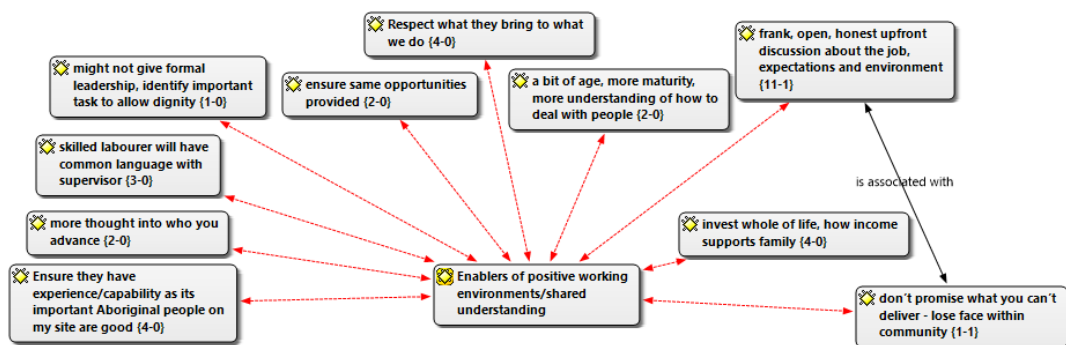*Figure 4.58: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Goal Setting and Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Enablers*

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A lot of encouragement to take pride in work	3
Accommodate time out when you can	1
Asked the guys, how would you do it, it empowers them	1
Comes down to leaders communicating issues at right forum	2
Go that extra step, help them with routine	2
Have that discussion when you see it [frustration] to find cause	1
If they ask questions, they are comfortable and will raise a problem or ask if unsure	5
If you dig often it is something you can work through	1
No difference, deal with them like any other person, same expectations and boundaries	17
Prescriptive in task setting on goals and how to achieve	1
Them respecting what you've asked, following guidelines	2
Treat each other the same is too general	2
Treat everyone like a team: equal, fairly, respectfully on basis of culture	13
Up-skilling so they feel valued and own work	2
What is the breakdown, what have we missed in each case	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "If they ask questions, they are comfortable and will raise a problem or ask if unsure" contained the following utterances:

> *getting them very comfortable so that they start asking you questions // if they have if they are able to ask me questions they will also have the same ability to call me and say that there is a problem on site or I am not sure of this, but I was promised this but this is not happening, so that is a level I have got to bring them to // The willingness to question openly without being shy or you know, they just did question things and basically did what they were asked to after that // open relationship. So even though [name] might not report directly to me, I try and ... the way my work style is, I try to create an open work environment that if someone feels they want to ask a*

question or wants to approach me as the project manager, they can // very

open relationship. I mean we have an open door policy. We've got an office

that is open door policy where people just walk up and ask questions at any

time. So…you know it's…and they do. So there's always a dialogue going on

with somebody on the different important things that they've got to talk

about.

As with the recruitment subcategory above, there is clear messaging from participants about setting clear tasks for Aboriginal team members and then going *"that extra step"* as one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN12) says, to ensure they understand, are encouraged and assisted in achieving the goals set:

prescriptive in tasks that he could do and sort of setting him tasks, you know

they task summary type thing, you know as we do which sets the specific

sorts of things we do you know working on your goals and how to achieve

them.

There is a general (and strongly grounded) theme of there being 'no difference' between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff in terms of treating them fairly and with respect. However, this is mildly contradicted with clarifications such as *"on the basis of culture"* or with *"their background"* in mind. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN14) explains:

I've learned over a long period of time to be blind to colour. To judge people

by what they bring and what they do, but also at the same time, reflect

about how I would be if I'd come from exactly the same background as that

person has come from and chances are I'd be exactly the same as they are.

There is a general theme and recognition from Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders that most issues can be worked through with conversation.

Researcher Comment:

As with Aboriginal Team Leaders there is a strong focus on treating people equally and there being no difference in terms of treatment under the rules. However, the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders have more of a focus on encouragement, taking extra steps to assist and to up-skill compared to their Aboriginal counterparts.

Mentors, Buddies and Role Models (blue)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around mentors, buddies and role models. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 20

- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.59. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the blue coloured codes only.
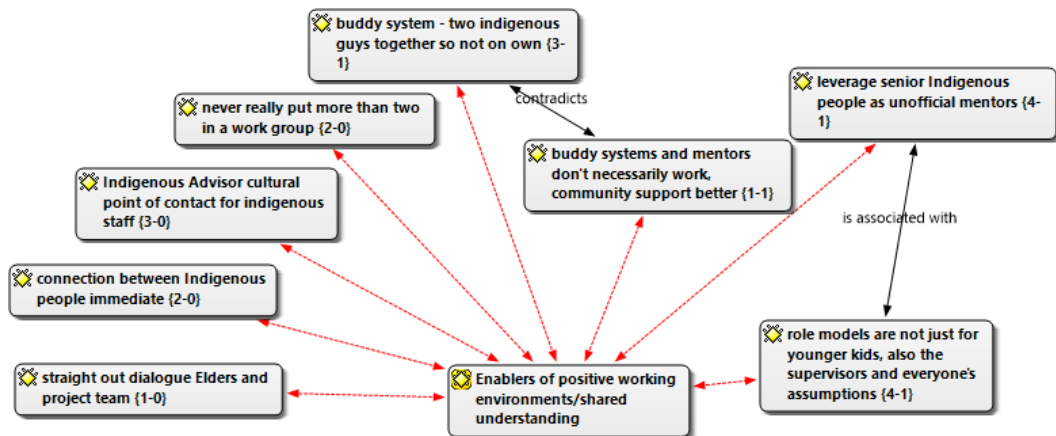
Figure 4.59: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Mentors, Buddies and Role Models Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Buddy systems and mentors don't necessarily work, community support better	1
Buddy system – two Indigenous guys together so not on their own	3
Connection between Indigenous people immediate	2
Indigenous Advisor cultural point of contact for Indigenous staff	3
Leverage senior Indigenous people as unofficial mentors	4
Never really put more than two in a work group	2
Role models are not just for younger kids, also the supervisors [team leaders] and everyone's assumptions	4
Straight-out dialogue between Elders and project team	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Buddy system – two Indigenous guys together so not on their own" contained the following utterances:

> *I don't like this person…they start closing down or shutting down or not…when you start getting them engaged in different workshops, multiple activities…having that team…basically allocating tasks to a pair. Pairing them up. Letting them do a job and then they have the liaison, you know, you will figure it out. // a buddy system so where if they were integrated into a work team, you know a work crew. We normally had two Indigenous guys together so they didn't feel like I'm on my own // new starters, the trainees, we would normally have two together and then we would integrate them into a work team. Just so that they kind of go…well if there is someone there of a similar background and…but we would always look and tell where the region they were from to try to align, so there wouldn't be too many issues*

There is a mild conflict among Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders as to whether buddy systems and mentors are the entire support picture to creating understanding. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) who comes from an organisation experienced in the Aboriginal engagement noted:

> *A lot of people focus on at work, so having buddy systems and mentors in a work context. But we found through our… that it was, we could have done…it wasn't necessarily work, but we could bring back…outside, if we had a community support who said, you are being silly, he probably wasn't talking about you, go and chat to your boss. People who can provide that advice and guidance to him, then he may have come back.*

However, there is recognition that pairing up of trainees, having more senior/experienced Aboriginal role models on site and/or having a cultural contact (Aboriginal Advisor, Aboriginal Liaison Officer), who is an Aboriginal person all assist in creating understanding.

Researcher Comment:

This theme is common among all the hermeneutic units.

Cultural awareness (green)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around cultural awareness. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 38
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.60. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the green coloured codes only.
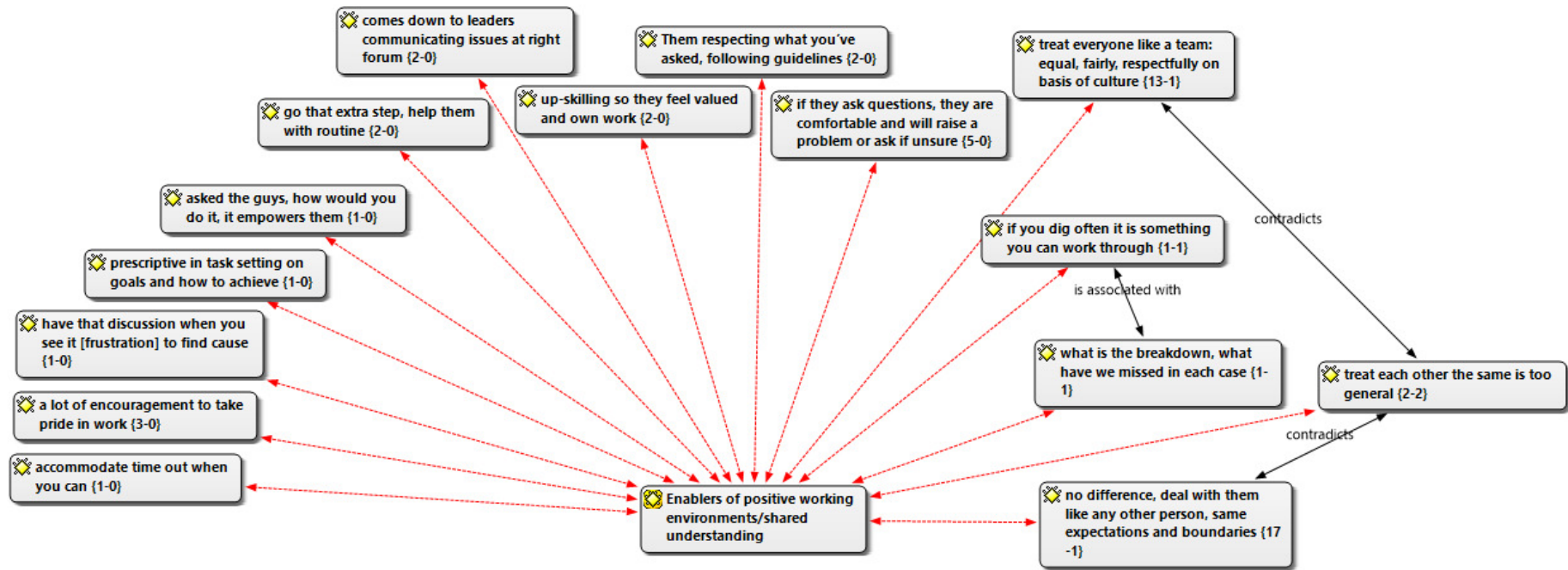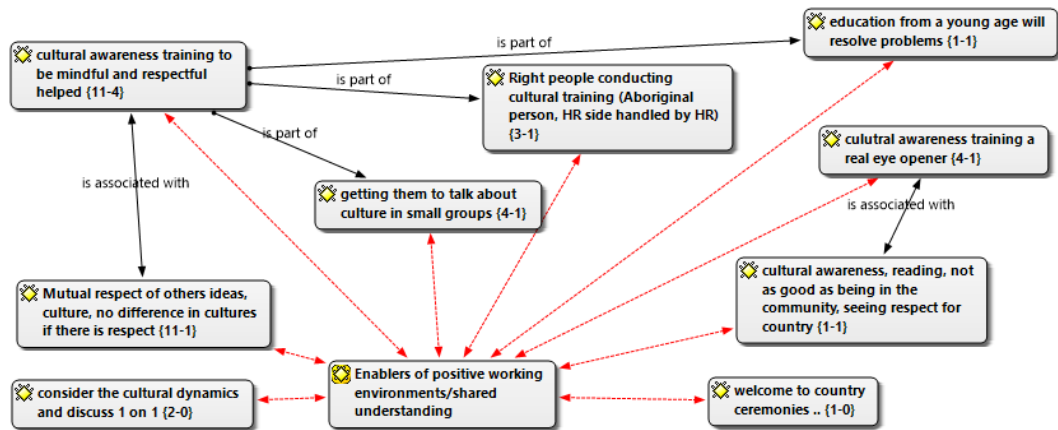

Figure 4.60: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Awareness Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Consider the cultural dynamics and discussion one on one	2
Cultural awareness, reading, not as good as being in the community, seeing respect for country	1
Cultural awareness training a real eye opener	4
Cultural awareness training to be mindful and respectful helped	11
Education from a young age will resolve problems	1
Getting them to talk about culture in small groups	4
Mutual respect of others' ideas, culture, no difference in culture if there is respect	11
Right people conducting cultural awareness training (Aboriginal person, HR side handled by HR)	3

Welcome to country ceremonies	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "cultural awareness training a real eye opener" contained the following utterances:

> *going to that cross-cultural awareness session and for our people the feedback we get from that is wow I've lived in Australia my whole life, I didn't realise how recent this is. // Doing cultural awareness training for me was a real eye opener. I went into that thinking I knew enough, and I came out of that knowing so much more // the biggest difference is obviously the way that their culture is set up. I mean we have the cultural awareness session here, which coming from the United Kingdom, seven and a half years ago, I mean I had zero idea. // cultural awareness sessions are always a good thing to do*

In addition to the value of cultural awareness training and discussions around culture, there is a strong theme of respect that came through from Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders. Many in vivo codes related to respect, with the quotations below from two different Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders (SN11 and SN4 respectively) being reflective of this theme:

> *It matters how you respect the others' ideas. If they whole team feels that there is no difference between different nationalities, or different ethnicities, it is just basically that team respects the whole lot*

> *I think that it's really about…that mutual respect. Where you get…at the end you get to a point where the different cultures don't matter. It's funny I mean I've worked on a lot of projects around the country and there is always going to be cultural diversity in the teams and some…some teams that diversity is eroded very quickly just through mutual interest and camaraderie*

Researcher Comment:

Both the matters of cultural awareness training and respect are common among all the hermeneutic units.

Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment (orange)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around organisational culture, systems and commitment. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 30
- Grounded codes: 18

These grounded are provided in detail in Figure 4.61. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the orange coloured codes only. The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Acknowledge you've got Aboriginals and need to take direct steps to improve participation	1
Address is as a management item at meetings every week	1
Do it because you want to, not for business	3
Everyone has to buy into it	1
Explaining his business and his journey created team buy in	1
Get some good resources behind you	1
Guidance and support needs to be offered across the business	3
Have contingency plans and tool kit of things to do	1
Head contractor willing to enforce	1
Hold people accountable to the culture of the organisation	4
Individual targets for Indigenous engagement	2
Ingrain general diversity into management team	1
It's persistence	1
Not employment. Focus on community, giving to community	2
Showed other Aboriginal guys the commitment of what we were prepared to do, a turning point	2
Small improvements to demonstrate it can work	1
Understanding the intent of the joint venture	1
Upfront communications, open dialogue so everyone understands	3
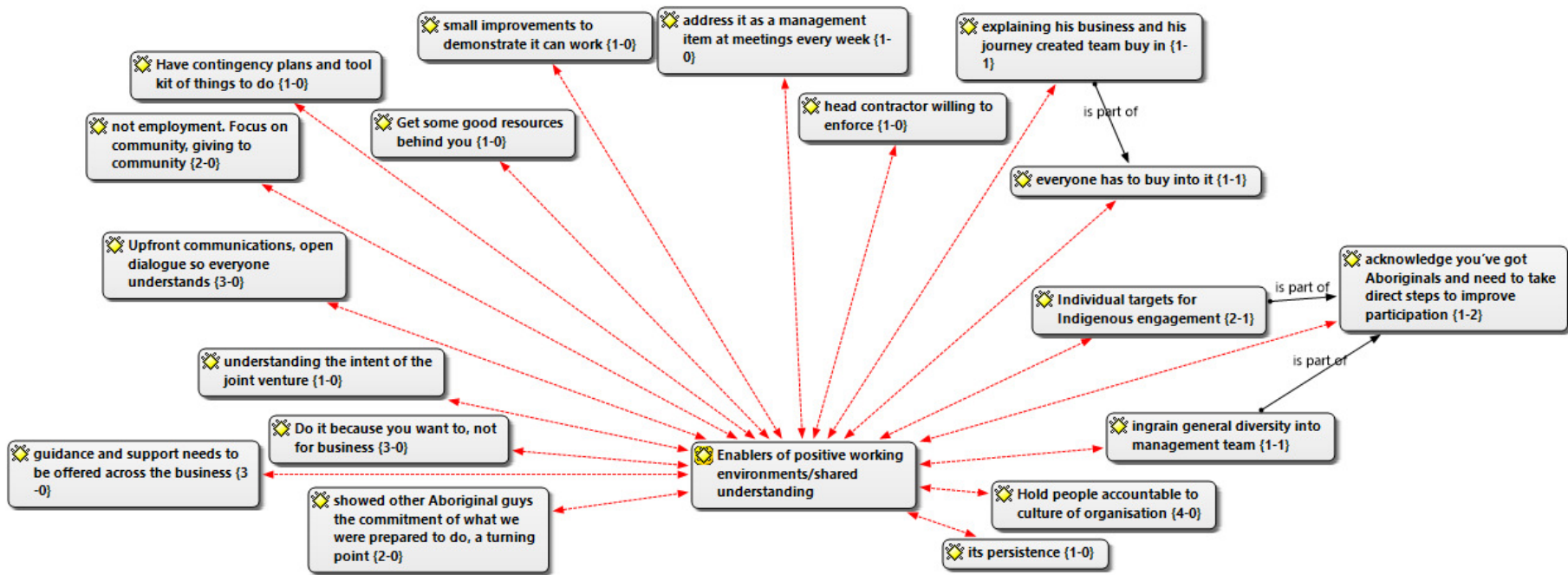
Figure 4.61: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Hold people accountable to the culture of the organization" contained the following utterances:

> *I think the whole site culture. So we…we went through a rocky road. I think it comes down to how the project is performing. The values there and having…just trying to…how you put it into words. Because in the first six months, that job was in dire straits. And that's just more from, we had a number of safety issues, we had a number of incidents. The job was financially not doing too well. // I will hold them accountable for that behaviour too // the culture of that organisation is the culture that you need to hold people accountable to and yeah, absolutely you can have some flexibility around how we deal with each individual and we do in all of our policies, we have diversity policies, we have things that respect Muslim's ability to pray or…all those different things. We already accommodate all that sort of stuff // you can't control people's personal lives, but we just demanded a certain level of behaviour.*

This subcategory is generally about organisational preparedness for Aboriginal engagement, including the steps to be taken, culture created and contextual matters to be considered. However, to create shared understanding, and in aliment with the theme of cultural awareness, generally guidance and support need to be offered across the organisation to bridge the two cultures. Furthermore, solid dialogue and communications are needed around this matter. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN6) states:

> *where I think it worked was engaging with everyone. So the Indigenous guys, the other employees. So opening that dialogue with communication and trying to build a one team and not…any segregation with individuals in general*

Another (SN15) noted that a situation could have been improved by communications up front: *"More upfront communications. Ensuring everyone understands everything and ensuring they understand. Not just going oh, yes I'm here…it's understanding".*

Researcher Comment:

Themes of respect, communications, setting targets and holding people accountable for their behaviour are common across all hermeneutic units.

Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds (olive)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created which deals with themes around relationships and understanding each other's backgrounds. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 65
- Grounded codes: 15

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.62. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the olive coloured codes only.

Figure 4.62: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Always share stuff about myself, they will give a bit/show trust	4
Be genuine to develop trust and relationship	11
Building a relationship feel comfortable having chat/giving feedback	10
Camaraderie…they sweat, joke, laugh together they want to come back	1
Entertain calls on a weekend or holidays	1

Codes	Grounded
Get to know the person and personal life, social chat, otherwise make wrong decision	7
Help them in where they want to go	2
I'll try to make a point of connection	2
Listen with empathy, not sympathy or apathy	5
Most powerful is to assist with own business	1
Respected and understood the relationship	2
Sit between them so it wasn't all black and white	1
Show empathy, show you care, provide bigger picture and career path	5
Social gathering to bring them together	3
Understand their background, values, history, what drives as a person for their future	10

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Listen with empathy, not sympathy or apathy" contained the following utterances:

> *listen to them. Understand what their needs are and to try…get them to understand the reasons why it is that way // be open, you need to be understanding their…listen // don't tell them what you believe it is, but listen and probably just keep listening // listening to people with empathy and through my experience in working with Indigenous people, they don't want sympathy, they don't want apathy // Just shut up and listen, you know. Just shut up and learn and when you're really super confident that what you're going to say adds value and doesn't make you look stupid and then say it*

There are many interrelated codes within this subcategory about mateship, trust, building relationships, and creating a genuine understanding between each other. This is exemplified in the following statement by a Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3):

> *employing Indigenous people, it's like anyone, showing empathy, showing you care, but providing someone with the bigger picture. This is something we work on with our blue-collar workers in general and all our workers is providing that career pathway.*

Several also emphatically talked about the importance of understanding the background of individuals, such as SN1:

> *spend time with the Aboriginal people…spend time with them. Understand*
> *where they are coming from. Understand their history and acknowledge*
> *that and then integrate them into the workforce.*

Researcher Comment:

Themes around mateship, trust, building relationships, and creating a genuine understanding between each other are common among all hermeneutic units. What is revealed by the Aboriginal interviews is the different way trust is built between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Conflict Management (pink)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around conflict management. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 5
- Grounded codes: 3

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.63. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the pink coloured codes only.
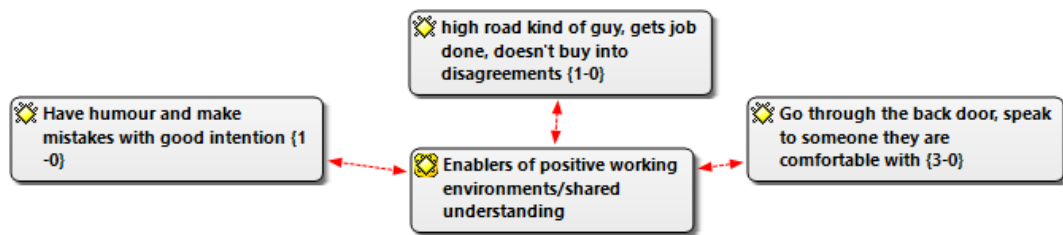
Figure 4.63: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Conflict Management Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Have humour and make mistakes with good intention	1
High road kind of guy, gets job done, doesn't buy into disagreements	1
Go through the back door, speak to someone they are comfortable with	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Go through the back door, speak to someone they are comfortable with" contained the following utterances:

> *Three-way feedback. So they provide feedback to their family. I get the feedback. I then provide feedback to the Supervisor (Team Leader] or I provide feedback to them on how to best address a certain issue // They'll go through the back door and speak to someone they feel comfortable to speak to // normally sit down and go how are you going? How are you settling in? [Is] there anything, you know, you got any issues? And sometimes they may not be comfortable in having a chat with me and that is why I always say there is other avenues you can go and talk to other people if you wanted to raise something and kind of give people a level of assurity [assurance] and comfort*

It is interesting that some Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders recognised that conflict needs to be dealt with in a different way with Aboriginal people. A 'mediator' or someone trusted by the Aboriginal person sometimes needs to be involved.

Researcher Comment:

While touched on lightly in this research, this conflict management preference and style, most likely requires further in-depth research in its own regard. However, across both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Supervisors, there is an acknowledgement that conflict is rarely dealt with directly within Aboriginal culture, but through third parties to come to a resolution. This is similar to other research (Gendron & Hille, 2013; Osi, 2008; Victor, 2007) has revealed around community decision making, it becomes a negotiated group affair.

Self-Respect/Pride (white)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around self-respect and pride. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 4
- Grounded codes: 2

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.64. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.53, showing the white coloured codes only.
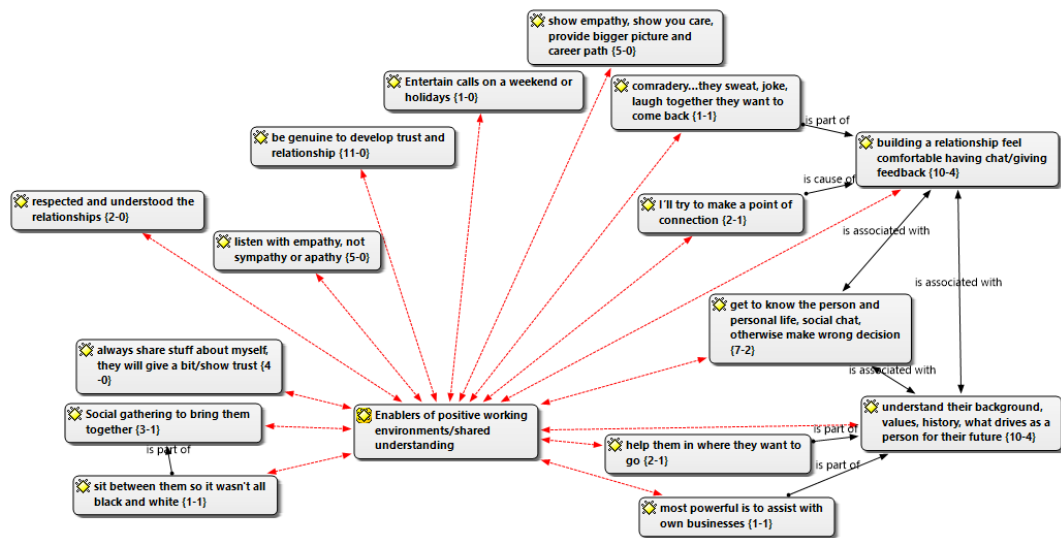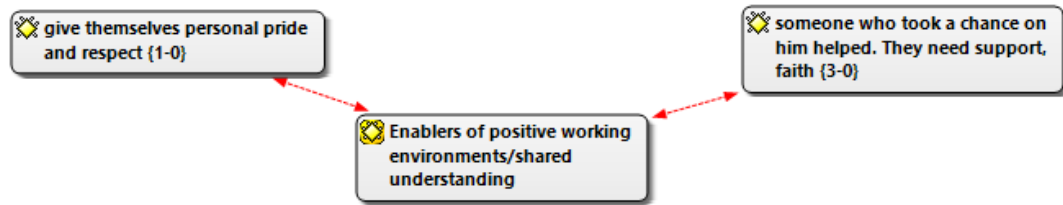
Figure 4.64: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Self-Respect/Pride Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are set out below:

Codes	Grounded
Give themselves personal pride and respect	1
Someone who took a chance on him helped. They need support, faith	3

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Someone who took a chance on him helped. They need support, faith" contained the following utterances:

> *Cause he wanted them to succeed…he wanted them to do well. // told them that this is the case, we are going to rely on them. We are going to trust them, more than they have been trusted before. They were very happy // having someone who took a chance on him I think helped. I think all of these Indigenous guys and girls who are unskilled who are trying to get into industry, I think the majority of them have the right intentions, but they haven't got the support or they haven't got someone that shows a bit of faith in them*

It is interesting that some Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders recognised the influence of having faith in Aboriginal people and how positively that influences relationships. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN10) describes the importance of developing personal pride and respect as follows:

> *I think to them, it's about giving them…how to get them to give themselves personal pride and respect. The biggest issues I think they…us as a community haven't been probably really giving or you know to them. Do you know what I mean?*

Researcher Comment:

Aboriginal Team Leaders acknowledge the importance of work performance and merit in terms of achieving in life. Interestingly, Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders see the need to offer more faith and support in their Aboriginal colleagues' abilities.

4.4.2 Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Inhibitors")

Within the category of Inhibitors, there were:

- In vivo codes: 182
- Grounded codes: 75

These are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.65.

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for discussion:

- Racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions (red)
- Team leader matters (purple)
- Performance management of Aboriginal employees (yellow)
- Shame matters and Aboriginal people ceasing work (turquoise)
- Recruitment and retention matters (grey)
- Relationship building matters (olive)
- Team structure and support matters (white)
- Cultural matters (green)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored by detailing the codes and grounding.
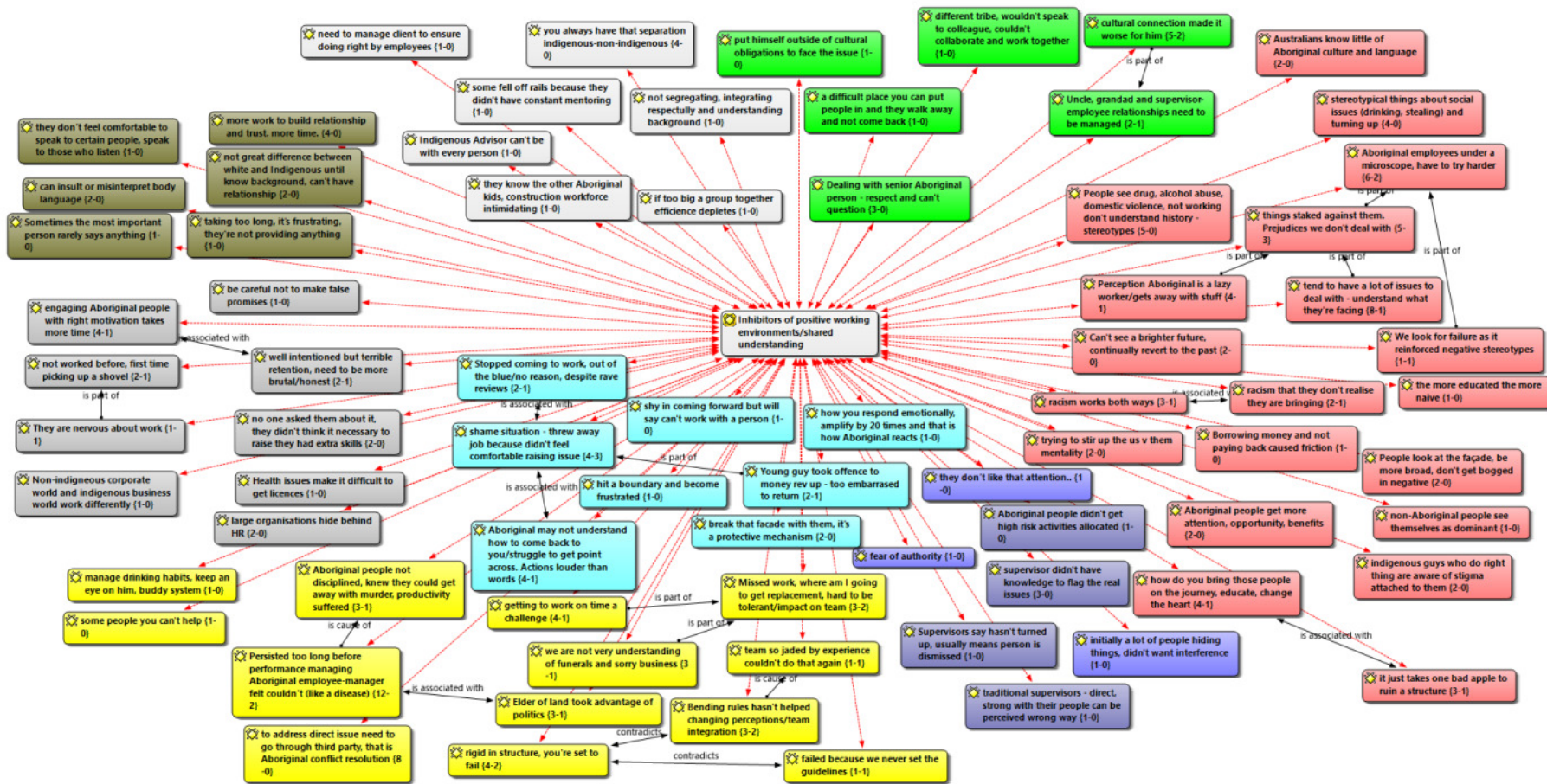
Figure 4.65: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments, Shared Understanding

Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with the themes around racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 60
- Grounded codes: 20

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.66. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the red coloured codes only. The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal employees under a microscope, have to try harder	6
Aboriginal people get more attention, opportunity, benefits	2
Australians know little of Aboriginal culture and language	2
Borrowing money and not paying back caused friction	1
Can't see a brighter future, continually revert back to the past	2
How do you bring those people on a journey, educate, change the heart	4
Indigenous guys who do right thing are aware of the stigma attached to them	2
It just takes one bad apple to ruin a structure	3
Non-Aboriginal people see themselves as dominant	1
People look at the façade, be more broad, don't get bogged in the negative	2
People see drug, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, not working, don't understand history	5
Racism that they don't realise they are bringing	2
Perception Aboriginal is a lazy worker/gets away with stuff	4
Racism works both ways	3
Stereotypical things about social issues (drinking, stealing) and turning up	4
Tend to have a lot more issues to deal with – understand what they are facing	8
The more educated the more naïve	1

Codes	Grounded
Things are stacked against them. Prejudices we don't deal with	5
Trying to stir up the us v them mentality	2
We look for failure as it reinforced negative stereotypes	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "things stacked against them. Prejudices we don't deal with" contained the following utterances:

> *wider social issue of the perception of the Indigenous community that they have a very difficult task just to get to level ground with a lot of people, simply through stereotypes and all those things // Australia in general defaults back onto that and thinks it's a social norm to be like that // he was just sort of fighting against a system he was never going to win almost sort of thing. And I think you know in the end he sort of he drifted off and he gave up his football and he sort of…I mean here is a kid that just had…so much talent I suppose // still a lot of…misconceptions and things like that which…it's going to be hard…it's going to be…but it's literally going, to my book, almost take a generation to get over that // all these things stacked against them that they've got to deal with…prejudices and all this that we don't have to deal with and we're oblivious to*

As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader's (SN14) commented in relation to how our perceptions and prejudices are coloured: *"a mistake that a lot of non-Aboriginal people make and continue to make is that they subliminally, see themselves as a bit dominant of Aboriginal people."*

Researcher Comment:

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders recognised the internal systemic/cultural barriers to Aboriginal people succeeding at work. The category of Enablers recognises how training (such as cultural awareness training/experiences) has addressed these perceptions. All of these respondents have attended such training. These data were consistent with the Aboriginal perspective, where most respondents had recounted recent examples of racism and prejudice at work.

stereotypical things about social issues (drinking, stealing) and turning up {4-0}

People look at the façade, be more broad, don't get bogged in negative {2-0}

it just takes one bad apple to ruin a structure {3-1}

is associated with

People see drug, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, not working don't understand history - stereotypes {5-0}

trying to stir up the us v them mentality {2-0}

Australians know little of Aboriginal culture and language {2-0}

tend to have a lot of issues to deal with - understand what they're facing {8-1}

is part of

how do you bring those people on the journey, educate, change the heart {4-1}

Borrowing money and not paying back caused friction {1-0}

indigenous guys who do right thing are aware of stigma attached to them {2-0}

things staked against them. Prejudices we don't deal with {5-3}

is part of

Aboriginal people get more attention, opportunity, benefits {2-0}

Perception Aboriginal is a lazy worker/gets away with stuff {4-1}

is part of

racism works both ways {3-1}

the more educated the more naive {1-0}

is associated with

Aboriginal employees under a microscope, have to try harder {6-2}

is part of

racism that they don't realise they are bringing {2-1}

non-Aboriginal people see themselves as dominant {1-0}

Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding

We look for failure as it reinforced negative stereotypes {1-1}

Can't see a brighter future, continually revert to the past {2-0}

Figure 4.66: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

Team Leader Matters (purple)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around team leaders. This subcategory embraced codes that were regarding the team leader's understanding and behaviour that impacted negatively on working relationships. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 9
- Grounded codes: 7

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.67. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the purple coloured codes only.
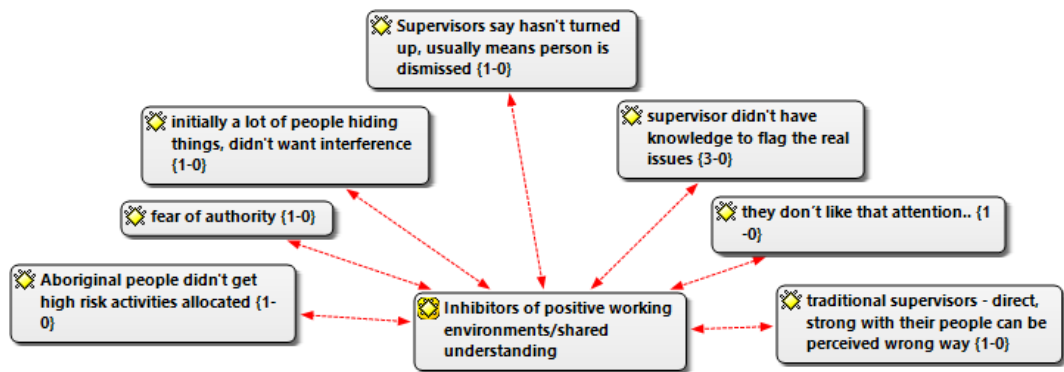
Figure 4.67: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people didn't get high risk activities allocated to them	1
Fear of authority	1
Initially a lot of people hiding things, didn't want interference	1
Supervisors [team leaders] say hasn't turned up, usually means person is dismissed	1
Supervisor [team leader] didn't have knowledge to flag the real issues	3
They don't like that attention	1
Traditional supervisors [team leaders] – direct, strong with their people can be perceived the wrong way	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "supervisors [team leaders] didn't have the knowledge to flag the real issues" contained the following utterances:

> *project managers and supervisors [team leaders] who may not necessarily have all the knowledge of working with Aboriginal people // supervisor [team leader] didn't really talk to this guy and didn't really engage with him. Didn't find out why he is not...he is not interested in doing this properly // supervisor [team leader] probably didn't have the knowledge or the education to flag the issues when he...the real issues. It was always oh he owes him money; they had an argument at lunch, right. You guys can't have lunch together any more. Problems solved. And that wasn't the issue.*

As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN11) observes, some Team Leaders do not recognise and promote Aboriginal people based on their skill sets and experience:

> *Those team of Aboriginal people didn't really get high risk activities allocated to them. So...and basically...with the help of my supervisors [team leaders] from then onwards, we tried to promote them. Because we felt that they were responsible people and there is no different between them and the other guys that were doing the job.*

Researcher Comment:

The diverse codes in this subcategory, is reflective of the varying capacities of Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders to manage Aboriginal people. It is also revealing of ingrained attitudes towards Aboriginal people regarding the activities allocated to them and desire to deal with matters of concern. These Codes are also reflected within the Aboriginal participants findings of having to work harder for recognition.

Performance Management of Aboriginal Employees (yellow)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the theme of management of Aboriginal employees. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 47
- Grounded codes: 13

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.68. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the yellow coloured codes only. The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people not disciplined, knew they could get away with murder, productivity suffered	3
Bending rules hasn't helped changing perceptions/team integration	3
Elder of land took advantage of politics	3
Failed because we never set the guidelines	1
Getting to work on time a challenge	4
Manage drinking habits, keep an eye on him, buddy system	1
Missed work where am I going to get replacement, hard to be tolerant/impact on team	3
Persisted too long before performance managing Aboriginal employee-manager felt couldn't (like a disease)	12
Rigid in structure, you're set to fail	4
Some people you can't help	1
Team so jaded by experience couldn't do that again	1
To address direct issue need to go through third party, that is Aboriginal conflict resolution	8
We are not very understanding of funerals and sorry business	3

Persisted too long before performance managing Aboriginal employee-manager felt couldn't (like a disease) {12-2}

team so jaded by experience couldn't do that again {1-1}

Aboriginal people not disciplined, knew they could get away with murder, productivity suffered {3-1}

is cause of

is associated with

Bending rules hasn't helped changing perceptions/team integration {3-2}

Elder of land took advantage of politics {3-1}

manage drinking habits, keep an eye on him, buddy system {1-0}

to address direct issue need to go through third party, that is Aboriginal conflict resolution {8-0}

contradicts

failed because we never set the guidelines {1-1}

Missed work, where am I going to get replacement, hard to be tolerant/impact on team {3-2}

contradicts

is part of

rigid in structure, you're set to fail {4-2}

Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding

getting to work on time a challenge {4-1}

is part of

some people you can't help {1-0}

we are not very understanding of funerals and sorry business {3-1}

Figure 4.68: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

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To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Bending rules hasn't helped changing perceptions/team integration" contained the following utterances:

> *set a bad precedent where it felt to them like we'd given someone a hand out through the program who had no construction experience. We gave him a job on a very high paying role…who probably leapt ahead of a few guys in the pecking order for no real reason other than his background. With a hope that that would be sort of a pilot program and it failed. Spectacularly // integrating them into the team. Giving them the support and opportunities without, like I said taking it to the point where everyone sees it as being a negative on them. That's where the relationship goes the other way, where the Indigenous are getting all these opportunities and they are loving it. The majority are starting to feel negative // Change the perceptions because people sort of say…and in some cases we've almost haven't helped that because in some cases, we've had some people that we have really gone out of our way and almost bent the rules to hang onto those people and give them a second chance, whereas normally we wouldn't. By almost trying to be helpful, we also build up a little bit*

There is an industry wide concern regarding performance management of Aboriginal employees as it is often the relationships with Traditional Owners that has facilitated the work to occur and as a result there are often minimum employment agreements are in place. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN12) commented: *"it was quite stuck. Because ordinarily you can performance manage someone like that and sort of bring them up or get rid of them through performance management."*

This leads to team discontentment and poor relationships, as another Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN9) described it, the situation becomes *"like a disease"* as it builds resentment of the other team members and creates an unhealthy culture.

Researcher Comment:

Several of these codes relate to the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader's fear or perceived inability to performance manage and therefore delay in performance management or 'soft' performance management in various ways. This was a recurring theme across all of the participating organisations, where team leaders appeared paralysed by cultural

sensitivity, inability to navigate Aboriginal conflict processes, client expectations and contractual obligations around Aboriginal employment. There is also debate as to how rigidly the rules should be applied.

Shame Matters and Aboriginal People Ceasing Work (turquoise)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the theme of Aboriginal shame, shyness and actions leading an Aboriginal person to not work. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 17
- Grounded codes: 8

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.69. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the turquoise coloured codes only.

Figure 4.69: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Shame Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal may not understand how to come back to you/struggle to get point across. Actions speak louder than words	4
Break that façade with them, It's a protective mechanism	2
Hit a boundary and become frustrated	1
How you respond emotionally, amplify by 20 times, that is how Aboriginal reacts	1

Shame situation – threw away job because didn't feel comfortable raising issue	4
Shy in coming forward but will say when can't work with a person	1
Stopped coming to work, out of the blue/no reason, despite rave reviews	2
Young guy took offence to money rev up – too embarrassed to return	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Aboriginal may not understand how to come back to you/struggle to get point across. Actions speak louder than words" contained the following utterances:

inability to communicate. They struggle to put a point across. Many of them have not worked before do not understand the level of language that is used on a construction site. // sometimes don't have the best communication or understanding of how to come back to ya, their actions speaks sometimes a lot bigger than the words. // if something occurs and all of a sudden it goes a bit quiet. I always treat quietness as not a positive thing. So when it goes a bit quiet then I've got to keep delving into where the issue is then stemming from and then working out how to almost reversing that // you might do that to somebody and they may or may not tell you why they can or can't do this job and take this responsibility

There is an observed 'shame' situation where the combination of not being able to talk about something, being frustrated and aware of perceptions of Aboriginal people, leads to an Aboriginal person inexplicably (from the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader perspective) not returning to work. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) commented:

the shame situation. So this young guy threw away getting paid huge money for unskilled work. Over $100,000 for an unskilled worker on a traineeship about two minutes from his girlfriend's house. All this sort of stuff and it was a sweet gig and he threw it away because of a misunderstanding. For me that was a big thing. I was gutted about that. But this kid had so much potential, but because we didn't manage that situation. Or he didn't manage. He didn't feel comfortable raising that with anybody.

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory reflects the observation around an Aboriginal person's struggle in dealing with situations of conflict in a Western way. Direct confrontation on any situation, particularly at work is difficult for an Aboriginal person and is reflected in non-Aboriginal observations of Aboriginal people's shyness, inability to communicate, emotion and frustration.

Recruitment and Retention System Matters (grey)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around the systems, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention which had become barriers to understanding. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 9

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.70. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the grey coloured codes only.
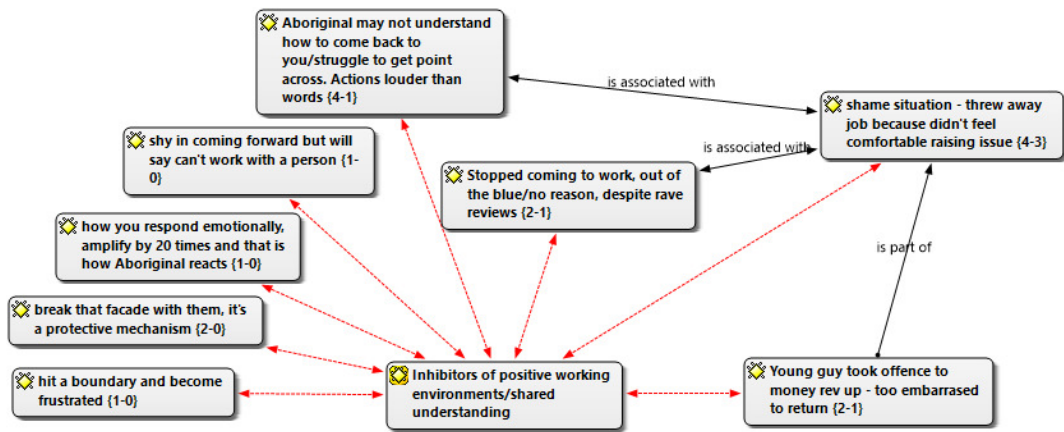

Figure 4.70: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment and System Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Be careful not to make false promises	1
Engaging Aboriginal people with right motivation takes more time	4
Health issues make it difficult to get licences	1
Large organisations hide behind HR [human resources]	2

Codes	Grounded
Non-Indigenous corporate world and Indigenous business world work differently	1
No one asked them about it, they didn't think it necessary to raise they had the extra skills	2
Not worked before, first time picking up a shovel	2
They are nervous about work	1
Well-intentioned but terrible retention, need to be more brutal/honest	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Engaging Aboriginal people with right motivation takes more time" contained the following utterances:

> *That specific case, he slipped through…or our recruitment process was probably not as robust enough. He had a history of criminal behavior. And we didn't pick that up // we were getting school kids and they were almost seeing it as a way of getting out of school. When we put them in the workforce and they had to cope with getting up at 5 in the morning and not getting home until half past six at night, they really struggled // it wasn't their passion I suppose. So you were dealing with…you ended up with people that really…you know, they were sort of here, they didn't want to be here // we sort of spent a lot more time on our planning on who we were going to get in there and screening people. So we got people that were genuinely interested. As I said a lot of them were a bit older and…a lot of them had families*

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders recognised that the systems and standards put in place to 'protect' the organisation also provide a barrier to Aboriginal employment and promotion and thereby to the creation of positive working relationships. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN1) commented: *"large organisations hide behind their human resources teams and put barriers to employment of Aboriginal people".*

Researcher Comment:

Many Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders commented on the need to be transparent about roles, responsibilities, expectations of the job and the organisation upfront. In a way that

is more detailed than they might for non-Aboriginal employees. There is also recognition that systems to traditionally protect the organisation unfairly disadvantage Aboriginal employees, and the rules are often 'bent' or flexed to facilitate Aboriginal employment.

Relationship Building Matters (olive)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of relationship building and communications. This subcategory had

- In vivo codes: 11
- Grounded codes: 6

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.71. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the olive coloured codes only.

Figure 4.71: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationship Building Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Can insult or misinterpret body language	2
More work to build relationship and trust, more time	4
Not great difference between white and Indigenous until know background, can't have relationship	2
Sometimes the most important person rarely says anything	1
Taking too long, it's frustrating, they're not providing anything	1
They don't feel comfortable to speak to certain people, speak to those who listen	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "More work to build relationship and trust, more time" contained the following utterances:

> *it needs time, without a doubt // it takes a bit more work to build that relationship and that trust and those sorts of things. It takes a bit more time // You could see that over time it would break down as they would get to know a few people. They would sort of...but they are very shy and they will stay unless you try and physically // first three weeks in this role...it was very difficult because...people weren't sharing things with me, people weren't trusting me. People didn't know who I was or what I bring...but...little bit by little bit you break down that sort of barrier and all of a sudden...it starts to flow*

Although there are relationship sensitivities and it is generally conceded it takes more time and effort, as one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN10) observed:

> *I don't think there is a great difference between you know, white people and Indigenous. I think it's just...you've got to get a bit of a picture of where they are. You know in themselves. Because everyone has got their own background and personalities and I think until you get to know that...it is like dealing with everyone. You can't have relationship or...understand where they are if you don't kind of delve down into that past...*

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory contains recognition of some of the similarities in managing relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and coming back to the fundamentals of knowing someone at a personal level. Aboriginal interviews reveal similar and particularly focus on the importance of understanding others and own background and spending quality time together on recreational activity.

Team Structure and Support Matters (white)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of team structure and support. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 9
- Grounded codes: 6

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.72. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the white coloured codes only.
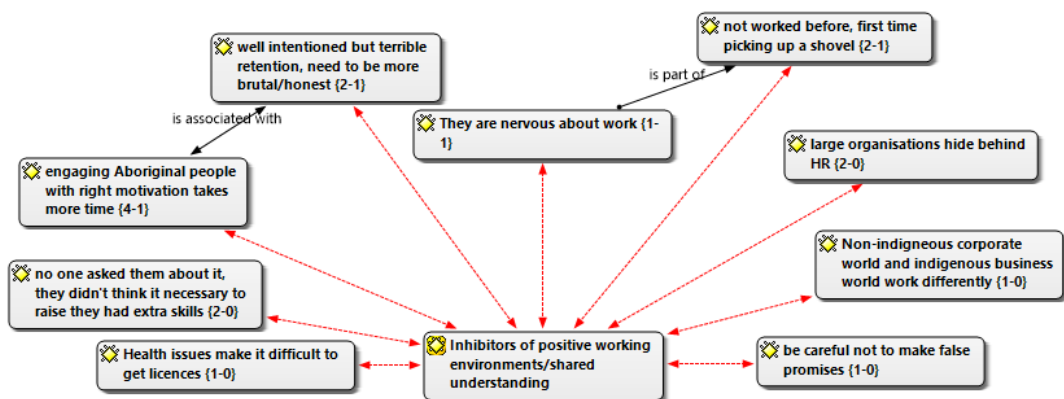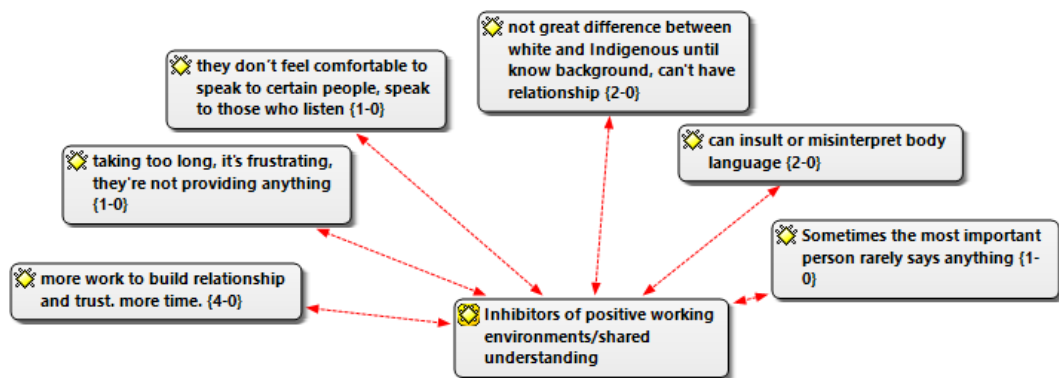

Figure 4.72: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
If too big a group together efficiency depletes	1
Indigenous Advisor can't be with every person	1
Need to manage client to ensure doing right by employees	1
Not segregating, integrating respectfully and understanding each other's backgrounds	1
They know the other Aboriginal kids, construction workforce intimidating	1
You always have that separation Indigenous-non-Indigenous	4

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "You always have that separation Indigenous-non-Indigenous" contained the following utterances:

> *they can be a bit more comfortable with their own people // you always have that separation, that is like the indigenous and non-indigenous // all the Aboriginal kids would sit over there and all the whities would sit over there // literally in the morning when you starting the pre-starts, they would sit there and the guys would sit there [he indicated left and right]*

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From a Non-Aboriginal perspective there is a need to be cognisant of the impacts of team structure, as one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN13) comments:

> *"they usually know the other Aboriginal kids, it's very easy for them usually to talk, because they know them from around town. So they've got someone they know. Where all the other people…all these sort of whities from somewhere else sort of thing. Well it's a bit intimidating almost. And a construction workforce can be very intimidating"*

However, another Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN10) notes that you should not put too many Aboriginal people (he was referring specifically to trainees here) within the one team: *"I found that if we put them in too big of a group in the same, and they're all together…I found that their efficiency and their work style was depleted very greatly, quickly"*.

Researcher Comment:

There appears to be an important balance to be found between a pairing of inexperience Aboriginal people within a team without having too many in the one team. The Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders also recognise (for the most part) that they have a role in terms of bringing people together and removing the 'them and us' scenario which naturally plays out on site. Aboriginal respondents did not report this issue.

Cultural Matters (Green)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of culture. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 13
- Grounded codes: 6

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.73. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.65, showing the white coloured codes only.
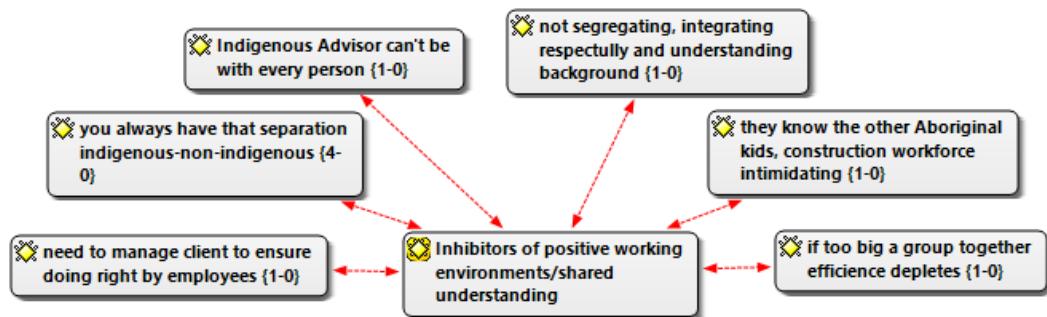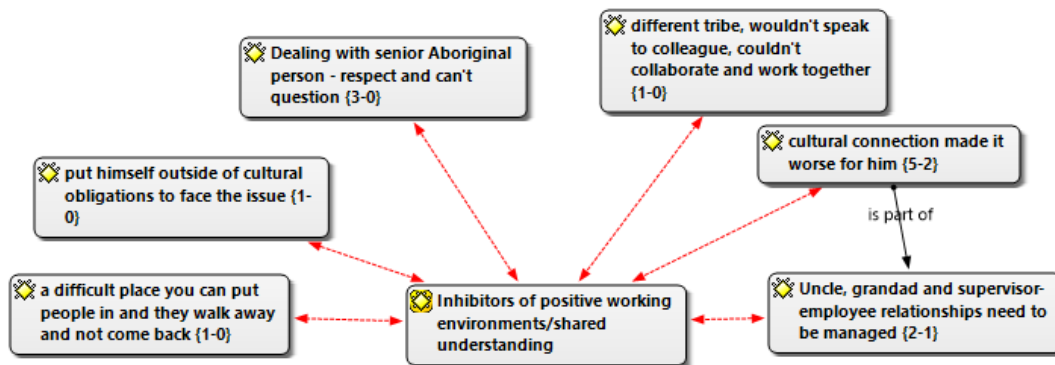
Figure 4.73: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A difficult place you can put people in and they walk away and not come back	1
Cultural connection made it worse for him	5
Dealing with senior Aboriginal person – respect and can't question	3
Different tribe, wouldn't speak to colleague, couldn't collaborate and work together	1
Put himself outside of cultural obligations to face the issue	1
Uncle, grandad and supervisor [team leader]–employee relationship need to be managed	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Cultural connection made it worse for him" contained the following utterances:

the man that was working with him, he'd been brought through law and so we understood that there was now a very strong cultural bond and we probably skirt around the issue a fair bit and it got to the point though there was risk. The relationship was at risk. There was no drive by the Aboriginal business to manage it well // had a cultural connection and how to manage that cultural aspect…so…I think it was… I think…oh for him it was a lot worse // worst thing is that he actually took him through law and so…the issue there was the fact that it wasn't just employing someone that he had

to feel/show embarrassment at, he now had that cultural obligation // he was being constrained from obviously…his cultural brother that was giving him advice, which he then realised that it was the wrong advice… // when people are already in work and the come to work and there might be 10 of them and all of a sudden you decide that one of them needs to be the leading hand...he might step up for a day or two and the rest of the team will rip him down

The Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders could see their Aboriginal colleagues struggling with cultural and work obligations. As one non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN14) observes:

it is a very difficult place that you can put people in…and often they can walk away and not come back, just because you've created an environment in which, they might from a professional perspective, yeah, I feel proud, I got responsibility here and…when I was up in [country], they used to call me Boonguwah…Boonguwah is the boss. Or Barta la Boonguwah is the big boss. So as the boss you make a lot of mistakes.

Researcher Comment:

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders recognise the difficulties of cultural conflict in similar ways to Aboriginal Team Leaders. It is recognised that these difficulties need to be managed carefully by team leaders in the workplace. However, solutions are not necessarily forthcoming and as one participant noted "you make a lot of mistakes".

4.4.3   Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating positive regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 17
- Grounded codes: 11

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.74.

Figure 4.74: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

The grounded codes in this category are follows:

Codes	Grounded
Being supportive of one another	1
Decision making without retribution sign of trust	2
Employed to make boss' job easier	1
Get the most out of people if you put into them	1
I want to be across problems, no concealed aggression	1
If we fail, we fail together	1
Integrity, trust and honesty valued highly	3
Knowing that if they've got a problem, you've got their back	1
Lead by example	1
Measure trust/respect by when they speak about stuff they don't need to tell me	1
Work ethic, accountability, positive attitude	4

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Work ethic, accountability, positive attitude" contained the following utterances:

> *respect themselves and basically…have the reliance within themselves that*
> *they are doing a good job and being positive about what they are doing.*
> *Don't second question yourself // accountability of the team. The way the*

team responds to their…their tasks and their responsibilities and accountabilities. If a team member is…basically… allocated a task to do or looking after certain parts of the projects…I've been in teams that say OK, I can't do this, I don't care. But when you build your team…the team really needs to take that accountability and make sure that they do things and they take the responsibility for things // I think work ethic to a degree. But I think work ethic…and when I say work ethic, it's driven by experience and what they know. So I think I probably have higher expectations from more senior people. Because there is an expectation that they, they should be delivering I guess. I guess what…drive. So in our construction work, you need people that are highly motivated, have drive // a team with an attitude to work and they want to get the job done and they're positive and they want to work and they want to help and a good attitude to safety obviously

The action-oriented culture of the civil construction industry is very much reflected in one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader's (SN10) comment in relation to decision making:

don't be scared to make a decision, because whatever decision you make, you always move forward. It doesn't matter if they're wrong. You're always going to learn from them. But I think, that is probably the biggest thing.

Researcher Comment:

The data here are more a reflection of the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders' views of factors that would positively affect their regard for their teams. There is a strong focus on work-ethic, trust, being supportive and sharing and showing leadership on problems. There appear to be recurring themes throughout the four hermeneutic units of trust, attitude, being supportive and respect.

4.4.4   Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating negative regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 11
- Grounded codes: 10
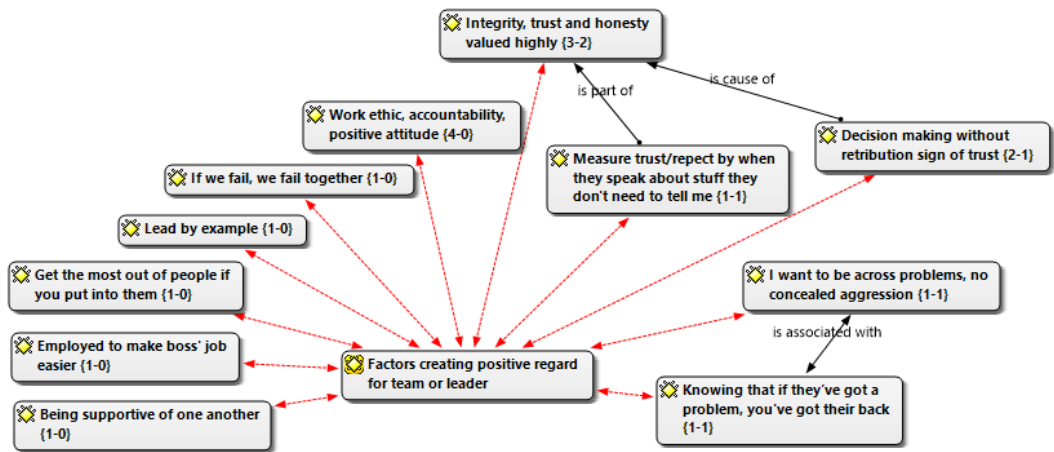
These grounded codes are detailed in Figure 4.75.
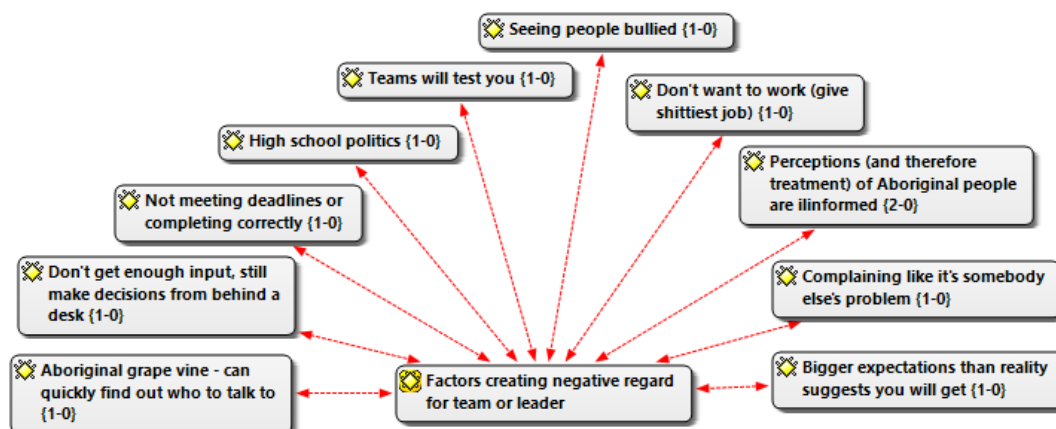
Figure 4.75: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

The grounded codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal grapevine - can quickly find out who to talk to	1
Bigger expectations than reality suggests you will get	1
Complaining like it's somebody else's problem	1
Don't get enough input, still make decisions from behind a desk	1
Don't want to work (give shittiest job)	1
High school politics	1
Not meeting deadlines or completing correctly	1
Perceptions (and therefore treatment) of Aboriginal people are ill-informed	2
Seeing people bullied	1
Teams will test you	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Perceptions (and therefore treatment) of Aboriginal people are il-informed" contained the following utterances:

> *if you can treat safety with high regard, if you can treat your production with high regard, but you treat your people with disregard…that annoys me to a large extent. Especially after support is provided and support is continued to be provided. You have a total disregard for…and you have your*

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own personal views about Aboriginal people // Understand your own

weaknesses as a manager or leader. Understand that you might have come

on a different journey and that your perception of Aboriginal people might

be a little bit il-informed. You know and be open to that.

This Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN4) provided a comment which is generally reflective of the deadline-driven construction industry and how that affects his regard for his team:

frustrates me and it's…it's probably the same sort of things is that I hold

myself to a high accountability to meet deadlines, to be disciplined, to

complete things correctly, professionally, properly. So when people don't do

that I get let down by that. If they miss deadlines or they give you work that

is not complete or it's in their mind complete enough so that [he] will finish

off the rest and it will get done.

Researcher Comment:

The data here reflect the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader's views of factors that would negatively affect their regard for their teams. There is once again, a strong focus on work-ethic and getting on with the job without politics, bullying or complaining.

4.4.5 Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Within the category of Issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 28
- Grounded codes: 22

These grounded codes are detailed in Figure 4.76.

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal people don't want favours, just level playing field, safe environment	1
Balance of reverse bias and giving opportunity for wrong reasons	1
Being foreigners, like myself in the team, didn't feel any difference	1

Codes	Grounded
Benefits to both site mentor and Indigenous Advisor, but site mentor better	1
Body language that is probably the best indication	1
Call the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre	1
Client should deal with community before development/time pressures	1
Community involvement creates much better environment post work	1
Elders have more respect. Success with Elder involved	4
Guys like having a male mentor as well	1
Indigenous business provide a pool of people available	1
Industry like a family, you earn your place	1
More than one objective leading to appointing a less experienced Aboriginal person	1
Never go down a path where it becomes an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal story	2
No engagement policy, just right person for the job	1
People can change with coaching	2
RAP Committee and champions to drive but all have to have buy in	1
Should have got General Manager involved for top down approach	1
The gift of the egg symbolic of rebirth/renewal of the relationship	2
Their culture more family and group drivers	1
Traditional contracting exhausted, what can we do cultural perspective	1
Various models need to be adopted	1

Figure 4.76: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding or Improve Working Relationships

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Never go down a path where it becomes an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal story" contained the following utterances:

> *careful not to distinguish and Aboriginal person from a non-Aboriginal person. // never go into a path where it becomes and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal story. It should be part of a story where you develop a very good workforce.*

As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) expressed it:

> *Aboriginal people don't want…well the ones I've met and it's a massive stereotype but don't want favours. They want the level playing field to go and work in a safe environment that understands their culture. I think if people understand Aboriginal culture then they can help provide that environment.*

An expression of understanding that culture is reflected in the story of the gift of the egg which was a highly emotional story, told from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspective within the research. The Non-Aboriginal Team Leader's (SN2) commentary was:

> *He said let's move forward together and he gave me an emu egg, a carved emu egg. Now I understood that there was obviously some significance to it, but I didn't understand what it was. And…anyway, it was one of these one days where I thought this is…we finally got passed a hurdle. We were going to work together, and it felt very promising.*

He was later informed by his Aboriginal colleague the meaning of the egg, which he relayed as follows:

> *The gift of the egg is effectively symbolic of the birth of the relationship. He's given that to you as a form of trust to say let's now continue this journey together and with a high level of trust and I remember for me that was probably the most memorable period I've had in Aboriginal engagement because I finally felt that I was understanding the dynamics a bit more.*

It is a highlight of the strong use of imagery and symbolism within Aboriginal culture, in a very different way to Western practice and use of symbolism and imagery within the business context.

Researcher Comment:

The data in this category reflects the difficult balance Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders must find in terms of organisational policy, cultural understanding, community involvement and team support structures. Several themes in this category are consistent across hermeneutic units, including:

- fairness and equity in terms of systems
- the need for mentors and coaching, albeit there are various preferences as to how this is structured
- the family culture of industry
- the family-focused culture of Aboriginal people
- leadership and general buy-in to Aboriginal participation.

4.4.6 Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that prevent shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 26
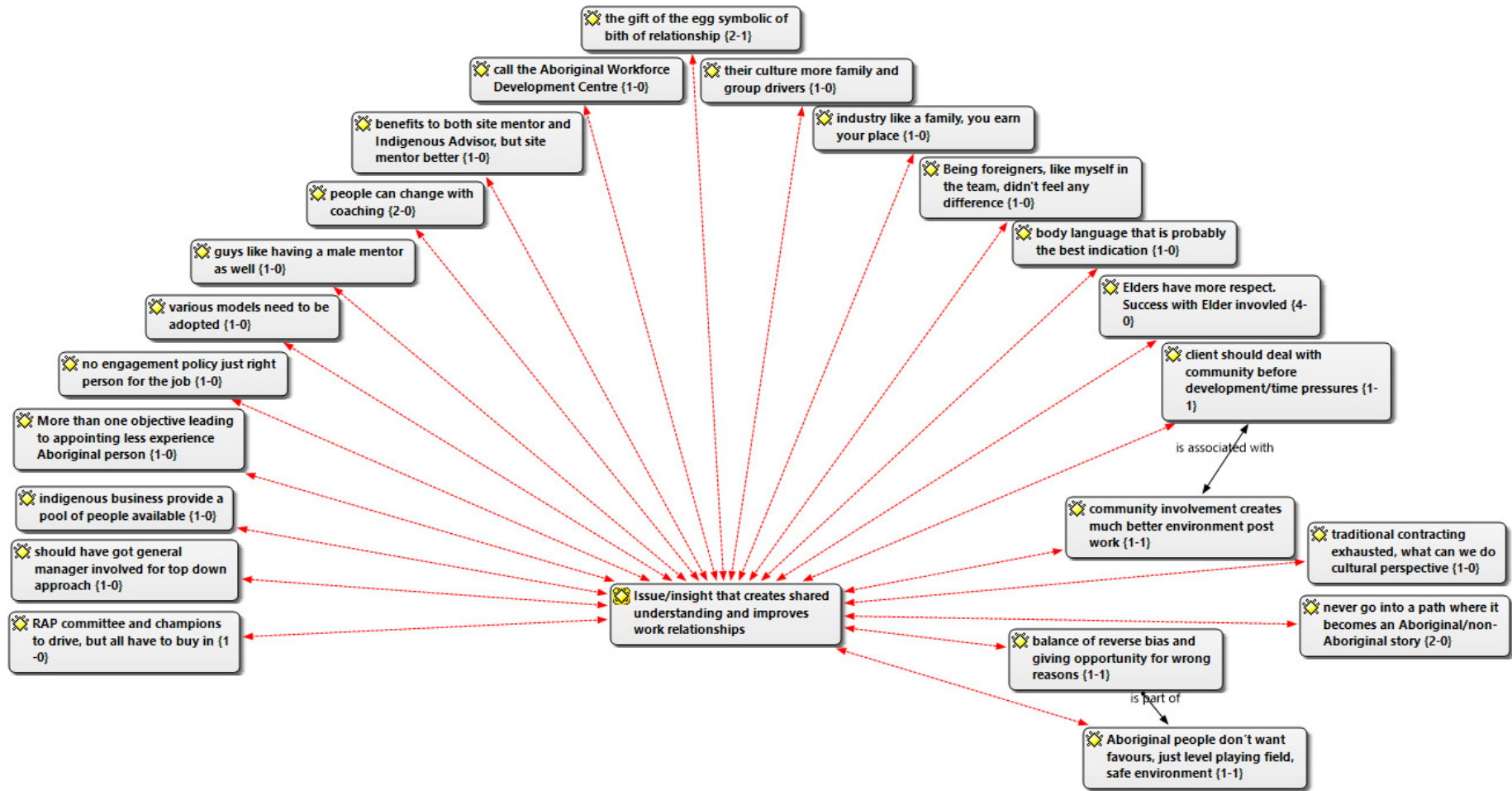- Grounded codes: 17

These grounded codes are detailed in Figure 4.77.
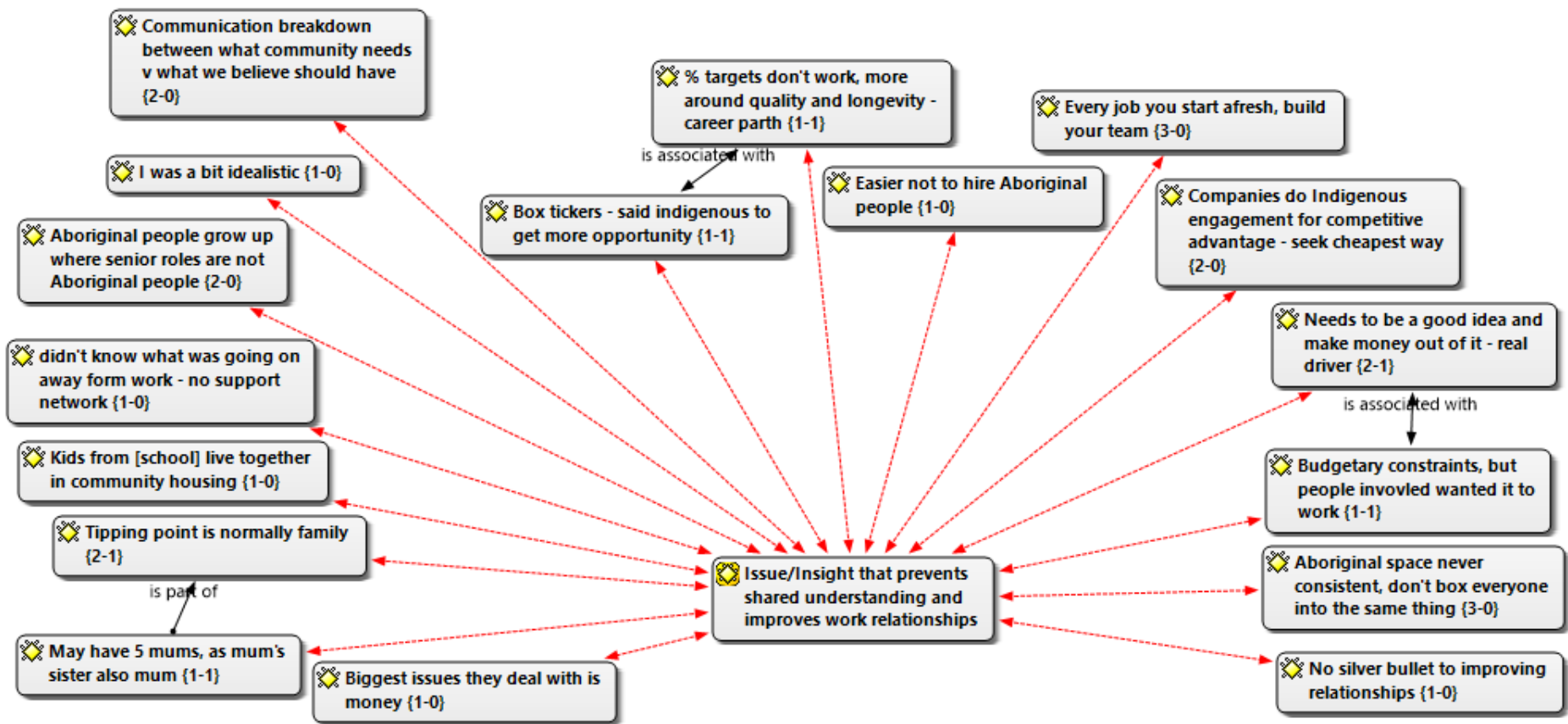
Figure 4.77: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Communication breakdown between what community needs v what we believe should have {2-0}

I was a bit idealistic {1-0}

Aboriginal people grow up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people {2-0}

didn't know what was going on away form work - no support network {1-0}

Kids from [school] live together in community housing {1-0}

Tipping point is normally family {2-1}

is part of

May have 5 mums, as mum's sister also mum {1-1}

Biggest issues they deal with is money {1-0}

% targets don't work, more around quality and longevity - career parth {1-1}

is associated with

Box tickers - said indigenous to get more opportunity {1-1}

Easier not to hire Aboriginal people {1-0}

Every job you start afresh, build your team {3-0}

Companies do Indigenous engagement for competitive advantage - seek cheapest way {2-0}

Needs to be a good idea and make money out of it - real driver {2-1}

is associated with

Budgetary constraints, but people invovled wanted it to work {1-1}

Aboriginal space never consistent, don't box everyone into the same thing {3-0}

No silver bullet to improving relationships {1-0}

Issue/Insight that prevents shared understanding and improves work relationships

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
% targets don't work, more around quality and longevity – career path	1
Aboriginal people grow up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people	2
Aboriginal space never consistent, don't box everyone into the same thing	3
Biggest issues they deal with is money	1
Box Tickers – said indigenous to get more opportunity	1
Budgetary constraints, but people wanted it to work	1
Communication breakdown between what community needs v what we believe should have	2
Companies do Indigenous engagement for competitive advantage – seek cheapest way	2
Didn't know what was going on away from work – no support network	1
Easier not to hire Aboriginal people	1
Every job you start afresh, build your team	3
I was a bit idealistic	1
Kids from [school] live together in community housing	1
May have 5 mums, as mum's sister is also a mum	1
Need to be a good idea and make money out of it – real driver	2
No silver bullet to improving relationships	1
Tipping point is normally family	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Aboriginal people grow up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people" contained the following utterances:

> if I'm an Aboriginal kid and Mum and Dad are all often unemployed, or
> Uncle Johnny, who is the family role model, he is employed on CDEP or work
> for the dole. He gets to drive around in the rubbish truck that picks up the
> rubbish, four hours a day, three days a week or whatever. If he's my
> greatest role model that I can relate to then that is as far as I'm aspiring to
> be, you know. So yeah, you aspire to be the things that you see // Aboriginal

people grow up in an environment where the senior roles, the important roles, the doctors, the nurses, the police are not Aboriginal people. The school teachers aren't Aboriginal people. So…not deliberately but just by the environments in which they grow up, often they don't aspire to be in those very big and important positions. Again, a very big generalisation

As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) put it:

Some Indigenous people are really connected with their history and understand the impact of British people coming in and they get that, but for some Indigenous people it is just all non-Indigenous people. And to some people, people are just all people. So it depends on the context but and putting everyone under the same banner is hard.

Another Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN14) commented on his inability to find a consistent approach: "*the Aboriginal space it's never consistent, it's never easy. In fact, if it's easy then you're doing something wrong*"

Researcher Comment:

The diversity of data in this category demonstrates the breadth of issues and thinking about what might prevent shared understanding in the industry, including the fundamentals of how the industry works. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN10) put it the "*construction industry is very brutal*" and as another observed, it is easy to be more "*idealistic*" than the industry will allow in the contract. Civil construction teams are built for each construction job won by tender. If new work is not won by that company within the town, then nearly all the team are made redundant. This means that there are clear fiscal and operational constraints to what some may consider to be 'social' matters such as employing Aboriginal people. The other theme in this data is around the situation Aboriginal people find themselves in such as family obligations and structure and living arrangements.

As clearly demonstrated by the utterances detailed above, this data also forewarns against making generalisations about what will work and what will not work in relation to creating understanding.

4.5   Non-Aboriginal Workers

This hermeneutic unit of Non-Aboriginal Workers comprise the five non-Aboriginal people interviewed that had no direct reports/staff. This hermeneutic unit was chosen to reflect the world view of most Australians working within the civil construction sector who do not have staff. These people hold a variety of roles within their organisations (administrative, machine operators, project managers) and have a team member role in terms of co-creating shared understanding within their teams. They varied in years of experience in the civil construction industry.

As with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, the diversity of cultural background within this hermeneutic unit showed an observed (albeit unexplored for the purposes of this research) difference in attitudes towards Aboriginal people between Australia- born and raised participants and those not born and raised in Australia. Some of these differences are observed in terms of conflicting utterances. This matter requires further research.

Within this hermeneutic unit, there were:

- In vivo codes: 270
- Grounded codes: 119

The most grounded codes are:

Codes	Grounded
Be open to listening, change and taking on board	11
Backs my decisions, supportive, open to my ideas, on the same side	9
Relationships and work where you can trust and respect your colleagues	7
Understanding of where each other is from and what makes them tick, positives and weaknesses	6
Be open and honest and communicate why you're there and what you hope to achieve	6
Just seeing the same people all the time, build that personal relationship [builds trust and rapport]	6
PBC hard to strike a relationship, another layer, misadvice and misleading advice	6

Codes	Grounded
A generalisation, stereotype around their work ethic in comparison	6
Lost in the system, someone else's problem to give them the opportunity, really got to provide they are worthy	6

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Be a generalisation, stereotype around their work ethic in comparison" contains the following utterances:

> *definitely a generalisation around…their work ethic in comparison to others // there is sort of that stigma, or generalisation … // if there is like an expectation that they're not going to do much work, then of course you have no motivation to reach that bar. // I don't think they are too worried about working any harder or anything. // I really don't think they care if they are working at someone else's 80% but for them it might be their 100%. // little tidbits of what people stereotype and drivers or…yeah…laziness what have you*

As per the process described in the Introduction of this chapter, these codes were divided into categories and then subcategories where appropriate for sense-making. This section will proceed to discuss the more detailed findings from the Non-Aboriginal Workers by each of the six categories.

4.5.1 Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Enablers")

Within the category of Enablers, there were:

- In vivo codes: 117
- Grounded codes: 39

These grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.78.

For ease of analysis and sense-making, these grounded codes have been divided into the following subcategories:

- Racism and tolerance (red)
- Team influence and communications (light purple)
- Recruitment, retention and advancement (grey)
- Goal setting and performance management (yellow)
- Mentors, buddies and role models (blue)
- Cultural awareness (green)
- Organisational culture and systems, commitment (orange)
- Relationships, understanding each other's backgrounds (olive)
- Reputation (white)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored by detailing the codes and grounding.
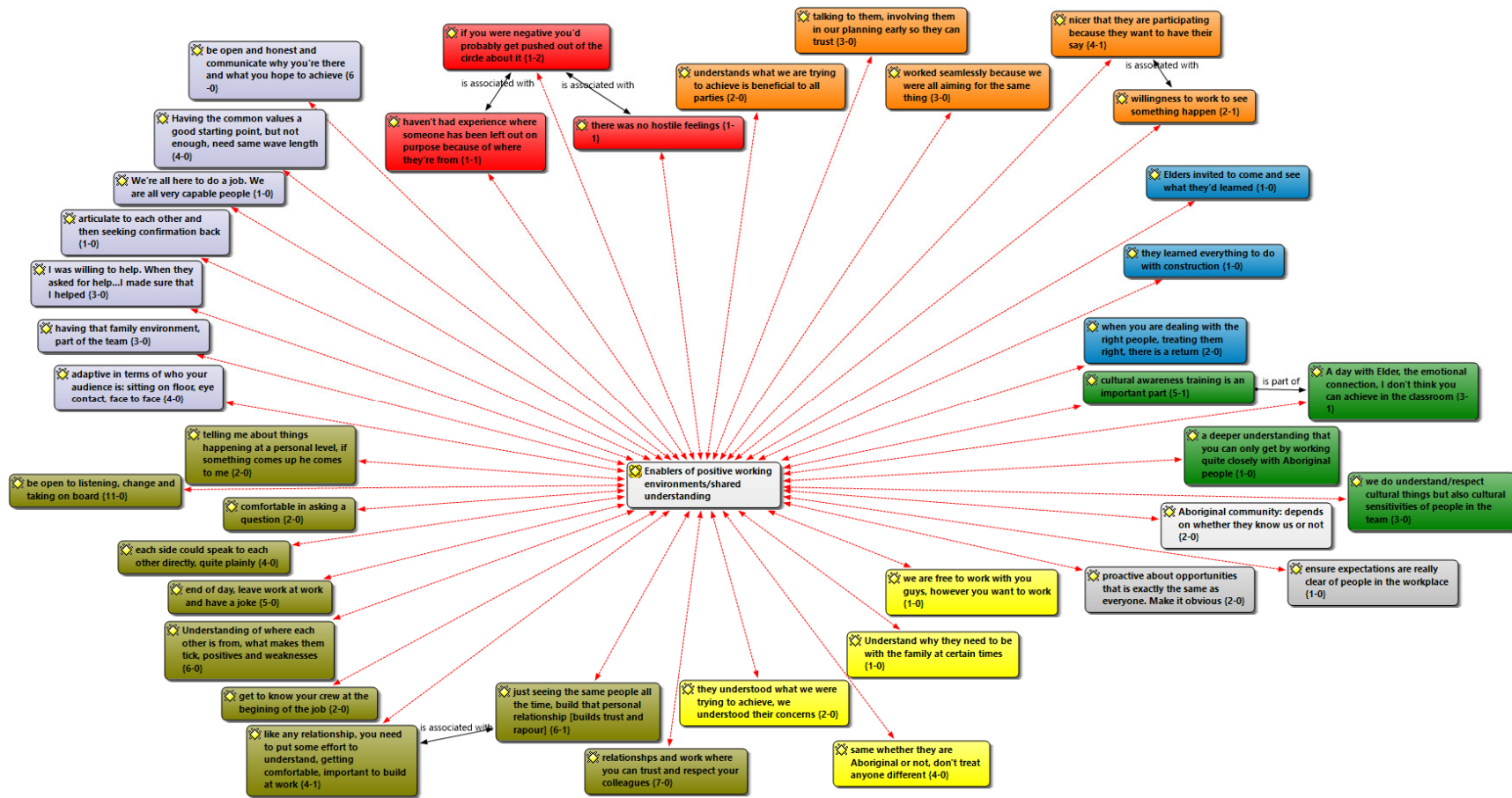
Figure 4.78: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Non-Aboriginal Workers' Enablers of Positive Working Environments, Shared Understanding

Racism and Tolerance (red)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory with themes around racism and tolerance has been created. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 3

It was not possible to ground these and they are provided in detail in Figure 4.79. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the red coloured codes only.
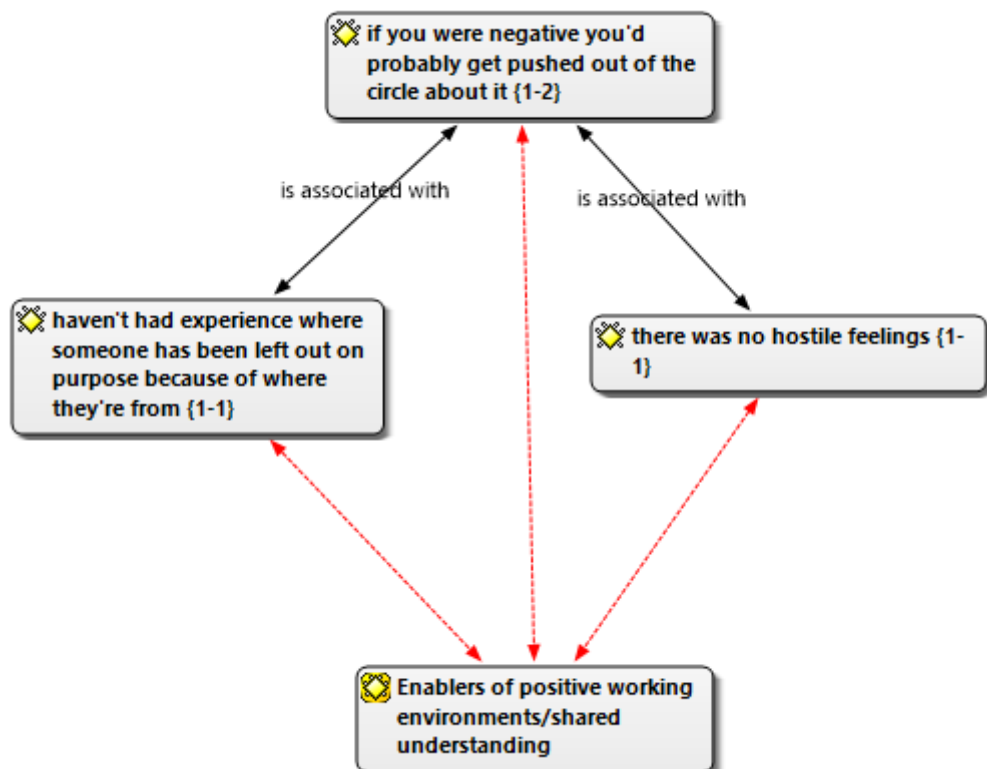
Figure 4.79: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism and Tolerance Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
If you were negative you'd probably get pushed out of the circle about it	1
Haven't had experience where someone has been left out on purpose because of where they're from	1
There was no hostile feelings	1

Researcher Comment:

Interestingly, the Non-Aboriginal Workers interviewed did not see the racism and, in fact, claimed the group would 'self-regulate' if racism occurred. This is inconsistent with other hermeneutic units.

Team Influence (light purple)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with the themes around team influence. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 22
- Grounded codes: 7

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.80. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the light purple coloured codes only.

Figure 4.80: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Influence Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Be open and honest and communicate why you're there and what you hope to achieve	6
Adaptive in terms of who your audience is: sitting on floor, eye contact,	4

Codes	Grounded
face to face	
Having the common values a good starting point, but not enough, need same wavelength	4
I was willing to help. When they asked for help…I made sure that I helped	3
Having that family environment, part of the team	3
Articulate to each other and then seeking confirmation back	1
We're all here to do a job. We are all very capable people	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Be open and honest and communicate why you're there and what you hope to achieve" contained the following utterances:

> communication is huge…sort of being like more honest about your work //
> be honest about it. If you have a…what you're trying to do, let them know.
> // getting people to understand…so taking them out to site, to explain a
> future project and getting them to understand…I guess our requirements
> and what we need to do. // as long as you communicate why you're there,
> and what you hope to achieve // open and honest then…things generally go
> OK // Opening communication, yeah

As with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders there is a theme that the team is like a family. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN1) explained:

> Having that family environment and they 100% bring that to the table.
> That's really important for them and working in a team environment…you
> definitely start seeing those personalities that want to be like family person
> looking after the team.

Another (WN2) highlighted the importance of being willing to assist: *"I just highlighted the fact that I was willing to help. And when they asked for help…I made sure that I helped."*

Researcher Comment:

Many themes are similar to those of the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders; however, this hermeneutic unit focused more on the communications team work and less on the leadership role in influencing the team.

Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (grey)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around recruitment, retention and advancement. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 3
- Grounded codes: 2

These are provided in detail in Figure 4.81. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the grey coloured codes only.

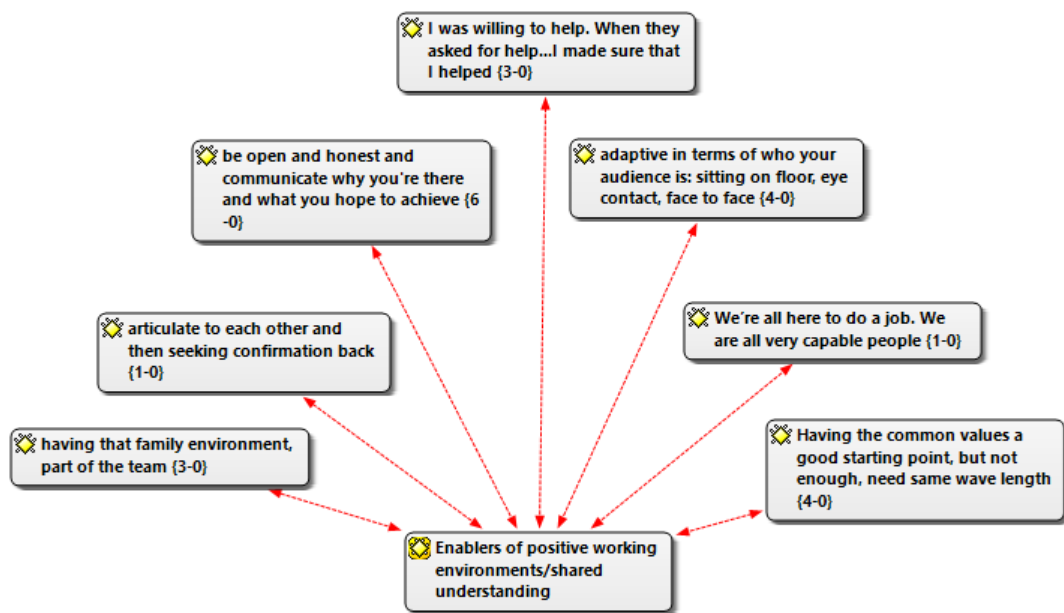*Figure 4.81: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment, Retention and Advancement Subcategory from the Category of Enablers*

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Proactive about opportunities that is exactly the same as everyone. Make it obvious	2
Ensure expectations are really clear of people in the workplace	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Proactive about opportunities that is exactly the same as everyone. Make it obvious" contained the following utterances:

> *everyone needs to be given a fair chance from the get go. They might have had other issues that fell into their workplace. // being really proactive about making it black and white the opportunities that they have is exactly*

the same as everyone and they just don't understand that or don't have an understanding that they can do that job and go get qualified just like someone else. I think they need to make it more obvious to them.

Researcher Comment:

As with the other hermeneutic units, there was a theme around equality and providing the same opportunities. However, the Non-Aboriginal Workers are also aware that their Aboriginal colleagues may not be cognisant of the opportunities available to them and may need that to be made more obvious.

Goal Setting and Performance Management (yellow)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around goal setting and performance management. This subcategory had

- In vivo codes: 8
- Grounded codes: 4

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.82. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the yellow coloured codes only.

Figure 4.82: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Goal Setting and Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Same whether they are Aboriginal or not, don't treat anyone different	4
They understood what we were trying to achieve, we understood their concerns	2
Understand why they need to be with family at certain times	1
We are free to work with you guys, however you want to work	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Same whether they are Aboriginal or not, don't treat anyone different" contained the following utterances:

> *they are just treated exactly the same // it is the same whether they are*
> *Aboriginal or not…and I actually don't like to treat any one different because*
> *they are from a different background or they get more opportunities… //*
> *everybody is here and we are not favouring these people because they're*
> *white and got a strong family history of project management. And we're not*
> *favoring these people because they're Indigenous and we think we need to*
> *// I don't think that's any different to any of the other project managers*
> *who are working in Perth as opposed to…to here*

Again, a theme of 'no difference' was found between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal staff; however, an understated difference around differences in backgrounds and what 'the other' might want, as WN2 stated: *"try to understand where the other party is coming from"*.

Researcher Comment:

This hermeneutic unit had less of a performance management and issuing instruction type focus on their commentary and a more pragmatic discussion around understanding, treatment of each other and acknowledging the difference in background. This is possibly due to the lack of leadership role and not having the need to issue instructions to others, but to follow those instructions with others.

Mentors, Buddies and Role Models (blue)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around mentors, buddies and role models. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 4
- Grounded codes: 3

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.83. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the blue coloured codes only.

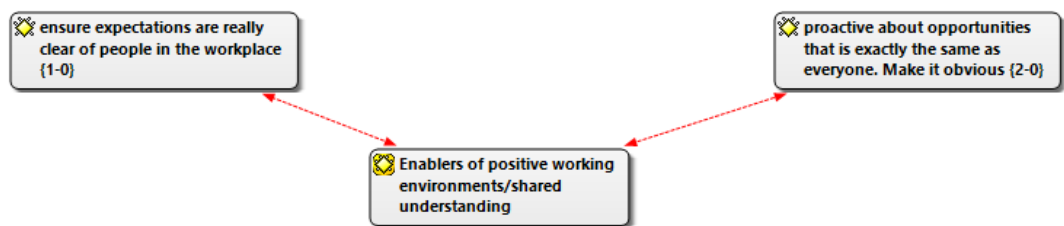*Figure 4.83: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Mentors, Buddies and Role Models Subcategory from the Category of Enablers*

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
When you are dealing with the right people, treating them right there is a return	2
Elders invited to come and see what they'd learned	1
They learned everything to do with construction	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "When you are dealing with the right people, treating them right there is a return" contained the following utterances:

> *If you treat people right, 99% of them treat you right. // when you are dealing with the right people and treating them right, there is a return; funnily enough.*

Researcher Comment:

As with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, this hermeneutic unit recognised the importance of the involvement of Elders. The commentary here is different to their team leader counterparts as often they would be the ones undertaking the mentoring and this is reflected in the "they learned everything to do with construction" code. Therefore, they are coming at the mentoring and role models' issue from a different perspective in the relationship.

Cultural Awareness (green)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around cultural awareness. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 12
- Grounded codes: 4

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.84. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the green coloured codes only.
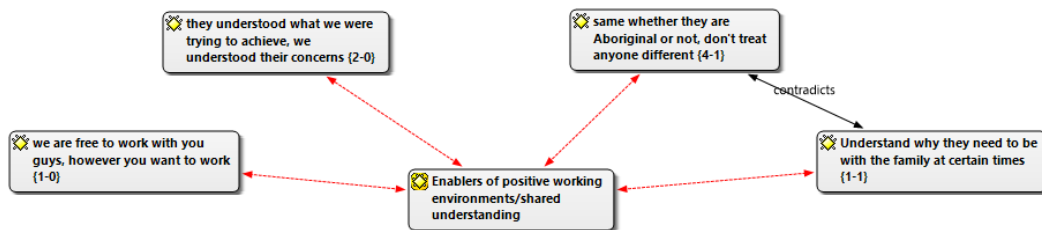

Figure 4.84: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Cultural Awareness Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Cultural awareness training is an important part	5
We do understand/respect cultural things but also cultural sensitivities of people in the team	3
A day with Elder, the emotional connection, I don't think you can achieve in the classroom	3
A deeper understanding that you can only get by working quite closely with Aboriginal people	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Cultural awareness training is an important part" contained the following utterances:

> *they do a whole induction on the background on what's happened in the last couple of hundred years, so I have a better understanding and appreciation on like where they've come from and their land, I think in comparison with my first year at [company], I had no idea. I didn't really*

understand the history or anything like that…it's was…I wasn't born here //

really is important to understand the history, the background of it

and…when you're working, like on the land // cultural awareness training, I

think is an important part. I think that's one of the useful tools // classroom

style is…is the easy option. Is the quick option that could be used in any

shape or form // Definitely cultural awareness

In addition to the value of cultural awareness training and discussions around culture, Non-Aboriginal Workers interviewed felt they had some understanding of culture. It was generally acknowledged though that class room style cultural awareness training is not enough. Working closely with Aboriginal people or spending time on country with Elders provides a deeper understanding, as WN2 explains:

that is the emotional connection. I don't think you can achieve…in the

classroom. He comes and talks about the same thing, he is not going to cry

in front of 20 people…and just basically giving everything. But when you're

actually in that moment that you are sharing things…

Researcher Comment:

This is consistent with views expressed by their Non-Aboriginal Team Leader counterparts.

Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment (orange)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around organisational culture, systems and commitment. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 14
- Grounded codes: 5

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.85. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the orange coloured codes only.
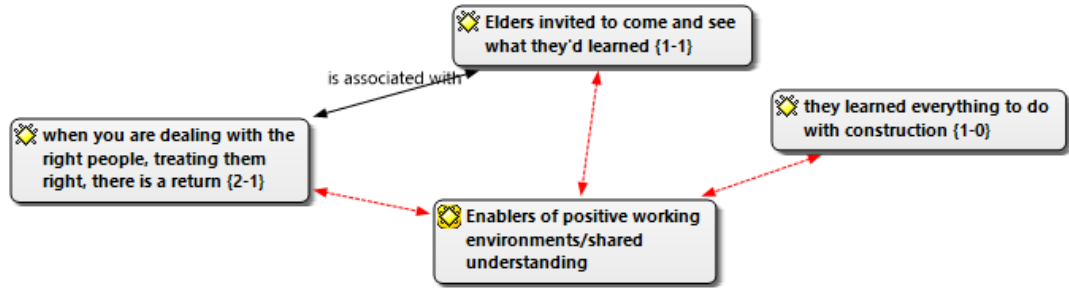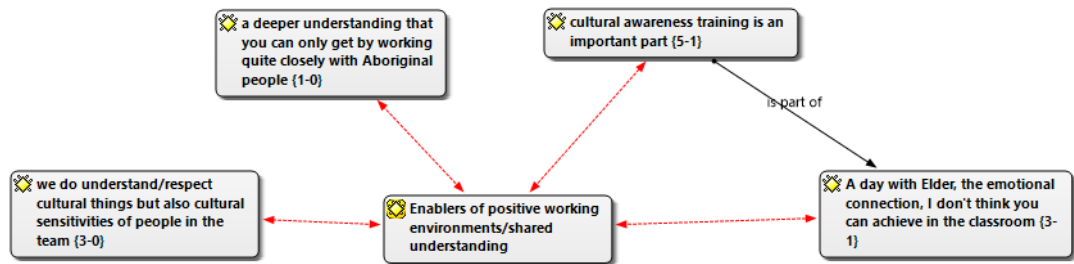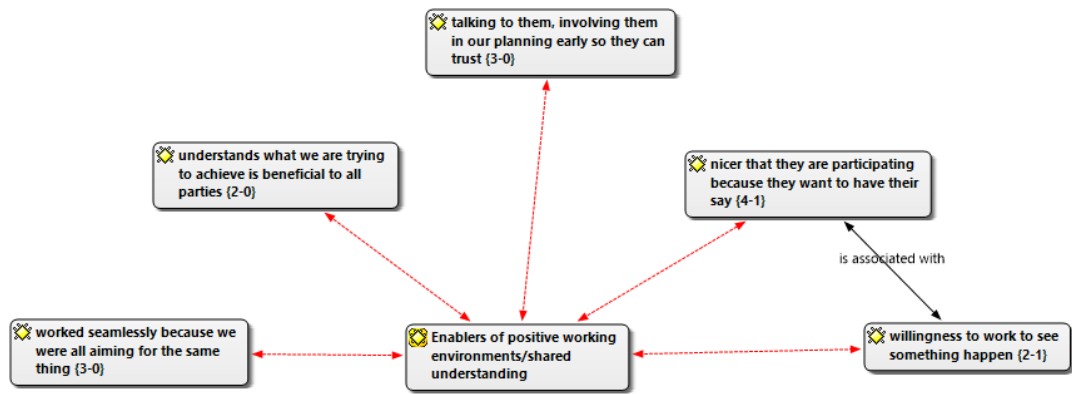
Figure 4.85: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Nicer that they are participating because they want to have their say	4
Worked seamlessly because we were all aiming for the same thing	3
Talking to them, involving them in our planning early so they can trust	3
Understands what we are trying to achieve is beneficial to all parties	2
Willingness to work to see something happen	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Nicer that they are participating because they want to have their say" contained the following utterances:

> *helping them to understand some of the language and they could weave some of the stories around that. // the willingness of them to be there and to…participate in it. // if you've got willing people that are…I mean, ultimately, they were going to get paid, but…it's nice to not have it be just about the money and the payment // nicer that they are going there and participating because they want to have a say and they're interested*

As most leadership theory explains the motivation (willingness) and aiming for the same thing gives the Non-Aboriginal Workers a sense of cultural alignment. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN2) put it: *"the key there was sharing the common goal in the end."*

Researcher Comment:

The responses of the Non-Aboriginal Workers for this subcategory do not have the diversity of the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders, however the utterances are consistent with some of the grounded codes of the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders.

Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds (olive)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around relationships and understanding each other's backgrounds. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 49
- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.86. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the olive coloured codes only.

Figure 4.86: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Be open to listening, change and taking on board	11
Relationships and work where you can trust and respect your colleagues	7
Just seeing the same people all the time build that personal relationship	6

Understanding of where each other is from, what makes them tick, positives and weaknesses	6
End of day, leave work at work and have a joke	5
Each side could speak to each other directly, quite plainly	4
Like and relationship, you need to put some effort to understand, getting comfortable, important to build at work	4
Telling me about things happening at a personal level, if something comes up he comes to me	2
Comfortable in asking a question	2
Getting to know your crew at the beginning of the job	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "End of day, leave work at work and have a joke" contained the following utterances:

> *they create like that personable environment where you know you can go to them or they're happy to have a beer with you after work kind of thing // if you can go and make and effort and have like a beer after work or something. They can really appreciate that. But it takes time to be accepted. // if someone will go and get you a beer or they invite you to…social things and things like that. It's just like a more positive relationship…yeah. // end of the day, leave work at work and be able to have a joke // always the really sociable ones and will have a laugh and have a joke*

There are interrelated codes within this theme around trust, building relationships, being open and honest with each other. This is exemplified in the following statement by a Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3): *"we are both conscious of the fact that we need to work together and we have a healthy respect for one another."*

Several also emphatically talked about the importance of spending time building the relationships, such as WN4:

> *Having the same people working on the project for a long time. And this might be a bit more of a general statement, so you know, for example…now I've been here for 7 years and you can refer back to different stages of the project and say oh, remember when we went out on site…and looked at this and…oh you were there when we talked about that. And they say that to me*

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as well, oh yeah, you were there that time when we went out and did…that.

I think it…it's just a relationship thing.

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory holds themes around trust, respect, feeling comfortable, listening and understanding each other's background as in the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader data.

Organisational Reputation (white)

Within the category of Enablers, a subcategory has been created with themes around organisational reputation. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 2
- Grounded codes: 1

This code is provided in detail in Figure 4.87. This is an extract from the network map of Figure 4.78, showing the white coloured code only.
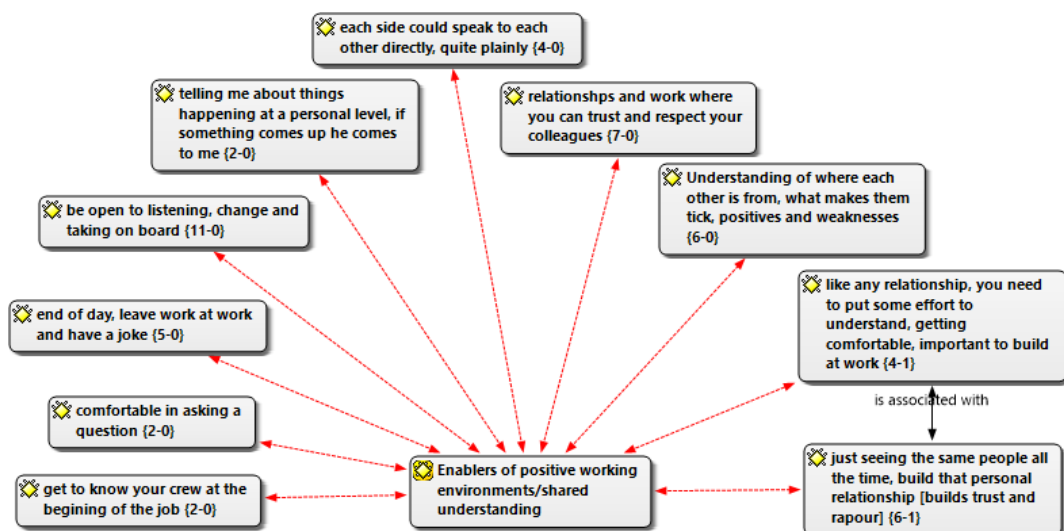

Figure 4.87: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Organisational Reputation Subcategory from the Category of Enablers

The code in this subcategory is:

Codes	Grounded
Aboriginal community: depends on whether they know us or not	2

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Aboriginal community: depends on whether they know us or not" contained the following utterances:

a lot of it is reputation // the Aboriginal community…it depends on whether
they know us or not, because there's certain members of it that…know us
and know what we do and are quite supportive of what we do. And they
trust us and then there's other ones that don't.

Researcher Comment:

This small subcategory is the only one not encompassed by other hermeneutic units.

4.5.2 Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding ("Inhibitors")

Within the category of Inhibitors there were:

- In vivo codes: 61
- Grounded codes: 28

These grounded codes are shown in the overall network map in Figure 4.88.

For ease of analysis, these have been divided into the following subcategories for discussion:

- Racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions (red)
- Team leader/team matters (purple)
- Performance management (yellow)
- Recruitment and retention matters (grey)
- Relationship building matters (olive)

Each of these subcategories will now be further explored by detailing the codes and grounding.
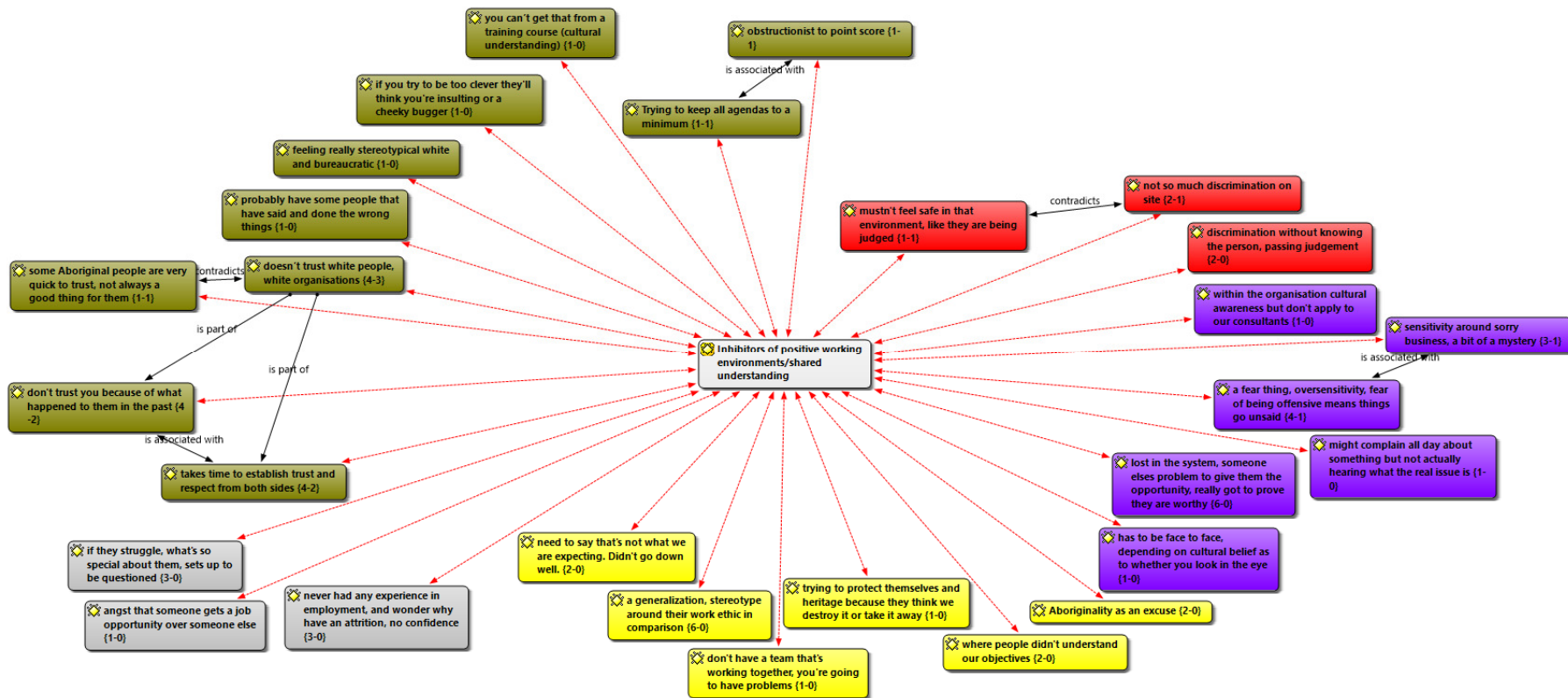
Figure 4.88: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Inhibitors

Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory has been created with the themes around racism, stereotypes, prejudices and perceptions. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 5
- Grounded codes: 3

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.89. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.88, showing the red coloured codes only.

Figure 4.89: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Not so much discrimination on site	2
Discrimination without knowing the person, passing judgement	2
Mustn't feel safe in that environment, like they are being judged	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Not so much discrimination on site" contained the following utterances:

> *not so much discrimination on site // not so much of that discrimination*

As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN4) comments in relation to how our perceptions and prejudices are coloured:

Discrimination without knowing the person. Like anything like of any one

from a different culture…and not passing judgment before you get to know

the person and I think all people will do that but…yeah.

Researcher Comment:

This theme of racism is less prevalent than in the other hermeneutic units; however, the nature of the commentary is similar.

Team Leader/Team Matters (purple)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around team leaders. This subcategory embraced codes that were regarding the team leader's understanding and behaviour that impacted negatively on working relationships. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 16
- Grounded codes: 6

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.90. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.88, showing the purple coloured codes only.
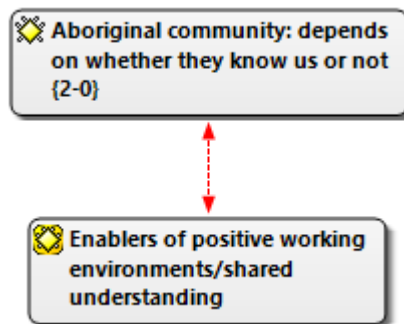

Figure 4.90: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Team Leader/Team Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Lost in the system, someone else's problem to give them the	6

Codes	Grounded
opportunity, really got to prove they are worthy	
A fear thing, oversensitivity, fear of being offensive means things go unsaid	4
Sensitivity around sorry business, a bit of a mystery	3
Might complain all day about something but not actually hearing what the real issue is	1
Has to be face to face, depending on cultural belief as to whether you look in the eye or not	1
Within the organisation cultural awareness but don't apply to our consultants	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "A fear thing, oversensitivity, fear of being offensive means things go unsaid" contained the following utterances:

> *almost an oversensitivity. That you're a bit scared to say anything in case you say something wrong. // not scared, but you're reluctant to…to say something for fear of it being offensive I suppose. // a fear thing and I think that it means things go unsaid. And maybe things need to be said. // might say something to a non-Aboriginal colleague, but you would possibly bite your tongue before you said that to an Aboriginal colleague*

In alignment with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader colleagues, one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN1) also observes, some supervisors (team leaders) do not recognise and promote Aboriginal people based on their skill sets and experience: *"almost the opposite with the site supervisors [team leaders]. Like they've really got to…prove almost that they are worthy of that opportunity"*

Researcher Comment:

This subcategory is, not surprisingly, much less performance management based than the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader equivalent subcategory. Here we can see a clear focus and sensitivity within the team. Although there is awareness among the Non-Aboriginal Workers that their Aboriginal counterparts can be over-looked and promotional opportunities are not clear to their colleagues.

Performance Management of Aboriginal Employees (yellow)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the theme of management of Aboriginal employees. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 14
- Grounded codes: 6

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.91. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.88, showing the yellow coloured codes only.
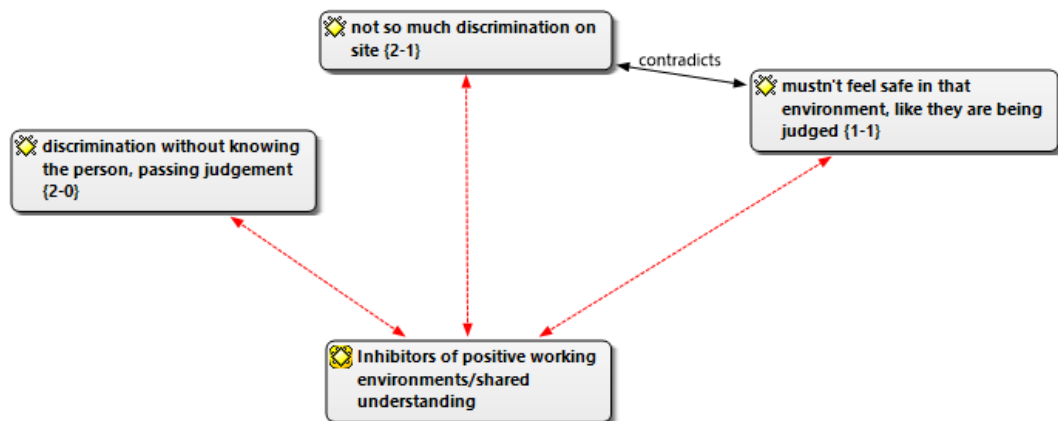

Figure 4.91: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Performance Management Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
A generalisation, stereotype around their work ethic in comparison	6
Need to say that's not what we are expecting. Didn't go down well	2
Aboriginality as an excuse	2
Where people didn't understand our objectives	2
Don't have a team that's working together you're going to have problems	1
Trying to protect themselves and heritage because they think we destroy it or take it away	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "A generalisation, stereotype around their work ethic in comparison" contained the following utterances:

> *definitely a generalisation around…their work ethic in comparison to others*
> *// there is sort of that stigma, or generalisation // if there is like an*
> *expectation that they're not going to do much work, then of course you*
> *have no motivation to reach that bar. // I don't think they are too worried*
> *about working any harder or anything. // I really don't think they care if*
> *they are working at someone else's 80% but for them it might be their*
> *100%. // little tidbits of what people stereotype and drivers*
> *or…yeah…laziness what have you*

There is a concern regarding performance of Aboriginal employees among their colleagues, whether it is real or perceived is questionable. When the researcher asked one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN1) who had access to timesheets if this behaviour was reflected in the timesheets, they responded with:

> *Well it's more in conversation or production on a person or their appraisal*
> *after six months or something and they would just get paid exactly the*
> *same, may be the same hours, even if they had a lot more down time*
> *or…like anyone at work that's slacking off or anything…but I think it is more*
> *of a conversation of a generalisation that that is how they work.*

This leads to team discontentment and poor relationships, as another Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3) described it, there is a feeling that their Aboriginal colleagues are *"using their Aboriginality as an excuse"*.

Researcher Comment:

Some of the commentary in this subcategory around perceptions of performance and generalisations around work ethic of Aboriginal colleagues is consistent with their Aboriginal counterparts. This group is also cognisant of the importance of team alignment and their ability to work together.

Recruitment and Retention System Matters (grey)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with themes around the systems, particularly in relation to recruitment and retention, which become barriers to understanding. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 7
- Grounded codes: 3

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.92. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.88, showing the grey coloured codes only.
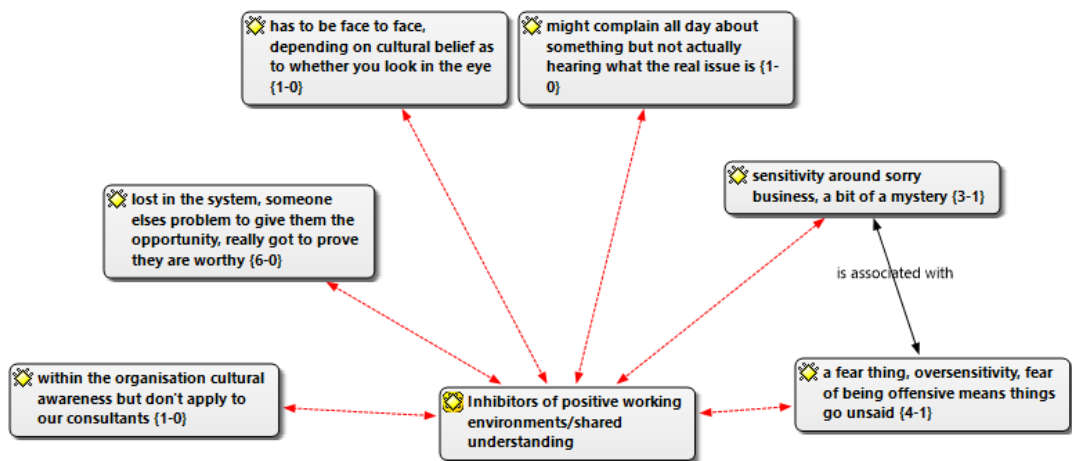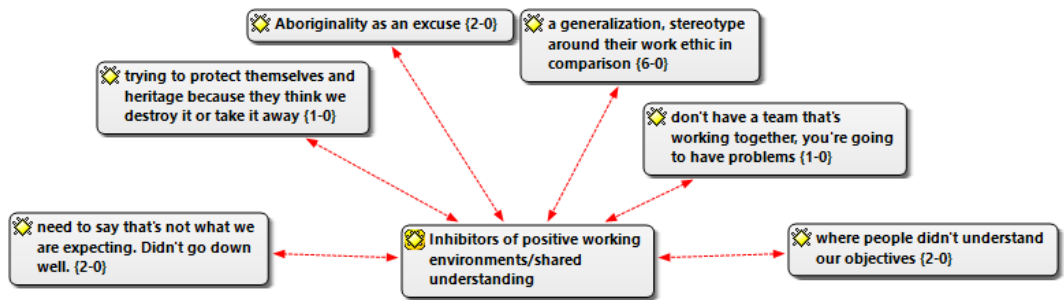

Figure 4.92: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Recruitment and System Matters Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
If they struggle, what's so special about them, sets up to be questioned	3
Never had any experience in employment, and wonder why we have attrition, no confidence	3
Angst that someone gets a job opportunity over someone else	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "If they struggle, what's so special about them, sets up to be questioned" contained the following utterances:

> *as soon as you start pampering and I think…it…if it goes well. OK, if it goes well…great and they perform and everything else. If it doesn't go well and they don't perform, you start to see within a team, people starting to go…why are they given all these different opportunities. When I went through here, I wasn't…then start to get some resentment built up. // when you sort of single out a group and you say, this group is special and everybody goes, OK, why? // if they struggle a bit, everybody goes, what's so special about them? …So it…it almost sets some of them up to…to be…questioned, potentially ridiculed*

In a variety of ways Non-Aboriginal Workers are sensitive to Aboriginal people being perceived as different or being offered opportunities that may or may not be available to

them as well. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3) commented: *"why are they given all these different opportunities?"*

However, they also seem aware that some of their Aboriginal colleagues have never had a job before and they are sensitive, almost protective of their lack of confidence in seeking new opportunities or lack of understanding as to where to go to ask. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN4) commented:

> *we are taking people who are barely work ready and trying to put them into a really intense situation. The [project], it was 12-hour days. You had to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning to be on site by 6 to work a 12-hour day to then go back home again. I couldn't do that! Let alone somebody who's never worked. In their entire life, so it's a really…some of the things that we're asking people to do, it is a really big ask.*

Researcher Comment:

The awareness of some of their Aboriginal colleague's lack of experience in the workplace is consistent with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leader views. However, the attention and focus that Non-Aboriginal Workers perceive their Aboriginal colleagues to be getting is clearly causing angst. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3) states: "*what's so special about them?*", implying a view that the extra attention and focus is unnecessary.

Relationship Building Matters (olive)

Within the category of Inhibitors, a subcategory was created with the themes of relationship building and communications. This subcategory had:

- In vivo codes: 19
- Grounded codes: 10

These grounded codes are provided in detail in Figure 4.93. These are an extract from the network map of Figure 4.88, showing the olive coloured codes only.
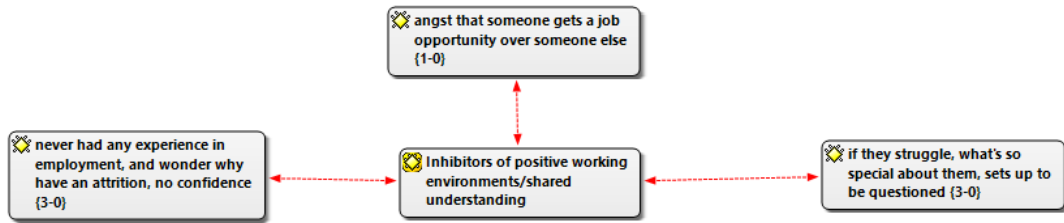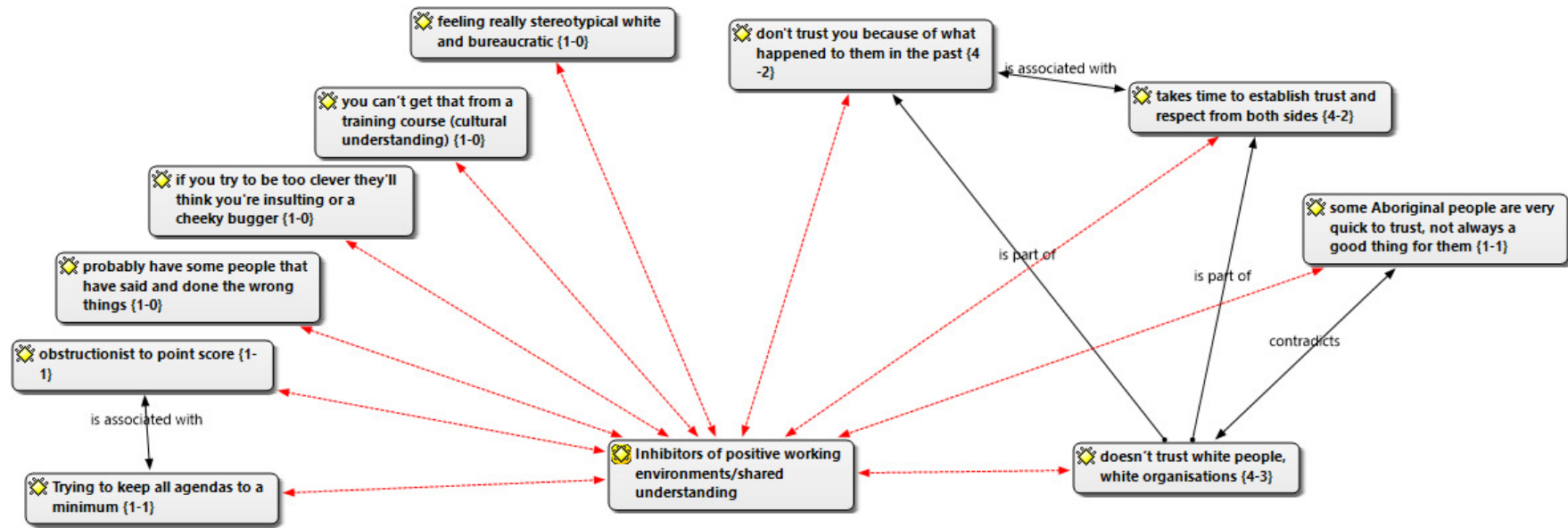
Figure 4.93: Network Map of Grounded Codes of the Relationship Building Subcategory from the Category of Inhibitors

The boxes and connections in the network map contain the following text:

- feeling really stereotypical white and bureaucratic {1-0}
- don't trust you because of what happened to them in the past {4-2}
- takes time to establish trust and respect from both sides {4-2}
- you can't get that from a training course (cultural understanding) {1-0}
- if you try to be too clever they'll think you're insulting or a cheeky bugger {1-0}
- some Aboriginal people are very quick to trust, not always a good thing for them {1-1}
- probably have some people that have said and done the wrong things {1-0}
- obstructionist to point score {1-1}
- Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding
- doesn't trust white people, white organisations {4-3}
- Trying to keep all agendas to a minimum {1-1}

Relationships shown: "is associated with", "is part of", "contradicts"

The grounded codes in this subcategory are:

Codes	Grounded
Doesn't trust white people, white organisations	4
Takes time to establish trust and respect from both sides	4
Don't trust you because of what happened to them in the past	4
Some Aboriginal people are very quick to trust, not always a good thing for them	1
Feeling really stereotypical white and bureaucratic	1
You can't get that from a training course (cultural understanding)	1
If you try to be too clever they'll think you're insulting or a cheeky bugger	1
Probably have some people that have said and done the wrong things	1
Obstructionist to point score	1
Trying to keep agendas to a minimum	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Doesn't trust white people, white organizations" contained the following utterances:

> *still like a spectrum of people that…the Aboriginals that don't like the white man so to speak // doesn't trust white people to start with… that doesn't trust white organisations // The amount of mistrust // maybe the way they've been treated in the past*

As with the Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders this group is also sensitive to the amount of time and effort to build trust in the relationship. As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN5) observed: *"It does take time and yeah, it does improve if…if you get to know them."*

Researcher Comment:

This is fairly consistent with the commentary of other hermeneutic units. There appears greater sensitivity to political agendas in the Non-Aboriginal Worker commentary coming through in the 'obstructionist' and 'agenda' commentary.

4.5.3 Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating positive regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 40
- Grounded codes: 19

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.94.

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
Backs my decisions, supportive, open to my ideas, on the same side	9
Good way of speaking to people, engaging with people	3
Open, available to consult with, I can go to him	3
Really believes in and he does his best, not just lip service	3
Work out what they can do, embrace that	2
Take responsibility	2
Know you're part of the team, never felt alone	2
A good level of trust, he takes my advice	2
Leaving you to get on with things	2
Getting to know your crew and feeling safe around them	2
In certain areas shows very strong leadership	2
Nice, open, nobody kind of leading, nor pressure to have viewpoint	1
He's taken extra steps to make sure team delivers	1
Got to come from the individual, to be given this opportunity	1
Job has got to be done and client happy	1
Problem will be discussed and resolved	1
Share with me but doesn't share with anybody else	1
Constructive feedback on a regular basis	1
Be straight out about things	1
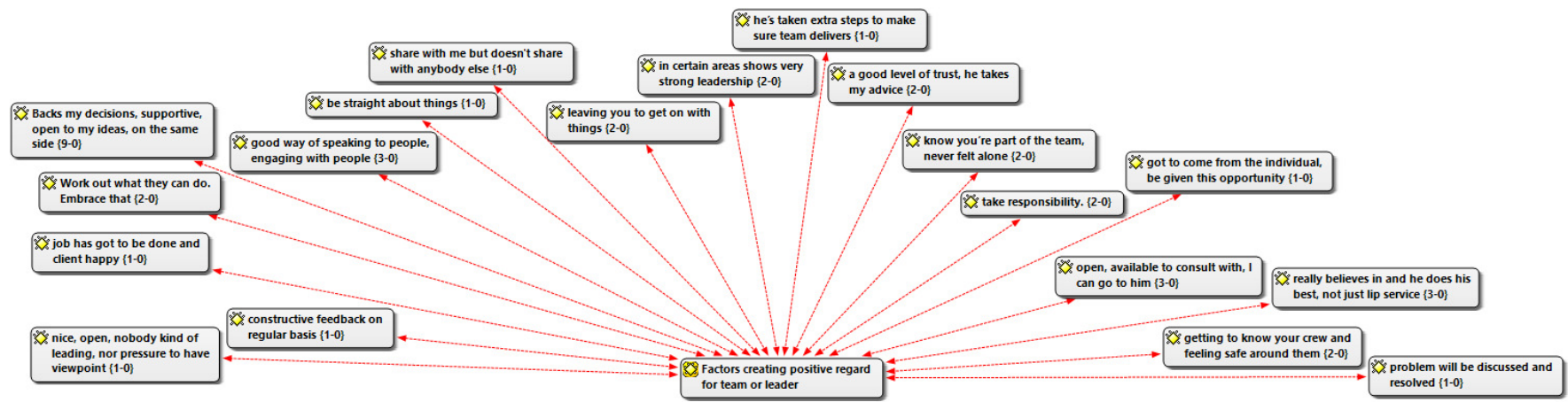
Figure 4.94: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Backs my decisions, supportive, open to my ideas, on the same side" contained the following utterances:

> *create some sort of environment where everyone feels like they can contribute. I think that would be a lot better // He backs my decisions // he was always very willing to negotiate, is not the right word, but to be flexible and to take on board their point of view and drill that through to the consultant team that that is what they needed. // supporting you and your team when they need support. // he was very supportive // we were just on the same side basically // I find him very supportive so…I can't pinpoint anything. // is very supportive and very open to my ideas and ways of improving things so… // supporting me is important.*

The need for supportiveness is not only demonstrated by the utterances in the code above, but also in terms of being open and available and demonstrating mutual trust. This is reflected in comment from one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN5): *"he's very open to or available to go and…consult with."*

Then from another (WN4): "*knowing that sometimes he asks me for advice and trusts what I say".*

Researcher Comment:

The requirements here from a team leader are consistent with those of the other hermeneutic units around trust, being supportive, leading by example and honesty.

4.5.4   Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within the category of factors creating negative regard for team or team leader, there were:

- In vivo codes: 8
- Grounded codes: 7

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.95.
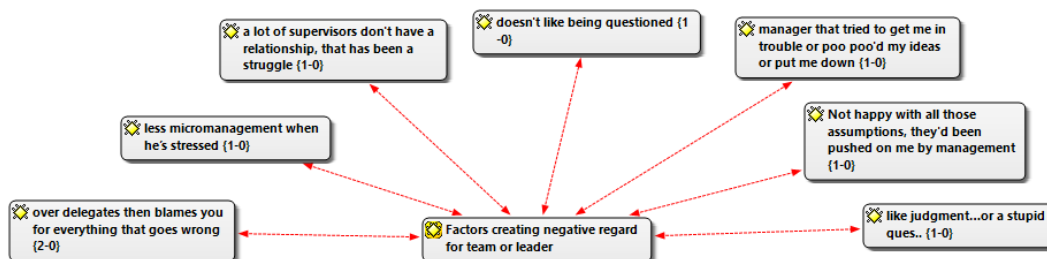
Figure 4.95: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

The codes in this category are as follows:

Codes	Grounded
Over-delegates then blames you for everything that goes wrong	2
Manager that tried to get me in trouble or poo poo'd my ideas or put me down	1
Not happy with all those assumptions, they'd been pushed on me by management	1
Like judgement, or a stupid question	1
Less micromanagement when he's stressed	1
Doesn't like being questioned	1
A lot of team leaders don't have a relationship, that has been a struggle	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "Over-delegates then blames you for everything that goes wrong" contained the following utterances:

> *He over-delegates and he almost delegates to an extent that he passes all responsibility then blames you for everything that goes wrong. // You have your responsibilities. I have my responsibilities. Let's share them and work together, rather than passing everything to you…then saying everything's your fault.*

The need for supportive management and team are reflected in the following commentary by one Non-Aboriginal Worker (NW5): *"If I had a manager that turned around and tried to get me in trouble or poo poo'd my ideas or my work or put me down that…that…I wouldn't be very impressed".*

Researcher Comment:

The data from the Non-Aboriginal Worker is more Team Leader-focused, than their Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders who focused more on the happenings within the team. This is likely reflective of their positions and roles within their respective organisations.

4.5.5 Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 14
- Grounded codes: 12

These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.96.

Figure 4.96: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding or Improve Working Relationships

The grounded codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
From people unsure of what we are going to do, distrusting to a point of trust	4
Right people in the right place	2

Codes	Grounded
Not from European country works to my favour	1
Spiritual situation	1
Can feel it but how do you reconcile with work environment	1
Aboriginal way respect the Elders, connection to land	1
Asked for changes, we made them, that journey built the relationship	1
Work on trusting each other more, both ways	1
Realising neither has the upper, the full control, each discussion is unique	1
Tell you where you stand	1
Don't have to look someone directly in the eye to understand	1
Encouraged juniors to go with seniors	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "From people unsure of what we are going to do, distrusting to a point of trust" contained the following utterances:

> *just go out into…fields and ranges and have a look and be able to put plans on top of utes and talk about what their stories are and have our consultants there mapping things out in one hit // this is what we took from the meeting we had with you guys, does it look about right? And they were able to go oh, yeah that is that walking trail that we used to do when we were kids and this is where the kids go now and this is the cultural area that…you know…we told you about…oh it's good to see that's mapped out. That's a really positive way of…I think of dealing with heritage. // we'd like to respect your heritage places, but you…we need you to work with us. They understood that and away we went. It's where you have…either side trying to score points…then that's when you have the breakdowns. // we went from a point where…people were really unsure about what we were going to do. It is in an area that had…does have a mythological heritage site recorded over it….So we were in a quite sensitive area. And just…getting from that point where people were very…distrusting of us, through to a point where they trusted us.*

As stated by one Non-Aboriginal Worker (NW5): *"we need to work on trusting each other more, both ways"*.

An expression of understanding that culture is reflected in the spirituality story. One Non-Aboriginal Worker (NW4) told a story of their unique spiritual experience:

> *Then you dive into the waterhole, swim over to the other side and you look up and there's a big Wanjina watching you as you sit under the waterfall…It's just…I can't explain it…it sort of gives you…it sort of give you shivers…and…yeah, just…I sort of had this moment, when I was like…oh maybe this is what people…talk about…this is what aboriginal people talk about.*

Aboriginal people interviewed talk about these spiritual experiences as well in other interviews. However, as the Non-Aboriginal Worker (NW5) said:

> *You can feel it. But how do you reconcile that with a work environment? Because that is not…that's not…that's what happens in your personal life, that is not what happens in your office life and yet I think for…for…for non-Aboriginal people, they struggle with the fact that some Aboriginal people would have to bring that into the workplace.*

Researcher Comment:

The observations around issues/insights take a different focus to the other hermeneutic units, other than the Aboriginal observation around spirituality and difficulty reconciling this in the workplace.

4.5.6 Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Within the category of issues or insights that prevent shared understanding or improvement of working relationships, there were:

- In vivo codes: 28
- Grounded codes: 14

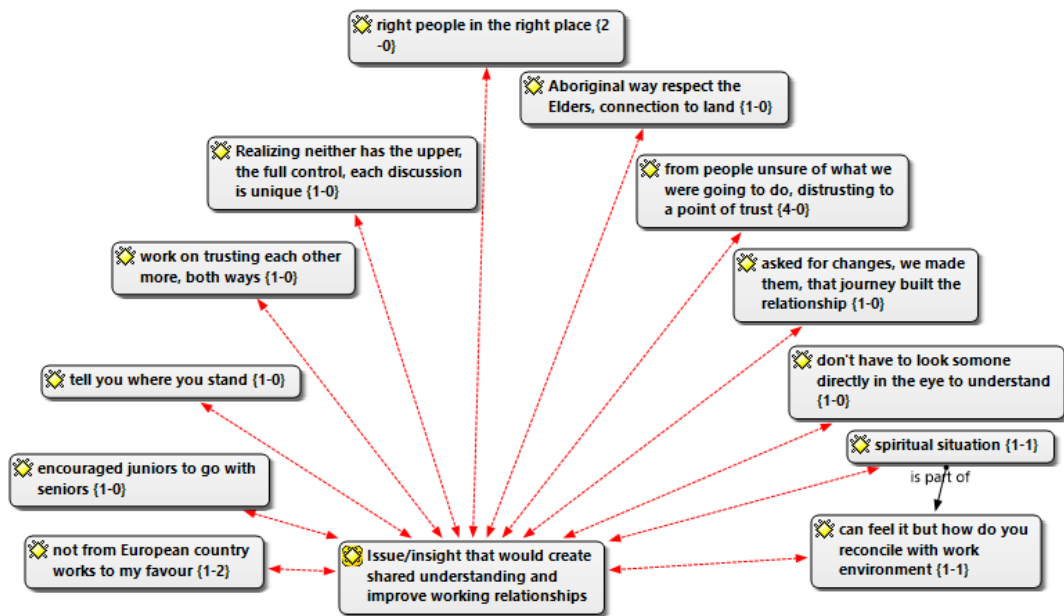These grounded codes are depicted in Figure 4.97.
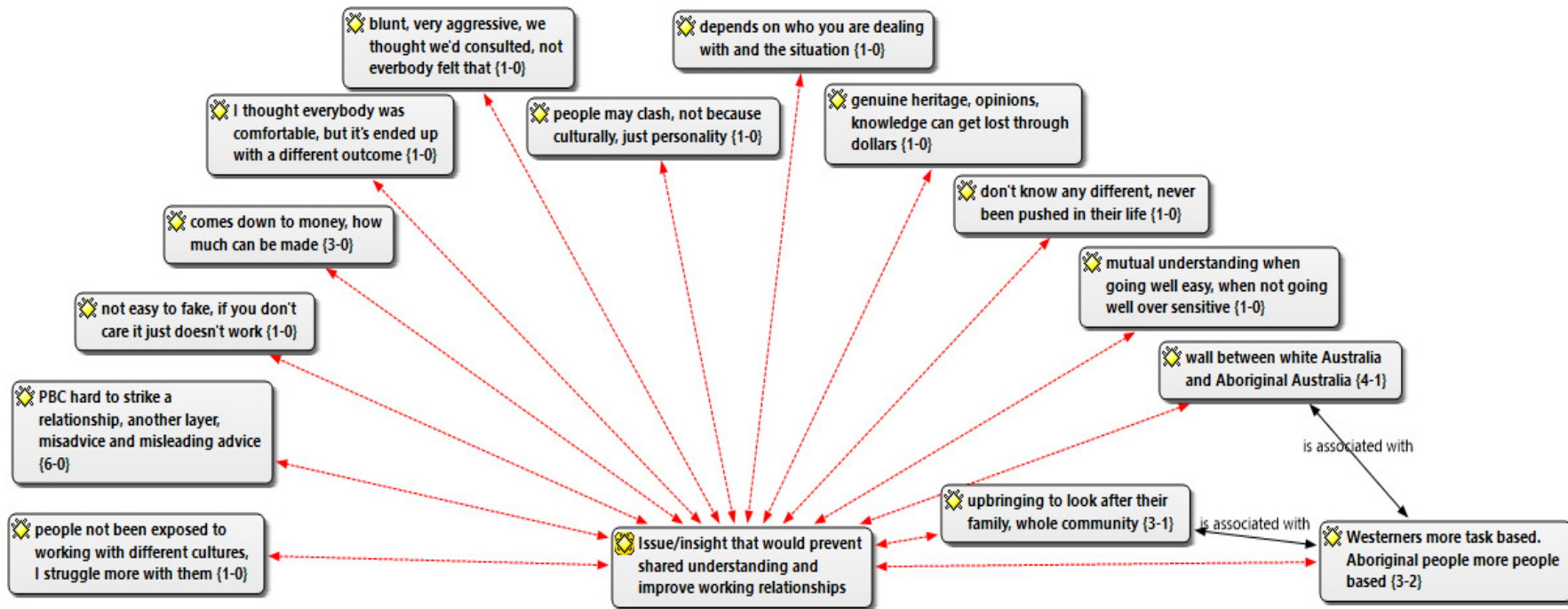
Figure 4.97: Network Map of Grounded Codes of Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

The codes in this category are:

Codes	Grounded
PBC [prescribed body corporate – a representative body of Aboriginal people] hard to strike relationship, another layer, misadvice and misleading advice	6
Wall between white Australia and Aboriginal Australia	4
Upbringing to look after their family, whole community	3
Westerners more task based. Aboriginal people more people based	3
Comes down to money, how much can be made	3
Mutual understanding when going well easy, when not going well over sensitive	1
Not easy to face, if you don't care it just doesn't work	1
I thought everybody was comfortable, but it's ended up with a different outcome	1
People may clash, not because culturally, just personality	1
People not been exposed to working with different cultures, I struggle more with them	1
Genuine heritage, opinions, knowledge can get lost through dollars	1
Depends on who you are dealing with and the situation	1
Blunt, very aggressive, we thought we'd consulted, not everybody felt that	1
Don't know any different, never been pushed in their life	1

To illustrate authentic utterances in the merging of codes, the grounded code of "PBC Hard to strike relationship, another layer, misadvice and misleading advice" contained the following utterances:

> consultants or advisors that [traditional owners] have, have…border on the point of misleading them. // Subsequently she got in trouble with her board. // again lies that whole…misadvice that they are getting…the…the really awful thing is, is that they are being lead to believe that they have all this power // when their…when a group is represented by the PBC, it is very hard to…strike up an individual relationship with those PBC [prescribed body

corporate] Board members…because you…you've got another layer to go
through, so you never…you never pick up the phone or set up a meeting
directly it's always through the…this other organisation. // as an
organisation they are meant to be an enabler, not a blocker, but I certainly
feel in some situations…they're the political block of the native title situation
is…can be very difficult. // the people I deal with aren't Aboriginal
themselves, but they obviously represent their Aboriginal people and it can
be quite frustrating with them because they're lawyers and things, getting
things through.

As one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3) put it: *"start to get this whole them and us thing,*
which is…quite divisive."

Another Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN2) commented on the essence of the divide between
the two cultures:

In the Western world, tend to be a bit more scope oriented. So it's really
important for us to deliver this, deliver that in this budget in this time.
Whereas, Aboriginal culture is a bit more stakeholder management
oriented, so you need to talk to people, understand where they are coming
from. If they have a sick child, if they have a sick parent, that actually is
important.

Researcher Comment:

This category took a different focus to the Non-Aboriginal Team leaders around the
prescribed body corporate becoming such an inhibitor in their relationships with
Aboriginal people. However, the themes around money and family relationships are quite
similar. The observed differences between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal 'worlds' are
similar to the responses from the Aboriginal respondents.

Chapter 5: Analysis of Similarities and Differences between Hermeneutic Units

5.1   Introduction

This chapter provides a brief analysis of similarities and differences in subcategories and grounded codes between hermeneutic units. Using side-by-side comparison, the four hermeneutic unit responses were compared for each category. Presentation of analysis will be provided by each of the six categories of:

A. Enablers of positive working environments/shared understanding
B. Inhibitors of positive working environments/shared understanding
C. Factors creating positive regard for team or team leader
D. Factors creating negative regard for team or team leader
E. Issues or insights that would create shared understanding and improve working relationships
F. Issues or insights that would prevent shared understanding and improve working relationships

Each of these respond to the research objectives as described in Chapter 4 and form categories within each hermeneutic unit of Chapter 4. In the case of the two categories covering the Enablers and Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared understanding, due to the large number of grounded codes, firstly the commonalities and differences in subcategories will be presented, followed by commonalities and differences in grounded codes within each Category. For the other four categories, only the commonalities and differences in grounded codes within each Category will be presented as there are no subcategories.

Where grounded codes from two hermeneutic units have similar intent, they have been detailed one after the other with // between the two grounded codes.

5.2   Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

Within this category over the four hermeneutic units, there were 910 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 303 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal

and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

The commonalities and differences at a subcategory level is provided in the diagram below (Figure 5.1). Subcategories placed into the All Team Leaders or All Workers sections were subcategories common to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders or Workers, respectively. Subcategories placed into the All Aboriginal or All Non-Aboriginal sections were common to both Team Leaders and Workers, either Aboriginal or Non-Aboriginal, respectively. Subcategories placed into the All Respondents section were common to all hermeneutic units.

However, the subcategories displayed in Figure 5.1, require further detail in terms of insights in order to better explore the similarities and differences.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	All Team Leaders Conflict Management Team Leader Matters	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
Aboriginal Respondents Self-respect/Pride Team Leader Matters	All Respondents Racism and Tolerance Team Influence Recruitment, Retention, Advancement Goal-Setting and Performance Management Mentors, Buddies and Role Models Cultural Awareness Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment Relationships, Understanding Each Other's Backgrounds	Non-Aboriginal Respondents
Aboriginal Workers	All Workers	Non-Aboriginal Workers Organisational Reputation

Figure 5.1: Commonalities and Differences of Subcategories within Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. The insights shared by all four hermeneutic units as enabling shared understanding included:

- The team is like a family, good mates and this personal relationship and genuine friendship is part of team success and developing an understanding
- Cultural awareness training and creating cultural safety are very important
- Everybody has to perform to the same standard

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders believed that several insights enabled shared understanding with these including:

- Do not make a big deal out of it, all part of a team
- Leadership at both an individual and company level is important to success
- Caring about each other and showing empathy
- Show respect and honesty and do an honest day's work
- My experience is a bit different…skilled labourers
- Connect both as individuals and to the Aboriginal community
- Conflict managed differently: including dealing with performance issues directly on a one-to-one basis; being upfront in communications, learning to defuse situations of conflict through humour
- Support structures – mentors, advisors, role models

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers also had areas of agreement as to what enables shared understanding; these included:
- Get the job done
- Help each other out
- Be open and honest in your communications
- The code of conduct expected is clear around respecting each other.

Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agree that:
- Mentors, support people and role models work well (Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agree with this as well)
- Maintaining good relationships and people getting along, including allowing time to build trust
- Be willing to learn from each other and be supportive
- Making your own way on your own abilities

All enable positive working environments and shared understanding. However as one Code expresses:

> *Patience and Time. The thing with blackfellas, you just give them time you*
> *get that bit of trust with each other.*

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers noted the following as being important in enabling shared understanding:

- Be accommodating of family time

- Be frank, honest and open about expectations

- Creating buy in and planning early

Interestingly both groups of Workers and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed that the involvement of Elders in mentoring or as informal oversight was beneficial. It is possible that this wasn't mentioned by Aboriginal Team Leaders are nearly half were Elders in their own right.

Both Aboriginal Workers and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agree that these things enable shared understanding:

- training team leaders prior to engaging Aboriginal staff;

- The connection between Aboriginal people is immediate

- Aboriginal engagement is not just about employment, it is more about economic development and how the organisation works with the community.

However, overall more differences are found than similarities. These differences are explored in Figure 5.2.

There was an acknowledgement of a 'different experience' by Aboriginal people raised in non-Aboriginal culture. They identified that their own upbringings may cause their results to differ from others within their hermeneutic units. This was particularly reflected within the Enablers of Shared understanding discussion as contributing to their better understanding within the workplace. While this would be an area for further research, their responses do suggest a different perspective to the broader group.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Influence each other • Be flexible, focus on retention but don't be taken for a ride • Connect as individuals, share stories, be open • Help each other out, unify as a team	• Need to have a mix of the right personalities and cultures in the team • Demonstrate the organisation's commitment • Tolerance and reduce pre-conceptions • Connection with the team/ Not just the team leader, it's about the immediate team as well
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• Good relationship with Team Leader, know how he sees things • Company culture of acceptance and feel encouraged • You'll never truly understand, but try not to be offensive • You have to maintain that level of trust and relationship • Honour, self-respect and authenticity • Someone who hasn't been in Australia a long time, they understand Aboriginal needs better	• No racist experiences/hostile feelings • Common values a good starting point, but not enough • Willing to work and participate • Need to be adaptive in communication techniques, direct and seeking confirmation back • Get to know each other, it's easier if they know us

Figure 5.2: Differences of Insights within Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

5.3   Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

Within this Category over the four hermeneutic units there were 666 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 289 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

The commonalities and differences at a subcategory level are provided in the diagram below (Figure 5.3). Subcategories placed into the All Team Leaders or All Workers sections were subcategories common to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders or Workers, respectively. Subcategories placed into the All Aboriginal or All Non-Aboriginal sections were common to both Team Leaders and Workers, either Aboriginal or Non-Aboriginal, respectively. Subcategories placed into the All Respondents section were common to all hermeneutic units.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	All Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
		Shame Matters and Aboriginal People Ceasing Work Cultural Matters
Aboriginal Respondents Shame and Confidence Matters Cultural Matters Conflict Management	**All Respondents** Racism, Stereotypes, Prejudices and Perceptions Team Leader Matters Team Matters Performance Management Recruitment and Retention Relationship Building	**Non-Aboriginal Respondents**
Aboriginal Workers Organisational Culture, Systems and Commitment	**All Workers**	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**

Figure 5.3: Commonalities and Differences of Subcategories within Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

However, the subcategories displayed in Figure 5.3, require further detail in terms of insights to better explore the similarities and differences.

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. The insights shared by all four hermeneutic units as inhibiting shared understanding included:

- Discrimination, prejudices, stereotyping and being judgemental
- Taking time out of work for funerals is not well understood and impacts on the team

Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders shared several insights that they believed inhibited shared understanding; these included:

- Racism works both ways
- No hope and anger
- Lack of understanding of Aboriginal culture
- Us versus them thinking
- Communications can be difficult
- Aboriginal shame
- Fear of authority
- Being too rigid and not understanding how to deal with Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal people identify with Aboriginal people

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers also had areas of agreement as to what inhibitors shared understanding; these included:

- Differing expectations
- Deadlines and bigger things to meet
- Don't understand/trust due to what happened in the past
- Fear of being offensive, over sensitivity

Areas of agreement as to inhibitors of shared understanding for Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers were:

- People don't realise I am Aboriginal and say things that are hurtful
- Racist comments made as a joke
- Team are not on board or interested
- Aboriginal person outperformed due to demanding home life
- Poor language skills and reliance on body language
- Cultural barriers that non-Aboriginal colleagues do not understand
- Avoidance and differing conflict protocols
- Shyness

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers noted the following as being important in inhibiting shared understanding:

- Aboriginal person not worked before
- Takes time to establish trust and respect from both sides

Both Aboriginal Workers and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agree that these things inhibited shared understanding:

- Non-Aboriginal people seeing themselves as being dominant
- Large organisations hide behind HR [human resources] or put up barriers that are not necessary
- Making false promises and giving false hope

The following inhibitors to shared understanding are common to all Team Leaders and Aboriginal Workers:

- There are always some who ruin it for everyone
- Unconscious bias, one dark Aboriginal man and he'll walk into a room and everyone acts differently
- Some non-Aboriginal people believe that Aboriginal people are a little slower

Both Aboriginal Team Leaders and Non-Aboriginal Workers believe that Aboriginal people do not trust, due to historic treatment and practices, and therefore bringing people together is hard work.

However, there were also more differences than similarities overall. These differences are explored in Figure 5.4.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Racism and prejudice against Aboriginal people • Fear of answering phones • Language, communication and tone • Proving yourself – only have a job because you are Aboriginal • Different worlds, culture, skill sets	• Look for failure • Aboriginal people do not meet our social norms • Bending the rules leads to team disillusionment • Stigma • Conflict • Cultural Implications
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• Not culturally safe • Wear the comments and get on with it • No relationship • No understanding as to how to engage • People stop talking or think I'm a good blackfella • No special supports • Got to work harder to be trusted • Nepotism • Easier if manager not from Australia • Think they are smarter • Rudeness	• Stereotype around their work ethic • No discrimination on site, complaints not the real issue • Some people say and do the wrong things • Agendas and point scoring

Figure 5.4: Differences of Insights within Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

5.4   Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within this Category over the four hermeneutic units there were 176 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 70 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. There were no insights shared by all four hermeneutic units as creating positive regard for team or team leader. This creates leadership difficulty in that there is no single issue common among all four hermeneutic units as a factor that might create positive regard for the team or the team leader.

There were several insights that both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders believed created positive regard for their team or Team Leader; these included:

- Feeling confident to come and ask you for advice and knowing that if they have a problem they can ask.
- Work ethic, accountability and positive attitude
- A leader that puts themselves on the line for their team

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers also had areas of agreement as to what creates positive regard for their team or team leader; these were all focused on the team leader and included a team leader who:

- backs their decisions and supports their ideas;
- has good people skills;
- has an 'open door' policy and is approachable;
- makes them feel trusted by leaving them to get on with things; and
- provides constructive feedback regularly.

Areas of agreement as to what creates positive regard for their team or team leader for Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers were also predominantly team leader-focused and included team leaders who:

- understand Aboriginal people or is willing to learn;
- understand the importance of family and the level of dysfunction they are trying to manage;
- build relationships with the team;
- praises publicly but criticises privately to avoid embarrassment or shame; and
- able to tell each other what we think

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers noted the following as being important in creating positive regard for their team or team leader:

- a team leader who has your back and trusts your advice, discusses and resolves problems;

- ensures everyone is part of the team;
- leads by example;
- shows trust and respect by sharing personal things; and
- integrity, trust and honesty

However, there were more differences than similarities overall. These differences are explored in Figure 5.5.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Leader who creates buy in or leads by example • A leader who helps them grow • Asking rather than being directive, however being firm when necessary • Being clear as to what the plan is	• Being supportive of one another • Making the boss' job easier • Investing in people to get more back
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• Speaking up on your behalf/standing with you • Admitting when you do not understand • Someone who is 'new to the game' (i.e. not from Australia) or will see for themselves	• Believes in what he is doing • Takes responsibility • Gets to know the crew, is one of the team • Get the job done • It's up to the individual to earn opportunity

Figure 5.5: Differences of Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

5.5   Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Within this Category over the four hermeneutic units there were 74 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 78 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. There were no insights shared by all four hermeneutic units as creating negative regard for team or team leader. This creates leadership difficulty in that there is no single

issue common to all four hermeneutic units as a factor that might create positive regard for the team or the team leader.

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders believed that several insights created negative regard for their team or team leader, these included:

• Teams do not provide enough input to them to enable better decision making;

• Perceptions and treatment of Aboriginal people by team leaders are ill-informed; and

• People being bullied at work.

Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers also had a couple of areas of agreement as to what creates negative regard for their team or team leader; these were all focused on the team leader and included a team leader who:

• Micromanages their team; and

• Fail to have a relationship with individuals in their team.

Areas of agreement as to what creates negative regard for their team or team leader for Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers were also team leader-focused and included team leaders who:

• Have an attitude of all Aboriginal people are the same;

• Leave them in limbo; and

• Make examples of them in front of the group.

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers had no areas of agreement as to what creates positive regard for their team or team leader.

However, there were more differences than similarities overall. These differences are explored in Figure 5.6.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Being treated differently because I'm Aboriginal • Team leader not being supportive • Lack of understanding of family • Saying one thing but doing another • Not clear if Aboriginal engagement is genuine or just to win contracts	• Expectations too high • Complaining • Politics • Lack of motivation • Not meeting deadlines
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• Too much competitive spirit within the team • Having to constantly prove yourself • Lack of trust • Poor communication • Internal group politics/factions • A team leader that puts Aboriginal people down or does not correct others when they put Aboriginal people down • No assistance with career management	• Over-delegates, then blames when things go wrong • Not supportive of ideas or does not like questioning • Judgemental

Figure 5.6: Differences of Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

5.6   Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Within this Category over the four hermeneutic units there were 85 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 49 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. Once again there were no insights shared by all the hermeneutic units. No shared insights were found between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers.

One insight common to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders was around the importance of leadership and leaders setting expectations and acting as the example to others.

Areas of agreement for both Aboriginal Team Leaders and workers include:

- Understanding the complexity of decision making (by consensus) in Aboriginal families
- Aboriginal culture is changing
- Aboriginal people do not seek personal leadership, instead the group deems them the leader

There was also commonality between Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers which included:

- Being a foreigner to Australia is an advantage in improving working relationships
- Encourage the involvement of Aboriginal Elders

However once again, there were more differences than similarities overall. These differences are explored in Figure 5.7.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Understanding work relationships by giving them a family context • Spiritual connection to country • Avoid confrontation • It starts with the 'raw people' (the children)	• Aboriginal people do not want favours • Mentors and Indigenous Advisors have a role • Community involvement very important • Industry is like family, you earn your place • Never go down a path where it is an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal story • Aboriginal culture has more family and group drivers • Various models need to be adopted
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• To be asked for something is an honour, not a favour • Aboriginal people are very good at reading body language • Allowing Aboriginal culture in the workplace • A gift holds symbolism and meaning which need to be understood	• Difficult to reconcile spirituality with the workplace • Work together to build the relationship • Trust needs to go both ways • Realise neither culture has the upper hand

Figure 5.7: Differences of Issues or Insights to Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

5.7   Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding or Improved Working Relationships

Within this Category over the four hermeneutic units there were 103 codes, which through merging codes of the same meaning were combined for form 53 grounded codes. These were compared to show commonalities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As well as compared to identify commonalities and differences between Team Leaders and Workers. This is shown in detail in Appendix 1.

Using the data in Appendix 1, key themes or insights were drawn from the grounded codes. Once again there were no insights shared by all the hermeneutic units. There were also no insights shared between the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers and no insights shared between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders.

There was a commonality between Aboriginal Team Leaders and Aboriginal Workers around the diversity of Aboriginal cultures.

There was also a commonality between Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Non-Aboriginal Workers being that it is important any initiative makes money for the business.

There were otherwise only differences in insights that would prevent shared understanding: these are explored in Figure 5.8 below.

Aboriginal Team Leaders	Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders
• Fitness for work can be difficult for Aboriginal people • Difficulties for Aboriginal people getting to work • Personal questioning of their own role	• % targets do not work • Aboriginal people have grown up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people • Aboriginal space is never consistent • Need to understand the outside of work context for Aboriginal people • Companies do Indigenous engagement for competitive advantage • Easier not to hire Aboriginal people • Breakdown between what Aboriginal community needs and what we believe they should have
Aboriginal Workers	**Non-Aboriginal Workers**
• Non-Aboriginal people do not understand Aboriginal spirituality and it is difficult to talk to them about it • Aboriginal people feel more comfortable with other Aboriginal people • Some Aboriginal cultures are dying, some not raised in culture • Inappropriate comments in the workplace are not funny, but I get on with it • Favours requested, should be fulfilled • Different language groups have different rules	• Wall between white and Aboriginal Australia • Understanding gets lost in the dollars • Non-Aboriginal people are task based, Aboriginal people relationship/community based • Difficult to know if doing the right thing and when not going well can get over sensitive

Figure 5.8: Differences of Issues or Insights that Prevent Shared Understanding and Improved Working Relationships

This chapter has provided a condensed overview of the Findings contained in Chapter 4, for ease of critical discussion. This will now be utilised in conjunction with the literature review of Chapter 2 to show consistency or otherwise with existing theory and research and to make several contributions to the theoretical body of knowledge on shared understanding.

Chapter 6: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will critically discuss the key insights from findings with the literature in the literature review (Chapter 2) and provide observations as to consistency or otherwise with existing theory. It will then also extend existing theory where the data have revealed more information than is currently available and lead to an emergent leadership model to create shared understanding called Baldja Leadership. The discussion chapter focuses on answering the research question of:

> *What are the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian construction industry which inhibit and/or enable leaders' achievement of shared understanding*

The research objectives related to this research question were to:

1. gather Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;

2. gather Non-Aboriginal team leader and staff perceptions on how to create positive working environments between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, including identifying enablers and inhibitors to this;

3. compare and analyse perception commonalities and differences collected from items 1 and 2;

4. identify the factors which affect an Aboriginal worker's regard for his team leader and whether these differ from the non-Aboriginal perspective;

5. identify the issues and insights that would create shared understanding and thereby improve working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; and

6. identify emerging constructs to inform how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people socially construct meaning in the civil construction industry.

These research objectives have been achieved by this study as evidenced by the findings chapter. This chapter will now discuss the implications of these findings on creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry.

As implied by the title of this thesis ("The Third Space…"), underlying the understanding of enablers of and inhibitors to shared understanding is the possibility that a 'third space' exists where both cultures can retain their values and integrity, but also co-create a 'new space' of joint values and shared understanding within the workplace. This study demonstrates that this 'third space' can be created by leaders in the workplace through ensuring enablers to shared understanding such as cultural awareness training, genuine relationships, personal and professional leadership, respect and job performance are in place. To achieve this, it is necessary to remove barriers to shared understanding such as 'othering', institutional bias, too much task focus, poor physical and verbal communication and decoupling of procedure from practice.

This study contributes to existing research by identifying the enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding (including insights) to shared understanding from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. Furthermore it identifies the factors that affect the regard for a team or team leader from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. It then evolves these findings into a leadership model that can create this 'third space' and finally makes pragmatic recommendations to industry as to how to improve the likelihood that a 'third space' is created. This chapter will discuss and evidence these contributions. This study addressed a complex research question, which requires the consideration of two world views, Western and Aboriginal. Each has its own 'rules' of societal and leadership expectations and values within the business realm (C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). Although Hamrin (2016) found that through sense-making leaders can consider Aboriginal culture within a dominant cultural context, other research has found that these have required the non-Western culture to 'adopt a new identity', 'assimilate' or 'walk in two worlds' (Bell et al., 1993; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Julien et al., 2010; Ossenkop et al., 2015). This research shows that Western Australian Aboriginal people too are 'walking in two worlds', however also that a third space can be created based on the needs of both cultures as simplistically represented by Figure 6.1 below. Islam (2013) found that narrative can be used as a mediator in such cases to 'patch over differences'. In practice, this is a complex matter drawing on theories of leadership, shared understanding, sense-making, motivation, organisational justice, trust and cultural awareness.
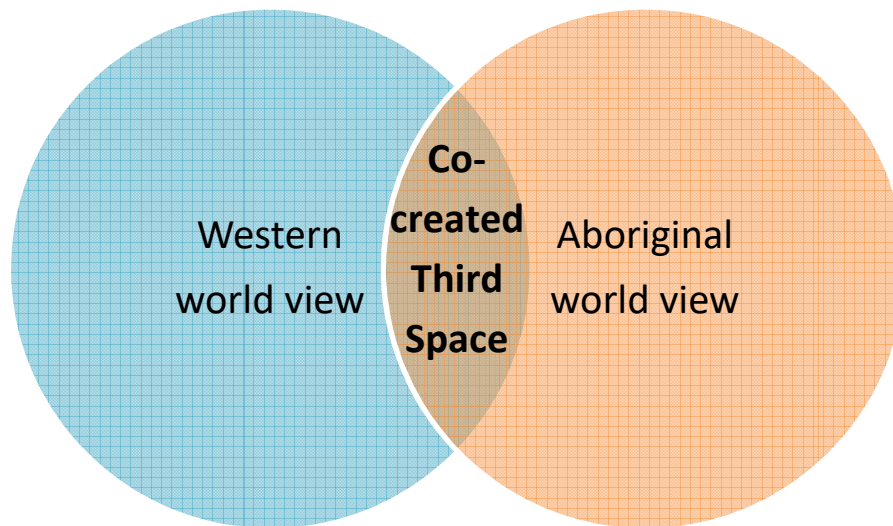
Figure 6.1: The Third Space

Most theory in relation to leadership and shared understanding comes from an 'emic analysis' which "describe[s] the behaviour in any one culture, taking into account what the people themselves value as meaningful and important" (Brislin, 1976, p. 215). The Western foundational emic is one of universalism, reflected in such organisational policies as standardisation. The Aboriginal foundational emic is particularistic reflected in a preference for relational policies. The idea is to let each cultural group retain its emic foundation while contributing to a new 'third space' emic.

Co-creation of a new 'third space' emic is a complex matter. Liang and Whiteley (2003) found that while interaction and dialogue can assist team leaders in seeing beyond their own culture, due to cultures being different and similar to each other in differing ways, there is no strategy suited to two cultures. This presents a challenge to researchers working in intercultural settings such as this. However, this research has found enough similarities for a potential way forward for leaders in the civil construction industry to encourage and foster shared understanding between mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teams.

The discussion commences with insights in relation to a selection of the literature review from the section of Chapter 2 being Literature Related to the Research Objective. As this is formative research and in the absence of directly related literature to the research objective, it is perhaps a little as Boje (2001, p. 5) suggests "there is no whole story to tell, only fragments, which even with retrospective sense-making cannot find a plot that will make the fragments cohere". Furthermore, the data are reflective of the organisational

and industry dynamics, which mirror the beliefs, tensions and differential outcomes for individuals of the society in which they operate (Brown et al., 2003; Showunmi et al., 2016). Being an industry diverse geographically and culturally and having interviewed people from cities and regional towns, this diversity is partially reflected in the data.

Finally, further literature is drawn from the second section of the Literature Review being the Data-directed Literature and compared with the insights from this research. This section discusses and expands on theory that the data have revealed. These contribute to the body of knowledge, in terms of surfacing issues for further research, especially in the civil construction industry.

This research has pioneered the introduction of Aboriginal thinking, philosophy and practice into organisational behaviour theory. Particularly in relation to theory of trust, leadership, motivation and conflict management all of which contribute to shared understanding through sense-making and social construction of meaning (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Thompson & Fine, 1999). It reveals gaps in allowing for the 'priorities' of Aboriginal people in terms of workplace leadership and shared understanding and that they are, in some ways, different to their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Although this research has begun to close the gulf of research that exists relating to Aboriginal people in the workplace, there remains much work to be done to clarify and delve deeper into some of the formative concepts presented.

This next section explores the findings of this research in relation to the literature related to the research question from Chapter 2, exploring the nature of leadership within the civil construction industry as well as affirming Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004, p. 143) conceptual framework for shared understanding.

6.2   Insights in Relation to the Literature Related to the Research Question

There are areas of agreement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector when it comes to creating shared understanding and the role of the team leader in creation of shared understanding. Areas of united agreement include creating a team where: personal relationships are strong; there is cultural safety; high team (task) performance; and the team operates in an environment free of prejudice and discrimination.

This section explores the insights from data that relate to the literature on leadership in the civil construction sector and shared understanding, exploring, firstly, the issue of leadership in the civil construction sector and, secondly, the conceptual framework for shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004). It will then make recommendations for industry as a result of the data and the body of literature that will improve shared understanding.

As there is no body of literature directly related to the research question, the first section of discussion of literature related to the research question will be regarding leadership in the civil construction industry.

6.2.1 Leadership in Civil Construction and Views of Team Leaders

Existing research on leadership and management in civil construction is difficult to distil from research in the construction industry generally as it is not always specified by researchers as to which part of the construction industry they are referring. However, organisational issues in the construction industry generally (such as the short-term nature of projects, mobilisation of teams for jobs) are similar to those of the civil construction industry. Leadership and team commitment to Aboriginal engagement were found consistently across hermeneutic units in this study to be important in creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. It is therefore important to detail the nature of leadership that is perceived to be required to achieve such team commitment.

Research in the construction industry discusses leadership practices in a shifting team environment (e.g. Toor & Ofori, 2008) ; use of power (e.g. Toor & Ogunlana, 2009); job satisfaction (e.g. Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012); and leadership styles (e.g. Tabassi et al., 2014). This section will discuss the findings of this research in relation to that detailed in the literature review on leadership and management in the civil construction industry. This includes findings around empathy and respect, team performance and task orientation and interpersonal skills.

Empathy and respect were key findings of the research conducted in Kenya and the United Kingdom looking at the Construction Supervisor's role in managing cross-cultural complexity and uncertainty on projects (Ochieng et al., 2013). They found that empathy gives team members confidence to carry out their roles and this was critical to trust. This research has also revealed that empathy and caring is an enabler of shared

understanding. Interestingly the Kenyan participants of Ochieng et al.'s research noted that empathy is just one element of social awareness, including understanding the team's preferences and background. This aligns to key themes in this research around creating a culturally safe environment and common commentary from team leaders about connecting with people individually. As an Aboriginal worker explained:

> *Sitting the person down and figuring out what is most important to that person. Cause everyone has different things and different priorities. Whereas mine is my family and if I need to go and do something for my family then I'll go and do something.*

This research also agrees with Ochieng et al. (2013) that team performance and output should be a key focus in order to be "effective" or in order to create shared understanding. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN11) explained:

> *We are here to basically achieve a goal and there are means to get that goal and it doesn't really matter where you come from and what language you speak or what colour of skin you've got. Doesn't really matter. It's a team so that's how I always try to basically try to promote in my team and how I feel about it so.*

And then from the Aboriginal perspective, another team leader (SA3) agreed: "*we all respected him and he got things done and we got things done and we enjoyed working with each other*".

A focus on the task and delivery was prevalent throughout all interviews confirming Toor and Ofori's (2008) findings that the industry does have a high task orientation.

Interestingly Ochieng et al. (2013, p. 319) also found that "project leaders must have superior multicultural and interpersonal skills". A key finding of this research was that cultural awareness and cultural competence training were integral to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. So much so, it was mentioned by every person interviewed. Therefore, this was explored further in the data-directed literature. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) claims:

> *We have been trying hard with the business. It's about educating the people that we are working with. We have had to do a lot of ground work in that area.*

This research found that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people look for several qualities in a team leader. These are explored at a high level in Figure 6.2.

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses to this research indicate that a team leader who holds the traits depicted in Figure 6.2, will be held in better regard by the team as a whole. However, there are also some qualities that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have said will have a negative impact on their regard for their team leader. The areas of agreement as to what will create negative regard for the team leader are depicted in Figure 6.3.
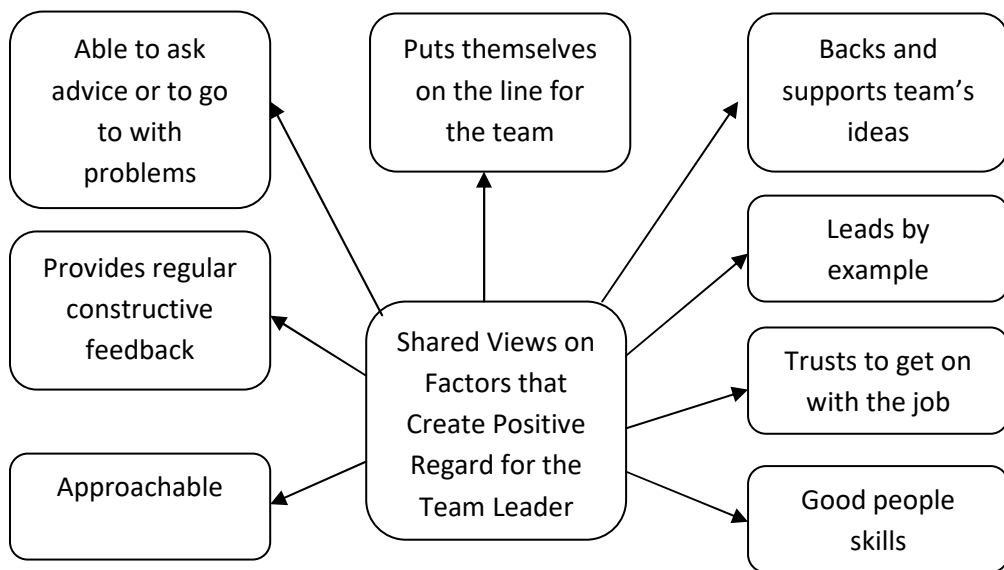
Figure 6.2: Factors that Create Positive Regard for a Team Leader for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People

The qualities depicted in Figure 6.3 are clearly qualities that should be avoided in team leaders if relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are to be improved in the workplace. Toor and Ofori (2008, p. 628) argue that leaders in the civil construction industry need greater focus on the "people-side of project management" and many of the above areas that might create positive or negative regard for the team leader are reflective of the 'people-side' of management. The aspects that are agreed to create negative regard for the team leader are also aligned to Butler and Chinowsky's (2006) findings around the weakest areas of leadership in executives being empathy; interpersonal relationships and social responsibility.
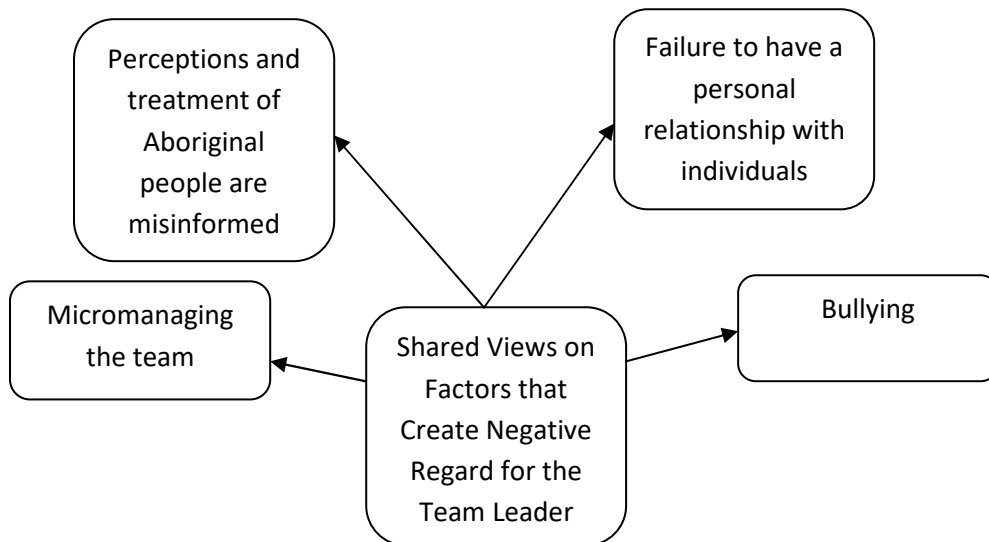
Figure 6.3: Factors that Create Negative Regard for a Team Leader for Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People

Based on the findings of this research and others on leadership in the civil construction sector, it is suggested that companies wishing to create shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people appoint leaders who generally have 'good people skills' including:

• empathy and able to demonstrate caring towards their team and develop strong personal connections;

• approachable so the team members can go to them for advice or to problem solve;

• encouraging team performance and output by holding the team's focus on the goal to be achieved and providing regular constructive feedback and trusting the team to 'get on with the job';

• supporting their team's ideas and will back the team even at times of personal risk; and

• having high multi-cultural and interpersonal skills which have been honed by participation in cultural awareness, competence and immersion programs to improve their cultural competence (among other things).

Key things that should be avoided in team leaders by organisations wishing to improve understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people include: prejudiced attitudes; micromanagement; bullying behaviours; and an inability to build personal relationships.

Having explored leadership in the civil construction sector, the next section analyses the data of this research against the conceptual framework for shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004) and adds to the existing body of knowledge in relation to shared understanding by exploring the barriers and inhibitors of shared understanding in this research context.

6.2.2   Shared Understanding Conceptual Framework

When considered in relation to Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004, p. 143) conceptual framework for shared understanding, this research confirms many elements from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world views. Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004, p. 143) conceptual framework explained that "prior background and knowledge", leads to: Conceptual learning; Feedback; Expression of affect; and Questioning, which together create shared understanding.

This research applies two lenses to this model: the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and asks if a similar process to that developed by Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004) could be applied in this inter-cultural situation. This is conceptually depicted in Figure 6.4.
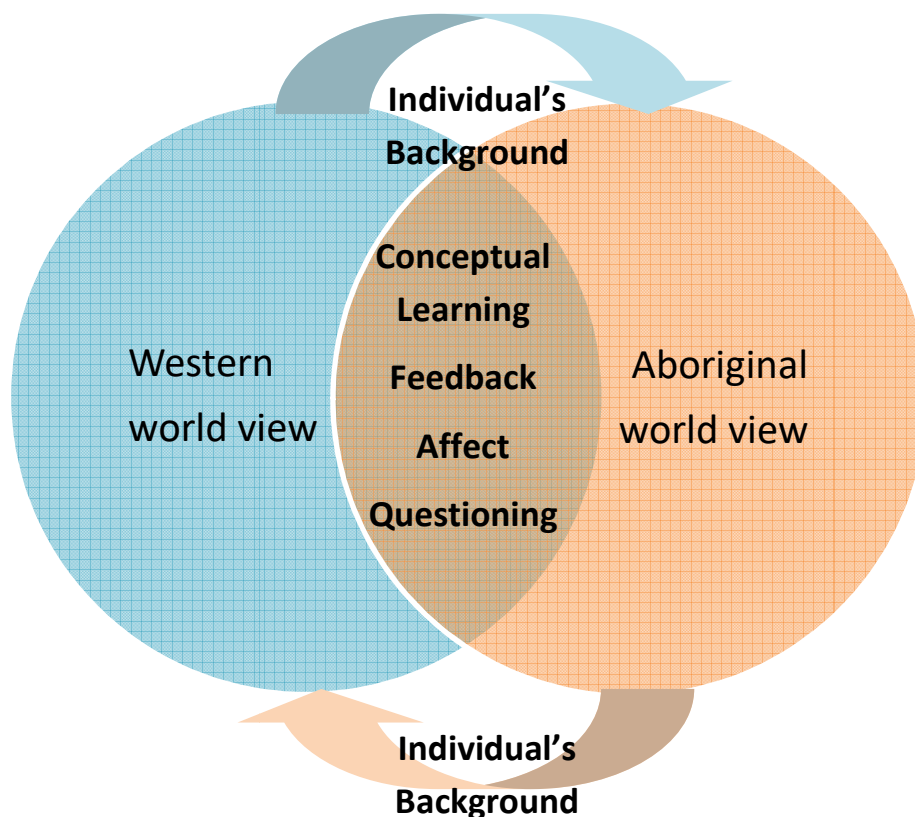
Figure 6.4: Conceptual Framework for Shared Understanding Explained in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Contexts

These elements are each explored in terms of the findings from this research below.

Individual's Background and Knowledge

The importance of prior knowledge and understanding the background of individuals is shown in this research through both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents talking about the importance of connecting as individuals and developing an understanding of each other. A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN1) explains the importance of this:

> Spend time with the Aboriginal people…spend time with them. Understand where they are coming from. Understand their history and acknowledge that and then integrate them into the workforce.

This is a similar comment from the Aboriginal team leader (SN4) perspective:

> As I talk to them and find out about them…if you don't know that person and have some interest in that person and you don't find out a bit about their culture, you're not going to grow either. Because you're not exchanging ideas. You're not seeing how someone else might live. You're not even exchanging a recipe, you know.

Finally, an Aboriginal worker (WA7) explains the importance of knowing a person's background, but from the negative perspective of not knowing:

> Up there, there is people from Eastern States, people from Ireland and England and everywhere. Didn't know who they were and what they were about.

This research has shown that knowing and understanding the background of an individual is important to creating shared understanding from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. It is therefore applicable to creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Conceptual Learning

Within the conceptual framework for shared understanding, "conceptual learning refers to the exchange of facts and concepts, reflection on them and fine tuning of them" towards the co-construction of knowledge (Mulder et al., 2004, p. 142). While not directly sought within this research, learning between the two cultures was observed. As an Aboriginal team leader (SN1) said:

These guys have gone out of their way in trying to learn and change their

thinking as well. They have really tried hard and…to sort of come across

and support us the best way that they can.

This was reiterated from the non-Aboriginal (SN1) perspective by one team leader: "*how do you bring those people on the journey and how do you educate them*".

Learning, particularly through cultural awareness and competence training, was a recurring theme throughout interviews. It was mentioned in every interview as being integral to creating shared understanding. This learning allowed for the exchange of 'facts and concepts', leading to greater openness to new or different ways of 'being'. This research shows that learning, particularly around culture, is also applicable to creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Feedback

Feedback through communication encourages reflection and contributes to creating shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004). In alignment with the conceptual framework for shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004), feedback was also noted as important in creating shared understanding within this research. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN8) explains how feedback is important in terms of building relationships and communication to create shared understanding:

Ongoing and regular feedback, catch-ups, like those informal chats, so I'd

say when you said relationships…to me it's all around relationships. And

those relationships to me are built on the communication.

This was reiterated from the Aboriginal perspective in this research. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA5) explains: "*sitting down with them and going…you know…could you have handled that situation better. So it's almost a coaching type of thing for them*".

This research confirms that feedback is important to both cultures and instrumental in creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Expression of Affect

The expression of affect includes "motivational and evaluative expressions on the usefulness of acquired information" (Mulder et al., 2004, p. 143). It was intended to capture the "motivational and emotional part of learning" (Mulder et al., 2004, p. 143). This research too captured the 'motivational and emotional' parts of shared

understanding, but more in relation to empathy and expression of affection. Mulder, Swaak and Kessels' (2004) 'expression of affect' is a little different and implies an emotional impact of learning. The relational style of affect found in this research to create shared understanding is about the formation of deep and caring relationships. Participants commented that their 'team is like a family' or 'good mates' or 'genuine friendship' is key to their success as a team on site. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA5) states:

> *It is like a family, so again, my team has changed a little bit over my…but my main team that I had again I've got an elderly woman that is probably…and she is my best mentor. She is the best mentor across our business. She's probably my mum's age, so every time we leave we hug.*

The data emphasise that both Team Leaders and Workers understand the importance of making that personal connection with the team, including that empathy, respect and honesty are integral to creating shared understanding. As a Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) explains:

> *Showing people that you actually do care. It's not just about coming to work and laying pipe or coming to work and doing training. It's about them as a person and how they can contribute to the broader team and that connection and purpose is really important.*

Therefore, while the 'expression of affect' has been found to be relevant to creating shared understanding in this research, it is from a very different perspective to the term as it was framed by Mulder et al. (2004).

Questioning

In alignment with the conceptual framework for shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004), this research confirmed that the ability to ask each other questions was important to creating shared understanding. As a Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN11) explains, he knew he had a good understanding with his team when:

> *The willingness to question openly without being shy or you know, they just did question things and basically did what they were asked to after that.*

An Aboriginal worker (WA6) offered a similar view: "b*e open to asking questions and talking to people and…you know instead of being scared because it is something different".*

This research has also confirmed that questioning and feeling comfortable enough to question is important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Conceptual Framework for Shared Understanding Generally

Overall, Mulder et al.'s (2004) conceptual framework for shared understanding is confirmed by this research. This research has found that having "prior background and knowledge" of team members leads to: Conceptual learning; Feedback; Expression of affect; Questioning, which together can create shared understanding between the two cultures as depicted in Figure 6.2.

It is therefore recommended that leaders wishing to encourage shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace encourage a situation where:

- the team members can get to know each other's backgrounds, history and perspectives;
- there is a level of conceptual learning, particularly around culture;
- feedback between team leader and individual or inter team feedback is free flowing;
- there is genuine caring and empathy between the team; and
- individuals feel safe to ask questions of the team leader or the team.

However, what the conceptual framework for shared understanding has failed to consider is what might enable this model to work more effectively or what may prevent the Framework from operating as expected in creating shared understanding. This research has revealed several factors that may encourage or inhibit shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace. A workplace may be able to encourage creation of shared understanding using this Framework, among other things, however if the barriers and inhibitors to shared understanding are not removed, shared understanding may remain elusive. The enablers and inhibitors to creating shared understanding will be explored in the next section in more detail.

6.3   Shared Understanding – Enablers and Inhibitors

Although this research has confirmed much of the existing literature around leadership in the civil construction sector as well as the conceptual framework for shared understanding there is no literature that speaks specifically to what enables or inhibits shared understanding in the workplace. This section will draw on literature from all of Chapter 2, including literature surrounding shared understanding as well as data-directed literature such as cultural awareness, conflict management and organisational prejudice.

6.3.1   Enablers of Shared Understanding

Enablers of shared understanding are things that the workplace, and team leaders particularly, need to undertake or ensure to facilitate bringing the two world views closer together. If team leaders can achieve this, then it will increase the likelihood of achieving the idealised 'third space' of shared understanding. As explored in detail in Chapter 5, this research revealed several shared views of enablers of shared understanding as summarised in Figure 6.5.

Team Leaders

- All part of a team
- Leadership support
- Caring about each other
- Respect
- Personal Connection
- Hard work
- Being skilled
- Connect individually and to community
- Managing and defusing conflict
- Mentors, advisors, role models

ALL

- Same performance standards
- Shared Views on Enablers to shared understanding
- Strong personal relationships
- Cultural awareness training and cultural safety

Workers

- Get the job done
- Help each other out
- Open and honest communication
- Clear code of conduct: respect

Figure 6.5: Shared Views of Enablers of Shared Understanding

Each of these enablers of shared understanding could be said to expand the 'third space' by facilitating common ground such as values, while maintaining the cultural integrity of the Aboriginal or Western world view. This process of expansion of the 'third space' is shown in Figure 6.6.
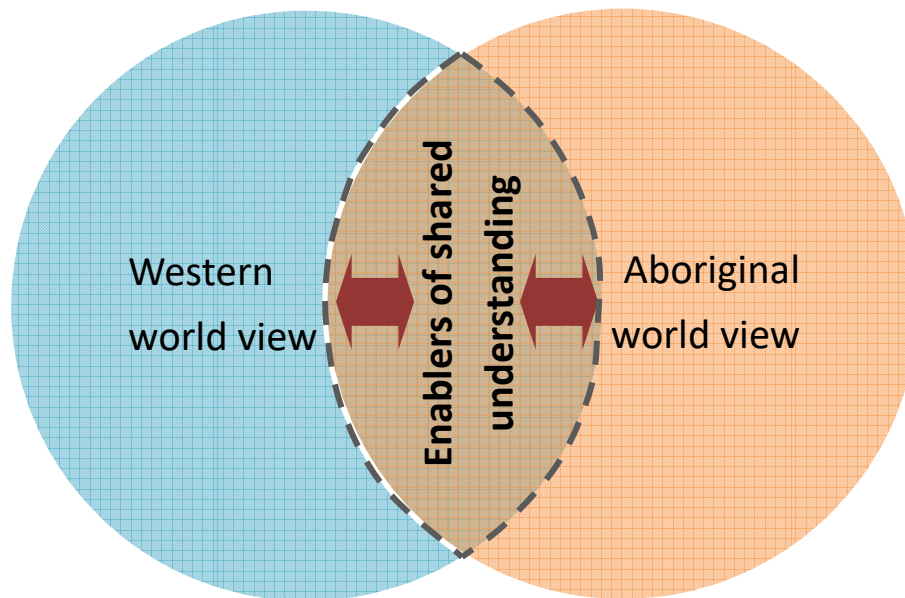
Figure 6.6: Enablers of Shared Understanding Expanding the Third Space

Some of these enablers hold a complexity that is perhaps not immediately obvious from the above diagram, particularly cultural awareness and safety, conflict management and the use of mentors and advisors. These three items will be explored in more detail below in relation to the literature due to potentially different cultural interpretations as to what may be required in terms of enabling shared understanding.

Cultural Awareness Training and Safety

Cultural safety within a team occurs where there is no racism and cultural respect exists (Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2013). Both 'Aboriginal' and 'non-Aboriginal' within Australia are collective terms for what is potentially hundreds of subcultures, each with their own values, norms and assumptions. However cultural awareness training was universally agreed by all participants as being required to facilitate understanding between the two broad and diverse cultural groups. Cultural awareness training can assist team members in understanding and potentially displaying more culturally appropriate behaviours and body language (Shultz, 2005).

In the researcher's experience, typically cultural awareness training consists of providing a high-level overview of cultural practices, spirituality and spiritual practices, polite body language and ways of ensuring respectful engagement. It also sometimes provides a historical context to the culture to show how the culture has evolved over time or been impacted by historical practice.

Although not in the Aboriginal context, Dale and Dulaimi (2016, p. 232) found that cultural awareness training improved a team leader's "ability to establish relationships, communicate and approach challenges and opportunities more effectively". This research confirms this view, as one Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN1) states:

> *They do a whole induction on the background on what's happened in the last couple of hundred years, so I have a better understanding and appreciation on like where they've come from and their land, I think in comparison with my first year at [company], I had no idea. I didn't really understand the history or anything like that.*

A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN1) reiterated the impact cultural awareness training had on him and his team:

> *One of the things I would say is important for everyone to go to cultural awareness. But not just understanding culture. It has to be linked in with communications skills, leadership skills for an individual to step up to the plate. Because today's construction environment everyone is under high pressure. Many people think it is machines that perform but it is actually people that perform. So how do you bring your entire team on the same journey as you to achieve the desired result. So it is Aboriginal culture is just part of it. So teaching people how to communicate with Aboriginal people… not that they can't communicate it's how not to be insensitive and how to be a little bit more patient with someone who is new.*

Interestingly all Aboriginal respondents agreed. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA1) stated:

> *Cultural awareness is a big part of it. Sort of have a better understanding of Indigenous culture and I guess things around, I guess a lot of the mining companies have issues with the leave and stuff of Indigenous people take I guess. For I guess when they go through their culture and law and so on.*

They don't have an understanding of it. I think they need to get more of an understanding of that area. Particularly I think everyone's bludging and taking time off for nothing and finding he is, but there is reasons behind it. I guess things like a death and so on, Aboriginal people take that pretty serious culturally, so…

However, building cultural awareness and competence is a complex matter. It does require a combination of class-room and experiential style learning (Townsend et al., 2015) and several responses to this research indicated an immersive experience to be the most effective. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN2) described:

You can have as much cultural awareness, as much reading of literature…until you are involved in the community…in fact probably more so… when you start seeing their respect for their country, for being on country. I think that is where things start to make a bit more sense.

Others noted the importance of giving team leaders, in particular, additional cultural competence skill sets. As another Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN6) noted:

With the team leaders we try and educate, so they have an understanding so going through the cultural awareness training and things like that. I think it's really around educating them so they are more mindful and respectful and while we are looking at integrating them into the team.

Lack of cultural competence has already been found in the mining industry to be a primary reason an Aboriginal person leaves an employer (Brereton & Parmenter, 2008). Furthermore, every participant in this research has confirmed the importance of cultural awareness and competence in creation of shared understanding. However, this research also acknowledged that this cultural awareness needs to go two ways. There is a need for non-Aboriginal people to be more aware of Aboriginal culture and for some Aboriginal people to be more aware of the organisational culture. As one team leader (SN5) described:

We need to spend more time educating our supervisors [team leaders] and the guys or girls who are starting here unskilled, who have never been in that environment before about when they can come and talk to people and the support network is around them. Rather than just not turning up to work anymore.

It is therefore highly recommended that organisations wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people should hold cultural awareness training from the Aboriginal cultures in which they operate; and induction training into the business to ensure 'rules and expectations' of the workplace are clear.

It is important that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people across the organisation attend both training sessions.

This section has considered the importance of cultural awareness and building cultural competence in terms of enabling shared understanding. There are other enablers of shared understanding that may also require more detail to further describe the intent, the next of these to be explored will be conflict management.

Conflict Management

Conflict management through discussion of, and sense-making around, differences can impact on shared understanding between any cultures. Within teams, Jehn (1995) found that conflict can be beneficial to team performance, however if it goes unresolved it may lead to damaged relationships and lowering of performance over time. Research conducted in the Arctic (Gendron & Hille, 2013) and Canada (Victor, 2007) has found that Indigenous peoples hold different perspectives of dispute resolution and that there is a greater need for 'balance' and 'harmony' and maintaining relationships. There is little to no research on Australian Aboriginal conflict management process, however observationally it appears to support the findings from the Arctic and Canada (Gendron & Hille, 2013; Victor, 2007) in terms of supporting the maintenance of relationships, conflict avoidance and the use of jokes.

One Aboriginal worker (WA7) talked about allowing one particular conflict situation go unaddressed for the preservation of team relationships:

> *Cop it on the chin and sort of work with them. But everyone, the jobs get done and everyone has a good old time when they're getting along. If you just accept that is part of it, everyone is happy. The boss is happy because work is getting done. Everyone is happy but…yeah…*

WA7 also spoke of making a joke about the situation, to maintain team performance: *"laughed at it and gave it back and…but it worked because everyone had to get the job done."*

Several respondents suggested working with community, family or a trusted friend if there was conflict, to allow for saving of face, but also repair of relationships. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) stated:

> *they can use like a good friend or contact to communicate through them. So find out what they want to say, then that person will say it, you know how they want to say it. Sometimes they can't…I don't know, not everyone, but sometimes they don't know how to…bring things up without sounding rough or disrespectful and stuff like that.*

Experienced Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders (SN2) have discovered similar approaches to be effective:

> *If there's a direct issue…that we can't address that direct issue, we need to actually go through a third party to sort of almost go through the means…to almost sort of the way that Aboriginal conflict is resolved, it's not directly. It's done externally. Whether it's through the wife…whether it's through family…but then hopefully then that discussion can be had before that interaction can occur.*

While the issue of conflict management similarities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace requires substantially more research, this research appears to support evidence from the Arctic and Canada around different methods of resolving conflict and particularly conflict avoidance. It is therefore recommended that organisations wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace are aware of the use of avoidance, humour and protection of relationships in conflict management.

Mentors and Advisors

It is historically common in the civil construction industry to have experienced workers mentor those less experienced (Hoffmeister, Cigularov, Sampson, Rosecrance, & Chen, 2011). However it has also been found that the mentor relationship in the civil construction industry may be different to that of other industries due to the diverse and changing nature of the work to be undertaken (Hoffmeister et al., 2011). This relationship is important in terms of providing both affirming and negative feedback to the mentee (Hoffmeister et al., 2011). Training and mentoring have also been found to be key to the

success of Indigenous enterprises and entrepreneurship (Spencer, Brueckner, Wise, & Marika, 2016).

This research has found both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have found the use of internal mentors or Aboriginal advisors to be effective in facilitating shared understanding. One Aboriginal worker (WA1) noted the importance of his mentor:

> *Automatically become my mentor. So they have a responsibility to make sure that I'm doing something and I yeah, make sure that I'm always at work and I'm always here in time for work type of thing.*

Aboriginal team leaders noted the importance of an Aboriginal mentor that has similar trades experience. As SA3 stated:

> *People that they identify with. Well, they can identify them and some of them have already been through the traineeships or apprenticeships they are going through, so they not only have got the Aboriginal aspect, but you've got the training and the… and the work side of things that they also identify with.*

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders reiterated this message as to the importance of more senior Aboriginal people acting as mentors, as SN4 stated:

> *They tend to gravitate together anyway. A lot of times it may just be that the individual hasn't got the confidence to speak up to a supervisor [team leader] or manager to flag the issues, whereas the mentor normally has that relationship where they can. So they will be the mouthpiece. We normally find in those cases that the issues are picked up in a matter of days not weeks or months.*

However, it is not only Aboriginal people who may require mentoring into a civil construction business. Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders spoke of the value of having someone they can ask questions of and seek advice on how to improve shared understanding between their Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal team members. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN15) discussed how he needed mentoring on how to better manage Aboriginal people in his team:

> *I call her my secret weapon. You can ask her anything and they also have*
> *workshops where…how to deal with Aboriginal employees. So I went there*
> *and got myself a bit of education.*

When asked if it is better to have an on-site or organisational advisor/mentor, one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN4) stated that a site advisor or mentor is better than an organisational one:

> *There certainly benefits to both. But from my experience having someone*
> *on the project is better, if it's possible. It's not always possible. It's a wish*
> *list obviously.*

This research has revealed the success of mentoring both new-entrant Aboriginal employees into the business as well as team leaders in how to better manage Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relationships. It is therefore recommended that businesses wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people consider engaging more senior Aboriginal people to mentor younger, up and coming Aboriginal team members. In addition engaging mentors or advisors to work with Team Leaders on how to improve their own understanding of managing Aboriginal people,

to improve the likelihood of creating shared understanding within the team.

Overview of Enablers to Shared Understanding

This research has found shared views as to what will enable shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector. These have included:

- Creating a team that is united, cares for and respects each other and has been able to build strong personal relationships;
- Ensuring individuals on the team are skilled, work hard and get the job done;
- A team leader that supports team members and communicates honestly and openly;
- Ensuring cultural awareness, competence and safety within the team and on site;
- Using mentors and cultural advisors to support both younger Aboriginal people and team leaders in improving shared understanding;
- Finding culturally appropriate ways to resolve conflict; and
- Ensuring the same performance standards and code of conduct from each member of the team.

These enablers of shared understanding could either create or expand the 'third space', of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace. However, this may not be sufficient to deliver shared understanding, if inhibitors to shared understanding are not addressed. The next section will discuss the findings of this research in relation to inhibitors of shared understanding.

6.3.2 Inhibitors of Shared Understanding

Although there is a body of research which explores shared understanding and how it is created within the Literature Review chapter, there is very little research as to inhibitors of or barriers to shared understanding. This is perhaps one of the most significant contributions this study can add to the existing literature relevant to the research objective: to shed light on areas that inhibit shared understanding. The theoretical models and discussions to date have focused on how to create shared understanding through sense-making. It could, perhaps, be assumed that behaviour opposite to the findings of previous research on shared understanding would prevent sense-making and therefore shared understanding from occurring. However, it is apparent that the barriers to shared understanding are not well documented, nor understood. The data provided in this study reveal that if the barriers to that shared understanding are not well understood and are not 'broken down' or 'removed', shared understanding may never be achieved.

Overall. Agreement was reached on several inhibitors to shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace. These are things that workplaces and, particularly, team leaders need to ensure are prevented to enable the two world views to come closer together and increase the likelihood of achieving the idealised 'third space' of shared understanding. As explored in detail in Chapter 5, this research revealed several shared views of inhibitors of shared understanding which are summarised in Figure 6.7.

Team Leaders

Racism works both ways

No hope and anger

Lack of cultural understanding

Us v them thinking

Communication difficulty

Aboriginal shame

Fear of authority

Too rigid in process

Aboriginal people identify with Aboriginal people

ALL

Discrimination, prejudice, stereotyping

Shared views on inhibitors to shared understanding

Shyness

Time out (cultural obligations) not understood

Workers

Differing expectations

Deadlines to meet (task focus)

Don't understand/ trust (history)

Fear of offending, over sensitive

Figure 6.7: Shared Views of Inhibitors of Shared Understanding

Table 6.1 shows how these inhibitors can be grouped into 6 key themes which will prevent the creation of a shared understanding and therefore the third space. These 6 themes are:

1. 'othering' and social categorisation
2. institutional bias and decoupling of procedure and practice
3. lack of cultural awareness or competence
4. the historical influences which have created lack of hope, shame, anger and fear
5. too much task focus
6. poor communication both verbal and body language

Each of these inhibitors to shared understanding could be said to prevent the 'third space' by creating a barrier between the two world views as depicted in Figure 6.8.

Table 6.1: Exploration of Inhibitors to Shared Understanding

Inhibitors agreed by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people	'Othering' and social categorisation • Discrimination, prejudices, stereotyping, being judgemental • Unconscious bias • 'Us' and 'them' thinking • Lack of trust between each other due to Australia's history • Non-Aboriginal people perceiving themselves as dominant Institutional bias • Human Resource system barriers • Non-Aboriginal people being too rigid and not understanding how to deal with Aboriginal people Lack of cultural awareness/competence • Poor cultural understanding (including cultural leave requirements) • Fear of being offensive so non-Aboriginal people are oversensitive Historical influences – lack of hope and feelings of shame, anger, fear • Lack of hope and feelings of anger • Fear of authority on the part of Aboriginal people • Aboriginal shame Task focus • Task focus: Deadlines and 'bigger things' to meet Lack of or poor communication • Making false promises or giving false hope • Poor communication skills • Different workplace expectations
Inhibitors from Aboriginal perspective only	'Othering' and social categorisation • Offensive/racist comments made as' looks white' or made in jest Lack of cultural awareness/competence • Lack of interest in Aboriginal culture or engagement • Unable to perform as well as the rest of the team due to family life • Cultural matters that non-Aboriginal colleagues do not understand • Cultural conflict protocols (avoidance) difficult to adhere to

	Poor communications • Aboriginal reliance on body language • Shyness from Aboriginal people
Inhibitors from non-Aboriginal perspective only	'Othering' and social categorisation • Non-Aboriginal people look for failure • Stereotype around Aboriginal work ethic • Agendas and point scoring • Takes time to establish respect Lack of cultural awareness/competence • Aboriginal people do not meet 'our' social norms • Bending the rules leads to team disillusionment Task focus • Lack of working experience

Western world view

Inhibitors of shared understanding

Aboriginal world view

• 'othering' and social categorization
• institutional bias and decoupling of procedure and practice
• lack of cultural awareness / competence
• historical influences – lack of hope, shame, anger, fear
• too much task focus
• poor communication (verbal and body language)
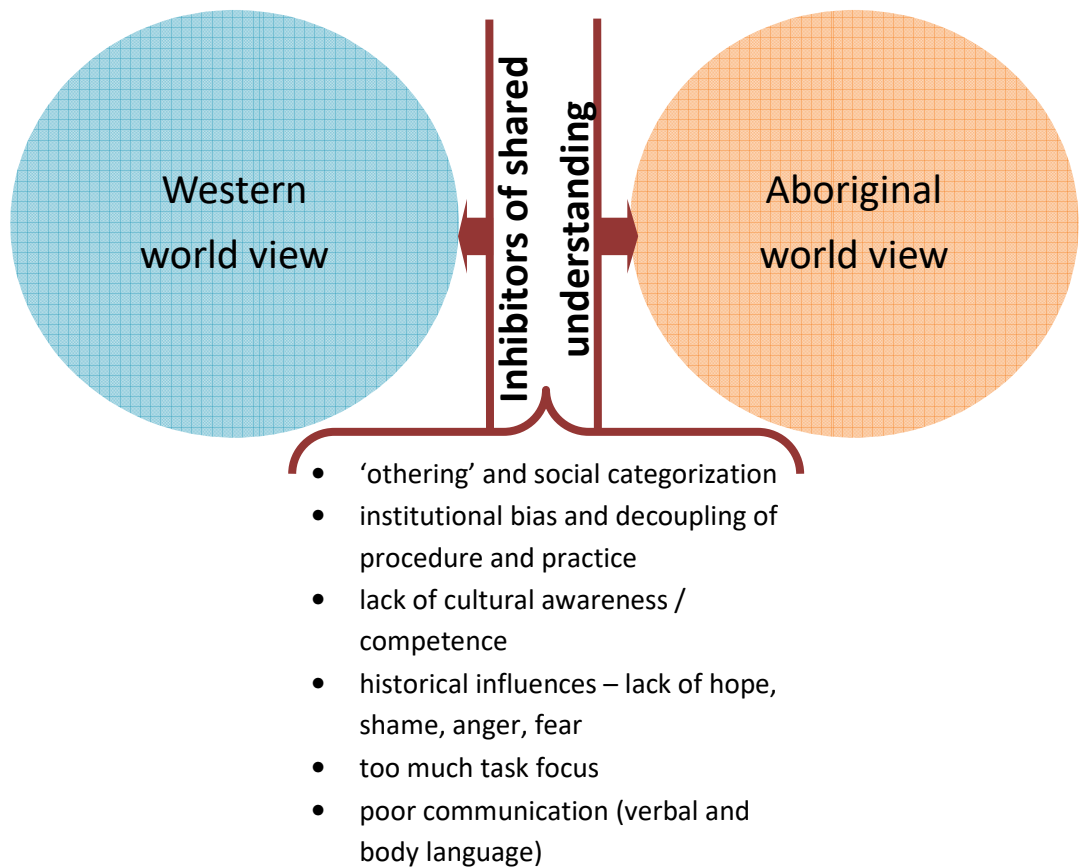
Figure 6.8: Impact of Inhibitors to Shared Understanding on Creating a 'Third Space'

These inhibitors and their implications will be explored in more detail below. In this discussion the matters of lack of cultural awareness and historical influences have been combined as they are interrelated. This next section will commence this discussion with 'othering' and impacts of social categorisation.

'Othering' and Social Categorisation

This research has revealed that the greatest factor inhibiting shared understanding is discrimination in the workplace and this includes prejudices and stereotyping from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA3) notes:

> *The way that they are taught how to see stuff and what their perceptions of Aboriginal people are. A lot of their perceptions are based on bad events happening on TV or to their families based on other areas and other people and unfortunately for those people they think that everybody is the same.*

Many non-Aboriginal people agree with this sentiment, as SN13 stated: *"They've got all these things stacked against them that they've got to deal with…prejudices and all this. that we don't have to deal with and we're oblivious to"*.

However, it is also acknowledged by both cultures that this prejudice works both ways. Aboriginal people are also prejudice against non-Aboriginal people. By way of example, one Aboriginal worker (WA7) explains: *"I feel more comfortable talking to Aboriginal people. Just straight up. Like when I came here, I asked to be with an Aboriginal"*.

The data-directed literature within the Organisational Justice and Prejudice section of the Literature Review (Chapter 2) confirms that Aboriginal people are often subject to racism and impediments to success (Appo & Härtel, 2003; Brown et al., 2003; Cutcliffe, 2006; Deitch et al., 2003; Pedersen et al., 2006). Hogg (2015) made a number of recommendations which were also reflected in the data of this research to address issues of racism and prejudice in the workplace, including appointment of a team leader who:

- will speak out against racism by reaffirming a relational identity of the team (including messaging of collaboration, cooperation and the whole being greater than the parts);
- can 'span the boundaries' of both cultural groups; and
- will avoid categorisations.

All these recommendations are reflected in this study. For example, one Aboriginal worker (WA8) spoke of disappointment in the response by the team leader and team to a racist comment:

> *I expected more from my ops manager and other people but I think they were caught surprised just like I was. So I had to give them some benefit of the doubt and say…OK. But more my pride and every part of me wanted to just stand up…gently push my chair in, grab my things and I say to my ops manager…I walk out the door and I'll see you tomorrow and just walk out and jump in the car and go home. And then. I'll probably when I have a meeting with him, I'll let a lot go. But I guess the…that was probably my worst experience and I thought that…I did expect more from the ops manager. And from the crew.*

Aboriginal team leaders (SA6) agreed: *"If he came out disrespectful then you couldn't…you can't, just let it happen, you have to address it straight away and say, look that's not on buddy".*

Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders also noted the importance of picking up on poor team behavior: as SN9 stated: *"regardless if people say they're behind or whatever, I see the way they react and I will hold them accountable for that behaviour too".*

Non-Aboriginal Workers noted the impact of these incidents as well, as WN5 stated:

> *We've…we do have probably some people working here that don't have a lot of experience in that side and have in the past said and done the wrong things that they've…that people have take offence to, so you've kind of got to undo that damage.*

In terms of being able to 'span the boundaries' of both groups, one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) described the importance of achieving this: *"getting the right people for those roles, I think…you need someone quite extroverted, who is able to walk in both worlds as well…because…would be helpful".*

A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN1) described how he was able to span both boundaries: *"never go into a path where it becomes an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal story. It should be part of a story where you develop a very good workforce."*

Some non-Aboriginal people claimed it was 'easier' for them or they did not really understand the division between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as they were not born in Australia. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN11) explained:

> *I haven't really…felt any difference between my Aboriginal people working for me and the other people. Like there was a bit of a mix like in my crew, like everywhere I've worked. Being foreigners, like myself in the team, Australians in the team, Aboriginals, I didn't really feel any difference within it.*

Interestingly, Aboriginal participants made similar comments about it being easier to work with people who were not born in Australia, as they were not raised with the same prejudice (Ford, 2017), as AW7 explains:

> *When someone who hasn't been in Australia a long time, comes here and if, they…they are a lot more focused. They are a lot more interested in the dynamics of people's relationships. It's like they know there is an Aboriginal-Non-Aboriginal element. At some point they would have heard about it. Someone would have said something to them.*

In relation to avoiding categorisation, one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA5) described a situation where an Aboriginal worker who had missed a flight to the site for the first time in four years was accused of missing flights 'all the time':

> *From the leaders, when they are identifying a group. They still sort of identify the group as having more issues than the other and you might have a…we had a guy and he had an incident on site and he goes, you're always doing that. And he goes, hang on a second, I've never missed a flight and they looked through and he had never missed. They had grouped him in with everyone else. So he goes this is the first one in four years, what do you mean, all the time? OK, yeah well. But that is the default. The leader's default*

A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN6) explained:

> *Not segregating. It's about integrating and trying to…really I guess have, being respectful and have an understanding of their backgrounds, culturally and where they've come from which could be significantly*

different to ourselves. And being mindful of that when you're when you're

integrating into a team.

This research confirms Hogg's (2015) findings that in order to create shared understanding a team leader needs to:

- speak out against racism and reaffirm the relational team identity (including messaging of collaboration, cooperation and the whole being greater than the parts);
- be able to 'span the boundaries' of both cultural groups or 'walk in both worlds'; and
- avoid categorisations within the team into groups.

The next section will explore another major inhibitor of shared understanding in the civil construction sector which is institutional bias and decoupling of procedure from practice.

Institutional Bias and Decoupling Procedure from Practice

The effectiveness of Western governance frameworks in the Aboriginal community has been shown to be questionable (Limerick, 2009). It has also been found that minority groups often forgo their own culture to 'assimilate' into the dominant cultural environment (Bell et al., 1993; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014) and that generally Aboriginal people are marginalised in the workplace (Buultjens, 1997).

This research has revealed that institutional bias both working for and against Aboriginal people in the workplace can place shared understanding at risk. It shows that there remains institutional bias around perceptions of Aboriginal people as being 'lazy' or 'less capable' than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN5) explains the pervasiveness of this perception:

Non-Aboriginals assume an Aboriginal is a lazy worker, likes a drink and I

think that attitude from day 1 doesn't help. Again I've worked with a lot of

Aboriginals that are better workers than anyone that I've worked with. So

it's kind of six of one, half a dozen of the other.

A Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN3) talked about it in terms of using culture as an excuse, as he explains: "*using their Aboriginality as an excuse…for not participating, not doing work".*

Part of this is perhaps a discomfort in claiming their own skills for example, one Aboriginal Worker (WA7) talks about it being difficult to claim good work in front of the group:

> *I don't like doing it. I can't come forward and say that I've done this. You know, I've done this. I don't like doing that. But if someone else said it for me. On my behalf. Then I like that yeah.*

It is therefore important for organisations and team leaders wishing to create shared understanding that this bias of individuals and decision making does not limit the opportunities for some team members over others.

There is also the perception that Aboriginal team members 'get away' with things that their non-Aboriginal counterparts are not able to do. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN15) explains: *"perception among…the non-Aboriginal employees sometimes that people get away with stuff because they are the Aboriginal employee".*

Interestingly, and in conflict to this view, numerous Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders note how much harder it is for Aboriginal people to prove themselves in the workplace. As SN14 states: *"we really watch Aboriginal employees under a microscope a lot more than we do non-Aboriginal employees. We don't mean to, but it happens".*

It is clear from this research that organisational bias and pervasive perceptions around 'laziness' and capability of Aboriginal people exists within the civil construction sector. In a highly task-oriented environment, whether real or perceived, this builds resentment between team members and therefore prevents shared understanding.

The other institutional issue is around 'rules' and how they are implemented. All organisations have policies and procedures or 'rules' that bind the team. At times these are followed universally and at other times, team leaders use their discretion to allow for personal circumstances. Whiteley (2006, p. 53) describes this as the team leader drawing on "rules and also personal sensibility when involved in social encounters". This research reveals the fragility between rigidly complying with 'rules' and the need to 'bend the rules' for certain circumstances. Both choices create difficulty for shared understanding and this complexity and conflict in viewpoints requires further research.

However, this study found that being too rigid in application of the rules, leads to failure of shared understanding, as one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN14) explains: *"If you're too rigid in your structure, you're set to fail. Particularly working in the more remote sort of regions, you know".*

One Aboriginal Team Leader (SA4) claims that shared understanding would be more prevalent if Team Leaders considered Workers' personal needs: *"more Aboriginal or non-*

Aboriginal people would get along in the workforce if they had better humanised managers".

However, this research also has numerous examples of where bending the rules has led to failure to create shared understanding and even team dissonance, such as this one SN4 described:

> *Set a bad precedent where it felt to them like we'd given someone a hand out through the program who had no construction experience. We gave him a job on a very high paying role…who probably leapt ahead of a few guys in the pecking order for no real reason other than his background. With a hope that that would be sort of be a pilot program and it failed. Spectacularly.*

Although it was also acknowledged in this research that the rules are there and should be universally applied. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) explains: *"in the work sense, yeah, everybody has to perform to the same standard. As in the rules are there for everybody".*

However, many Aboriginal people openly acknowledged that their workplace performance is often influenced by family life. As an Aboriginal worker (WA7) describes:

> *I've got all these family commitments and sometimes family problems. And it follows you. It follows you because you're tired, cranky…your mind is elsewhere, you know, you are thinking about things at home.*

Teams and Team Leaders retaining an open mind to such influences on performance are considered from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives to improve shared understanding.

What is interesting is that this is in relation to performance. However, in relation to leave for personal reasons, it is broadly acknowledged (by both cultures) that there needs to be greater flexibility in the rules, particularly for Aboriginal people. As an Aboriginal team leader (SA5) discussed in relation to funerals:

> *Aboriginal people experience them more…more than 5-6 times a year or whatever it is in terms of…the suicides, the deaths…all that type of thing. Now you talk to anyone that has lost a loved one, how long that takes them to recover or respond. For some people it's easy. Other's it's not. Now if you have to do 4 or 5 of them a year…*

Another (SA2) in relation to family matters:

> *When they go and actually see where they live, see all the children that they have to try and feed. See all the dysfunctional sort of family set ups that they have to try and manage and patch then do a day's work? When they see that, they get it.*

This research reveals that there are times when rules should be adhered to rigidly, such as around performance and provision of professional opportunities and other times when rules should be more 'flexible', such as allowing for personal leave. There are potentially many other examples of where rules require further consideration in relation to shared understanding, however these have not been revealed in this high-level research. This could be further explored in future research endeavours.

In relation to 'othering' and decoupling of procedure from practice this research has found that organisations wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people need to:

- avoid organisational bias and individual perceptions of 'laziness' of Aboriginal people and build transparent performance systems that critically address these perceptions;
- adhere to performance-oriented rules/processes rigidly; and
- offer flexibility around leave arrangements to allow for cultural practices.

The next section addresses the impacts lack of cultural and historic awareness can have on preventing shared understanding.

Cultural and Historic Awareness

For the purposes of discussion, these two inhibitors have been grouped together as they are inextricably connected. Hall (2011) has found that cultural and historic contexts are jointly important in the social construction of leadership. The nature of cultural awareness training provided in the civil construction industry is that it provides not only an overview of Aboriginal culture, but also an overview of Australia's historic policies and laws surrounding treatment of Aboriginal people. It is therefore a treatment for both cultural awareness and awareness of Australia's historic influences on our relationships and creation of shared understanding.

The importance of cultural awareness and cultural competence was covered in the Enablers of Shared Understanding, Cultural Awareness Training and Safety section of this chapter, it is therefore logical that lack of cultural awareness and competence would become an inhibitor of shared understanding. However, the lack of cultural competence (such as insensitive commentary or poor social awareness) is noted by all hermeneutic units as contributing to inhibiting shared understanding. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN12) explains their awareness of Aboriginal culture prior to undertaking cultural awareness training:

> *Only what I'd known of my understanding of Aboriginal culture through you know…being a member of Australian society in general. What sort of information is available to the general public through the osmosis of being a citizen in Australia you know.*

This lack of knowledge compounds in terms of poor understanding of Australia's historic treatment of Aboriginal people, which was acknowledged by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants as impacting their ability to achieve shared understanding. As one Aboriginal worker (WA8) explains: *"some horrible histories that what we have today or what I've had that my ancestors and my past generations have gone through to get to where I am now"*.

WA8 explains the impact this has on their behaviour in the workplace:

> *They think that I'm…I'm a very negative person, but it's just…you don't quite understand the horrendous stuff that the guys have been through. My grandfathers and my grandmothers and so on. We've had people that fought for this country as well.*

This history has led to a fear on the part of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. For example, Aboriginal people this is a fear of authority, stemming from the intergenerational trauma inflicted by historic government policy; and Non-Aboriginal people, this is a fear of being offensive due to lack of cultural competence.

Both fears are noted by both cultures. For example, the Aboriginal fear of authority is explained by an Aboriginal team leader (SA6) who notes how this fear is culturally instilled from a young age:

> *Young ones always…they're very scared. Because they've been taught to*
> *be scared. They'll take you away, you know, they'll lock you up…if you do*
> *that…where's your uncles, where's your mum? Where's your Dad?*

A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader observes the outcome of this in relation to Aboriginal people not feeling comfortable approaching a Team Leader:

> *A lot of it is to do with fear of authority…they fear…it has been handed*
> *down generational where they see the cops as authority and they only*
> *know that they will be put in jail.*

The non-Aboriginal fear is also observed by both cultures, as an Aboriginal worker (WA7) discusses how their colleagues react to an Aboriginal person taking time off work:

> *They don't talk to me about it because it seems so politically sensitive,*
> *when people bring up…when people bring up conversations about*
> *Aboriginal privileges.*

A Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN4) explains how they feel these matters can be sensitive and difficult to raise: *"almost an oversensitivity. That you're a bit scared to say anything in case you say something wrong".*

This historic treatment of Aboriginal people has also lead to a sense of hopelessness and anger, particularly in the Aboriginal community which impacts on their working life. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA6) explains: *"you can't be positive and listening to negative stuff. Otherwise it'll stop you. It'll hold you back".*

This research found that tied in with fear and cultural matters is the concept of shame, which was more prevalent in the Aboriginal cultures than Western cultures. Shame shapes relationships and has a role in the motivation, functioning and performance of individuals and a team (Clough, 2010; Plate, 2015). Using Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions, Velayutham and Perera (2004) found that cultures which are collectivistic, have high power distance and avoid uncertainty, such as the Aboriginal culture, tend to experience shame more than 'guilt cultures', such as Western culture. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA6) explained:

> *Shame…you know. They get shamed out a lot. Which you know, sounds*
> *ridiculous, but there's things…like…there's something about shame this*
> *morning, you know…it's probably why I haven't communicated with my*
> *bosses because I'm ashamed…I'm shamed how to bring it up.*

This research found that shame intervened in team leader–subordinate relationships (as described above); affected work motivation; and at times caused absenteeism from work. One Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) described such a situation:

> *The shame situation. So this young guy threw away getting paid huge money for unskilled work. Over $100,000 for an unskilled worker on a traineeship about 2 minutes from his girlfriend's house. All this sort of stuff and it was a sweet gig and he threw it away because of a misunderstanding. For me that was a big thing. I was gutted about that. But this kid had so much potential, but because we didn't manage that situation. Or he didn't manage. He didn't feel comfortable raising that with anybody.*

Based on their research on shame and guilt and the impacts on accountability Velayutham and Perera (2004) questioned the applicability of Western accountability practices in a non-Western environment, such as with Aboriginal people, and that demanding increased accountability may have counter-productive effects. This creates complexity for team leaders wishing to improve shared understanding due to conflicting impacts of shame and guilt on approaches to accountability. As with Velayutham and Perera (2004), this research has not found a way to practically resolve this concern and it remains a matter for further research. However, organisations may wish to consider the different approaches to conflict management detailed in the section on Conflict Management in the Enablers to Shared Understanding of this chapter. This sheds light on avoidance and how diverse community relationships may be leveraged to resolve conflict.

To avoid cultural and historical matters inhibiting shared understanding in the workplace, organisations need to consider the complexities of removing cultural and historic barriers which inhibit shared understanding. Specific actions that may prove to be useful in removing these barriers include:

• Cultural awareness training.
• Acknowledgement of the past and encouraging conversation and dialogue around the historic treatment of Aboriginal people and what this means to today's workplace relationships.
• Building community relationships to allow for improved handling of shame and conflict.

- Consider how increasing accountability practice may actually exacerbate the impacts of shame, rather than drive performance and find ways of addressing performance, in a 1 on 1 forum in a manner that allows for saving of face.

This section has considered the cultural and historic impacts on inhibiting shared understanding. However there remains other inhibitors of shared understanding identified by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. The next section will discuss how a focus on tasks (as opposed to relationships) can inhibit shared understanding.

Task Focus

A team or team leader with too much of a focus on the task at hand, rather than relationships in the team, can also inhibit shared understanding. A Non-Aboriginal Worker (WN2) observed the difference between his own culture towards relationships and that of their Aboriginal colleagues:

> In the Western world, tend to be a bit more scope oriented. So it's really important for us to deliver this, deliver that in this budget in this time. Whereas, Aboriginal culture is a bit more stakeholder management oriented, so you need to talk to people, understand where they are coming from. If they have a sick child, if they have a sick parent, that actually is important.

This was also reflected in the commentary of Aboriginal participants, as one Aboriginal worker (WA7) explained: *"when it's construction, you've got to get things done. You know. There is deadlines and there's bigger…they think that there is bigger things that they have to meet".*

As discussed in the Literature Review, Chapter 2, Toor and Ofori (2008) found the construction industry leadership to be very task and authority focused. Although civil construction projects require a focus on scope and delivery, team leaders wishing to create shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people need to be cognisant that both cultures require both of a task and a relationship focus to create that understanding.

Having less of a task and more relationship focus requires well founded communication skills between team members. The next section will explore how this research has revealed poor communication also inhibits shared understanding.

Poor Communication

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants in this research observed difficulty in communications between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Some of this is language skills due to education levels or being multi-lingual (some Aboriginal people speak 5-6 different languages). However, it is commonly acknowledged that Aboriginal people will use as much if not more body language than words. As one Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN10) explains:

> *Lots of times, to me, 'cause they sometimes don't have the best communication or understanding of how to come back to ya, their actions speaks sometimes a lot bigger than the words.*

However, this is not always consistent for Aboriginal people, as one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) noted: *"for me personally I don't have too much dramas communicating with non-Indigenous people because I've had a fairly long working life".*

Body language is noted as being a large part of the communication that may prevent shared understanding, as an Aboriginal worker (WA8) explains:

> *If you are upset with someone else…it's quite easy to see that with the other guys. You can tell that they are really angry towards you or…whatever reason it's happened. Our people are very good at reading body language. It's part of our culture that we've had for so many thousands of years. When you stick something out that they don't see it as being obvious, we do.*

Although paralinguistics has been studied for most of the last century (Jolly, 2000), it has not necessarily been considered in relation to shared understanding. Transformational leadership and sense-making are both founded in discursive processes, conceptual learning, questioning and feedback (Hamrin et al., 2016; Mulder et al., 2004), which potentially rely on strong use of verbal communication. This may be more difficult between the Western culture which is more verbally oriented and the Aboriginal culture which is more body-language oriented than the other.

Therefore, to improve shared understanding, it is recommended that organisations seek opportunities to improve verbal and non-verbal communication skills within their teams.

Several inhibitors or barriers to shared understanding were found from the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives. Some of these are shared by both cultures and others are unique to one or the other as explored in Table 6.1.

These inhibitors require further exploration through more research as it is difficult to say if the construct of this research objective being between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people has led to an unconscious bias towards focusing on these differences, no matter how minor.

To ensure that the inhibitors to shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are minimised, this research recommends:

- appointing team leaders who can protect team members by speaking out against racism and avoiding categorisations into groups while retaining the task and relationship focus of the team. To do this, they must be able to span both cultural groups to deliver messages of collaboration, cooperation and the whole being greater than the parts.
- Working with team leaders to address decision making bias in relation to Aboriginal performance and promotion.
- Adhering to rules related to performance, however offer flexibility around rules related to leave for personal matters.
- Providing cultural awareness training.
- Acknowledging the past and encouraging conversation and dialogue around the historic treatment of Aboriginal people and what this means to for today's workplace relationships.
- Building community relationships to allow for improved handling of shame and conflict.
- Reviewing performance accountability practices to avoid exacerbation of feelings of shame. This includes addressing performance, in a 1 on 1 forum in a manner that allows for saving of face.
- Training to improve both verbal and body language communications between team members.

6.3.3   Shared Understanding – Conclusions of Enablers and Inhibitors

This section has discussed the enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as revealed by this research. Some of these enablers (e.g. cultural competence) have corresponding inhibitors (such as low cultural awareness), which mean that the same actions can address both enabling shared understanding while also reducing the inhibitors. However, others are uniquely enabling (such as mentors and advisors) or inhibiting (such as organisational bias). Several pragmatic recommendations have been made for organisations wishing to address both enabling shared understanding as well as removing inhibitors of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in their business.

This chapter has explored both the applicability of previous models of shared understanding and the enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding revealed by this research. However, there are a number of other insights offered by this research that would be useful in terms of creation of the 'third space' in the workplace of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. These will now be explored in the final section of this chapter.

6.4   Other Insights from the Literature and Research

This chapter has so far explored what affects the regard for a team leader and the applicability of a shared understanding conceptual framework to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal culture. It has also detailed the common views on enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding. However, there are several other insights garnered from this research in relation to improving the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. These insights include: differing foundations of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; spirituality; the impacts of the broader community; and impacts of organisational systems on perceptions of justice and compassion.

Each of these insights highlights differences in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world views that have the potential to impact on shared understanding and the creation of a 'third space'. The outcomes from this research surrounding each are important to detail here to provide a preliminary and formative understanding as to some of these differences and the potential impacts.

The first section will explore the differing foundations of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

6.4.1 Trust

The literature review (Chapter 2) acknowledges that foundations of trust are different for each individual and that trust remains a poorly defined and not well understood (Simpson, 2007). It is also known that levels of trust in team leaders can vary within cultural contexts due to perceptions of leadership and attitudes towards authority (Casimir et al., 2006). As trust is a social construction it relies on sense-making (Adobor, 2005; Lewis & Weigert, 1985). Trust between team members is important for knowledge sharing (Wickramashinghe & Widyaratne, 2012) and creation of shared understanding. In their proposed model of trust, Mayer et al. (R. Mayer et al., 1995) found that ability, benevolence and integrity are antecedent factors to trust.

This research confirmed this model in relation to ability and this is reflected in having the same performance standards enabling shared understanding, as an Aboriginal team leader (SA3) describes: *"we all respected him and he got things done and we got things done and we enjoyed working with each other".*

The importance of benevolence was also reinforced through commentary around caring and empathy. As a Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN3) explains:

> *Showing people that you actually do care. It's not just about coming to work and laying pipe or coming to work and doing training. It's about them as a person and how they can contribute to the broader team and that connection and purpose is really important.*

Finally, integrity, particularly in terms of honesty was also reaffirmed as being important to shared understanding and trust. An Aboriginal worker (WA8) describes proving trustworthiness to a new Team Leader: *"and that you're honest. You're an honest person. And that you can be trusted".*

However, in addition this research noted the importance of quality, social time in building trusting relationships for Aboriginal people.

Auvinen et al. noted the importance of leader storytelling and narration to motivate, inspire and generate trust (Auvinen et al., 2013). However, in the case of Aboriginal people it is the co-experiencing that time together, rather than the listening to it being re-experienced that will generate trust. In their case, time spent together is also an antecedent to trust. Based on Mayer et al.'s research and the findings from this research, a proposed model of Aboriginal Trust is depicted in Figure 6.9.

One Aboriginal worker (WA7) describes the importance of time to Aboriginal people:

> *Patience and time. The thing with blackfellas like, you just give them time,*
> *you know… They allowed me that space and I kind of worked my way in*
> *here. Blackfellas are like that. You sort of just got to give them some*
> *space. After a little bit of time, they open up. They do open up.*

Another Aboriginal worker (WA4) described the importance of time in developing trust: *"probably the time we spent together. You get that bit of a trust with each other".*

In pursuing the issue of trust formation, the researcher asked if time was more important than something like being consistent in their actions or doing what they say they're going to do. The response from WA4 was: *"yeah, most probably yeah".*

Aboriginal team leaders (e.g. SA3) agree, as one explains the importance of social interactions outside of work in building relationships: *"even outside of work, go and spend a bit of time with us down at the footy or having a beer or BBQ. Those types of interactions really go a long way, you know".*
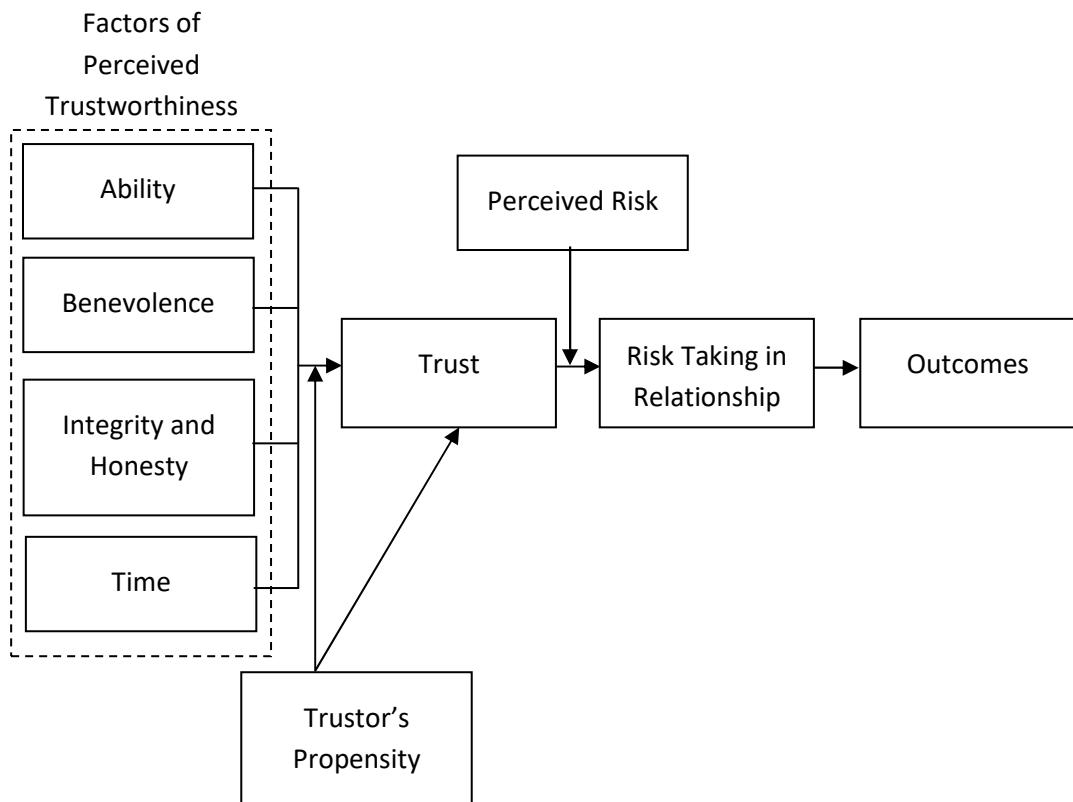
F*igure 6.9: Formative Aboriginal Model of Trust*

This is even noted by non-Aboriginal people, as one Non-Aboriginal Worker (NW4) explained in relation to a shared history with Aboriginal colleagues:

Having the same people working on the project for a long time. And this
might be a bit more of a general statement, so you know, for
example…now I've been here for 7 years and you can refer back to
different stages of the project and say oh, remember when we went out
on site…and looked at this and…oh you were there when we talked about
that. And they say that to me as well, oh yeah, you were there that time
when we went out and did…that. I think it…it's just a relationship thing.

This shared history in building trust was commented on by one Aboriginal team leader (SA7) in relation to a non-Aboriginal colleague

The other side of it, that's how [other person] and I got to know each other
was through the [project] stuff. Like my grand-daughter is now 18 years
old and [other person] has been around most of that time. Me carrying her
on my hip and…so she's been someone that's been there.

An Aboriginal team leader (SA5) noted the importance of spending time with the team to build good team relationships:

It is all around the relationships. I have a relationship with the team, and
they have a relationship with leaders and so, I put a lot of time and effort
in just spending time with those people and trying to find out about them.

This may be a difficult concept for non-Aboriginal people to understand in terms of workplace relationships, that in order to improve trust by their Aboriginal colleagues, social relationships need to be evolved outside of the workplace.

There may be other differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives of trust that have not been detected by this research. However, it is anticipated that organisations wishing to improve shared understanding will be more successful if this difference in the factors that create trustworthiness is taken into consideration.

In addition to trust there are other insights that may impact on the creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people such as spirituality. This will be further explored in the next section.

6.4.2 Spirituality

The differences in views around spirituality and the lack of acknowledgement of Aboriginal spirituality are found in this research to have an impact on shared understanding. This has in part been covered in previous sections through cultural awareness training enabling shared understanding and lack of cultural understanding inhibiting shared understanding. However, there is a unique spirituality of place for Aboriginal people, for which allowances need to be made by the team and the team leader for the relevant cultural protocols to occur to ensure spiritual and psychological safety. One Aboriginal worker (WA7) spoke of the difficulty of relaying this spirituality to his non-Aboriginal colleagues:

> *If we didn't have a proper night's sleep and we thought that there was something hanging around…that I could talk to them* [Aboriginal colleagues]*. I could say you know what? I think I got a visit last night. I think…because around Christmas time could have been law time. I see some old fellas* [spirits of people passed] *come through. They understand that. I can't say to a non-Indigenous person, oh, I didn't get my sleep last night because there was spirits walking through my…I felt there was a spirit walking through my room last night. They mightn't understand it. But the Aboriginal group that I was with could understand that.*

This is both from the spiritual perspective in terms of ensuring welcome to country, but also in terms of respect of this spirituality from their colleagues, as an Aboriginal worker (WA4) explained:

> *This is somebody's land, native land you know, so you're going to have to look after it. I just got taught that if you're going to go into someone else's property or you're working there you respect it, you know. Because you don't know. You just think back there was ancestors here before we were here.*

Understanding this spirituality which connects Aboriginal people to place and the impact it may have on their emotional safety and feeling comfortable coming to work is important to facilitate shared understanding. If an Aboriginal person does not feel comfortable expressing when he/she does not feel safe for fear of being judged by team members, then shared understanding seems unachievable.

Creating shared understanding between a team comprising both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people requires a cognisance of this spirituality and associated cultural protocols. While Western cultural protocols in the workplace are generally well understood, the Aboriginal protocols are rarely considered and other research has found Western governance models questionable in the Aboriginal context (Limerick, 2009). Organisations wishing to facilitate shared understanding need to consider non-Western gestures to create cultural safety, such as a welcome to country from a local Elder and being aware of the relationship protocols that may affect the team. This can be complex work and will vary from site to site (Maddison, 2009) as one Aboriginal team leader (SA5) explains:

> *There are cultural differences, where you're going in to and it's very much you're going into that country so you need to change to see and fit there. Unfortunately, we don't apply that here because it's our country, we're doing it our way.*

Inclusion of cultural protocols requires a level of tolerance by both cultures. This includes tolerance from non-Aboriginal people of protocols that they may feel are meaningless and tolerance from Aboriginal people as Non-Aboriginal team leaders learn the most culturally appropriate responses. As a Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN8) explains:

> *Within that somehow the bigger driver, the bigger population can make that difference on the site. On the project it's those tolerances that allow people to do what they need to do and the changes will happen when that change has happened.*

Another Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN14) talks about the level of patience and adaptability required to successfully undertake this role as a non-Aboriginal person: *"the Aboriginal space it's never consistent, it's never easy. In fact, if it's easy, then you're doing something wrong".*

Use of Elders as mentors in these situations may assist in adapting to the local cultural needs. Interestingly, all respondent groups except Aboriginal team leaders spoke of the importance of bringing in local Elders as mentors. Consultation with the Noongar mentor for this research revealed this could possibly be because the Aboriginal team leaders felt they themselves fulfilled this role. Given around half of the Aboriginal team leaders

interviewed were Elders, this may be a reasonable explanation, however would require further exploration in other research.

Endeavouring wherever possible to embed the local cultural protocols into team activities and team structure assists in avoiding conflict between Aboriginal people and encourages Aboriginal people to feel welcomed into the team. It is also a small way of connecting with the spirituality of the place in which the team is working, creating a team more connected to its environment as well as each other.

These insights into shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people have covered trust and spirituality, the next section will add to these insights with an exploration as to the influence of community.

6.4.3   Community Influence

As identified by Julien et al. (2010), in relation to Canadian Aboriginal leaders, this research has confirmed Australian Aboriginal people are also community oriented leaders.

In contrast to the Western perspective of leadership, in the Aboriginal world view, leadership is not an individualistic task and an individual does not choose to become the leader, as one Aboriginal team leader (SA7) describes: *"you don't want to be the leader in the group. But the nature…in the group is they're drawn to you"*.

This and the commentary of others, affirms Stewart and Warn's (2017) observation of a leader taking great care to not assume their right to lead. This 'leadership' is created by the expectations and acceptance of the broader group inferring leadership. This group or community 'approval' is demonstrated in the description of another Aboriginal team leader as to how they came to take a promotion:

> SA4:   *So then I spoke to all the lads and I made sure it was OK with them. So I said, now seriously you guys, you really got to think about this. Do you want me as your team leader? And they all said, yeah, it would be great.*

> Researcher: *Oh that is nice. Really nice of you to ask too. A lot of people wouldn't ask.*

> SA4:   Well it would defeat any…I wouldn't have got anywhere if I didn't have their approval.

> Researcher: Yeah

> SA4:   Cause they could have just fought against me. And I'm not one to…what is the word…I'm not going to waste my time. I won't waste my time. If I'm going to be needed, I want to be needed.

This consultative behaviour of seeking permission or approval before taking a leadership role was repeated across interviews. What is interesting, and requires further research, was that it was a process undertaken of both Aboriginal people raised in culture and Aboriginal people who were not due to the 'stolen generations'[1] or parental philosophy. It seems that Aboriginal people naturally return to 'cultural' ways of inferring leadership, even without realising. It is also unclear from this research as to what decision is likely to be made should be team be divided in views as to whether or not the team leadership should be taken.

In the Western world view, an individual applies to become the team leader and higher in the organisational hierarchy deem he/she is capable and the most suited then he/she is appointed as team leader. This aligns with expectancy theory, where certain behaviours invoke a reward or outcome, the reward being a promotion (Vroom, 1964).

Generally, the Aboriginal people in this research, particularly team leaders, did not seek personal leadership. Their desire to lead appears to have stemmed from the acceptance of the group that they would be a good choice of leader. It is through the construct of acceptance that the Aboriginal team leader will then feel it is permissible to take on the leadership role on behalf of the united group.

The Western world view, is that once appointed as team leader, a leader will then use powers of persuasion, influence, and sense-making to engender social construction of process and then action (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Hersted & Frimann, 2016; Thompson & Fine, 1999). This is seen in theory of transformational leadership which relies on the transformation of "perceptions and expectations of members" (Parry, 1998, p. 86).

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[1] being children taken by the State or Federal Government or church missions under both State and Federal laws of Australia between 1905 and 1970s. These children were generally of mixed-race and were perceived by law-makers at the time to be better off in non-Indigenous households and could be assimilated into white society.

In contrast, the better governance, from an Aboriginal perspective, comes from the wishes of the community. One Aboriginal team leader (SA2) spoke about the importance of community involvement in terms of 'how the governance is produced' and that the *"information influencing that process…came from what the community, rather than from one person"*. Another explains: *"being involved a bit more and sort of getting out in the community a bit more and making them a bit more aware of what we are…what's happening"*.

Interestingly, the benefits of being connected to community were also recognised by the non-Aboriginal responses, albeit more from a human resources management perspective, as SN5 explains:

> *Outside, if we had a community support who said, you are being silly, he probably wasn't talking about you, go and chat to your boss. People who can provide that advice and guidance to him, then he may have come back.*

This connection with community provides a surrounding support network to the team outside of the workplace, who can also assist in drawing the team together after conflict or difficult periods.

The importance of community connectedness in creating shared understanding, particularly for Aboriginal people, needs to be considered by organisations wishing to improve understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The next section discusses how theories and perceptions of organisational justice can impact on the creation of shared understanding.

6.4.4   Systems of Organisational Justice

This research has highlighted some similarities and differences in how distributive, procedural and interactive justice may be used in the creation of organisational justice (Robbins et al., 2008) and how this impacts on shared understanding. Figure 6.10 takes Robbins et al.'s (2008) model of organisational justice and puts examples from this research that create a positive regard for the team leader within each type of justice.

As highlighted in the data-directed literature of Chapter 2, understanding organisational justice requires "consideration of individual differences; contextual influences; affective cognitive, and social processes; as well as person centric orientation that allows for both

time and memory to influence the social construction" (Rupp, 2011, p. 72). This is reflected in the contradicting outcomes of this research whereby participants believe everyone should be bound by the same rules, but sometimes there needs to be flexibility around cultural leave or leave for family matters. This level of flexibility is clearly dependent on the norms of the organisation (Shahzad & Muller, 2016).

Procedural Justice

Definition: perceived fairness of process used to determine the outcome

Non-Aboriginal Worker: " is very supportive and very open to my ideas and ways of improving things so…"

Aboriginal Worker: "Somebody who actually values the input that people bring"

Distributive Justice

Definition: perceived fairness of outcome

Aboriginal Worker: "if it is professionally and something that I can work on at work, then that is fine with me. I wouldn't take offence to that. I would sort of take it and come back and be a bit better at it obviously the second time."

Non-Aboriginal Worker: "make sure that everyone knows that they are part of the team as opposed to their being management, like a couple of admins, blue collar and yeah."

Interactional Justice

Definition: perceived degree to which one is treated with dignity and respect

Non-Aboriginal Worker: "[manager] has got a very good way of…speaking to people in that positive sense and engaging with people on that front."

Aboriginal Team Leader: "He's pretty down the line, he knows how to manage…he manages really well without…makes you feel good about it…but setting you straight. Somehow and make you feel good about it."

Organisational Justice

(adapted from Robbins et al., 2008, p. 199)

Figure 6.10: Model of Organisational Justice

As highlighted in the literature review, however, systems of organisational justice often fail minority groups, such as Aboriginal people (Ghorashi & Sabelis, 2013; Janssens & Zanoni, 2014; Ossenkop et al., 2015). Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in this research observed how systems had failed Aboriginal people. For example, one Aboriginal worker (WA8) described a situation where organisational justice had failed and he learned not to raise issues: *"come in here and be the person where, everybody stops talking when you walk in the room. You know, kind of crap. I don't want that".*

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A Non-Aboriginal worker (WN3) talks about the differential treatment of their Aboriginal colleagues as creating issues in the team:

> *As soon as you start pampering and I think…it…if it goes well. OK, if it goes well…great and they perform and everything else. If it doesn't go well and they don't perform, you start to see within a team, people starting to go…why are they given all these different opportunities. When I went through here, I wasn't…then start to get some resentment build up.*

A Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN14) acknowledged the organisational bias for Aboriginal people:

> *What had happened was the white guy actually had a lot more days off than the Aboriginal guy. The problem with that though, or the thing that was the issue around the misconception…every time the Aboriginal guy has the day off, it is noted. It is noted in the crib room. It is noted by the colleagues at lunchtime or wherever, you know, on the job…oh…seen little Johnny last night and he looked like he'd had a few to drink and I didn't expect him to be here tomorrow. Or you know, he got issues at home or whatever and we just watch every single time. But this other guy, the non-Aboriginal guy, when he has time off when his kids are sick or he had a big night or whatever, it's no worries, oh they won the grand final at the footy at the weekend, so I didn't expect him in, but they don't even note it. They don't even think about it.*

The difficulty in implementing organisational justice is that Aboriginal people tend to have greater life demands from family expectations. For example, as one Aboriginal worker (WA7) stated:

> *Had to go to a funeral. My Nan's sister and like it's a bit far. You can't take. I mean it's a big thing to take a day off work. To go..but to us it's…to us our family expect us there. Like my mum and dad would expect me to be there. It reflects on them if I'm not there.*

There is a difficult and fine line for organisations to balance in implementing a form of compassionate organisational justice (refer Figure 2.6, Chapter 2), particularly in terms of: creating shared perceptions of 'fairness'; preventing unconscious bias against Aboriginal people; and providing sufficient workplace flexibility to allow for the cultural and family expectations of Aboriginal people without appearing to 'favour'.

Shahzad and Muller (2016, p. 147) believe that sense-making may allow teams to "deal with this ambiguity and uncertainty by developing a coherent collective understanding of their inherently uncertain environment" and that this would lead to organisational choices and responses. They go on to note that due to the "dynamic, social and subjective nature of justice, it is not always possible for justice requirements to be defined objectively" (Shahzad & Muller, 2016, p. 151). As can be seen from the commentary above, the surrounding sense-making/sense giving processes leading to organisational decisions does not always, in practice, provide sufficient explanation to create perceptions of 'fairness'. A Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN6) described the consequences of such experiences:

> *Integrating them into the team. Giving them the support and*
> *opportunities without, like I said taking it to the point where everyone sees*
> *it as being a negative on them. That's where the relationship goes the*
> *other way, where the Indigenous are getting all these opportunities and*
> *they are loving it. The majority are starting to feel negative.*

One Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN1) explained how he addressed this issue: *"never go into a path where it becomes an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal story. It should be part of a story where you develop a very good workforce"*.

There was strong support, from both cultures, in this research for consistency in 'rules' or 'guidelines', particularly when it comes to disciplinary matters. As one Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN6) explains:

> *In the event that someone has done something that they shouldn't have*
> *and they haven't followed the JHA or process, I said then we would…then*
> *the individual needs to be accountable. It doesn't matter who they are. I*
> *think once we put some very clear guidelines in and everyone was held*
> *accountable I think that really brought the team together. I think*
> *OK…doesn't matter who you are, what you're doing, if something…if you*
> *cross that line there is a consequence.*

However, there was also an acknowledged need for flexibility in terms of recognising extended family relationships (particularly at times of bereavement) that non-Aboriginal people may not necessarily require. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA5) explains:

> *We do have cultural leave and compassionate leave, which still works in*
> *the immediate family. That's so…your grandmother, your mother, your*

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father, that type of stuff. But those…we acknowledge that those extended
families may have the same relationship as your mother, father, so we
don't deny them to go to those funerals.

In short, this research has found that organisational justice, such as procedural and interactional justice are important to maintain for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, particularly in relation to task performance and workplace growth opportunities. However, there is also a need for organisational compassion in decision making around areas such as bereavement leave, or short leave to accommodate family matters. Team leaders wishing to create shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people may find it beneficial to leverage organisational justice, particularly compassionate organisational justice, to improve perceptions of fairness and remove barriers as well as facilitate enablers to shared understanding.

6.4.5 Impact of Insights into Shared Understanding

This section has highlighted key differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal thinking and beliefs on matters of trust, spirituality, community and perceptions of organisational justice that will impact on creation of shared understanding. While more comprehensive research is required to focus on each of these areas, organisations and team leaders wishing to create shared understanding need to be cognisant of these differences. Some of the ways organisations can adapt for these differences include:

- Creating outside of work social opportunities for teams to spend time together and get to know each other outside of work, thereby assisting with trust;
- Ensuring a local Elder welcomes people to country who are not of the local Aboriginal culture to address spiritual concerns;
- Avoiding or discouraging situations of judgement of Aboriginal spirituality in the same way judgement of Christian philosophies are discouraged in the workplace;
- Improving engagement with the local community in ways that assist in ascertaining support or dissent of organisational decisions; and
- Training team leaders in use of compassionate organisational justice.

This discussion chapter has now considered the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the Western Australian civil construction industry. It has firstly considered the factors (both positive and

negative) that affect regard for a team leader that are common to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This aims to assist in selecting team leaders who are more likely to create shared understanding. This chapter has secondly, identified the enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that are common to both cultural groups. The chapter has then provided some key insights as to differences in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives on trust, spirituality, community involvement in decision making, and perceptions of organisational justice.

Having addressed leadership in the civil construction industry, creation of shared understanding as well as enablers and inhibitors to shared understanding, there is potential to start to define the nature of leadership that will create a third space. The final phase of this discussion chapter will be to identify emerging constructs of leadership that will be more likely to facilitate the social construction of meaning between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction industry.

6.5   Leadership for the 'Third Space'

The insights from the data gathered in this research confirm previous research regarding the substantial differences between Western and Aboriginal systems and their impacts on business (Dang et al., 2016; Lombardi, 2016; C. Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). Dang et al. (2016, p. 29) claim that this "presents a barrier to successful engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander" people in business "and could clash with their values and identity". However, this research has found commonality around a conceptual framework for shared understanding as well as some commonalities around factors that impact regard for a team leader between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Nonetheless, there are also some key differences, such as trust formation, spirituality and cultural perceptions of leadership that may inhibit the creation of the 'third space'.

This section builds on the findings of this research and subsequent discussion to offer formative emerging grounded theory arising from the data. The data reveal paradigm issues of time, perceptions of 'rules' and trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people which is causing difficulty in creation of shared understanding. One Non-Aboriginal Worker described this as "*that wall between white Australia and Aboriginal Australia*". There is a need to build a bridge between the Western and Aboriginal paradigms and as one Aboriginal team leader (SA5) expressed this by stating that the leadership role should: "*be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture*".

This is the crux of this thesis: to investigate the creation of that 'third space'(Bhabha, 2011), a space of shared understanding within the workplace context. Bhabha (2011) defined the phrase as the space between cultures, the 'intercultural' and that although universalism permits diversity, it hides the ethnocentric values, norms and symbols. This is not a space of opposition but one in which different ways of relating and being is formed by both cultures. This then allows for the necessary negotiation and translation to create a shared understanding.

Nakata (2007, p. 2) claims that it "is not possible to bring in Indigenous knowledge and plonk it in…unproblematically as if it is another data set for Western knowledge to discipline and test". Therefore, the researcher is exercising caution in her interpretation of the data and has sought guidance from her Noongar mentor as data have been interpreted and extrapolated into Western-based theoretic constructs. However, it is important that such translation occurs so that businesses operating in the civil construction sector are able to improve their own appreciation as to how to improve the likelihood of shared understanding occurring within their teams comprising both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal team members.

This 'third space', "the intercultural space is understood as a layered and complex entanglement of concepts, theories and sets of meanings" (Haynes, Taylor, Durey, Bessarab, & Thompson, 2014, p. 7). The 'third space' aims to avoid essentialism and shift thinking around differences from being a 'problem' (Bhabha, 2011; Haynes et al., 2014; Nakata, 2007). This research aims to achieve the same intent. To achieve a 'third space' where our cultural differences are not a 'problem' but are recognised, understood and worked within by the 'other'.

Creating a space where cultural differences are not a 'problem', requires a leadership construct that will facilitate such a team culture. This next section will discuss the findings of this research around leadership that can create a team culture adaptable to both the Western and Aboriginal styles and modes of thinking to create shared understanding. It will evolve a proposed new leadership construct suggested for organisations wishing to facilitate this intercultural 'third space' of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

6.5.1 Leadership to Create a 'Third Space' – Baldja Leadership

This leadership construct is named from the Whadjuk word meaning "firmly united" (Whitehurst, 1997). It stems from the views and perspective of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people on the creation of shared understanding aimed at 'uniting' both cultures into a 'third space' of shared understanding. The researcher felt it appropriate, with Elder permission, to give the proposed leadership model an Aboriginal name from the Wadjuk people of the Noongar Nation in whose country she was born and raised.

The landscape of the civil construction sector is changing rapidly. As one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) states:

> *You can see the working culture has really changed, from a 25 year, all white male dominated workforce into one that is sort of now having a domino effect in sort of Indigenous culture as well as other diversity in terms of gender diversity and other…races, you know they are really…we have a multicultural workforce.*

As construction organisations start to reflect the Australian multicultural society (Dombeck, 2003; Showunmi et al., 2016), the creation of shared understanding between these cultures becomes complex. The Western perspective of leadership becomes questionable in terms of validity (for example Julien et al., 2010; Limerick, 2009) and it is acknowledged that leadership style needs to match the needs of diverse employees (Lazányi & Dóka, 2015).

Therefore, the question remains as to what is the nature of a leader who will create the 'third space'? Figure 6.11 shows the Western world view of transformational leadership, along side the findings of Julien et al. (2010) taken from the Canadian Aboriginal perspective and generally supported by this research. This is depiced within the context of the conceptual framework for shared understanding adapted for two cultures (adapted from Mulder et al., 2004).

Individual's Background

Western

- Individual orientation
- Narrower world view (tasks, goals to benefit organization)
- Shorter-term thinking
- Organizational beliefs, values and norms
- Discursive communication
- Relationships: hierarchical
- Focus on the employee (separate work/family domains)

Shared Understanding

Conceptual Learning

Feedback

Affect

Questioning

Aboriginal

- Community orientation
- Broad world view (spirituality to action benefiting community)
- Long-term thinking
- Spirituality
- Storytelling communication
- Relationships: egalitarian
- Focus on the whole person (mental, physical, spiritual, emotional, family)

AVOID

- 'othering' and social categorization
- institutional bias and decoupling of procedure and practice
- lack of cultural awareness / competence
- Ignoring Australia's history
- too much task focus
- poor communication (verbal and body language)

Figure 6.11: Conceptual Framework for Leadership to Create Shared Understanding Explained in the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Contexts

Creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector requires a leadership style appropriate to both cultures. Although this research and others (for example Bodkin-Andrews et al., 2013; Brereton & Parmenter, 2008; Dale & Dulaimi, 2016; Wilkinson et al., 1996) have found cultural awareness and cultural competence improve shared understanding within teams, there is a key role for a leader in these circumstances. As an Aboriginal team leader (SA3) noted, the leader has to take a position 'in the middle' of the two cultures:

> *"taking that sort of educator type role to both parties to sort of…the person in the middle"*

> *"you've got two extremes and you're trying to be the person in the middle"*

Figure 6.11 shows, there are very different leadership styles between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, particularly relating to individual/community orientation, world views, tasks/relationships, spirituality, and communication styles.

This research has shown, however that task competence and completion as well as building of strong relationships is important to both cultural groups. This relationship building needs to be deeper than most Western perspectives of workplace relationships. As another Aboriginal worker (WA2) describes:

> *They particularly have been very open to understanding Aboriginal people and understanding how Aboriginal communities operate and I have had really close working relationships with them to the point where, you know, I only have to look at them sideways in a meeting and they know what I'm thinking.*

A Non-Aboriginal worker (WN2) observed the difference between his own culture towards relationships and that of their Aboriginal colleagues:

> *In the Western world, tend to be a bit more scope oriented. So it's really important for us to deliver this, deliver that in this budget in this time. Whereas, Aboriginal culture is a bit more stakeholder management oriented, so you need to talk to people, understand where they are coming from. If they have a sick child, if they have a sick parent, that actually is important.*

Many non-Aboriginal people can operate at work on solely a transactional basis, however non-Aboriginal participants in this research acknowledge the importance and value of building friendships and family-like relationships at work, as one Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN10) explains: *"you're a family when you're in the work team. You need to be a family".*

Generally, Aboriginal people require a deeper connection in the relationship. As a result of this deeper connection, Aboriginal people will generally place the relationship over the

organisational requirements. Therefore, a team leader needs to understand the importance of building relationships and needs the ability to find ways of doing this within the construct of the organisational systems.

A Baldja leader will find opportunities to create social experiences together that are not a forced 'team building' exercise, but through different activities (in this research activities such as fishing, shooting/hunting, sport, cooking and music were mentioned) to build genuine friendship and understanding. So that over time the understanding of each other deepens to a personal level of motivation and care, as one Aboriginal team leader (SA3) explains:

> *What makes them tick and over time they started to realise, they weren't*
> *very different after all, apart from their upbringing, their culture and their*
> *skin colour.*

Experienced, Non-Aboriginal team leaders (e.g. SN9) also acknowledged the importance of knowing each other 'after hours' and appreciating what is going on in each other's lives:

> *You've got to get to know them at least to a degree personally. If you've*
> *got no idea what's going on in their personal life, outside of work, then*
> *you've probably got…you're probably going to miss the way you should*
> *manage them and talk to them quite often. And quite often end up*
> *making wrong decisions based on…the wrong assumption of what's going*
> *on.*

Non-Aboriginal workers (WN1) also noticed the importance of social activities in building understanding, as one states:

> *If you can go and make an effort and have like a beer after work or*
> *something. They can really appreciate that. But it takes time to be*
> *accepted.*

Therefore, a team leader's care for the team does not end at the end of the work day if genuine understanding is to be created. Baldja leaders would find subtle, unforced opportunities to create this time together to improve trust and shared understanding. Although difficult in a civil construction environment due to the changing nature of contracts and workforce transcience, the longer a team can be together and the more

social experiences available to create that history together, the more likely shared understanding and trust will be achieved. Due to Aboriginal perceptions of time in relation to trust, this history together becomes intertwined with the understanding and performance of the team in the present.

This research has also found that open, honest and respectful communications is important to both cultural groups. In addition to open and honest communication, this research found the use of humour in communication can be useful in times of conflict or to preserve relationships. Use of humour has been shown to enhance performance, job satisfaction, team cohesion, trust, organisational commitment and coping effectiveness (Hughes & Avey, 2009; Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012). The team leader's use of humour enhances team performance, satisfaction with the team leader and team cohesion (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012), while self-deprecating humour affects the team's perceived effectiveness and mediates trust in the team leader (Gkorezis & Bellou, 2016). Both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders in this research found humour helpful in bridging the gap to facilitate shared understanding. As one Aboriginal Team Leader (SA6) describes:

> Humour is really helpful. There's a point that you don't cross or that you don't…there is a difference between…on anything…someone could get hurt. But humour definitely helps.

A Non-Aboriginal Team Leader (SN15) talks about humour in relation to honest and good intentions. Humour can be used to make light of mistakes, provided there is a good intention, as he explains:

> You have a bit of humour and just be honest, really, you can never do any wrong. Because we all make mistakes, but as long as your intention is good, then you can get by with whatever it is that you are doing.

The use of humour, which is not degrading of team members, becomes an important activity for the leader to undertake in building a happier and more connected team.

An important difference between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in this research, is that Aboriginal people, generally find it hard to speak up for their own abilities or concerns. As an Aboriginal worker (WA7) said:

> *I don't like doing it. I can't come forward and say that I've done this. You*
> *know, I've done this. I don't like doing that. But if someone else said it for*
> *me. On my behalf. Then I like that yeah.*

Therefore, a Baldja leader needs to be capable of providing that voice when their team are unable or unwilling to do so. This would apply to both positive matters such as a team member having the skills and ability to take a promotion as well as negative matters such as in the face of racism. As one Aboriginal worker (WA8) explained after experiencing a very racist comment in a crowded lunch room:

> *I expected more from my ops manager and other people but I think they*
> *were caught surprised just like I was. So I had to give them some benefit of*
> *the doubt and say…OK. But more my pride and every part of me wanted to*
> *just stand up…gently push my chair in, grab my things and I say to my ops*
> *manager…I walk out the door and I'll see you tomorrow and just walk out*
> *and jump in the car and go home. And then. I'll probably when I have a*
> *meeting with him, I'll let a lot go. But I guess the…that was probably my*
> *worst experience and I thought that…I did expect more from the ops*
> *manager. And from the crew.*

A Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN11) noticed the reluctance to speak up even when qualified: *"they never spoke up before saying that I've got this ticket. When we went through the records ourselves we found out that this guy actually has the ticket".*

On site, this would be colloquially called 'having their back', for both the good, in terms of opportunities for promotion and the bad, in terms of addressing inappropriate behaviour. A Non-Aboriginal team leader (SN13) explained it as:

> *Just knowing that if they've got a problem then you've got their back. So*
> *it's something that…I work pretty hard on….and I really reckon it's one of*
> *the real key things about…to bring it back to purely financial things. To be*
> *successful in business, to make money, you've got to have staff that*
> *basically… have good staff. You know that basically…if you go into the*
> *trenches and things get tough, they'll stand by you and all that and you*
> *can't expect that if you don't give it.*

Therefore, this research finds that knowing your team and being able to provide this advocacy in times of need is important to generating trust, and also shared understanding as to skills and appropriate behaviours.

Although spirituality has also been found to be a key difference between the cultural groups, this research has found that acceptance and tolerance of the 'other' world view in relation to spirituality may provide a way forward in terms of creating shared understanding. There is therefore, a 'middle ground' that can be found between what initially appears diametrically opposed world views.

A co-created third space of shared understanding is possible, in a context where project deliverables are achieved, and skilled people are employed to deliver on project deliverables. However this requires both stewardship (Block, 1993) and implementation of compassionate organisational justice (Shahzad & Muller, 2016), while adhering to formal performance and promotion systems. Other leadership practices that this research finds to lead to shared understanding include:

- Cultural awareness and competence training
- Flexible personal leave arrangements
- Engagement of mentors/advisors
- Organisational induction training
- Community engagement
- Open, honest and respectful communications
- Providing constructive feedback
- Culturally diverse conflict management practices

These among other Baldja leadership qualities and the espoused and encouraged team culture by the team leader are depicted in Figure 6.12. These are shown within the context of the elements of Mulder et al.'s (2004) conceptual framework for shared understanding to demonstrate how such a leadership approach can facilitate shared understanding between the two cultural groups in the workplace
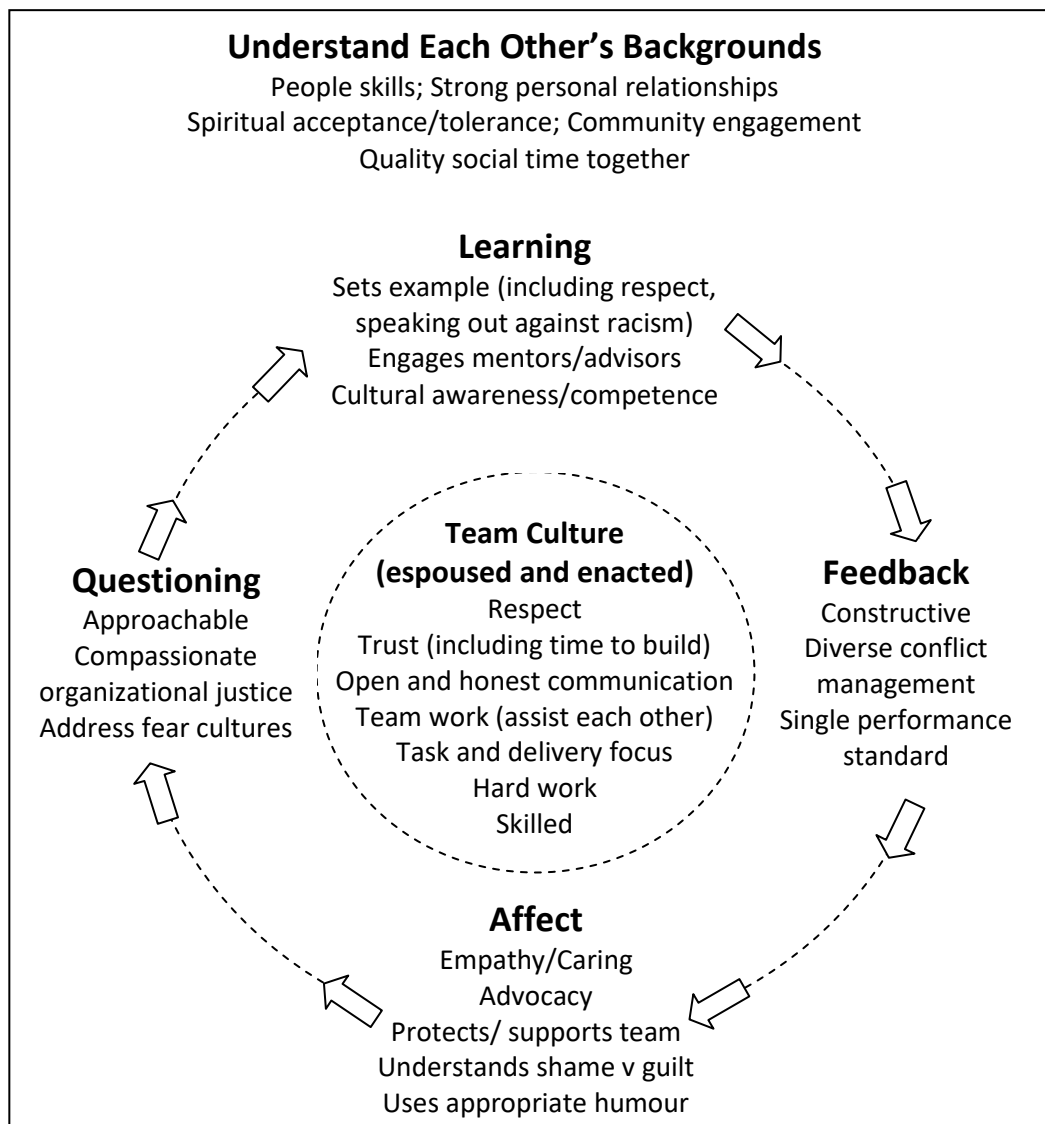
Figure 6.12: Conceptual Model of Baldja Leadership to Create Shared Understanding

While the Baldja leadership framework is formative due to the small and exploratory nature of this research, it provides initial guidance to industry as to the nature of leadership in the civil construction sector that will lead to creation of the 'third space' of shared understanding.

This discussion chapter has now explored:

- the nature of leadership in the civil construction sector, including what creates both positive and negative regard for a team leader as agreed from both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives;

- shared understanding from the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives, including the agreed enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding; and

- the nature of leadership (Baldja Leadership) that has been agreed by both cultural groups as being able to facilitate a 'third space' of shared understanding.

This chapter will finally summarise the recommendations to the civil construction industry to facilitate shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and then make recommendations for further research.

6.6   Summary of Recommendations

Having explored leadership in the civil construction sector, enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding and leadership to create a 'third space' of shared understanding, this thesis has made a number of recommendations to businesses wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This section provides a complete summary of these recommendations for ease of reference.

Team leaders wishing to encourage shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace should encourage a situation where:

- the team can get to know each other's backgrounds, history and perspectives;
- there is a level of conceptual learning, particularly around culture;
- feedback between team leader and individual or inter team feedback is free flowing;
- there is genuine caring and empathy between the team;
- individuals feel safe to ask questions of the team leader or the team;
- there is a strong relationship focus within the team;
- both verbal and non-verbal communication skills are improved within the team; and
- team members can spend quality, social time together.

Team leaders wishing to facilitate shared understanding also need to be aware of the use of avoidance, humour and protection of relationships in conflict management. They also need to be cognizant of how practices designed to increase accountability may exacerbate the impacts of shame, rather than drive performance and find ways of addressing performance, in a 1 on 1 forum in a manner that allows for saving of face.

Organisations wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are recommended to undertake:

- cultural awareness training for all staff from the Aboriginal cultures in which they operate;

- induction training for all new entrants into the business to ensure 'rules and expectations' of the workplace are clear;

- engaging more senior Aboriginal people to mentor younger, up and coming Aboriginal team members; and

- engaging mentors or advisors to work with Team Leaders on how to improve their own understanding of managing Aboriginal people;

- building of community relationships to allow for improved handling of shame and conflict; and

- non-Western gestures to create cultural safety, such as a welcome to country from a local Elder and being aware of the relationship protocols that may affect the team; and

- offering a local Elder to welcome people to country who are not of the local Aboriginal culture to address spiritual concerns.

In relation to team leaders, it is important for organisations to appoint team leaders who can:

- speak out against racism by reaffirming a relational identity of the team (including messaging of collaboration, cooperation and the whole being greater than the parts);

- 'span the boundaries' of both cultural groups; and

- avoid categorizations into groups of people within their teams;

Furthermore, organisations should work with team leaders to address decision making bias in relation to Aboriginal performance and promotion. This includes avoiding organisational bias and individual perceptions of 'laziness' of Aboriginal people and build performance systems that critically address these perceptions. Nonetheless, rules around performance need to be adhered to, even though flexibility should be offered in relation to rules about leave for personal matters.

Finally, it is recommended appointed team leaders have the capacity to enact Baldja Leadership as explained in Figure 6.12.

This section has summarised the recommendations to the civil construction industry for creation of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace. The final sections of this chapter provide an

overview of the weaknesses in this study and recommendations to future researchers of areas for future research.

6.7   Limitations of this Research

Several limitations of this study need to be acknowledged and explored. Many of the weaknesses relate to sampling. Although data saturation has been reached, this remains a relatively small data sample. The sample is too small to reveal differences between cultural groups within the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal samples, however it is suspected there is a difference between Aboriginal people raised in traditional culture versus those from stolen generations; and Non-Aboriginal people born and raised in Australia and those not.

The sample contained both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people potentially from diverse cultural backgrounds. Aboriginal people from all over the state of Western Australia were interviewed and this land area has traditionally held hundreds of different Aboriginal cultures. This is also the case with the non-Aboriginal sample. These too are from culturally diverse backgrounds as some interviewees have moved to Australia from other countries within the last decade.

Furthermore, Showunmi et al. (2016) argue that too often research considers ethnic differences independently to gender and this limits our understanding of individual complexity. This research has not considered the impact of having diversity of genders within each hermeneutic unit.

6.8   Recommendations for Future Research

This chapter has discussed key similarities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal world views on shared understanding and leadership that will create shared understanding between the two cultural groups. This research is, however a small study and has exposed for the first-time similarities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in relation to shared understanding. Therefore, the findings would benefit from deeper research, particularly in relation to trust, conflict management and consultative leadership styles and practices. However, there are also socio-cultural and gendered areas of interest for future research that have an impact on shared understanding in the workplace and these include:

- In relation to Aboriginal people, differences in viewpoints between members of the people not raised in traditional culture (including stolen generations) and people raised in more traditional culture;

- In relation to non-Aboriginal people's differences in viewpoints between people born in Australia and those who migrated as adults;

- Differences in points of view between genders as to what enables and inhibits shared understanding.

In addition, this research has suggested time for adherence to rules rigidly (e.g. performance management) and other times when rules should be more flexible (e.g. personal leave), however there are potentially other examples of where rules require further consideration in relation to enabling or inhibiting shared understanding and this could be further explored in future research.

This research has not exposed the Australian Aboriginal conflict management practices and preferences and further research in this space would better inform impacts of shame and guilt on approaches to accountability as well as allow workplaces to adapt their conflict management styles.

Finally this research has not considered the impact of shared understanding on motivation and whether existing theories of motivation such as expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) and job characteristics theory (Oldham, Hackman, & Pearce, 1976) are applicable in the Aboriginal context.

6.9   Conclusion of Discussion

This chapter has considered leadership in the civil construction sector that will facilitate shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. It has identified the leadership qualities that are agreed by both cultures to influence their regard (both positive and negative) for their team leader.

The chapter has subsequently explored the applicability of the conceptual framework of shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004) to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector and then identified commonly held views as to enablers and inhibitors of shared understanding.

This research identifying commonly held views between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as to desired team leader qualities and enablers and inhibitors of shared

understanding leads to a possibility of creating a 'third space' (Bhabha, 2011) of shared understanding. This chapter has proposed a formative model of leadership, Baldja Leadership, which based on the findings of this research is likely facilitate a 'third space' of shared understanding.

Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusion

This thesis has explored the critical factors in the working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the civil construction sector. It has found that creation of a 'third space' (Bhabha, 2011) of shared understanding between what appears to be disparate cultures is possible and has proposed a model of leadership, Baldja Leadership, that will facilitate this co-created space of shared understanding in the workplace.

Literature relating to Aboriginal culture in the workplace in the Australian leadership context is very limited and until this study, there has been no other example exploring if existing theory of shared understanding is relevant to Aboriginal people. The unique contribution of this research and thesis has been to:

A. Identify the leadership traits perceived by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as creating positive and negative regard for their team leader.
B. Confirm the relevance of the conceptual framework for shared understanding (Mulder et al., 2004) in both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal contexts.
C. Identify that there are commonly held views between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people as to what enables and inhibits shared understanding as well as identify what these factors are to enable practical recommendations to industry.
D. Propose a formative model of leadership based on the jointly held views from A and C that will facilitate shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

This research finds that just as when the 'world was soft' we too (as in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people), with the right leadership, can 'soften' to create a third space of shared understanding.

Central to this study has been issues of meaning making as gained from experiences of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working in the civil construction industry. This research used a theoretical framework of a constructivist ontology to focus on the active construction and co-creation of knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). It has also used an interpretivist epistemology to emphasise the lived experience and the meaningful interpretations placed on that experience (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Schutz, 1967; Weber, 1964), to design a small qualitative study of thirty six participants.

Data were analysed using a constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2005b; Glaser, 2013) and dividing data into the four hermeneutic units of Aboriginal Team Leaders; Aboriginal Workers; Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders; and Non-Aboriginal Workers.

Trustworthiness and rigour were ensured through interpretive awareness by the researcher. This included member checks with participants and the researcher's Aboriginal mentor, source triangulation, peer debriefing with other researchers, academics and the researcher's Aboriginal mentor.

This research has found that shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace can be achieved. It makes pragmatic recommendations to industry as to how to achieve this shared understanding. These recommendations involve the team getting to know each other's backgrounds, history and perspectives and creating genuine caring empathetic relationships through work and social time together. There is also a necessary level of conceptual learning, where the team feel safe to ask questions and feedback between the team leader and team is free-flowing. Creating such an environment requires both verbal and non-verbal communication skills within the team as well as acknowledging the use of avoidance, humour and protection of relationships is encouraged in conflict management. Finally, performance management systems need to recognise that, at times, increasing accountability may exacerbate the impacts of shame, rather than drive performance and performance is addressed in a one-on-one forum that allows for the saving of face.

It also recommends that organisations wishing to improve shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people should consider:

- Providing cultural awareness training for all staff from the Aboriginal cultures in which they operate.
- Providing induction training for all new entrants into the business to ensure 'rules and expectations' of the workplace are clear.
- Engaging more senior Aboriginal people to mentor younger, up and coming Aboriginal team members;
- engaging mentors or advisors to work with Team Leaders on how to improve their own understanding of managing Aboriginal people;
- Appointing team leaders who can speak out against racism by reaffirming a relational identity of the team (including messaging of collaboration, cooperation and the whole

being greater than the parts), 'spanning the boundaries' of both cultural groups; and avoiding categorisations into groups of people within their teams;

- Build community relationships to allow for improved handling of shame and conflict;

- Undertaking non-Western gestures to create cultural safety, such as a welcome to country from a local Elder and being aware of the relationship protocols that may affect the team; and

Furthermore, organisations should work with team leaders to address decision making bias in relation to Aboriginal performance and promotion. This includes avoiding organisational bias and individual perceptions of 'laziness' of Aboriginal people and build performance systems that critically address these perceptions. Nonetheless, rules around performance need to be adhered to, even though flexibility should be offered in relation to rules about leave for personal matters.

Finally, it is recommended that appointed team leaders have the capacity to enact Baldja Leadership as explained in Figure 6.12. Baldja Leadership creates shared understanding through developing an understanding of each other's background, encouraging a learning culture and a team culture of respect, trust, honesty as well as a focus on task competence and delivery.

This research has provided an initial exploration into the creation of shared understanding of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace. It is a small study, which although exposing for the first time similarities and differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in relation to shared understanding, there are findings that would benefit from further research including around trust, conflict management and differences in leadership styles. Further research into these areas will allow businesses to improve organisational design, development and systems to improve motivation and thereby enhance shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the workplace.

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Appendix 1: Analysis of Commonalities and Differences of Grounded Codes to develop Insights

Grounded codes placed into the All Team Leaders or All Workers sections were common to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders or Workers, respectively. Grounded codes placed into the All Aboriginal or All Non-Aboriginal sections were common to both Team Leaders and Workers, either Aboriginal or Non-Aboriginal, respectively. Grounded codes placed into the All Respondents section were common to all hermeneutic units.

Grounded codes were then grouped to by common themes to form insights as to commonalities and differences. Insights are depicted in bold and italics heading with grounded codes considered to relate to each insight grouped underneath with // delineating grounded codes.

Enablers of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

Enablers Common to All Participants

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all hermeneutic units as enabling shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The team is like a family, good mates and this personal relationship and genuine friendship is part of team success and developing an understanding
In our team we are like a family // Not just a work crew, it's…like I've got good mates and family now, like added family // Friendship in the team part of success – you're a family // Having that family environment, part of the team // I'll hear stuff just by being there and talking // He went in listening, don't go in saying and thinking you know it all. Go in and listen // Listen with empathy, not sympathy or apathy // Be open to listening, change and taking on board // Humour is really helpful // Building friendships outside work, spend weekend crabbing, fishing, have a BBQ after work and a couple of laughs (AW) // Camaraderie…they sweat, joke, laugh together they want to come back // End of day, leave work at work and have a joke // You build it as a friendship as well as a working relationship // A personal level as well, if you've got money issues point you in the right direction // Always share stuff about myself, they will give a bit/show trust // Like and relationship, you need to put some effort to understand, getting comfortable, important to build at work // Telling me about things happening at a personal level, if something comes up he comes to me // Built relationships now they trust each other // I just sit

down with people and start talking about building a relationships, talk about other stuff, then business // Be genuine to develop trust and relationship // Relationships and work where you can trust and respect your colleagues // People come from different backgrounds, actually care, just be respected and treated right and fairly // Go back to basics of who we are as people, understand what is important to each other and what our expectations are, the way we feel // Understand their background, values, history, what drives as a person for their future // Understanding of where each other is from, what makes them tick, positives and weaknesses // Building a relationship feel comfortable having chat/giving feedback // Comfortable in asking a question

Cultural awareness training and creating cultural safety are very important

Cultural awareness is a big part of better understanding, leading Aboriginal people training as well, prior to people being on board // More training like cultural awareness, people need to be more culturally aware, every single worker needs cultural awareness // Cultural awareness training a real eye opener // Cultural awareness training is an important part

A culturally safe environment, work on team culture, pave the way, educating the people we work with // By engaging them, I make them culturally aware, teach them and develop that relationship // Cultural awareness training to be mindful and respectful helped // We do understand/respect cultural things but also cultural sensitivities of people in the team

Cultural experience better than cultural awareness, changes the whole attitude of how staff are dealing and connected to the people // Took the people out bush and spent two days and learned a bit about culture and stories, better understanding, beats the classroom, need to be here to learn // Cultural awareness, reading, not as good as being in the community, seeing respect for country // A day with [an] Elder, the emotional connection, I don't think you can achieve in the classroom

Everybody has to perform to the same standard

Everybody has to perform to the same standard. Rules are there for everybody // Indigenous guys wanting to get treated like everybody else given the same opportunities don't want to be treated differently // Treating everybody equally, evenly, exactly the same as everyone else // No difference, deal with them like any other person, same expectations and boundaries // Same whether they are Aboriginal or not, don't treat

anyone different // Ensure same opportunities provided // Proactive about opportunities that is exactly the same as everyone. Make it obvious // Trying to treat me as what they treat themselves, treat everyone

Enablers Common to All Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Team Leaders. In that both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed these matters were important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Do not make a big deal out of it, all part of a team

Can understand why narrow the field, because you're wanting people to see Aboriginal people improve their lot // Don't have dramas communicating with non-Indigenous people because I've had a long working life, link between // I don't need to prove anything cause I'm Aboriginal, they haven't pigeon holed me, I don't think they look at me as being Aboriginal // Success was no big deal out of it, just part of team // Made it easier because we saw ourselves as individual. Not Aboriginal individual

Leadership at both an individual and company level are important to success

People grown up around Indigenous guys, those fellas come to the fore, lead the way // Exposure to Indigenous people before makes difference // Once they buy into it, doing this because the company needs for its development // Do it because you want to, not for business // Manager very strong in support and passionate provided opportunity to do it right // People were inclusive of what we were trying to do, rather than fighting against it, passionate about Indigenous employments // Trainer really passionate, spent a lot of time // Non-Indigenous are the teachers, they seem very accommodating // Head contractor willing to enforce // Work particular[ly] well because they wanted an Aboriginal contractor, as many Aboriginal [workers] // Most leaders are reasonable people, most people are reasonable people // Having a RAP that is driven from the top down. Leaders openly voice that // Comes down to leaders communicating issues at right forum

Caring about each other and showing empathy

Everyone is checking up on each other. We know if something is having a down, everyone's involved in that // Show empathy, show you care, provide bigger picture and career path

Show respect and honesty and do an honest day's work

We are honest, when we talk // Environment is open and honest, can approach senior manager // Respect in the way you speak, treat people the way you want to be treated/how they would like to be treated // Mutual respect of others ideas, culture, no difference in culture if there is respect // Team respect hard work, performance, attitude (leads to acceptance) // Always working on our merits, everyone just wants and honest days' work, do a good job get more work, experience is what everyone respects

My experience is different…Skilled labourers

Not really, experienced much racism, but look at me, they probably think I'm a ding // No negative bias made it easy // My experience as an Aboriginal person different, high value on education, work is a lot easier for me // Skilled labourer will have common language with supervisor [team leader] // Had some success stories, recruited good people early in the piece // Take the chance with the person who had the experience // A bit of age, more maturity, more understanding of how to deal with people // Ensure they have experience/capability as it's important Aboriginal people on my site are good // My mother said it was very important for Aboriginal people to become assimilated; we would be better off

Connect as individuals and to the Aboriginal community

Outside of work, go and spend a bit more time with us. Those interactions go a long way // Entertain calls on a weekend or holidays // Get to know the person and personal life, social chat, otherwise make wrong decision // Working around more Aboriginal people, understand what they are going through // Straight-out dialogue [with] Elders and project team

Conflict managed differently: including dealing with performance issues directly on a 1:1 basis; being upfront in communications, learning to defuse situations of conflict through humour

It is about get them to explain back what you want them to do // Prescriptive in task setting on goals and how to achieve // Toolbox meetings are always the best things // Address is as a management item at meetings every week // Defusing the situation, if heated come back and have a rational conversation, try to work through, what are we working towards, how could be done differently // Have humour and make mistakes with good intention // Need to have connection to the community that they can find that

information out // Go through the back door, speak to someone they are comfortable with // Don't say to that person, that is enough, but they do not encourage any more discussion on it, they didn't get drawn in // High road kind of guy, gets job done, doesn't buy into disagreements // If they're doing wrong, be stern and tell them // If I had to deal with him it was just to the point // If you dig often, it is something you can work through // Pull him aside and be pushy, one on one and offer assistance

Upfront communications, open dialogue so everyone understands // Communicate not just what we are doing but why we are doing it // Have that discussion when you see it [frustration] to find cause

Support structures – mentors, advisors, role models

Buddy systems and mentors don't necessarily work, community support better // Indigenous Advisor cultural point of contact for Indigenous staff // Never really put more than two in a work group // Get some good resources behind you // Guidance and support needs to be offered across the business // Role models are not just for younger kids, also the supervisors [team leaders] and everyone's assumptions // Buddy system – two Indigenous guys together so not on their own // They give them security

Others not included in Insights

Education…last line of defence // Education from a young age will resolve problems

Go that extra step, help them with routine // People buying houses, Aboriginal [people] don't know about how to go about that sort of stuff, help them set up online bank accounts, they generally form lifetime friendships

Enablers Common to All Workers (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Workers. In that both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers agreed these matters were important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Get the job done

There's something good that come out of it if we all get a job done, we all make some good money // We're all here to do a job. We are all very capable people // Worked seamlessly because we were all aiming for the same thing // Pretty much the same sort of wavelength in terms of work stuff // As long as you can get along with everyone getting through the day is easy, do what is told

Help each other out

Stuck with work, no matter how under the pump, just find the time to help me out, really helpful // I was willing to help. When they asked for help…I made sure that I helped

Be open and honest in your communications

Be open and honest and communicate why you're there and what you hope to achieve // Just having open communication we talk about things a lot, going that extra nine yards, show them what they are doing

The code of conduct expected is clear around respecting each other.

If you were negative you'd probably get pushed out of the circle about it // Very strict here and there's posters about respect you employees and things, so they make it pretty clear

Enablers Common to All Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Aboriginal participants, in that both Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed that these matters were important for creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Mentors, support people and role models work well (Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders also in agreement)

Mentor, support person and person that is going to lead them have to be very important, give them specific training, mentors work with leaders // Mentor needs training // Mentor has to be that bridge between Western and Aboriginal culture, taking educator type role, the person in the middle // I knew them. So to try and make it work well, they used me a lot to be kind of a middle man // I want them to be the best the best they possibly can. People said to me if you go, I want to come too // I didn't mind doing it but I was younger then. All the guys coming to me and asking for help // I'm not the only one, There's other people out there. It's a good thing to see nine of your brothers and sisters working out there // Train other Indigenous people to be mentors // Really good mentors for me in a professional sense

Maintaining good relationships and people getting along, including allowing time to build trust

It is all around relationships…I put a lot of time and effort in just spending time with those people and find out about them // Patience and time. The thing with blackfellas, you just give them time, you get that bit of trust with each other // People getting along // I got brought up to mingle and just associate with people // A little bit of background, find out a little more about them, what is important to them, instead of just you need to do this and that

Be willing to learn from each other and be supportive

Don't be afraid, respect means if you don't know something don't be afraid to ask // Be open to asking questions and talking to Aboriginal people instead of being scared afraid of offending, understand how communities operate // Guys gone out of their way trying to learn and change their thinking, sort of support us best they can, they develop those friendships // They were really supportive, watched my back

Making your own way on your own abilities

Achieving things that previous people didn't achieve, awareness is really getting out there // Come a long way, I think things are better, a lot more support, movement for our people // I influenced someone else to give him another opportunity // Trying to get me in the role, fill into one of their positions. It might be a bit better out there // Important to make your way through life on what you could achieve, not your Aboriginality // Prove that I'm just here to work and I'm a hard worker

Enablers Common to All Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Non-Aboriginal participants. In that both Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed these matters were important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Be accommodating of family time

Accommodate time out when you can // Understand why they need to be with family at certain times

Be frank, honest and open about expectations

Frank, open, honest upfront discussion about the job, expectations and environment // Ensure expectations are really clear of people in the workplace

Creating buy in and planning early

Everyone has to buy into it // Talking to them, involving them in our planning early so they can trust

Enablers Common to All Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers) and Aboriginal Workers

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Non-Aboriginal participants as well as Aboriginal Workers as being important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Elders as Mentors

Getting Elders involved and the mentoring is a really great thing to do // Leverage senior Indigenous people as unofficial mentors // Elders invited to come and see what they'd learned

Enablers Common to Aboriginal Workers and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Aboriginal Workers as being important to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Training of Team Leaders

Teaching the managers who then teach other managers and it's had a snow ball effect // Coaching and training supervisors [team leaders] before partnering with Aboriginal team members

Immediate Aboriginal Connection

We identified one and another through our family and stuff // Connection between Indigenous people immediate

Focus on Community

Aboriginal engagement is about economic development, how we work with community. It is an umbrella // Not employment. Focus on community, giving to community

Differences in Enablers of Shared Understanding

This section shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people and Team Leaders and Workers.

Aboriginal Team Leader Views Only

Influence each other

Someone so young, no knowledge of race or whatever be direct…our job is done // We ain't going nowhere, for us, that means we've got to work together and live here together // Connection and knowledge that what I do and how I do it influences others, so they empower // Aboriginal people influenced by Western ways as well // Willing to learn on both parts…from both parties, needs to be two-way dialogue

Be flexible, focus on retention but don't be taken for a ride

Make the best of the opportunity and make them see that it is worthwhile // Sometimes it's that one to take the chance on that wants to give it a go // Cultural leave and compassionate leave we acknowledge those extended families may have the same relationship as your mother, so we don't deny them // Don't expose yourself as a boss, I['ve] been taken for a ride sometimes. People are very genuine about things, you need to be able to allow them // Find an Aboriginal person who can do the minimum requirements of the job. Give them that job. Our policy // Governance, policy procedures, follow that // Health and well-being of all my staff is paramount, given them all possible avenues to be comfortable at work // Main focus is the Aboriginal employees, sort of retention // People leaving the business they want to come back to the same team // Rather than excuses like they can't do this, we took the opposite approach, we know they can't read, that their behavioural skills are not what we're used to // We bring them to site, show them what a truck looks like and what they would be doing // Time and spending it with both, getting out there and being visible

Connect as individuals, share stories, be open

They are all there for the same thing as in to work to support the family and have a better life // You need to know the person and who they are culturally, share stories, be open to local knowledge, knowing country, no matter what part of Australia, there has to be custodians

Help each other out, unify as a team

Not only helping one another out but staying back to work together, a good atmosphere, good morale // How we unified what needed to happen // I had an amazing team. Amazing… // We'll help you…generally we will be the ones that help them do it // We love achieving what we set out to do and I feel a small part of that success of the job // Already in the teams so they know the crew, so when they become the mentor everyone knows them already // Knowing that they can do it with the support

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

- Similarities we can leverage and move forward, also a lot of difference that we need to acknowledge
- I refer to them as my lad, my blokes and my son
- I wasn't the driving force because the guys were driving that as well
- Takes a lot of integrity
- The product, was not my game, it was me giving the product so that people could go in act do what they have to make it work
- Critical mass, enough Aboriginal people that they feel a bit of community within their team
- Radio, the moods always help
- Everyone wants to work for us
- We try to make up our own mind, reputation is everything to us, we usually like to find out about someone before we deal with them
- Words that Aboriginal community use, it's good if a white person uses
- Sometimes can be intimidating, but you have to sort that out in a good way of showing

Non-Aboriginal Team Leader Views Only

Need to have a mix of the right personalities and cultures in the team

Good supervisors [team leaders] provide bit of room without being harsh // Had to go through instruction // supervisor [team leader] 'cause I knew they trusted him // Selective with Supervisor [Team Leader] for unskilled guys – supportive and safe supervisor [team leader] // Balance them with the right person/personalities // Might not give formal leadership, identify important task to allow dignity // More thought into who you advance // Consider the cultural dynamics and discussion one on one // Right people

conducting cultural awareness training (Aboriginal person, HR side handled by HR) // Respect what they bring to what we do

Demonstrate the organisation's commitment

People need to feel good to come to work // Invest whole of life, how income supports family // A lot of encouragement to take pride in work // Asked the guys, how would you do it, it empowers them // Up-skilling so they feel valued and own work // Someone who took a chance on him helped. They need support, faith // Hold people accountable to the culture of the organisation // Individual targets for Indigenous engagement // Ingrain general diversity into management team // It's persistence // Showed other Aboriginal guys the commitment of what we were prepared to do, a turning point // Welcome to country ceremonies // Acknowledge you've got Aboriginal workers and need to take direct steps to improve participation // Help them in where they want to go

Tolerance and reduce pre-conceptions

Tolerance most important – allow people to do what they need and change will happen // Try and break down preconceived ideas and understand // Getting them to talk about culture in small groups // Respected and understood the relationship // Explaining his business and his journey created team buy-in

Not just the supervisor [team leader]; it's also about the immediate team

Didn't want to let [the] team down. Connection to team he'd never had // Guy's three family members died; all came together and supported him // Indigenous guys saying you need to sort yourself out // Not just supervisor [team leader], immediate team influence // Others (team/contractor) teaching Aboriginal workers new to role

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

- Don't promise what you can't deliver – lose face within community
- If they ask questions, they are comfortable and will raise a problem or ask if unsure
- Them respecting what you've asked, following guidelines
- Treat each other the same is too general
- Treat everyone like a team: equal, fairly, respectfully on basis of culture
- What is the breakdown, what have we missed in each case
- Have contingency plans and tool kit of things to do
- Small improvements to demonstrate it can work
- Understanding the intent of the joint venture

- I'll try to make a point of connection

- Most powerful is to assist with own business

- Sit between them so it wasn't all black and white

- Social gathering to bring them together

- Give themselves personal pride and respect

Aboriginal Worker Views Only

Good relationship with Supervisor [Team Leader], know how he sees things

I value people in authority, because they have the expertise, get and employ the best people for the job // Knowing your boss and what he is all about and how he sees things // Supervisors [Team Leaders] and bosses and they've got, most had good understanding, got to be passed down from the top // That bond with (supervisor [team leader]) as well, he allowed it, helping him, guide him a strong bond now // The reason I got it is because you put me in a really good place to get it // Through discussion so I just let him know // I would tell him just about anything // Someone keeping everyone in line, like a mediator

Company culture of acceptance and feel encouraged

It was good to just change opinions and views of people when you come into a place // They have an understanding of me and I've got a good understanding of my team // When people took it well, like, accepted it, it was very rewarding, everyone was involved // You didn't have to welcome yourself, they came and welcomed you to where we worked // Culture companies have, need to develop culture to be accepting of it, not seeing as different // Environment where Aboriginal people are going to feel encouraged to come to work // Once they got used to me everything just went smoothly

You'll never truly understand, but try not to be offensive

Understand that we live outside of this place, we come from our culture, so we are quite lucky // Get a better understanding. You'll never have a full understanding, you don't live the lifestyle, not from family, law culture group // If not part of who you are, very hard to understand, but a little awareness of how to conduct yourself not be offensive // Now I have to go back and explain it to my mob, because he understood that we can't work the same with Aboriginal people // Trying to push so that it kind of suits us now, we are slowly getting there // Appreciate the difference. Don't have to understand them, but respect their beliefs

You have to maintain that level of trust and relationship

People that I take trust in and call a friend, I see it as an honour that they are able to ask me for something, not the other way around // You have to maintain that level of trust and relationship, trust had evolved, the relationship strengthened

Honour, self-respect and authenticity

People talk about being authentic, but I think it is a really important thing // I try not to disappoint anyone // I'm here because of my expertise, I have to perform. I'm here to give // My vision is up here. There is things I want to do, be, I want to add value // You honour, who you are as person is the biggest thing // Probably trust, respect, your honesty and integrity, if someone is going to show respect and acknowledge you, give it back, both be happy

Someone who hasn't been in Australia a long time, they understand Aboriginal needs better

When someone who hasn't been in Australia [for] a long time, they are more focused, a lot more interested in people's relationships. They know the Aboriginal element // See all the brothers and the Kiwis, get treated same as us, so they always say hello

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

- I always come back to that we're Australian thing
- Never had a resume. So everything I learned was from here
- Depends on who is training it, need to be shown way of how we do it
- He told me it was a great meeting so I knew something had been given. Him telling you I really trust you and start again
- Indigenous person, a lot of them want to work with us, they were listening more, wasn't so shy

Non-Aboriginal Worker Views Only

No racist experiences/hostile feelings

Haven't had experience where someone has been left out on purpose because of where they're from // There was no hostile feelings

Common values a good starting point, but not enough

Having the common values a good starting point, but not enough, need same wavelength // They understood what we were trying to achieve, we understood their concerns //

A deeper understanding that you can only get by working quite closely with Aboriginal people // Understands what we are trying to achieve is beneficial to all parties // Each side could speak to each other directly, quite plainly

Willing to work and participate
We are free to work with you guys, however you want to work // They learned everything to do with construction // Nicer that they are participating because they want to have their say // Willingness to work to see something happen

Need to be adaptive in communication techniques, direct and seeking confirmation back
Adaptive in terms of who your audience is: sitting on floor, eye contact, face to face // Articulate to each other and then seeking confirmation back

Get to know each other; it's easier if they know us
Just seeing the same people all the time build that personal relationship // Getting to know your crew at the beginning of the job // Aboriginal community: depends on whether they know us or not // When you are dealing with the right people, treating them right there is a return

Inhibitors of Positive Working Environments/Shared Understanding

Inhibitors Common to All Participants

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all hermeneutic units as inhibiting shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Discrimination, prejudices, stereotyping and being judgemental
Discrimination without knowing the person, passing judgement // Aboriginal employees under a microscope, have to try harder // Stereotypical things about social issues (drinking, stealing) and turning up // One thing goes wrong and I'm a suspect, I feel as though eyes are on me // We don't all drink, we don't all smoke drugs, don't all bludge money, get handouts, this stereotype that all Indigenous people are the same // Complaining about how Aboriginal people do this and do that, they know I'm Aboriginal and I look at them and don't know what to say, it still hurts, I feel we are not all that way // They watch her in the shop like she's going to steal something //Mustn't feel safe in that environment, like they are being judged // Things are stacked against them.

Prejudices we don't deal with // Perception Aboriginal is a lazy worker/gets away with stuff // There used to be like mentally, Aboriginal people are lazy, how come you're working

Taking time out of work for funerals is not well understood and impacts team

Aboriginal people experience deaths more, cultural side of understanding funerals not just one family, it's extended family, if senior people, there's obligations // Hard to go to a funeral. It's a big thing to take a day off work, but our family expects us. It reflects on them if I'm not there // Sensitivity around sorry business, a bit of a mystery // We are not very understanding of funerals and sorry business // Leaders hate it when someone rings up for a funeral this weekend, now we are short. Doesn't help relationships // Missed work where am I going to get replacement, hard to be tolerant/impact on team

Shyness

Whole crowd of people they don't like to be blurting everyone out, put on the spot, get embarrassed and shame kind of thing // Smiled and nodded, it's just a leave me alone, I don't want to be put in the spotlight // Shy in coming forward, wouldn't speak up but will say when can't work with a person // They were very shy and they wouldn't speak up. Took myself out of shyness and approached them // A lot of it is just shyness

Inhibitors Common to All Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were identified as inhibitors to shared understanding by all Team Leaders. In that both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed these matters were inhibitors of shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Racism works both ways

Racism works both ways // a lot of the time racism is one way, don't realise that it is the other way as well

No hope and anger

Can't see a brighter future, continually revert back to the past // I grew up hating people. I was taught by my grandparents [that] whitefella no good, trauma towards hierarchy, can't be positive listening to negative stuff

Lack of understanding of Aboriginal culture

Australians know little of Aboriginal culture and language // In the past there has been a lack of understanding, a lot of people don't want to learn, didn't want to know our culture // How do you bring those people on a journey, educate, change the heart // Not wanting to know each other, scared to know each other // Different tribe, wouldn't speak to colleague, couldn't collaborate and work together // Cultural thing sometimes rules. Sometimes culturally it won't happen because you're going to be the wrong mix, certain families don't get along // Uncle, grandad and supervisor [team leader]–employee relationship need to be managed // Leaders in their community, move them into a team they are the minority and the bottom level

Us versus them thinking

Trying to stir up the us v them mentality // Need to stop pointing out the fact that I'm Aboriginal and you're European // Not segregating, integrating respectfully and understanding each other's backgrounds // Some of the kids where they've been segregated, good in one way, but doesn't have interaction, causes segregation // You always have that separation Indigenous/non-Indigenous

Communications can be difficult

Aboriginal [person] may not understand how to come back to you/struggle to get point across. Actions speak louder than words // Not because people are being nasty; it's because they don't know what they're doing, so anger comes, non-Indigenous kids didn't grow up with this attitude

Aboriginal shame

Shame situation – threw away job because didn't feel comfortable raising issue // Shame…you know. They get shamed out a lot which sounds ridiculous, but there's something about shame // Some people you can't help // Sometimes the issues are too big, you're not right to be here, that is fine, they choose not to fit in // Stopped coming to work out of the blue, no reason, despite rave reviews // Young guy took offence at money rev up, too embarrassed to return // A difficult place you can put people in and they walk away and not come back

Fear of authority

Fear of authority // Young ones they're very scared because they've been taught to be scared, installed in Aboriginal people you're going to lose something // They are nervous about work // You're not going to get that confidence, you're just not going to see it

Being too rigid and not understanding how to deal with Aboriginal people

Supervisor [Team Leader] didn't have knowledge to flag the real issues // We thought he had the experience to deal with Indigenous people // Traditional supervisors [team leaders], direct, strong with their people can be perceived the wrong way // More people would get along in the workforce if they had better humanised managers // Rigid in structure, you're set to fail // Things may not fit their policies or criteria, so we've got to really try to educate them on how we do things // Tend to have a lot more social issues to deal with – understand what they are facing // Sometimes you've got no idea what help is, could be anything from domestic violence to finding a job, most are sincere about that, it's basically our Aboriginal [upbringing]

Aboriginal people identify with Aboriginal people

Aboriginal people identify with Aboriginal people, they find it more comfortable talking // An Aboriginal person can tell a black joke, but you can't have a white, unless you have a good relationship // Find it easier to talk to me because I'm removed from their normal people that they work with // They know the other Aboriginal kids, construction workforce intimidating

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

No one asked them about it, they didn't think it necessary to raise they had the extra skills // Get developed quicker than the Indigenous person that is doing everything he is supposed to do

Well-intentioned but terrible retention, need to be more brutal/honest // Retaining our employees is such a huge problem

Inhibitors Common to All Workers (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Workers as inhibitors to shared understanding. In that both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers agreed these matters were inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Differing expectations

Need to say that's not what we are expecting. Didn't go down well // I didn't realise that your expectations are very different from mine

Deadlines and bigger things to meet

Don't have a team that's working together you're going to have problems // When it's construction, you've got to get things done. There [are] deadlines. They think there [are] bigger things to meet. A working industry, not relationship place

Don't understand/trust due to what happened in the past

They think that I'm a negative person, you don't understand the horrendous stuff the guys have been through // Don't trust you because of what happened to them in the past

Fear of being offensive, over sensitivity

A fear thing, over sensitivity, fear of being offensive means things go unsaid // They don't talk to me about it. Seems politically insensitive when people bring up conversation about Aboriginal privileges

Inhibitors Common to All Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Aboriginal participants. In that both Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed these matters were inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

People don't realise I am Aboriginal and say things that are hurtful/racist

I hear a lot of things because people don't realise I'm Aboriginal. I've heard people say I've never seen an Aboriginal person in the flesh, used to say things in front of me // Because of the way I look, I don't notice racism as much, but when I'm with my missus, I notice it // You get obviously graffiti and stuff said the obviously wasn't pleasant // I hear racist comments in a very direct and indirect manner every day. Things people say indirectly, aren't trying to be offensive. I deal with that constantly

Racist comments made as a joke

He says something back about my race; he sees it as the same thing. Just a joke, holds it on the same level // A lack of respect, our Wagyl is a joke. We don't say God's a joke. Things like welcome to country, cultural awareness we take serious // Unfortunately, it's

an Australian thing that cultural breakdown, people say we're not a racist country, well it depends on which side of the fence you're sitting on // See Aboriginal youth and they get, look at the Aboriginal people doing that, but it's a non-Indigenous guy, you don't hear look at all the whitefellas bashing // We get told to report it when you say this guy said something racist, it's a big thing, you don't want a big thing, treat you like a snitch or rat, not the way [we're] brought up // If someone bad mouth us, bad experiences, we could have added to it, but you just don't. Why should you go down lower? // They were sort of playing it down, covering themselves; he didn't mean it, said in this manner, they just don't understand

Team are not on board or interested

They don't care or they are not interested in doing it because there is money in it // Some people that aren't completely on board with having Aboriginal people in the workforce // You're Aboriginal, of course you're going to say that

Aboriginal person outperformed due to demanding home life

You're outperformed by your non-Indigenous peers, in their household things are a lot easier, different // What goes on at home is different, which can impair their ability to work…we struggle

Poor language skills and reliance on body language

We're a little bit harder to read I guess, always conscious about body language // The body language is for each other. Aboriginal English…you can use the same words but it means different things, can be misconstrued // Because of his vocabulary and stuff it doesn't come across that way and people can be offended // I'll just cut it in half and think I'm talking to the family // They talk so fast and English is his third language // I don't understand what they are saying so I just smile

Cultural barriers that non-Aboriginal colleagues don't understand

Up there, there is people from Eastern States, Ireland, England and everywhere, didn't know who they were and what they were about // People that are coming from all around Australia, may not have had interaction with Indigenous people, so it's from boiling pot into the fire, didn't know what they were doing // Dealing with a separate culture, we need to look at it as separate in that sense, different to our Australian work culture // It's very different in different groups, different rules, laws // Sometimes Supervisors [Team Leaders] uncomfortable about some issues, cultural issues, not sure

how to go about discussion // He just kind of felt like there was a whole different aspect to speak to them as opposed to non-Aboriginal people // You don't ask, you don't borrow, you don't lend, you stand on your own two feet and you've got a job and make money. Non-Aboriginal, you take care of you. // No humbug, no nothing about it

Avoidance and differing conflict protocols

There has got to be a proper way to do it, someone who can help mediate between them // use a good friend or contact to communicate through them, don't know how to bring things up without sounding disrespectful // Don't open it, don't know about it...avoidance, it's a safety mechanism // I used avoidance to buy some time, I just walked out

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

A lot of our family it's all broken now, nobody took the tradition // even I don't know about my culture

If you don't know how someone is feeling it's hard to put perspective on why they are acting the way they act // No one really knows what's going on in her personal life for her to be doing that, maybe some more training

Inhibitors Common to All Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all non-Aboriginal participants. In that both Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed these matters were inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal person not worked before

Never had any experience in employment, and wonder why we have attrition, no confidence // Not worked before, first time picking up a shovel

Takes time to establish trust and respect from both sides

Takes time to establish trust and respect from both sides // More work to build relationship and trust, more time

Inhibitors Common to Aboriginal Workers and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Aboriginal Workers as being inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Dominance and Offensive

Non-Aboriginal people see themselves as dominant // People don't actually realise what they are doing, you shouldn't have been offended by that because it wasn't said to you. But they are being offensive

Systems Barriers

Large organisations hide behind HR [human resources] // Putting up barriers that are not necessary, you created something that is more difficult than helpful, they are going by their policies

False Promises/Hope

Be careful not to make false promises, give false hope // Why give someone false hope? Why not just say there [are] no future opportunities?

Inhibitors Common to Aboriginal Workers and All Team Leaders

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal) as well as Aboriginal Workers as being inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Always one who didn't respect

It only takes one bad apple to ruin a structure// Always going to be the kickers // There was the odd one or two really didn't respect

Looks cause unconscious bias

People look at the façade, be more broad, don't get bogged in the negative //, One Aboriginal man that works in our office, he is very dark, he'll walk into a room and everyone like act differently // Unconscious bias and all that stuff just flows through non-Indigenous you know. We are not a racist country, but…

Idea Aboriginal people are slower

Some non-Aboriginal people have an idea (the way the media portrays) that Aboriginal people can be a little slower when it comes to problem solving

Inhibitors Common to Non-Aboriginal Workers and All Team Leaders

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal) as well as Non-Aboriginal Workers as being inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people not trusted with tasks

Lost in the system, someone else's problem to give them the opportunity, really got to prove they are worthy // Aboriginal people didn't get high risk activities allocated to them // They weren't allowed to…they didn't trust them to do tasks on their own.

Inhibitors Common to Non-Aboriginal Workers and Aboriginal Team Leaders

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to Aboriginal Team Leaders and Non-Aboriginal Workers as being inhibitors to creating shared understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Lack of Trust

Doesn't trust white people, white organisations // Lack of trust and bringing people together is hard work

Differences in Inhibitors of Shared Understanding

This section shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people and Team Leaders and Workers.

Aboriginal Team Leader Views Only

Racism and prejudice against Aboriginal people

A fish is the last one to know what water is // You do need to look after your stuff, but there's ways of doing it without insulting people // If a good relationship with supervisors [team leaders], putting them on notice that they need to take notice // Understanding of Aboriginal people, rather than first-hand experience // Need to be treated as individuals rather than group into those mob, their experiences are different

Fear of answering phones

Aboriginal people will be on their phone every day, but ring you can't get hold of them, won't answer the phone, not going to answer a vacant number // Couldn't get hold of him. They don't have a phone in their house, important to leave a message on answering machine

Language, communication and tone

He didn't ask me, he told me, maybe he should ask // Need to communicate a bit better with my management, let them know how I'm feeling // You can't be swearing to [the] public, talking sexual stuff

Proving yourself – only have a job because you are Aboriginal

Changes through our leadership team so it's a constant process of nurturing that relationship and educating // Most Indigenous guys are new to the business, things some have never had exposure before, not much experience where they are the minority. Some struggle // Not had a chance because they don't have this and their self-esteem is just gone, not going to win the role on selling themselves // Everyone just expected Aboriginal people not to know anything // That's always there that [it's] my job just because I'm Aboriginal, I do have some skills // I feel the pressure a lot, you know

Different worlds, culture, skill sets

Probably the wider community don't understand, lack of education // Lack of knowledge in making decisions, gets too hard and they struggle // Put a bit of structure in there, which for Aboriginal people is not … even I struggle // Aboriginal people exposed to a different reality, what they think is work is completely different, a lot of our mob don't realise it's FIFO [fly in, fly out] // If you're about, they'll be conscious of it (cultural side), but then you're not there, they're doing the wrong thing // There is cultural differences when you're going into that country, you need to change to fit there. Unfortunately, we don't apply that here // This is an Aboriginal thing, this is not important to me

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

Asked me to write a business plan, I feel it's a joke when they haven't showed me that stuff

I just put it down to nagging

Offers things to the apprentice then doesn't follow through

Don't do your job properly, someone else is going to suffer, it's not going to work

They don't want to be there, so they are not given 100%, just tokenistic performance

No loyalty to who you're working for that respect is lost

Too easy because there is a wage, most of the time in building wage doesn't apply, it's the job

Good buddies outside then back on the job, I'm the big boss and all. Cultural thing gets played then and it's not accepted.

The way they come across at the start, first impressions last

Let them vent but move on straight away to another topic

Point that you don't cross, difference between on anything, someone could get hurt

Sometimes you have to look for the best in people and move them

You have to be thoughtful about how you respond. Got to think of the consequence of that and what it might lead to, could I have done that differently

Only disrespect I get is more to do with my lack of knowledge of electrical and mechanical

Some of them will actually be quite snipey

What we could do for him rather than how he could help us and work together

Non-Aboriginal Team Leader Views Only

Look for failure
We look for failure as it reinforced negative stereotypes

Aboriginal people do not meet our social norms
Borrowing money and not paying it back causes friction // People see drug, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, not working, don't understand history // Getting to work on time a challenge // Manage drinking habits, keep an eye on him, buddy system // Health issues make it difficult to get licences

Bending the rules leads to team disillusionment

Aboriginal people get more attention, opportunity, benefits // Bending rules hasn't helped change perceptions/team integration // Elder of the land took advantage of politics // Failed because we never set the guidelines // Aboriginal people not disciplined, knew they could get away with murder, productivity suffered // Persisted too long before performance managing Aboriginal employee-manager felt couldn't (like a disease) // Team so jaded by experience, we couldn't do that again

Stigma

Indigenous guys who do right thing are aware of the stigma attached to them // A difficult place you can put people in and they walk away and not come back

Conflict

To address direct issue need to go through a third party, that is Aboriginal conflict resolution

Cultural Implications

Non-Indigenous corporate world and Indigenous corporate world work differently // Cultural connection make it worse for him // Dealing with senior Aboriginal person – respect, can't question // Put himself outside of cultural obligations to face the issue

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

The more educated the more naive

Initially a lot of people hiding things, didn't want to interfere

Supervisors [Team Leaders] say hasn't turned up, usually means person is dismissed

They don't like that attention

Hit a boundary and become frustrated

How you respond emotionally amplify by 20 times, that is how [an] Aboriginal [person] reacts

Engaging Aboriginal people with right motivation takes more time

Can insult or misinterpret body language

Not a great difference between white and Indigenous until know background, can't have a relationship

Sometimes the most important person rarely says anything

Taking too long, it's frustrating, they're not providing anything

They don't feel comfortable to speak to certain people, speak to those who listen

If too big a group together efficiency depletes

Indigenous Advisor can't be with every person

Need to manage client to ensure doing right by employees

Aboriginal Worker Views Only

Not culturally safe

Body cringes and you think don't say it. // I didn't hear any more racist comments after that // If I wasn't here you shouldn't be saying that anyway // Share only a little bit that needs to be shared to get the job done to do things, it's hard to trust people you get burned // Definitely not personally. When it comes to conversations around the office in that case no [understanding] I don't feel culturally safe // Not an understanding of those sorts of problems that I've got at home that follow me and can influence e (tired, cranky), they don't quite understand how you're feeling // Didn't have at the start of the job. The guys, I think were scared of...the way to approach me

Wear the comments and get on with it

I put that negative shit back here somewhere, but still have small incidents that just sit there // Cop it on the chin. Everyone, the jobs get done when they're getting along, just accept that is part of it, do I worry about this nitty gritty // There is a job on the line and there is guidelines and it's a politically sensitive subject, he could get in trouble if we made a complaint

No relationship

You don't know how to take him kind of thing // The angst was between the two about them connecting, they hadn't connected // With non-Indigenous people, you know they can just have a professional relationship and not have an outside relationship

No understanding as to how to engage

Only common denominator is the fact we're both Aboriginal, is that why you're asking me to do this? // Extremely distressed and upset, these people were ringing me, saying where is he? Lack of understanding // You're going to make a f'ing mess of this and later you come to me and tell me to fix it up // It is not about employment by itself, if that is the space you're playing in, you are kidding yourself // They've got culture. A lot of the Islanders, they've got culture. If you've got culture, then they understand. A lot of whitefellas don't have culture // Getting them to understanding what they were trying to do was not going to work the way they wanted it, if we say this has to be done in our culture, you can't question it, but they keep questioning it // People think they know and understand Aboriginal engagement or the issues, they don't it's about how you engage, not all the words spoken // None of them have ever really worked with Aboriginal people before, never had to deal with these situations, not sensitive to it, probably didn't feel comfortable // He had no idea of the complexities of that communication

People stop talking or think I'm a good blackfella

Be the person everybody stops talking when you walk in the room. I don't want that. I don't like dealing with conflict, don't want to be the reason she gets fired. // I get annoyed when someone says you're a real good black fella.

No special support

No specialised support for it and he is the one that needed the most support, but didn't receive anything // It would be good not to be [the middleman] and it would be good for everybody else to have a talk and all that

Got to work harder to be trusted

I've got to stress and go the extra yard 'cause you're really trying to protect yourself and it gets you down. // Other guys get a pretty good trust rate off the bat // I'm the only one in my family that works and I get upset/angry with me brothers just wasting their life

Nepotism

I'm not seeing you bring it. I'm critical of people who don't deliver, don't take mediocre, don't suffer fools // I won't play that game of where are you from? Oh, I don't employ Noongars. That hurts and is disempowering // None of this pretence of, here is my card, call me, you know // Some companies actually recruit people because they are friends or family. Nepotism are frowned upon in Aboriginal community

Easier if manager not from Australia

Someone who is new to this place goes maybe there is something different here and they give you lee way

Think they are smarter

You've got people who are street and community smart on the other side of the table // They think they have a lot to teach us, but there is a lot they could learn about how to look after employees and treat them well

Rudeness

So you are telling me something with your mouth, but your body is not telling me that // You're in our country, you should say hello, be so rude, a lot don't say a thing // I have to put into perspective of they are telling me this, but based on limited understanding, knowledge, I'd prefer to answer the question, that is fine

Others not included in Insights

If you're only getting negative communication you're thinking I'm not doing anything right

If you're only getting positive you never know where you've gone wrong

Some companies fall into the trap where they think everybody who is supervising has to be non-Aboriginal, I wish there were more Aboriginal supervisors [team leaders]

He said he will come, it might not be in your time frame but he will be here and he was

I got a certain amount of time is done, I go home. Not to be stressed or worried about

Some people think the way to do it is just to point out people's negatives to misdirect the things they are not accomplishing

Whisper of changing of the work or you've said something that adds a little extra, it's destructive in a working relationship

It was long days and I think by the afternoon we were a bit loopy

I'm going to do the right thing, tick a box then they employ this guy, do the right thing

They want to recruit somebody, it's not because they want to win a contract, they have a better understanding and want to employ

I think it just took a bit of time, they weren't excited about it to start with

We are not coming and talking with anybody else, we don't trust them

Giving and borrowing and lending affected a lot of our families, we do allow less of it, modern life

Giving was something that some guys I've come into contact with here's used to. What I've been brought up with

They stay there because that is where they were born, that is where they feel more comfortable I guess

When it comes to things like time off work because we need to go, make them feel different, why can't I do it. Encourage difference you know

If there is a problem we all get frustrated with it, but it seems they get more frustrated than I do

One of the guys is always under the pump, so you just don't ask him for anything

Some people up there didn't know we had a RAP program until our superintendent came up; they were aware of it

Non-Aboriginal Worker Views Only

Stereotype around their work ethic
A generalisation, stereotype around their work ethic in comparison // Aboriginality as an excuse // If they struggle, what's so special about them?, sets them up to be questioned

No discrimination on site, complaints not the real issue
Not so much discrimination on site // Might complain all day about something but not actually hearing what the real issue is

Some people say and do the wrong things
Within the organisation, cultural awareness, but don't apply to our consultants // If you try to be too clever, they'll thing you're insulting or a cheeky bugger // Probably have some people that have said and done the wrong things

Agendas and point scoring

People didn't understand our objectives // Trying to protect themselves and heritage because they think we destroy it or take it away // Angst that someone gets a job opportunity over someone else // Obstructionist to point score // Trying to keep agendas to a minimum

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

Has to be face to face, depending on cultural belief as to whether you look in the eye or not

Some Aboriginal people are very quick to trust, not always a good thing for them

Feeling stereotypical white and bureaucratic

You can't get that from a training course (cultural understanding)

Factors Creating Positive Regard for Team or Team Leader

Factors Common to All Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all team leaders in relation to factors that create positive regard for the team or team leader. In that both Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed these matters created positive regard for the team or team leader.

Feeling confident to come and ask you for advice and knowing that if they have a problem they can ask

If a problem, they feel confident to come and ask you, we can deal with problems early // knowing that if they've got a problem, you've got their back

Work ethic, accountability and positive attitude

Worth ethic, accountability, positive attitude // Leaders they just want someone who works and shows up every day and is about production

A leader that puts themselves on the line for their team

If we fail, we fail together // Valued having an Aboriginal leader who was there for them, put themselves on the line

Factors Common to All Workers (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all workers in relation to factors that create positive regard for the team or team leader. In that both Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Workers agreed these matters created positive regard for the team or team leader.

Backs their decisions and supports their ideas

Backs my decisions, supportive, open to my ideas, on the same side // someone who actually values the input that people bring // When something is not going well, he will defend us, with evidence will back you 100%

Has good people skills

Good way of speaking to people, engaging with people // There is just a connection that he has really good people skills, he gets it

Has an 'open door' policy and is approachable

Open, available to consult with, I can go to him // he always had an open door policy, a very open person, more approachable, has a laugh

Makes them feel trusted by leaving them to get on with things

Feeling trusted, when they give you some responsibility. Makes a big difference on how I perceive myself // Leaving you to get on with things

Provides constructive feedback regularly

Constructive feedback on a regular basis // you've stuffed up, instead of yelling he will show you how fix the mistake, professionally something I can work on and come back better

Factors Common to All Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Aboriginal participants in relation to factors that create positive regard for the team or team leader. In that both Aboriginal Team Leaders Workers agreed these matters created positive regard for the team or team leader.

Understand Aboriginal people or is willing to learn

He's different than a lot of bosses, come across with an understanding that there is a difference // He's got an understanding of Aboriginal people and he's willing to learn, wanting to engage with mentors

Understand the importance of family and the level of dysfunction they are trying to manage

His understanding of the importance of my family and that if something happens I'm the most responsible person to go and deal with issues // Go and see where they live, all the children, dysfunction and family set-ups to manage, they get it

Build relationships with the team

Building those relationships, you should be doing with your employees anyway // relationship...the first thing is the relationship between me and the team leader and understanding of me (where I want to go)

Praises publicly but criticises privately to avoid embarrassment or shame

Pick them up just quietly on the side, cause if you do it in front then they're embarrassed and ashamed // When something goes well, he praises everybody, gives everyone feedback, should do it more often, given me a loose rein

Able to tell each other what we think

Able to tell each other what we think // Blow up with him last week, spoke to him this morning like nothing happened

Factors Common to All Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all non-Aboriginal participants in relation to factors that create positive regard for the team or team leader. In that both Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed that these matters created positive regard for the team or Team Leader.

A team leader who has your back and trusts your advice, discusses and resolves problems

Knowing that if they've got a problem, you've got their back // a good level of trust, he takes my advice // I want to be across problems, no concealed aggression // Problem will be discussed and resolved

Ensures everyone is part of the team

Always made sure that everyone was part of the team, knew where everyone was, kept everyone on the same page // Know you're part of the team, never felt alone

Leads by example

Lead by example // in certain areas shows very strong leadership

Shows trust and respect by sharing personal things

Measure trust/respect by when they speak about stuff they don't need to tell me // Share with me but doesn't share with anybody else

Integrity, trust and honesty

Integrity, trust and honesty valued highly // Be straight-out about things

Differences in Factors that Affect Regard for Team or Team Leader

Table A1 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders. Table A2 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Workers.

Table A1: Differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders on Factors that Affect Regard for Team or Team Leader

Aboriginal Team Leader	Non-Aboriginal Team Leader
A leader who helps them grow A team leader that will help them grow. I've had some wonderful leaders and they've helped me grow ***Leader who creates buy in or leads by example*** Leaders have to buy into the selection process // Management being a bit proactive and communicating, leading by example ***Asking rather than being directive, however being firm when necessary*** If I don't speak to them like that I lose my authority, I'm not a good leader // If you had have handled that interaction a little bit differently would have been a different outcome // No boss, I was in charge, but I wasn't the boss and I didn't tell them, I asked people to do things, talked like mates // Being clear and pulling them up when they don't, disrespectful, you can't let it happen, address it straight and to the point // When he had to be hard, he was hard and we understood that was his role ***Being clear as to what the plan is*** Talk about what the plan is, what is coming up, what we need to concentrate on, we need to do differently **Others not included in Insights** How the governance is produced	***Being supportive of on another*** Being supportive of one another ***Making the boss' job easier*** Employed to make the boss's job easier ***Investing in people to get more back*** Get the most out of people if you put into them

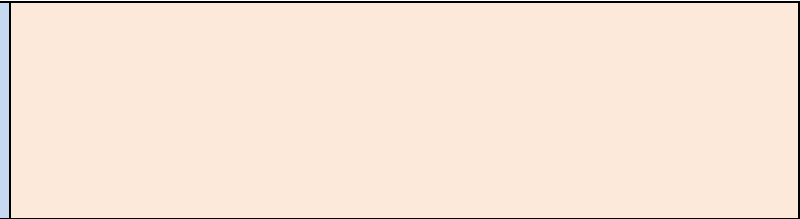|	
Knowledge and my general knowledge of how it works More involved and getting out in the community, making them a bit more aware People are older than him who he is in charge of, but they respect him Wouldn't have the mum side of the role, which I've discovered you actually need	

Table A2: Differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers on Factors that Affect Regard for Team or Team Leader

Aboriginal Worker	Non-Aboriginal Worker
Speaking up on your behalf/standing with you	**Believes in what he is doing**
Always good when you're with a trusted person, a friend, pull them up on it. // Hearing the word [a derogatory name] is never good, respect each other // I don't like doing it, I can't come forward and say I've done this, but if someone else can on my behalf then I like that // If you walked in on him saying that, what is he saying about us, even the guys in the field were angry	Really believes in and he does his best, not just lip service
	Takes responsibility
	Take responsibility
	Gets to know the crew, is one of the team
Admitting when you do not understand	Work out what they can do, embrace that // Getting to know your crew and feeling safe around them // Nice, open, nobody kind of leading, nor pressure to have a viewpoint
I don't mind the people who don't understand and will actually profess to that	
	Get the job done
Someone who is 'new to the game' (i.e. not from Australia) or will see for themselves	Job has to be done and client happy // He's taken extra steps to make sure the team delivers
	It's up to the individual to earn opportunity
I would rather someone new to the game, who is going to come with fresh ideology // Not just from what they are saying, see for yourself what is happening	Got to come from the individual, to be given this opportunity

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Factors Creating Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Factors Common to All Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all team leaders in relation to factors that create negative regard for the team or team leader. Both Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed that these matters created negative regard for the team or team leader.

Teams do not provide enough input to them to enable better decision making

Don't get enough input, still make decisions from behind a desk // Could withdraw their knowledge overnight and refuse to feed me information

Perceptions and treatment of Aboriginal people by Team Leaders are ill-informed

Perceptions (and therefore treatment) of Aboriginal people are ill-informed // [Team] Leaders feeling that Aboriginal people can't meet the requirements of the job

People being bullied at work

Seeing people bullied // the boss calling me names, I told him to get stuffed

Factors Common to All Workers (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all workers in relation to factors that create negative regard for the team or team leader. In that both Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Workers agreed these matters created negative regard for the team or team leader.

Micromanages their team

Less micromanagement when he's stressed // Dictating every part of that and then I have to be the person who goes and asks/presents

Fail to have a relationship with individuals in their team

A lot of supervisors [team leaders] don't have a relationship, that has been a struggle // Construction managers who have 100s of employees; they are not going to listen

Factors Common to All Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Aboriginal Participants in relation to factors that create negative regard for the team or team leader. In that both Aboriginal Team Leaders and Workers agreed these matters created negative regard for the team or team leader.

Have an attitude of all Aboriginal people are the same

Australian bosses have an attitude of you're all the same, paint youse all with the same brush // Causing trouble for the rest, when Aboriginal person does it, the leader...they all do it

Leave them in limbo

My manager was one of the people who didn't want to do it // Can't leave us in limbo, a lot of bosses are happy to be like that

Make examples of them in front of the group

Don't want to be made examples of or anything like that // Just pull them aside and talk to them one on one, instead of like a whole group

Differences in Factors that Create Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Table A3 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders. Table A4 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Workers.

Table A3: Differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders on Factors that Create Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Aboriginal Team Leader	Non-Aboriginal Team Leader
Being treated differently because I'm Aboriginal Get annoyed when treated differently because I'm Aboriginal. Not a racist thing // He just saw me as his lackey, I didn't accept that ***Team leader not being supportive*** I just felt he wasn't...I didn't take any problems to him, I went over his head // Leaders are risk averse // Most men are terrible leaders, they don't have a mum side and not Dad's either...too touchy feely ***Lack of understanding of family*** More family history, more connection Saying one thing but doing another People tell you they are going to do one thing and they just don't, you've just blown me off ***Not clear if Aboriginal engagement is genuine or just to win contracts*** Leaders don't value what we are trying to achieve, they just don't understand // Very patient and, a little too patient, could be setting him up to fail // Where I have struggled with my management, is it legitimate or just to get contracts	***Expectations too high*** Bigger expectations than reality suggests you will get ***Complaining*** Complaining like it's somebody else's problem ***Politics*** High school politics // Teams will test you ***Lack of motivation*** Don't want to work (give shittiest job) ***Not meeting deadlines*** Not meeting deadlines or completing correctly ***Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights*** Aboriginal grapevine, can quickly find out who to talk to

Table A4: Differences between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Workers on Factors that Create Negative Regard for Team or Team Leader

Aboriginal Workers	Non-Aboriginal Workers
Too much competitive spirit within the team Bit of competitive spirit that happens, sometimes it's good, but hasn't been a good thing in our crew ***Having to constantly prove yourself*** Every time change of guard, you have to prove yourself over and over again ***Poor communication*** He doesn't always communicate well, directly say or give direction and things like that ***Lack of trust*** I don't trust/respect someone, didn't like them then I wouldn't want to be working with them or around them. Hard to be motivated with people you don't trust // If things don't work out from the start, first time I meet him, it wasn't going to work out at all ***Internal group politics/factions*** I think poorly of my team where guys create their own little groups, or when he favours some, feels like a school yard camp going on here ***A team leader that puts Aboriginal people down or does not correct others when they put Aboriginal people down*** I would have like that someone/my manager had said something. I was very angry, I won't put up with this crap. // Last thing I want is someone who has been bought up just run blackfellas down the whole time. I don't want to work with a boss like that // They never like him after that because it was just a bad thing to say you know	***Over-delegates, then blames when things go wrong*** Over-delegates, then blames you for everything that goes wrong // Not happy with all those assumptions, they'd been pushed on me by management ***Not supportive of ideas or does not like questioning*** Manager that tried to get me in trouble or poo poo'd my ideas or put me down // Doesn't like being questioned ***Being judgemental*** Like judgement or a stupid question

No assistance with career management Never been asked where do you want to go from here, career wise or anything, or support with my studies	

Issues or Insights that would Create Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Factors Common to All Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to all Team Leaders (both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal) in relation to issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improve working relationships. In that both Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal Team Leaders agreed that these matters created negative regard for the team or team leader.

Team Leaders and Champions

Focus on the leaders because leaders have a certain expectation about what an employee should and shouldn't do // Should have General Manager involved for top-down approach // RAP Committee and champions to drive but all have to buy in

Factors Common to Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to Aboriginal participants (both Team Leaders and Workers) in relation to issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improve working relationships.

Understanding the complexity of decision making (by consensus) in Aboriginal families

It needs to be dealt with. Discussed with the whole family. Not just one person, everyone has a say // I'm only one in the mix, we all sit down

Aboriginal culture is changing

Our people are starting looking more into the future. It was just day to day living. If you had something someone needed, you'd do it // working culture has really changed, now having a domino effect in Indigenous culture as well

Aboriginal people do not seek personal leadership, instead the group deems them the leader

Don't want to be the leader in a group, the nature, in the group is that they are drawn to you, wasn't going to trample over everyone to get there // Having someone to talk, obviously a lot of Indigenous don't want to go up and like have a centre person to go with

Factors Common to Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to non-Aboriginal participants (both Team Leaders and Workers) in relation to issues or insights that would create shared understanding or improve working relationships.

Being a foreigner to Australia is an advantage in improving working relationships

Not from European country works to my favour // Being foreigners, like myself in the team, didn't feel any difference

Encourage the involvement of Aboriginal Elders

Encouraged juniors to go with seniors // Elders have more respect. Success with Elder involved

Differences in Issues or Insights that Would Create Shared Understanding

Table A5 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders. Table A6 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Workers.

Table A5: Differences in Issues or Insights between Team Leaders

Aboriginal Team Leader	Non-Aboriginal Team Leader
Understanding work relationships by giving them a family context 5 cycles in our family cycle, great grandparents becomes your son // A system where we link like a third party with experience say with your mother or people that you know, what respects to give them ***Spiritual connection to country*** Cultural aspect, the spiritual connection is virtually where it is, we don't own it, we just believe it can happen // Cultural knowledge of where we work, what I would see not to do here, I wouldn't go somewhere else as well, just our own ethics ***Avoid confrontation*** If I noticed negative behaviour or that person obviously got a problem. I didn't highlight it, I just ignored it ***It starts with the 'raw people' (children)*** Doesn't start with me and you, it starts with the raw people, with no knowledge, we might have a chance. He's going to teach his kids ***Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights*** Before every second day I was getting calls because of their lack of understanding Listen to Noongar radio Long time to be away from home, role in the family, questions employees upfront Probably comes from your personality as well, if you've got that sarcastic person it	***Aboriginal people do not want favours*** Aboriginal people don't want favours, just level playing field, safe environment // Balance of reverse bias and giving opportunity for wrong reasons // No engagement policy, just right person for the job ***Mentors and Indigenous Advisors have a role*** Benefits to both site mentor and Indigenous Advisor, but site mentor better // Call the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre // Guys like having a male mentor as well // People can change with coaching ***Community involvement very important*** Client should deal with community before development/time pressures // Community involvement creates much better environment post work ***Industry is like family, you earn your place*** Industry like family, you earn your place ***Never go down a path where it is an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal story*** Never go down a path where it becomes an Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal story ***Aboriginal culture has more family/ group drivers*** Their culture more family and group drivers ***Various models need to be adopted*** Various models need to be adopted // Traditional contracting exhausted, what can we do cultural perspective

probably will be taken the wrong way Use our Aboriginal grape-vine to find them	*Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights* Body language, that is probably the best indication Indigenous business provides a pool of people available More than one objective leading to appointing a less experienced Aboriginal person The gift of the egg symbolic of rebirth/renewal of the relationship

Table A6: Differences in Issues or Insights between Workers

Aboriginal Workers	Non-Aboriginal Workers
To be asked for something is an honour, not a favour He come and ask me and I felt that as a privilege, not disadvantage nor offence. Thanks for the honour because you feel you can ask me for something	***Difficult to reconcile spirituality with the workplace*** Spiritual situation // I can feel it but how do you reconcile with work environment
Aboriginal people are very good at reading body language Our people are very good at reading body language, part of our culture	***Work together to build the relationship*** From people unsure of what we are going to do, distrusting to a point of trust // Asked for changes, we made them, that journey built the relationship // Tell you where you stand
Allowing Aboriginal culture in the workplace I'd love to see more of our culture in the workforce instead of on the streets // Done deliberately because I wanted them to have that experience as men together	***Trust needs to go both ways*** Trusting each other more, both ways
A gift holds symbolism and meaning which need to be understood More so because he had been given something this man spent time carving // The Aboriginal lawman who is a senior law-man brought a gift, he came with a sense of hope	***Realise neither culture has the upper hand*** Realising neither has the upper ,the full control, each discussion is unique
Others not included in Insights Please don't go, you're our glue, you are putting me under pressure	**Others not included in Insights** Right people in the right place Aboriginal way, respect Elders, connection to land Don't have to look someone directly in the eye to understand

Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding and Improve Working Relationships

Factors Common to Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to Aboriginal participants (both Team Leaders and Workers) in relation to issues or insights that would prevent shared understanding or improve working relationships.

Different Cultures

Pilbara we are different to the people down South, We've got different cultures, they don't understand the influence of that // Diversity of our...all our groups and how differently but similarly we look at things

Factors Common to Non-Aboriginal Participants (both Team Leaders and Workers)

This section compiles grounded codes into themes that were common to non-Aboriginal participants (both Team Leaders and Workers) in relation to issues or insights that would prevent shared understanding or improve working relationships.

Need to make money out of it

Need to be a good idea and make money out of it – real driver // Comes down to money, how much can be made

Differences in Issues or Insights that Would Prevent Shared Understanding

Table A7 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Leaders. Table A8 shows the remaining grounded codes grouped into themes that were different between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Team Workers.

Table A7: Differences between Team Leaders on Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding

Aboriginal Team Leader	Non-Aboriginal Team Leader
Fitness for work difficult for Aboriginal people Fitness for work. Big problem, upfront pre-employment medical ***Difficulties for Aboriginal people getting to work*** Look how hard it is just to get to the airport to catch that plane ***Personal questioning of their own role*** Why am I here? // Won't waste time on individuals that can't see they are at fault **Others not included in Insights** Little boy up road, hit her kid. Ask parents in a respectful manner and you won't be attacked We are busy counting numbers, it has to be cost effective	***% targets do not work*** % targets don't work, more around quality and longevity – career path ***Aboriginal people have grown up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people*** Aboriginal people grow up where senior roles are not Aboriginal people ***Aboriginal space is never consistent*** Aboriginal space never consistent, don't box everyone into the same thing // I was a bit idealistic // No silver bullet to improving relationships // Every job you start afresh, build your team ***Need to understand the outside of work context for Aboriginal people*** Didn't know what was going on away from work, no support network // Tipping point is normally family // May have five mums, as mum's sister is also a mum // Kids from [school] live together in community housing ***Companies do Indigenous engagement for competitive advantage*** Companies do Indigenous engagement for competitive advantage – seek cheapest way ***Easier not to hire Aboriginal people*** Easier not to hire Aboriginal people // Box tickers – said Indigenous to get more opportunity ***Breakdown between what Aboriginal community needs and what we believe they should have*** Communication breakdown between what

Aboriginal Workers	Non-Aboriginal Workers
	community needs v what we believe should have
	Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights
	Biggest issues they deal with is money
	Budgetary constraints, but people wanted it to work

Table A8: Differences between Workers on Issues or Insights that would Prevent Shared Understanding

Aboriginal Workers	Non-Aboriginal Workers
Non-Aboriginal people do not understand Aboriginal spirituality and it is difficult to talk to them about it	***Wall between white and Aboriginal Australia***
Didn't have a proper night's sleep something hanging around, I could talk to them. I can't say that to a non-indigenous person // We are like there is so much we can give you and tell you but we can't tell you everything // When I drive up the road there I feel like I can hear laughter...my Dad said, well as long as they were laughing // When I got up there I just has goose bumps over me, the place is filled with anger and all kinds of different emotions // You're in the wrong country, if there is stuff there, don't touch it, don't go near it, you might get in trouble/sick, but I have to work here // This is somebody's land, native land, so you're going to have to look after it, respect it, you don't know, think back there was ancestors here before we were here	Wall between white Australia and Aboriginal Australia
	Understanding gets lost in the dollars
	PBC Hard to strike relationship, another layer, misadvice and misleading advice // Genuine heritage opinions, knowledge can get lost through dollars
	Non-Aboriginal people are task based, Aboriginal people relationship/community based
	Upbringing to look after their family, whole community // Westerners more task based. Aboriginal people more people based // Not easy to face, if you don't care it just doesn't work
	Difficult to know if doing the right thing and when not going well can get over sensitive
Aboriginal people feel more comfortable with other Aboriginal people	Mutual understanding when all going well easy, when not going well over sensitive // I thought everybody was comfortable, but it's ended up with a different outcome //
I feel more comfortable talking to	

Aboriginal people, the way we talk to each other, interact, is all about building relationships, blackfellas know how to talk to you

Some Aboriginal cultures are dying, some not raised in culture

Brought up with people that weren't even, didn't even know her culture, the background behind it, some cultures are dying, younger generation don't worry about culture

In appropriate comments in the workplace are not funny, but I get on with it

Political stuff, gets people angry about stuff in the general sense, then it stems its way to the small people on the ground // They always made sure that I was safe in the workplace, that made me feel and that is why I said maybe he is looking at the jokes as a normal joke // We've got a livelihood we just go, no worries mate, if you think what you want, I'm here for my family

Favours requested, should be fulfilled

It was pretty sad that you leave your fellow man or relative and you're not making contact and they don't feel right and cannot ask you for a loan // They are embarrassed and they would rather go without than to swallow a bit of their pride

Different language groups have different rules

Here there are four language groups, you are not allowed to talk to certain people, talk over them, sign of disrespect to look

Blunt, very aggressive, we thought we'd consulted, not everybody felt that

Other Grounded Codes not Included in Insights

People may clash, not because culturally, just personally

People not been exposed to working with different cultures, I struggle more with them

Depends on who you are dealing with and the situation

Don't know any different, never been pushed in their life

somebody in the eye, simple to explain	