

MANAGING RISK: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY ON THE EXPERIENCES OF  
CORPORATE INSTRUCTORS WHEN PLANNING AND DEVELOPING DISASTER  
DRIVEN TRAINING CONTENT

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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## **Abstract**

This phenomenological study aimed to understand and interpret corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content for remote situations and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. Using the disaster risk management theory by Kim and Sohn (2018), with specific emphasis on Petak's (1985) and McLoughlin's (1985) framework, data from the participants was collected using semi-structured individual interviews, document analysis, and observations. While corporate trainers have used years of experience and seasoned pedagogy to enhance learning for their participants to achieve corporate objectives, almost no content exists regarding the process. Due to increased remote learning resulting from the pandemic following the coronavirus outbreak, it was essential to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when creating content for novel situations. The central question for this study sought to understand the experiences corporate instructors had with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry under remote learning conditions. This study investigated corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments through interviews, observations, and document analysis, allowing insightful interpretation of the participants' lived experiences. Findings showed that although reflective, corporate trainers did utilize elements of the DRM framework specifically as it relates to risk preparation, mitigation, and response to develop disaster driven training content and see the benefit of an integrated and proactive approach to developing risk and disaster driven training content.

*Keywords:* Risk Management, Disaster Risk Management, Corporate Learning,  
Corporate Trainers

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to God, my creator, from whom all good things and blessings flow. Including and not limited to the tenacity and grace to complete my doctoral degree. To my husband who lovingly and doggedly supported me every step of the way, my parents, aunties, and uncles who gave me moral lessons on discipline from an early age. To the memory of my father for his pursuit of excellence which continues to urge me on to this day. To my children, Gavriel and Jethro, may you pursue knowledge throughout your lives. In the mighty name of Jesus. Amen. To my immediate and extended family, the Akintan, Akinyelure, Hughes, Malomo, Oghoetuoma, and Uju families. Your support and investment in me paid off. Thank you.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

American Council on Education (ACE)

Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI)

Certified Professional in Learning and Performance (CPLP)

Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Corporate Trainer Certified (CTC)<sup>TM</sup>

Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Internal Review Board (IRB)

Internet of Things (IoT)

Internet Service Provider (ISP)

Learning Management Systems (LMS)

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Professional Development Units (PDUs)

Project Management Institute (PMI)

Protected Health Information (PHI)

Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

Virtual Desktop Interfaces (VDI)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **Overview**

Historically, global organizations have periodically faced traumatic and disastrous occurrences (Older, 2021; Hangerott, 2021), which have necessitated a change in business operations (Kotter, 2012). Most recently, organizations were affected by instability due to the impacts of COVID-19 and its variants in the lives of employees and their loved ones (Hangerott, 2021; Older, 2021). While some organizations operate under the assumption that known or established measures are sufficient to manage the repercussions or resultant impacts from disasters, this is not always the case (Kotter, 2012). For example, in situations where established businesses or entities extricate themselves from the issues that affect less fortunate entities, this does not always mean that those issues may never reach or affect the wealthier organizations (Older, 2021). So effective planning and preparedness remain essential in every situation. Findings have shown that paradigm shifts are necessary to reduce or stem the tide of disastrous occurrences from spreading (Hangerott, 2021; Older, 2021). The change is especially relevant in today's organizational climate with the advent of COVID-19 (Abelsen et al., 2020; Hirsch & Strawser, 2014; Nash & Churchill, 2020; Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010; Wang et al., 2020).

As organizations are presented with the effects of pandemic-size proportions on businesses, effective planning and preparedness by corporate trainers will need to be incorporated into the standard organizational training programs to help secure the organization's data/information, preserve the cultural dynamics, and effectively plan and manage risks specifically in remote environments. The chapter will introduce and state the problem, provide, and state the purpose of the study, discuss the historical, social, and theoretical context of remote corporate training and corporate trainer preparedness for disaster and pandemic situations. The

final sections will include a discussion of the research questions, the significance of the study, relevant definitions, and a summary of the chapter.

## **Background**

Innovation (Hangerott, 2021), change (Kotter, 2012; Das, 2017; Older, 2021), and fierce competition contribute to many organizations' missions to develop their employees' knowledge base (Das, 2017). Employers expect their employees to function at increased levels, be responsive to the changing environment, and be flexible to organizational goals and missions (Das, 2017). Corporate trainers in most organizations are responsible for transitioning employees from the AS-IS to the TO-BE, bridging identified or recognized knowledge gaps, and driving employees towards organizational goals (Das, 2017). In essence, corporate trainers are accountable for introducing the employees to new or updated concepts (Boyd et al., 2017). Corporate trainers' knowledge of the training content, mission of the organization, and understanding how to educate effectively is critical when training employees (Das, 2017; Boyd et al., 2017). Hence, corporate trainers' role in the development of training content is integral to organizational success. However, when outliers like unprecedented disasters that disrupt the norm occur, employers and corporate trainers are hard-pressed to transition the employees to the new normal seamlessly.

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, corporate trainers dealt with the additional constraint of a remote or distance learning situation. Some of these corporate trainers tried to train employees about the new environment while adjusting to the environment. The 'new normal' included introducing employees to remote working conditions, identifying new ways to maintain the organizational culture, training employees on added measures to maintain safety and security, and updating processes to prevent data and information breaches. (Narayanan et al., 2017). Very little academic research exists about corporate trainers' coordinated approach to prepare for and implement effective training in pandemic situations. Findings show that the lack

of preparedness contribute to data breach or loss, ineffective understanding or implementation of training received, and intellectual property loss (Cheng et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017).

## **Historical Context**

Before the onset of COVID-19 or the coronavirus epidemic, working remotely was not a generally accepted phenomenon; however, during and following the pandemic, many organizations have adopted the work from home policy (Burgess, 2020). Telecommuting (Niles, 1998), or remote work, has been predicted as early as the 1970s by scholars like Jack Niles and Allan Toffler (Messenger & Gschwind, 2016) to help in reducing traffic congestion, pollution, increasing work-life balance, and flexibility. After studying the phenomenon, researchers found both successful and unsuccessful outcomes from organizations practicing remote work (Bosua et al., 2013; Chen & Ling, 2004; Davenport & Pearlson, 1998; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Hirsch & Strawser, 2014; Mitchell, 1996; Narayanan et al., 2017; Raghuram, 2011; Stanworth, 1997; Suoimi & Pekkola, 1998; Teo & Lim, 1995).

Hirsch and Strawser's (2014) found that internal departments like Information Technology (IT) and Human Resources (HR) reported higher risks to their processes, objectives, and goals. For IT, factors like system compatibility, developing and delivering equipment to meet remote work requirements, IT support expertise for diverse locations and Internet Service Provider (ISP) requirements and specifications, potential drain on organizations servers (if using Virtual Desktop Interfaces [VDI]), data and information security concerns, and IT security and onboarding training were problematic for both employees and employers and must be considered when working remotely (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021). For HR, risks included culture shock and preservation, increased process education issues, HR remote hiring, employee training,

onboarding, siloed work (Stacey, 2013), and increased HR reports. The increase in telecommuting (Burgess, 2020; Niles, 1998) exposed unprepared organizations to unique threats and exposures (Elsevier, 2014; & Elsevier, 2015). Due to the unplanned exposures from remote work, organizational intellectual property (Burgess, 2020), PII, PHI, and classified information were at increased risk because employees may not have understood the threat that disclosures (intentional or unintentional) may cause. Findings showed that data breaches and exposures still abound despite training in organizations like banks, government agencies, credit bureaus, retail markets (Elsevier, 2014; Elsevier, 2015; Weissman, 2018). So increased awareness about gaps in corporate trainers' preparedness for pandemic situations raises secondary questions like what unique risks organizations should plan and prepare for and how can these risks be managed or averted? How practical is the training, and what could be done better? Do corporate trainers fully grasp the threat, or are the objectives for the training insufficient? Is there a gap between the organizational goal and the training content? Are there behaviors that drive learning or the lack of assimilation of the content? How does the remote situation help or aggravate the learning curve? Is online content and platform helping or hurting? Are preventative measures effective, and how do these measures take into consideration the human factors? What training content process and delivery worked and is repeatable across multiple industries? Hopefully, this study should help shed some light on these questions while investigating corporate trainers' readiness for training employees in HR and IT-related risks in pandemic situations.

### **Social Context**

Studies have examined the impact of remote working on organizations' functionality and explored business continuity challenges outside established organizational boundaries or physical structure and the reasons for mixed reviews. Some of the difficulties found included:

resource management challenges that surpassed the processes of organizational social boundaries, disruption to business practices, poor management of alternative workstations, and difficulty in adapting and changing traditional technological boundaries (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014). To mitigate or avoid business disruption, organizations implement measures like machine learning (Noor et al., 2019), malware training (He et al., 2019), and staff training (Burden, 2019). However, regardless of the organizations' mitigating practices, data breaches persist (Cheng et al., 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2020). While some businesses are veering away from cultural norms and leaning towards artificial intelligence to stem the tide of data breaches (Ibrahim et al., 2020), others acknowledge the consistent patterns that may prevent full automation. The factor, in this case, refers to the human resources and unique behaviors that are not easily quantifiable but play a poignant role in causing the issues identified (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021).

Human resources are responsible for contributing to and mitigating risk. Even though organizations use up-and-coming technologies to protect against sensitive data breaches, these technologies will only solve part of the problem (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021). Information security solutions need to incorporate the human resource factor to manage training for HR and IT process risks more effectively and efficiently. Therefore, a specific focus should be on the training process and the impact of the new normal from the trainer's perspective. Suppose organizations focus on the life cycle of training programs. In that case, these organizations may be able to determine how protected they are from data breaches, as well as the efficacy of corporate training programs in identifying triggers useful in future unforeseen or disaster-related circumstances (He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021; Noor et al., 2019).

Another reason why there are mixed reviews concerning remote work is because some organizations and communities' remote working programs have lacked educational development

for employees' careers (Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). Several industries implemented changes, using a proactive approach to remote training, for instance: the medical teaching hospitals instituting distance training (Petryshen et al., 2020), rural communities and their workforce implementing retention strategies (Abelsen et al., 2020), and academia and industries utilizing information security training and education programs (Kweon et al., 2019). However, while organizations are instituting different remediation techniques like training (Kweon et al., 2019) and integration of Artificial Intelligence into daily operations to address disruptions caused by disaster situations (Ibrahim et al., 2020), other disasters may arise in a different organization or country which could use similar or a different response strategy (Kim & Sohn, 2018). For these reasons, understanding the organizational training process cannot be over-emphasized. Human resources (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021) and corporate trainers (Abelsen et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Petryshen et al., 2020) are key to understanding the best way to plan for future disasters. By understanding the audience, corporate trainers can successfully facilitate future innovative training and changes, allowing for continued educational development for employees while supporting effective disaster response planning (Kim & Sohn, 2018).

### **Theoretical Context**

Disaster risk management theory (Kim & Sohn, 2018) will form the basis of the theoretical framework for this study. This theory serves as an independent and collective ideology around how teaching is developed, conducted (Dewey, 1897; Helle et al., 2006; Thorburn, 2018), and received in disaster and post-disaster working environments, specifically related to data security, organizational culture, and learning. The theoretical construct identifies factors that could potentially support the participants' reported experiences (Thorburn, 2018) and recommend practical application (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020). It is essential to understand the

different types, components, and characteristics of organizations' response to novel occurrences like the pandemic's impact on organizational HR and IT processes, specifically in remote working conditions. Understanding how corporate trainers respond may provide insight to stakeholders into the social architecture, environment (internal and external), and effectiveness of their organization's response (Farrell, 2019). As remote working conditions and frequency increase so does the risk level for organizations, which requires risk and disaster (Kim & Sohn, 2017) management planning (Burgess, 2020). Risk identification is a complicated process (Becker, 2004; Wright, 2017), which may become even more convoluted when considering phenomena like human factors (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021), COVID-19, and the ever-changing working environment. As a result, effective teaching (Silen, 2006; Stentoft, 2019) and learning (Beyer & Brummel, 2015; Eberlein, 2008; Helle, 2006) is key to attaining organizational goals

### **Problem Statement**

The problem is that some employees, corporate trainers, and organizations are unprepared for the ramifications of working and training staff in alternative environments (Abelsen et al., 2020; Nash & Churchill, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). When disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic or disruption to the standard business operations occur, employers, staff, and business owners are hard-pressed to determine the next steps of working in an environment they may not have personally experienced or planned for (Drejer, 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Chief amongst this is training employees to preserve organizational culture, intellectual property, and data security (Cameron, 2021). When organizations do not have relevant, applicable, or updated training content to help educate their staff, incidents like intentional or unintentional data breaches, information loss, ineffective understanding, or implementation of training, or organizational IP loss occurs (Cheng et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim

et al., 2020; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017). Consequently, learning how organizations have evolved and the role that corporate trainers' have played, specifically in protecting data and preserving organizational culture despite technological and human-related constraints, will help develop benchmarks through which other organizations and corporate trainers can effectively plan and train.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. Corporate trainers' perspective is critical because of the pivotal role they have during the dissemination and, in some cases, implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study explored perceived risks, issues, rewards, and the associated impacts that arise for the participants; as well as recommended approaches that contribute to maintaining safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning and implementation of environments for the students/participants (Drejer, 2017; Williams et al., 2020). Using Kim and Sohn's (2018) disaster risk theory as a theoretical framework, twelve corporate trainers were interviewed to investigate corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments. Data was collected using semi-structured individual interviews, document analysis, and observations. The eventual goal was to help drive excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance (Baum & Haveman, 2020).

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is to substantiate current methodology and practice utilized by corporate trainers is at best inadequate, at worst recklessly irresponsible in response to the

ever-changing corporate landscapes we are all contributors to. While there is opinion-based content about how individuals perceive corporate trainers and how those perspectives could improve the trainers (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Angelova, 2019; Gray, 2015, Mathis, 2020), barely any research describes the content creation process from the corporate trainer's perspective. Today, regardless of formal educational preparedness and expertise (Gray, 2015; Kwon & Cho, 2020), corporate trainers further the work of traditional learning institutions and function in the role of designer, organizer, leader, moderator, teacher, expert, partner, ally, and facilitator (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Kwon & Cho, 2020). Serving in these roles constitutes a burden of expectation on corporate learners who may or may not have experience with workplace education and successful learning outcomes (Gray, 2015). This study will hopefully provide a benchmark to help instructors learn from the experiences of their peers or counterparts.

Historically, organizations struggled with staying competitive due to the changing climate in the business world (Fekete & Börcsnei, 2011). The struggles necessitated a proactive approach to organization, training, and development (Ling et al., 2020). The process proved that corporate training is relevant and contributes to helping organizations remain competitive in dynamic economies and environments (Abelsen et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Petryshen et al., 2020). Besides the competitive nature of economies, unforeseen circumstances, or disasters (like the COVID-19 pandemic) occur, requiring changes, proactive planning, and business preparation and implementation. The study focused on the corporate trainer's process for preparing training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments. As remote working conditions and frequency increase so does organizations' risk level, which requires risk and disaster (Kim & Sohn, 2017) management planning (Burgess, 2020). Risk identification is a complicated process (Becker, 2004; Wright, 2017), which may

become even more convoluted when considering the human factor (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021), COVID-19, and the ever-changing working environment. As a result, effective teaching (Silen, 2006; Stentoft, 2019) and learning (Beyer & Brummel, 2015; Eberlein, 2008; Helle, 2006) is key to attaining organizational goals.

Due to workplace changes and disaster scenarios like the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations were presented with a unique opportunity to learn about and develop their standard processes and analyze the rewards and risks that this new environment brought forth. This current study could provide significant insight into the best practices for organizations, including protecting IP, improving awareness of non-verbal cues, understanding variations in adult learning styles, facilitating learning in high octane environments, maintaining cordial relationships, and navigating multiple cultures and expectations hierarchy, and exposures. In addition, previous research has shown mixed findings as to how successful remote working conditions have been. Thus, this current study could shed light on the impact, risks, and reported experiences of the participants (Ney Matos et al., 2018) and identify corporate training that will help shape corporate objectives in organizations (Polo et al., 2018).

## **Research Questions**

For this study, I conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological study by focusing on the shared experiences of the facilitators (Creswell & Poth, 2018), as this will help drive understanding of the central research question. Additionally, and most importantly, choosing a hermeneutic phenomenology which is defined as the process through which the participants arrive at the meaning behind a concept, norm, culture, or process (Gall et al., 2007), will contribute to a better interpretation and understanding of the participants.

### **Central Research Question**

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing disaster or pandemic driven training content?

Research has shown that while there is a need and effectiveness attributed to disaster management training (Loke, 2021; Williams et al., 2008), the level of preparedness and training in organizations is insufficient (Gunay et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2013) and is not always tailored to suit the disaster. Understanding corporate trainers' perspectives on what goes into the preparation of the content will go a long way in providing benchmarks for other trainers.

### **Sub Question One**

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments?

Depending on the industry whether it is nursing or healthcare (Loke et al., 2021; Williams et al., 2008), hospitality (Tsai et al., 2020), or otherwise (Meng et al., 2020; Opdyke et al., 2018), training needs to be tailored to the audience and industry. In remote scenarios, apart from the ever-present risk of loss of IP (Burgess, 2020), other risks, and challenges can potentially affect remote conditions (Wang et al., 2020). Challenges like interference from the home front,

ineffective or un-sustained communication, loneliness, and procrastination can prove detrimental to all staff (Wang et al., 2020). Based on these challenges, it will be important to see how the industry impacted the corporate trainers' process.

### **Sub Question Two**

What factors, barriers, issues, and risks impact corporate instructors' experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content?

Corporate instructors face many barriers such as: the possibility of a training session interfering with work (Angelova, 2019), isolation or lack of interaction, challenges with communication, environmental interferences (Wang et al., 2020), security risks (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014), inconsistent processes or procedures across industries (Nash & Churchill, 2020), difficult remote group learning behavior (Asanov et al., 2021), and poor team learning and management in a virtual or remote environment (Petryshen et al., 2020). As such, it may prove beneficial to identify potential trends as reported by the corporate trainers, with the goal to understand how to manage potential and unique risks that arise from training in a remote environment, and how to identify how citizenship behaviors, cultural differences, and training design contribute to or are affected by the barriers faced.

### **Sub Question Three**

What successes and lessons contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

The Motivation-Hygiene theory by Fredrick Herzberg (1974) suggests that different factors bring about satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the workplace. Herzberg (1974) submits that satisfier factors such as motivation, achievement, and recognition, facilitate job satisfaction.

It would be interesting to note the interaction between satisfiers and successes encountered in the process.

### **Definitions**

1. *Axiological* – the thought that, standards assumed by different people are comparable and that even though an individual does not personally engage in the activity, they may understand the reason behind why the activity occurs (Ney Matos et al., 2018).
2. *Corporate Trainer* – Individuals who train organizational resources to help perform effectively in their jobs (Ahmed et al., 2017).
3. *COVID-19* – A disease caused by a novel coronavirus<sup>3</sup>(CoV), SARS-CoV-2 variant, belonging to the coronavirus (CoV) family.” (Jung, 2020)
4. *Disaster* – United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) defines disaster as: “A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human, material, economic and environmental losses and impacts” (Kim & Sohn, 2018, p. 3).
5. *Disruption* – In its multiple variants, can be described as a changing force for strategic management (Drejer, 2017).
6. *Telecommuting* – can be defined as an alternative or substitute work arrangement where an individual travels or commutes to work using technology. Alternatively, telecommuting can be used to refer to opportunities where staff can work from the comfort of their home or an alternative office, a hotel, or location other than the typical office location (Narayanan, et al., 2017).

7. *Intellectual Property* – this is defined as a creative and inventive energy which has intentional thought behind its purpose, or the role that the property has in the grand scheme of things (Poticha & Duncan, 2019)

### **Summary**

The problem is that some employees, corporate trainers, and organizations are unprepared for the ramifications of working and training staff in alternative environments (Abelsen et al., 2020; Nash & Churchill, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). When disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic or disruption to the standard business operations occur, employers, staff, and business owners are hard-pressed to determine the next steps of working in an environment they may not have personally experienced or planned for (Drejer, 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Chief amongst this is training employees to understand organizational culture, preserve intellectual property, and protect data security (Cameron, 2021). When organizations do not have relevant, applicable, or updated training content to help educate their staff, incidents like intentional or unintentional data breaches, information loss, ineffective understanding, or implementation of training, or organizational IP loss occurs (Cheng et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017). Consequently, learning how organizations have evolved and the role that corporate trainers' have played, specifically in protecting data and preserving organizational culture despite technological and human-related constraints, will help develop benchmarks through which other organizations and corporate trainers can effectively plan and train. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to assess corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. Corporate trainers' perspective is critical because of the pivotal role they have during the dissemination and, in some cases,

implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study will explore perceived risks, issues, rewards, and the associated impacts that arise for the participants; as well as recommended approaches that contribute to maintaining safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning and implementation of environments for the students/participants (Drejer, 2017; Williams et al., 2020). Hopefully, findings from this study can help in understanding the impact that unanticipated long-term disruption has on individuals and businesses, the related issues, and challenges with remote social work from the perspective of the affected staff (Maes & Weldy, 2018), and drive quality in innovative learning and procedural performance (Baum & Haveman, 2020).

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Overview**

Chapter two reviews current and historical literature and research on organizational training, culture, and data management to shed light on corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. The literature review provides a theoretical framework for the study, critically assesses the individuality and interrelationship of organizational culture, risk management, alternate working environments, data management/protection, and organization-wide training culture; and how these factors affect or are affected by corporate trainers. Further, this review helps to understand organizational approaches to risk management, including organizational culture, risk management, alternate working environments, data management, and organization-wide training culture.

Corporate data, culture, and training may negatively impact an organization if any of the factors are not understood and handled correctly in remote working environments (Cheng et al., 2017; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020). As corporate trainers are responsible for educating the staff and developing and mapping training content to meet business objectives in typical and pandemic situations, research must be carried out to better understand the gaps in the current training process from the corporate trainers' perspective. In addition, it is a corporate trainer's responsibility to ensure consistency of dissemination and application of information across the organization; however, when disasters like COVID-19 occur, a significant number of staff and businesses are not ready for the implications of working and training staff in alternative environments (Abelsen et al., 2020; Hirsch & Strawser, 2014; Nash & Churchill, 2020; Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010; Wang et al.,

2020).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Disaster risk management theory (Kim & Sohn, 2018) forms the basis of the theoretical framework for this study. This theory serves as an independent and collective ideology around how teaching can be developed, conducted (Dewey, 1897; Helle et al., 2006; Thorburn, 2018), and received in disaster and post-disaster working environments; specifically related to data security, organizational culture, and learning. Disaster risk management theory focuses on planning for and working with unknown unknowns (Kim, 2012).

Under ideal circumstances, identifying, managing, and responding to risks is somewhat of a defined linear process where the risks may be known risks (Figure: Linear Risk Management Process). The risk management theoretical construct identifies factors that could potentially support corporate trainers' reported experiences (Thorburn, 2018) and recommend practical applications for effective management in disaster situations (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020).

To understand disaster risk management theory, one needs to understand the concept and definition of the term 'disaster.' Various descriptions exist for this term, including defining disaster as a concept: a social, political, ecological, health-related, or economic phenomenon (Etkin, 2016; Kim & Sohn, 2017); a cause: the result of a hazardous interaction with existing vulnerabilities (Etkin, 2016); An event: Disaster is an occurrence that overwhelms the capacity of locals, thereby requiring national or international-level help (Below, 2006; Kim & Sohn, 2017). A catalyst: Disaster is a severe disruption in how the community functions, resulting in extensive human resources, material resources, economic standing, and environmental (internal or external) losses, which transcends the ability of the impacted community or society to survive by using its resources (WHO, 2008). While some definitions focus on addressing the negativity

caused by disasters, some researchers view disasters as a part of life by likening a disaster as a creation and destruction event, which brings about growth or change (Jigyasu, 2005). Based on the definitions given, disasters can be categorized as natural, technological, or human-caused events which can be hard to predict; and strike with disruptive attributes (Adikaram & Nawarathan, 2017; Etkin, 2016; Kim & Sohn, 2017; Scott & Davis, 2016). Identifying causes and impacts of disasters demonstrates the necessity of implementing disaster planning and preparedness measures, all of which form disaster risk management.

While championed by various institutions and industry standards, risk management has similar premises in the definition. The Association for Project Management (2006) defines risk management as “a process that allows individual risk events and overall risk to be understood and managed proactively, optimizing success by minimizing threats (disasters) and maximizing opportunities and outcomes” (p. 10). The Project Management Institute (2017) defines risk management as a method to identify, analyze, and respond to project risks.

Human resources simultaneously drive the occurrence and mitigation of risks and issues within society, organizations, and life. Human resources are an organization’s greatest asset and their biggest challenge (Wright, 2017). The connection between human resources and risks in any organization is rudimentarily intertwined and almost inescapable (Wright, 2017); however, that is not necessarily bad. While there is no risk without reward (Welding & Friday, 2015), the positive aspect is that human resources can plan for and implement risk-mitigating measures. As a result, disaster risk management theories have evolved to benefit employers, employees, and corporate trainers in any given organization (Kim & Sohn, 2017).

Beginning in the late 1980s with the four-phase disaster risk management framework proposed by Petak (1985) to help identify the roles of stakeholders and government entities in

each disaster phase, Petak (1985) classified pre-disaster, response, and post-disaster categories to correspond with the progress of disasters and countermeasures. The four phases as depicted in Figure 1: Petak's Four-Phase model on disaster management include disaster mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster response, disaster recovery (Kim & Sohn, 2017).

## DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT MODEL

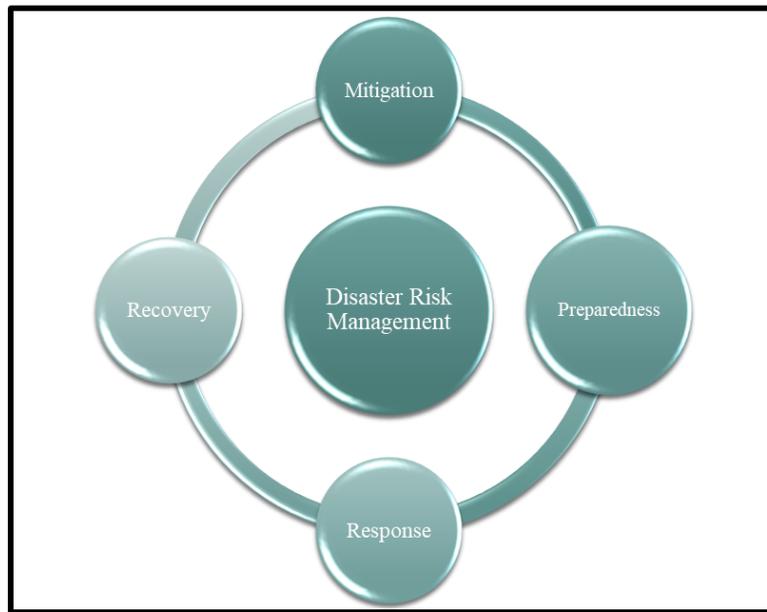


Figure 1: Petak's Four-Phase Model on Disaster Management (Depiction)

Following Petak's (1985) disaster risk management framework, which covered key areas of disaster planning and preparedness, including mitigation, monitoring/control or preparedness, response, and recovery, came the integrated disaster management model posited by McLoughlin (1985). This four-phase disaster risk management framework covered key areas of disaster planning and preparedness, including mitigation, monitoring/control or preparedness, response, and recovery. By 1970, over one hundred federal organizations and agencies practiced a fragmented approach to disaster risk management. The lack of coordinated effort gave rise to President Jimmy Carter's creation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in

1979. Creating FEMA helped with better coordination of fragmented responsibilities and resources (Kim & Sohn, 2017).

The four-phase disaster risk management framework Petak (1985) developed was borne out of the desire to anticipate the unexpected, reduce the risk to human life, and improve peoples' safety when natural and artificial disasters occur. The policies included in the plan followed a four-phase approach: Mitigation, the process of determining what to do in the event of a risk and implementing strategies to help reduce said risk (Petak, 1985). Typically, by instituting preventive safety measures and conducting an evaluation of the disaster management system. Preparedness involved developing a response plan and training relevant parties to reduce the damage caused by the disaster (Petak, 1985). The government agencies achieved the goal through conducting organized drills, developing training manuals, and effectively managing the resources (Kim & Sohn, 2017). The response is the process of providing emergency aid and helping to minimize the probability of secondary or tertiary damages (Petak, 1985). The response plan was implemented via effective communication plans and driving or requesting mobilization from internal or external resources (Kim & Sohn, 2017). Recovery included all post-response and restoration activities.

While Petak (1985) developed these theoretical principles for policy-related emergency management scenarios, corporations can draw parallels with the preparation that corporate trainers may need to implement to prepare staff or employees for a disaster-like situation. In other words, Disaster risk management theory and models are directly applicable when preparing training content, responding to the unique scenarios, providing coaching in a mitigation capacity, and supporting the organization through the process of organizational recovery from disaster situations. Disaster risk management theory may have proved successful for agencies like

FEMA. However, it was beneficial to draw parallels with how the participants managed training content development in pandemic situations.

### **Related Literature**

The related literature section is multifaceted and addressed thoroughly through four thematic areas. First by conducting a historical and contextual review of organizations from the lens of organizational culture, risk management, and remote working environment; secondly by investigating data management and the implication on businesses intellectual property, information security, and a summative application; thirdly through a review of historical and current outlook of corporate training; and finally the relationship between corporate trainers corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments.

#### **Organizations – Historical and Contextual Review**

The history of business is an evolving community of scholars from diverse backgrounds, ideas, and approaches. These differing attitudes have led scholars to conclude that there is an openness and flexibility within business communities, such that things can be completed or perceived in any way by the business community members (Keneley, 2020). Understanding and interpreting how organizations, businesses, and industries have changed and progressed over time is critical to the current study. The history will help draw parallels to the role that corporate trainers' have played in organizational progression. Specifically, corporate trainers have affected organizational change, relating to the three-pronged focus (risk management, data management, and organizational culture) and key categories including natural, technological, and human-related (Adikaram & Nawarathna, 2017).

The debate on what constitutes business history has been ongoing for several decades (Boyns, 1998; Harvey & Jones, 1990; Toms & Wilson, 2003; Walton, 2010). Early observers disputed the definition, likening business history to company history and biographies of people in business (Harvey & Jones, 1990; Keneley, 2020), thereby doing the research a disservice. Similarly, twenty-first-century observers have disagreed about the inputs and outputs that contribute to business history and the disciplines of business organizations (Kipping et al., 2017). However, despite these disputes, there have been significant breakthroughs in the historical research of business. For instance, the emergence of research on business history by Alfred Chandler in 1962 (Keneley, 2020) broadened the landscape of the directionality of business disciplines and research, particularly about strategic management, marketing, local and international business, sociology, and history (Chandler, 1962). Despite this research, scholars, such as Kipping et al. (2017), still staunchly maintain that business history should not be considered as a discipline.

To understand the progression of organizations throughout the years, one must explore the historical context of business history in a linear fashion. In the 1920s, economic historians produced works on company histories and business identities in the UK using narrative approaches and case studies. The development of case studies was closely followed by establishing the first chair in Business History at Harvard Business School in 1927. Towards the 1960s-1970s, theoretical frameworks emerged, such as those by Alfred Chandler, who used business histories to develop a framework that helped understand business strategy, in addition to his famous scale and scope hypothesis (Harvey & Jones, 1990; Jones et al., 2012; Jong et al., 2015; Keneley, 2020). From 1970-1980, Alfred Chandler extended the Chandler framework due to increased critiques of the Chandler framework. Further, due to increased awareness of the

definition of business and history, comparative and international studies emerged, as well as comprehensive surveys of early multinational enterprises and corporate growth across borders (Harvey & Jones, 1990; Jones et al., 2012; Jong et al., 2015; Keneley, 2020).

After that, in the 1990s, there was a broadening of research plans that went beyond Chandler's framework. This research transcended the scale and scope hypothesis with economic theory, agency theory, transaction costs, and new institutional economics (Harvey & Jones, 1990; Jones et al., 2012; Jong et al., 2015; Keneley, 2020). In the 2000s, business historians adopted interdisciplinary approaches, referencing marketing, business strategy, corporate governance, and sociology theories prevalent in this decade. Other methodologies and practices in this decade included institutional theory, information technology, and business network analysis, dynamic capabilities of organizations, organizational and business process theories, human and material resource requirements, and dependency (Harvey & Jones, 1990; Jones et al., 2012; Jong et al., 2015; Keneley, 2020). From 2010 to the current day, the depth and breadth of business research methodologies and boundaries continue to increase. Present business research domains include areas such as finance, organizational knowledge, business culture, internal and external environments, the use of hypothesis testing, cultural theories, narration, and finally, discourse analysis (Keneley, 2020).

While commerce is as old as time and scholars recently defined organizational history, organizations are equally vulnerable and at risk of disasters. Whether the disasters are natural, technological, or artificial, organizations constitute a vulnerable part of the affected entities (Adikaram & Nawarathna, 2017) and require a systematic approach to disaster risk management. The comprehensive disaster management procedure proposed by McLoughlin (1985), built on the components of disaster management presented by Petak (1985). McLoughlin posited that

managing disasters requires a proactive, pre-disaster, post-disaster, and recovery management approach (Kim & Sohn, 2017; McLoughlin, 1985; Rohli et al., 2018). Etkin's (2016) adaptation of an integrated emergency management system models' how organizations can manage disasters throughout the life cycle. Of note is that throughout the lifecycle of the disaster, learning and communication components stand out.

Another depiction of the disaster management system, as depicted by Etkin (2016), buttresses Kim & Sohn's (2018) disaster risk management theory. The model represents three phases of the disaster lifecycle: pre-disaster, response, and post-disaster. The pre-disaster phase includes the anticipate, assess, prevent, and prepare components. Each of these components addresses the preparedness that is important to help prepare for disaster situations. Anticipating, assessing, preventing, and preparing components can be a proactive way to be cognitively aware of the environment and institute measures to plan and prepare for the potential occurrence of a disaster. Unlike the Fukushima Daiichi employees, the Fukushima Daini employees implemented a proactive planning and preparation process which helped prevent a similar disaster (Saadat & Saadat, 2016).

The Fukushima Daini disaster resulted from the 9.0 earthquake, which rocked Japan. The resulting waves, which generated unprecedented waves, knocked out the power leaving one power line and diesel generator intact in the plant. Masuda (a leader at the plant) scanned the situation and, through experience, anticipated what could happen if planning and effective response strategies did not occur. He prepared the team and dove into action to prevent an escalation of the disaster and potential outcomes. Through constant recalibration, Masuda and his team restored order to the plant and prevented the disaster from intensification (Gulati et al., 2014).

Like Masuda proved, scanning the environment provided a framework to help educate the team on the best way to respond to the disaster they were facing. As they responded, he kept open lines of communication as he consistently warned and informed them of new problems, helping the team maintain emergency management processes. Adhering to the procedures helped with the coordination and recalibration, as shown in the response segment in Figure 2 (Etkin, 2016; Gulati et al., 2014).

Pre-disaster preparation, education, and planning reduce fallout and loss of life and property (Kim & Sohn, 2017). When looking at all these steps individually and collectively, pre-disaster planning plays a significant role in disaster risk management. The first step in the response section is warning and informing. Educators play a role in training and providing pertinent information to the employees (Das, 2017; Boyd et al., 2017). If the employees are informed and prepared, maintaining emergency management procedures or protocols may happen, as evidenced in the Fukushima Daiichi disaster incident (Gulati et al., 2014; Saadat & Saadat, 2016). Then comes the post-disaster or recovery phase; the four components tie to Kim and Sohn's (2018) recovery model. The critical attribute being the learning of lessons and the documentation of preventative measures. The output from this process could feed into the pre-disaster planning phase, as shown in Figure 1. The recovery stage depicts the importance of the education process and how it may influence the severity and effectiveness of disaster management.

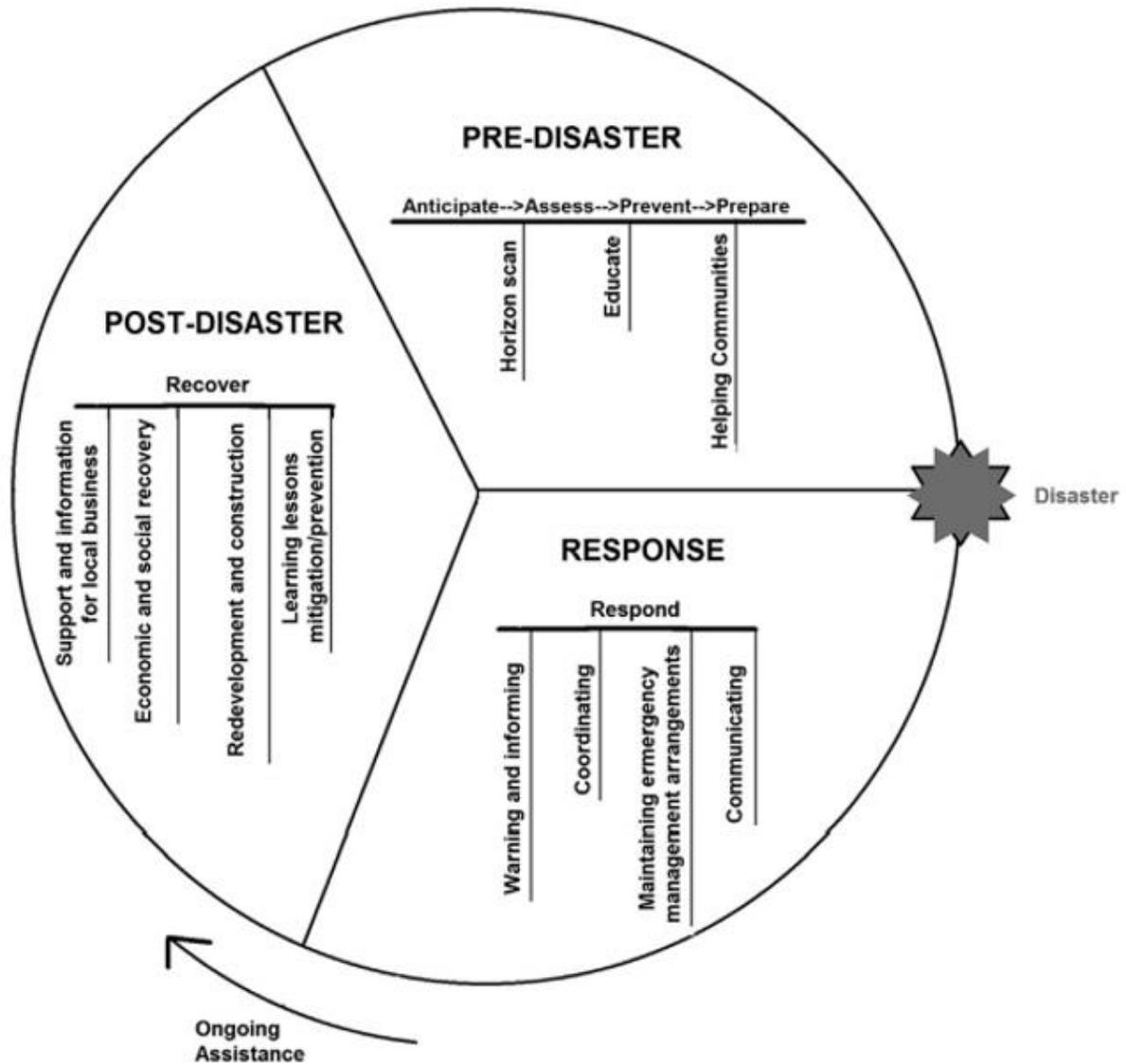


Figure 2: Integrated Emergency Management (Etkin, 2016).

McLoughlin's integrated emergency management model arose due to government agencies addressing emergencies using an 'at-the-time strategy,' which meant that agencies only worked together when there was a disaster, thereby increasing the risk factors. McLoughlin's premise for proposing the comprehensive disaster management procedures was to enhance cooperation between different government agencies that were not located in the same vicinity or

organization. This procedure aimed to help protect livelihood, lives, property, and governmental functions using the preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery procedures within the disaster management framework (Kim & Sohn, 2017).

The integration of resources to prevent or stem the effects of a disaster requires effective leadership. If insufficient resources have been invested in evaluating the level of understanding amongst the emergency management employees (Rohli et al., 2018), the necessity of trained personnel increases. Training personnel helps improve the level of preparedness of an organization when dealing with novel or disaster situations (Rohli et al., 2018). Whether it is a part of the organization's culture or not, this training is beneficial as training helps to strengthen relationships, improves response and mitigation for challenges in internal and external environments, and enhances overall organizational effectiveness (Potnuru et al., 2019).

### **Organizational Culture**

Historically, organizational culture was defined as a pattern of basic assumptions. These patterns are formed through the process of problem-solving, adapting to external stimuli, coping (Park et al., 2004) with the given situation(s) (internal and external), and integrating with the team. For the pattern to be considered culture, it must have functioned successfully enough to be considered valid, transferrable, and teachable to incoming members (Schein, 1990).

Organizational culture can also be defined as the shared values and norms of a group (Kim et al., 2004); a holistic, historical, and social construct (Abu-Jarad et al., 2010); and a sum of beliefs, values, customs, and traditions (Cerović et al., 2011; Roulin & Krings, 2020).

Organizational culture is necessary to determine how effective and functional an organization is (Ling et al., 2020). Multiple factors affect and contribute to the performance of organizations (Yesil & Kaya, 2013), one of which is organizational culture (Cameron & Quinn,

2006; Duke II & Edet, 2012; Fekete & Börcskei, 2011; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Saffold, 1998; Zheng et al., 2010). History and empirical research (Duke II & Edet, 2012; Marcoulides & Heck, 1993; Ogbonna & Haris, 2000) has supported the theory that organizational culture is related to an organization's performance (Ahmed, 1998; Arzubiaga et al., 2018; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Ling et al., 2020; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Saffold, 1988; Zheng et al., 2010). In this way, organizational culture plays a crucial role in determining the performance of the individuals working in the organization (Yesil & Kaya, 2013, as well as the organization as a whole (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Duke II & Edet, 2012; Fekete & Börcskei, 2011; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Saffold, 1998; Zheng et al., 2010).

Due to the tangential role that organizational culture plays in the performance of organizations, there is an increasing focus not only on the factor of organizational culture itself but also on how it relates to other areas (Barney, 1986; Ojo, 2010; Oparanma, 2010; Yesil & Kaya, 2013). Historically, some organizations struggled to thrive due to the competitiveness found in the business world (Fekete & Börcskei, 2011), causing them to seek innovative ways to remain competitive. Recently, organizational culture has been used as a strategic resource to cultivate entrepreneurial or corporate orientation to help organizations compete effectively (Ling et al., 2020). As a result, organizational culture serves as a bridge between organizational processes, organizational performance, and organizational learning culture (Škerlavaj et al., 2006). Since researchers have extolled the virtues of corporate culture, as it has had such a significant impact on individuals' performance (Roulin & Krings, 2020) and organizational performance (Ling et al., 2020), organizational culture is a salient factor in disaster risk management and corporate trainers' successes or roadblocks during the development of disaster training content.

Instituting a culture of training in organizations at the individual, team, and organizational levels is beneficial because various forms of corporate training help to:

- Enhance individual performance
- Provide an avenue for employees and management to update skillsets
- Increase individual and collective knowledge base,
- Facilitate problem-solving and risk management, and
- Support ingratiation of organizational culture in employees (Polo et al., 2018).

As discussed in the next section, risk management is a critical component contributing to organizational success or failure, as evidenced by the Fukushima Daiichi station blackout technological disaster. The employees of Fukushima Daini, the sister plant of Fukushima Daiichi, were able to tackle ambiguous situations, enhance resilience, and averted a similar catastrophe to that of Fukushima Daiichi (Murata, 2021). The confluence of organizational culture, disaster risk management, and technology drives the need to facilitate effective training culture in organizations and drive or achieve successful outcomes (Saadat & Saadat, 2016)

### ***Risk Management***

Although risks have been in existence throughout history, risk management itself has only become prominent and relevant in the last half-century (Farr & Bailey, 2019), especially where human beings are involved. In simple terms, A risk is anything, positive or negative, that impacts an activity, task, project, or endeavor. PMI defined risk as an uncertain event that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on one or more project objectives such as scope, schedule, cost, and quality. Human resource risk is the probability of realizing unfavorable or disastrous events due to the human resource decision-making process and outcomes (Karev & Tikhonov, 2019). Human resources and risks have an almost inescapably symbiotic relationship

because people simultaneously drive the occurrence and mitigation of risks and issues (Wright, 2017).

Regardless of the industry like Government (Kim & Sohn, 2018; Robbins, 2011), healthcare (Mojibian et al., 2017), and transportation (Oborilová, 2015), to name a few, human resource risk management is integral and requires a process for training, coaching, and managing to prevent or mitigate disasters. The intricacies and inter-relationships between people (human resources), risk, and security (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2017) results in challenges associated with business continuity, both inside and outside of the organizational boundaries (Farr & Bailey, 2019; Hirsch & Strawser, 2014).

Typical risk management follows a similar process as seen in Figure 1: Petak's Four-Phase Model on Disaster Management (Depiction). Where integrated resources are involved, Figure 2: Integrated Emergency Management (Etkin, 2016) provides a model for effectively responding to disaster situations by utilizing a risk planning and response process.

Organizational risks are diverse and encompass diverse risks like market risks, reputational risks, corporate identity/culture risks, financial risks, operational risks, legal or regulatory risks, technology risks, tangible and cybersecurity risks, resource risks, and fraud-related risks (Kraev, 2019; Wright, 2017). At the center of organizational risks, one will find that people are either propagating or mitigating the occurrence of people-related or security-related risks. A number of these challenges are resource management-based, such as organization of social boundaries, disruption to business practices, adaption to alternate workstations, and changes to traditional technological boundaries (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014).

Managing organizational risks requires collaboration between human resources and management teams to learn, interpret, understand, and work towards the organization's goal. For

effective risk and disaster management, a paradigm shift (Wei-Ching & Fraser, 2017) is needed for organizational success. Suppose the goal or resolution is foreign to the regular business and community practice (Jones et al., 2016). In that case, corporate trainers and management can work together to prevent adverse impacts (Fyodorova & Menshikova, 2014) by educating, communicating, and mitigating disaster management processes as depicted in Figure 2: Integrated Emergency Management (Etkin, 2016) using Petak's (1985) four-phase model on disaster management framework which focuses on the process of preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery (Kim & Sohn, 2018), to enact change effectively in organizations (Farr & Bailey, 2019; Vrona, 2015). However, the methods for risk management planning, preparation and documentation by corporate trainers is neither clear, reported, researched, or sufficiently documented.

Research has found that risk planning and response are convoluted and complicated processes (Wright, 2017). The variability of human resources response, organizational culture, and technological acumen in disaster situations could either reduce or compound a disaster event, as evidenced in the Fukushima Daiichi and Fukushima Daini disaster scenarios (Murata, 2021). The variability of each factor could potentially affect the organization's culture and security (Ash et al., 2019; Cameron, 2021; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021; Korpela, 2015). Before developing training content (Korpela, 2015) for disaster management, consideration of internal and external industry restrictions and requirements and other vital processes (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014) could be beneficial because the factors which constitute risk management and governance models may be unique by industry or agency (Farr & Bailey, 2019).

The consideration is recommended because a relevant model for some environments may not be suitable for all of them (Brown et al., 2009). Therefore, understanding the types, components, categories, and characteristics of organizations which is further complicated by factors like change, growth (Olsen, 2016), and pandemic-related occurrences, provides insight into the social architecture, environment (internal and external), and effectiveness of their given organization (Farrell, 2019). Ideal risk management strategies depend on the characteristics of the risk under consideration. Comprehension of the levels (Gunay et al., 2020; Tsai et al., 2020), type, and nature of the threat are required to create appropriate strategies, mainly because a one-size-fits-all risk management approach will prove ineffective (Etkin, 2016). Whether it is a process of disaster prevention literacy training (Tsai et al., 2020), or a remediation strategy (Levin & Koski, 1998), significant effort is recommended when developing organizational training content because of the human factor involved (Ash et al., 2019; Jain et al., 2020; Wright, 2017).

Risk management is vital for several reasons. Firstly, it facilitates efficient and effective business operations, which improves internal and external reporting and increases the possibility that a business will meet its objectives. Secondly, it builds confidence in stakeholders and the investment community, as risk management must comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and align with the organization's risk appetite and strategy. Thirdly, it improves the organization's resilience, as the risk process is embedded throughout the organization, which reduces operational surprises and losses while increasing risk responses and decision making. Lastly, it optimizes resource allocation and supports identifying and managing cross-enterprise risks; while enhancing the corporate governance methodology through company growth and return, which rationalizes capital and allows the organization to seize opportunities (Chapman,

2011). The criticality of risk management cannot be underrepresented (Farr & Bailey, 2019). While risk management in business entails ensuring the right balance between risk, reward, and planning for surprises and issues, effective development of training programs is needed to maintain organizational integrity in every scenario (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018; Masalimova et al., 2016). In addition, personnel security and personnel risk management are tangential in the process of organizational leadership (Karev & Tikhonov, 2019). Due to differences in how organizations operate, it is essential to have adequate training cultures and programs (Polo et al., 2018), as risk identification is an intrinsic part of managing any business (Chapman, 2011). Overall, risks remain one of the biggest challenges faced by leaders today. Therefore, understanding key risks and risk management is fundamental (Woods, 2011; Wright, 2017), particularly in typical and disaster situations (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014; Liebler & McConnell, 2011; Older, 2019).

### ***Remote Working Environment***

Telecommuting (Niles, 1998), or remote work, has been predicted as early as the 1970s by scholars like Jack Niles and Allan Toffler (Messenger & Gschwind, 2016). Studies by researchers like Davenport and Pearlson (1998) and Gajendran and Harrison (2007), and international researchers like Mitchell (1996), Stanworth (1997), Suomi and Pekkola (1998); Teo and Lim (1999); Chen and Ling (2004); Raghuram (2011), and Bosua et al. (2013) (Narayanan et al., 2017), showed successful and unsuccessful outcomes from remote working organizations. Remote work helps to reduce gas emissions, traffic congestion, pollution, increasing work-life balance, and allowing flexibility.

Before 2020, working in remote environments was not a generally recognized phenomenon; however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a substantial number of people now work remotely (Burgess, 2020). As most organizations have transitioned their working operations

from an in-person working environment to a remote working environment (Narayanan et al., 2017), understanding the related risk factors associated with teaching and implementing best practices in remote working environments has more than ever become relevant (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021).

While remote working conditions offer flexibility for the individuals employed in the organization and reduce overhead (Fleck, 2010), the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic introduced new issues for organizations that were not prepared for the remote work environment. Some of the emerging problems included disruption to normal working conditions or services, lack of job assurance, and little to no downtime for the organization to transition to a remote working environment. As a result, several probable and associated risks stemmed from the phenomenon. Some of the related risks and issues included:

1. Work definition risks including a propensity to work over defined business hours, risk of working in silos, and susceptibility to environmental or external distractions
2. Communication breakdown risks including loss of face-to-face or in-person interaction, loss of opportunity to read or rely on non-verbal communication cues, breakdown in communication due to lack of access, and reduced internet bandwidth
3. IT-related risks include the viability, safety, and security of the remote working environment, risks associated with damage or misuse of company equipment, software compatibility-related risks, connectivity-related issues, inconsistency with Internet Service Providers (ISP) home network bandwidth, and Help desk support issues, protection of intellectual property.
4. Human resource risks include understanding and maintaining organizational culture, management-related risks, confirming resource availability without micro-managing,

team camaraderie and reporting dynamics, remote interviewing and hiring concerns, disconnected employees, supporting team dynamics and collaboration, and the increased need to update organizations' standards and handbooks (Burgess, 2020; Caldwell, 2016; Drejer, 2017; He et al., 2019; Hirsch & Strawser, 2014; Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021; Larson & Foropon, 2018; Narayanan et al., 2017; Noor et al., 2019; Stacey, 2013; Wang et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2020).

Therefore, with the necessity for big and small organizations to transition to remote work, understanding challenges associated with remote working and learning has proved critical. As with all things, there are associated opportunities and risks, and managing risks is an integral aspect of business management. Whether or not remote work is voluntary or involuntary, these factors require consideration. Although organizations may not always have plans in place, recent events have caused organizations to reevaluate, reconsider, plan for, and implement measures to facilitate adequate remote working conditions (Hangerott, 2021; Older, 2021).

While all areas, as mentioned earlier, are of concern to organizations, the most poignant is an organization's intellectual property (data, process, or information security). The problem is that some staff and businesses are unprepared for the consequences of working virtually. When an external determinant or disaster like COVID-19 occurs, employers, staff, and business owners are hard-pressed to determine the next steps of working in an environment that, although they may comprehend, they may not have personally experienced or have measures in place to prepare for them. For this reason, organizations use risk assessment, benefit/cost analysis, and opportunity management, to develop means to help the employees understand the 'new normal'. An organization's intellectual property drives the core of the business, as it includes critical elements such as standard operating procedures, policies, processes, strategies, methods,

organizational dynamics, structuring, and information transmission (Asanov et al., 2020; Ash et al., 2019; Burgess, 2020; Caldwell, 2016; Cheng et al., 2017; Hernández-Chea et al., 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Noor et al., 2019; Yang, 2005). Therefore, a potential concern within an organization is how corporate intellectual property is protected. Using a risk assessment process, organizations can eventually determine the perceived risks and issues that arise from intellectual property protection, the potential impacts of data protection, and best practices regarding the maintenance of a conducive and practical working environment (Burgess, 2020; Drejer, 2017; Williams et al., 2020).

Identifying risks and potential mitigations is critical; however, a one-size-fits-all approach to risk mitigation will prove ineffective. The identified risks may vary based on the employee, remote conditions, personal disposition, styles, or behaviors within the organization. Once these risks have been identified, a thorough risk assessment approach can be carried out to plan for said risks, potential consequences, and impacts (Becker, 2004). Hart (1995) and Hirsch and Strawser (2014) proposed that a business's impact in association with unanticipated disruption helps determine best practices and updated standard operating procedures. As a result, researchers like Maes and Weldy (2018) have researched the effective development of virtual teams. When some organizations experienced disruptive occurrences and events, the organizations reported that training was an effective way to help employees grasp the new standard (Jain et al., 2021). Overall, the reports and findings from the businesses demonstrate the importance of teaching and learning and its pivotal input to identify best practices and approaches within an organization, specifically related to risk management in organizations that practice remote working.

Hirsch and Strawser's (2014) also found that internal processes like information technology and human resource processes are at risk in organizations. IT risks such as compatibility-related problems, equipment imaging formatting and delivering requirements, information technology support expertise for diverse locations, and Internet Service Provider (ISP) requirements and specifications constitute a drain on organizations' servers if using Virtual Desktop Interfaces (VDI). Hirsch and Strawser's (2014) findings conclude that information technology security and onboarding training must be considered when working in remote environments.

For human resources, risks include culture shock and standard operating process education, initiation, implementation, monitoring, and control. The identification and planning processes typically require collaborative sessions with cross-functional teams to determine how each risk identified would affect or impact residual risks (Murata, 2021). The association between human resources hiring and training, information technology security and technological access should be considered in this case.

Even with the rise of telecommuting and increased knowledge about remote working, there are still exposures and threats (Elsevier, 2014; Elsevier, 2015). Due to exposures, organizational intellectual property (Burgess, 2020), personally identifiable information (PII), protected health information (PHI), and classified information is at increased risk due to employees' lack of understanding as to the threat that disclosures (intentional or unintentional) may hold (Caldwell, 2016). Data breaches and exposures still abound even with repeated training in organizations like banks, government agencies, credit bureaus, and retail markets (Elsevier, 2014; Elsevier, 2015; Weissman, 2018). Despite these threats, the advancement of technology has made remote work or telecommuting possible (Messenger & Gschwind, 2016). Through the

use of technology, organizational risk management can help businesses continue operations and drive customer satisfaction.

In planning for risks, various organizations in diverse industries have implemented risk mitigation measures in an area that was not previously explored or, at best, practiced sparingly. Based on the increased practice of remote working (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021), organizations (willingly or unwillingly) have transitioned their working operations from face-to-face interaction to a remote working environment (Narayanan et al., 2017), which has heavily relied on technological processes.

Another aspect of remote working in organizations includes how remote work can impact business continuity outside established organizational boundaries (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014). Some of the business continuity boundary obstacles include resource management challenges that surpass the processes of organizational social boundaries, disruption to business practices, poor management of alternate workstations, and difficulty in adapting and changing traditional technological boundaries (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014). Some organizations instituted or implemented measures to prevent these occurrences, for instance, machine learning (Noor et al., 2019), malware training (He et al., 2019), and staff training (Burden, 2019). Regardless of these measures, issues like data breaches persisted (Cheng et al., 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2020).

While some businesses are increasingly leaning towards artificial intelligence to stem the tide of technology-related issues (Ibrahim et al., 2020), others acknowledge the elusive patterns that prevent full automation, mostly due to human factors and unique behaviors that are not easily quantifiable but play a poignant role in propagating some of the issues mentioned (Hughes-Lartey, 2021).

Until there is a validation that humans play a crucial role in managing and contributing to risks despite the up-and-coming technologies organizations use to protect sensitive data breaches, these technologies only solve a part of the problem. As human beings are part of the Internet of Things (IoT), information security solutions need to incorporate human factors to resolve technological issues (Hughes-Lartey, 2021). Therefore, the focus should be on the training culture that takes into account individuality and how the training contributes to the new normal, as only then will organizations be able to determine how practical training programs are positioned to help employees respond to breaches and identify triggers that can be used in future unforeseen circumstances (He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2021; Noor et al., 2019).

In conclusion, when assessing challenges and the potential solutions, the following variables stand out - the human resources that propagate the challenges and the corporate trainers who help bridge the gap from lack of knowledge. In addition to data breaches and human-related risks, some communities' remote working programs have lacked educational development for vocations (Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). Consequently, industries like medical teaching hospitals (Petryshen et al., 2020), rural workforce (Abelsen et al., 2020), academia, and industries (Kweon et al., 2019) have taken a proactive approach to remote training. A comprehensive understanding of these changes and training techniques from the trainer's perspective will go a long way for the future development of best practices and training content in disaster and pandemic situations.

### **Data Management**

As technology continues to influence behavior in the ever-evolving digital world, the likelihood of organizational information being accessible and transparent to internal and external entities increases, thereby adding complexity to data management (ter Hoeven et al., 2019). Current and historical findings show that social networking as a tool for communicating at work

instantaneously eliminates geographical distance and makes vast levels and types of information easily accessible (Evans et al., 2016; Gibbs et al., 2013; Kim, 2018; Leonardi, 2015; Leonardi et al., 2013; Stohl et al., 2016; ter Hoeven et al., 2019). While some resources may receive training and learn to self-censor how they use and share data or information (Cheng et al., 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Mao & DeAndrea, 2019), others are not that aware and contribute to the prevalent data breaches (Elsevier, 2014; Elsevier, 2015; Weissman, 2018). A data breach is defined as, generally, an unapproved use or exposure of information that could compromise the security or privacy of PII, to the extent that the use or disclosure of the data constitutes financial, reputational, or any other harm to the affected party, individual, or organization (Goldberg, 2013).

Organizations in the USA lose upwards of US \$250 Billion annually due to nefarious theft of digital information or data. Table 1 provides an example of data breaches due to system vulnerabilities. The largest reported hack occurred in 2013. Due to a hack, 3000000000 Yahoo accounts were compromised. Besides hacking, other methods where accounts were compromised include poor security, system misconfiguration, intentional or unintentional exposure of data, Unsecured systems, unprotected application programming interface (API), and Zero-day vulnerabilities, to name a few.

**Table 1**

*List of Data Breaches (Extracted from Wiki Compilation)*

| Entity  | Year | Records    | Method        |
|---|------|------------|---------------|
| <b>Largest Reported Data Hacks by Records</b> |      |            |               |
| Yahoo   | 2013 | 3000000000 | Hacked        |
| First American Corporation                    | 2019 | 885000000  | Poor Security |
| Facebook                                      | 2019 | 540000000  | Poor Security |
| Yahoo   | 2014 | 500000000  | Hacked        |
| Marriott International                        | 2018 | 500000000  | Hacked        |

|  |      |            |                                  |
|--|------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Friend Finder Networks                 | 2016 | 412214295  | Poor Security/ Hacked            |
| Exactis                                | 2018 | 340000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Airtel                                 | 2019 | 320000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Truecaller                             | 2019 | 299055000  | Unknown                          |
| MongoDB                                | 2019 | 275000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Wattpad                                | 2020 | 270000000  | Hacked                           |
| Facebook                               | 2019 | 267000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Microsoft                              | 2019 | 250000000  | Data Exposed by Misconfiguration |
| MongoDB                                | 2019 | 202000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Instagram                              | 2020 | 200000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Zynga                                  | 2019 | 173000000  | Hacked                           |
| Equifax                                | 2017 | 163119000  | Poor Security                    |
| Adobe Systems Incorporated             | 2013 | 152000000  | Hacked                           |
| Under Armour                           | 2018 | 150000000  | Hacked                           |
| eBay                                   | 2014 | 145000000  | Hacked                           |
| Canva                                  | 2019 | 140000000  | Hacked                           |
| Heartland                              | 2009 | 130000000  | Hacked                           |
| Tetrad                                 | 2020 | 120000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Target Corporation                     | 2013 | 110000000  | Hacked                           |
| ElasticSearch                          | 2019 | 108000000  | Poor Security                    |
| Capital One                            | 2019 | 106000000  | Unsecured S3 Bucket              |
| Quora                                  | 2018 | 100000000  | Hacked                           |
| Justdial                               | 2019 | 100000000  | Unprotected API                  |
| Mobile TeleSystems (MTS)               | 2019 | 100000000  | Misconfiguration/Poor Security   |
| <b>Most Recent Data Hacks</b>          |      |            |                                  |
| Ancestry.com                           | 2021 | 300,000    | Poor Security                    |
| Ankle & Foot Center of Tampa Bay, Inc. | 2021 | 156,000    | Hacked                           |
| AOL                                    | 2021 | 92,000,000 | Inside job, Hacked               |
| AOL                                    | 2021 | 20,000,000 | Accidentally Published           |
| Apple, Inc./BlueToad                   | 2021 | 12,367,232 | Accidentally Published           |
| Apple                                  | 2021 | 275,000    | Hacked                           |
| Apple Health Medicaid                  | 2021 | 91,000     | Poor Security                    |
| T-Mobile                               | 2021 | 45,000,000 | Hacked                           |
| Microsoft Exchange Servers             | 2021 | Unknown    | Zero-day Vulnerabilities         |
| Health Service Executive               | 2021 | Unknown    | Unknown                          |

Note. The table provides an inexhaustive sample of breached records.

For this study, data management will be analyzed in the context of intellectual property security, as well as a review on how mismanagement or exposure of data in organizations can contribute to causing new disasters or aggravating existing disasters (Asanov et al., 2020; Ash et al., 2019; Burgess, 2020; Caldwell, 2016; Cameron, 2021; Cheng et al., 2017; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Hernández-Chea et al., 2020; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Korpela, 2015; Kweon et al., 2019; Noor et al., 2019; Yang, 2005).

### ***Intellectual Property***

Intellectual property can be referred to as patented items, designs, models, processes, procedures, copyrights, and other associated rights, given or earned by creators or organizations (Yang, 2005). The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) defined intellectual property as the creations of the mind, which include inventions, literary and artistic works, designs, symbols, names, and images used in business operations (Hernández-Chea et al., 2020). Due to the Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement in 1994, intellectual property has become an integrated factor in business operations globally (Yang, 2005).

Intellectual property allows businesses and organizations to remain relevant and sustainable through the creativity and innovation of goods and services (Hernández-Chea et al., 2020). In order to stay current and innovative, businesses may choose to conduct their work or create their content in-house or outsource to cheaper options (Gupta, 2017). In doing so, there is a choice between cost or process efficiency and potential loss of intellectual property (Gupta, 2017; Schotter & Teagarden, 2014). As a result, protecting intellectual property remains the number one priority for organizations, especially multinationals operating in competitive international nations like China (Schotter & Teagarden, 2014). In 2013, China accounted for almost 80% of the intellectual property thefts from organizations headquartered in the United States, amounting to nearly \$300 billion in lost business and revenue. Findings show that one of

the prevalent causes of intellectual property leaks is due to ineffective human resource management (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Schotter & Teagarden, 2014) resource management challenges that surpassed the processes of organizational social boundaries, disruption to business practices, poor management of alternative workstations, and difficulty in adapting and changing traditional technological boundaries (Hirsch & Strawser, 2014). To mitigate or avoid business disruption, organizations implement measures like machine learning (Noor et al., 2019), malware training (He et al., 2019), and staff training (Burden, 2019). However, regardless of the organizations' mitigating practices, data breaches persist (Cheng et al., 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2020).

### ***Data and Information Security***

As organizations' information transitions to intangible core assets, information security is increasingly viewed as an essential factor when running a business sustainably (Kweon et al., 2019). The swift development and widespread application of information technologies have boosted data and resource sharing worldwide in many areas, including politics, economics, and culture. The increased use of information technology in data management has caused many cybersecurity issues, some of which include identity theft and fraud, careless disclosures and misplacement of user information, phishing, and attacks that target critically sensitive systems and websites. These cybercrimes constitute a threat to the public, personal safety, and national security (Guo, 2018).

Technology is intricately intertwined into business operations, such that information security and information technology management is necessary to preserve organizational assets (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018). As it is a fundamental part of these operations, information security is continually reformed (Hur et al., 2016; Tosuntaş, 2019) through the skills and expertise of the information security personnel and staff; as well as through corporate training programs which

enhance these skills for personnel (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018). Despite these measures, organizations continue to experience challenges and barriers to information security (Tondeur et al., 2017). While this can be attributed to dynamic changes in the information security world, scholars advise that repeated research (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018), training (Bauer et al., 2017; Bulgurcu, 2010; Burgess, 2020; Potnuru et al., 2018), and certification needs to be conducted frequently to refine practices to tackle security issues (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018).

The increased usage and application of information technology has synonymously increased security incidence exposures in all industries, including the health (Giansanti, 2021), construction, and finance sectors (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Kweon et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2009). Research has shown that employees are the primary source of exposures and data breaches (Bauer et al., 2017; Bulgurcu et al., 2010; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017; Schotter & Teagarden, 2014; Siponen et al., 2014), such that these incidents occur and reoccur due to lack of employee awareness, inadequate information security training, and ineffectively managed teams. These breaches constitute a significant threat to an organization's information security protocols (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017), thereby requiring the design and development of data management and security awareness programs to curb non-compliance (Bauer et al., 2017).

With the growth of information technology, data and security risks in all sectors have been on the rise (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017). The exponential increase in cyber-attacks means that network security, information security, security compliance, and training are even more crucial now than ever before (Giansanti, 2021). Spreading malicious software through devices has become increasingly accessible (Nikolopoulos & Polenakis, 2017) to the extent that stringent measures such as organization-wide training is needed to combat the spread. However, despite the uptick of organization-wide training, previous studies are yet to analyze the efficiency of

security training quantitatively or qualitatively at the organizational level (Kweon et al., 2019). Due to this lack of data (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018), businesses are unable to make decisions that can help them develop the right type of information security training or allocate sufficient funds to combat breaches or prepare them for disaster risk management (Kim & Sohn, 2018; Kweon et al., 2019).

A recent study by Kweon et al. (2019) was conducted to determine the relationship between security training and data breaches. Findings showed that despite education time, education of participants, the increase in business outsourcing correlated with the number of cybersecurity incidents or breaches. The results showed a significant negative correlation; however, Kweon et al. concluded that, based on the findings of the study, information security compliance, training, and education (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017), reduced security risks in organizations (Bauer et al., 2017; Bulgurcu, 2010; Burgess, 2020; Giansanti, 2021; Kweon et al., 2019; Potnuru et al., 2018).

Since the human resource element plays a significant factor, increased employee awareness through corporate training is critical. However, organizations tend to engage in a trial-and-error approach when dealing with human resources (Schotter & Teagarden, 2014). The process is likely due to the lack of expansive past precedence to draw experiences from and help develop standard operating procedures (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018). As a result, training updates and standardization of training manuals and preparedness receive less attention. Regardless of an organization's approach, organizational training and information dissemination are critical for an organization's security (Giansanti, 2021). In a nutshell, compliance with standards is vital, knowledge of those standards is fundamental, and the absence of compliance by employees can lead to intellectual property loss and data breaches (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017).

## **Corporate Training**

The teaching strategies and methods used in corporate training have a significant impact on learning. This finding was demonstrated best in a comprehensive study conducted by Johnson and Barrett (2017). Students' understanding or interpretation of a task was tested by analyzing the differences between two types of learning: active and passive. The jigsaw method, which is a high-complexity strategic learning task, was used to test this. The findings showed that students who were part of the active learning groups and sessions did better than those in the passive group. The researchers concluded that active learning could potentially help students participate in and develop a meaningful understanding of content and resources in a shorter amount of time, possibly within just one session (Johnson & Barrett, 2017), and potentially reduce knowledge depreciation (Boone et al., 2008).

In a remote environment, stimuli that begets learning may differ from the stimuli required for face-to-face settings. Online or remote adult learning could potentially stimulate behavior that could be compared to offered stimuli and the subsequent responses (Arghode et al., 2017)—eliciting desired behavior through effective conditioning while great (Arghode et al., 2017), is one part of the picture. Consequently, theories have been proposed to provide a framework for adult learning styles. One theory that has served as the backbone for addressing working-class adults' learning styles is that of Knowles (1980). Within Knowles' (1980) theory, there are four major assumptions:

1. As an individual matures, so does the individuals' self-concept, as it transitions from dependence to self-directed or independent.
2. There is an accumulation of experience that is resourceful for the learning process.

3. An adult's desire and readiness to learn is related to the developmental tasks of their social role" (McCray, 2016).
4. That time perspective, related to how and when to apply knowledge, changes for mature individuals.

As a result, adult learners tend to operate on the social constructivist framework by focusing more on practical learning to solve problems rather than just learning about the theoretical concepts (Knowles, 1980; McCray, 2016). In addition to the four assumptions as mentioned earlier, Knowles (1980) and his associates also presented two more assumptions in their 1984 publication, which are as follows:

1. The strongest motivators for individuals are internal and not external.
2. Adults need to know or understand the motivation behind why they are learning a new concept to learn it (Knowles, 1984; McCray, 2016).

Polo et al.'s (2018) study to test considerations underlying the training culture in organizations constituted the first attempt to create instrumentation to measure training culture within organizations. This research has proved relevant in the field, as some of the findings have contributed to defining the perception of training in organizations by management and employees (Polo et al., 2018).

Due to industrial and business globalization, organizations foster a culture that is increasingly supportive of value innovation and intellectual capital (Denford & Chan, 2011). With innovation comes competition, such that organizations expect employees to respond proactively to organizational changes in their environment (Jain et al., 2021). Organizational changes provide employees with an opportunity to learn directly through collaborative corporate training programs (Jain et al., 2021) or indirectly through the organization's revenues (driven by

profit and loss reporting). If training programs are implemented effectively, they can help employees develop their creativity and innovation skills (Jain et al., 2021). Professional development and training are of strategic importance in reaching organizational goals and fostering learning at an individual, educational (Hiim, 2017), and corporate level (Polo et al., 2018).

A core issue with educational content is that it is often tailored for a student learning environment, which is mismatched compared to what is required in an actual workplace environment (Butcher, 2019; López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; Soh et al., 2020; Verheul, 2018). In Norway, some vocational students raised complaints about the relevance of the educational content, as they reported losing sight of what they were studying (Hiim, 2017). In addition, firms or organizations have also complained that the applicants are not sufficiently qualified (Hiim, 2017). Although this is not the primary premise of this study, the case study highlights that increased integration and collaboration between vocational schools and firms, or organizations is critical for bridging the gap in the curriculum (Hiim, 2017).

This gap may be explained by Knowles' (1980,1984) assumptions, such that lack of knowledge or immaturity is not as prevalent in adult learners as it is in student learners, specifically because adults need to know or understand the motivation behind learning new concepts (Knowles, 1984; McCray, 2016). Due to gaps in the curriculum (Butcher, 2019; López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; Soh et al., 2020; Verheul, 2018), which make it hard for students to transition from the classroom to the industry (Hiim, 2017; Price & Reichert, 2017), organizations have invested in corporate training for their recruits to try to bridge those gaps (Price & Reichert, 2017); and to help recruits learn relevant skills for the workplace (Polo et al., 2018). This can be achieved through a myriad of methods, including case-method teaching (Emerald Publishing,

2019), training culture (Polo et al., 2018), and blockchain-enabled training effectiveness measurements (Jain et al., 2021).

For agencies like the American Council on Education (ACE), improving equity and expanding access to colleges and universities helps diversify higher education leadership and bridge the gaps in the curriculum (Hiim, 2017; Price & Reichert, 2017). Further, research has shown that these gaps can be bridged in a remote or blended learning environment (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020; Jan et al., 2019; Richardson et al., 2017; Stenbom, 2018), which is especially applicable to this current study. Interprofessional support and training delivered face-to-face or in remote working environments is a valued resource for recruits. It enhances co-worker relationships and streamlines processes that contribute to quick onboarding, growth, and development for recruits (Price & Reichert, 2017). In addition, continuing education credit programs, where an individual can earn Professional Development Units (PDUs) and Continuing Education Units (CEUs), have steadily increased maturity for employees in both their personal and professional growth, such that the possibilities are boundless (Donaldson, 1990).

Adult learning theory, also referred to as andragogy, was created to help educators and trainers understand adult learning styles (Knowles et al., 2014). According to Knowles (1980), it is also a set of tenets that is mostly applied to adult learning situations. Adults should feel accepted, respected, and supported when learning because there should be "a spirit of mutuality between teachers and students as joint inquirers" (Knowles, 1980, p. 47). Throughout their educational or pedagogical journey, learners require guidance best provided by instructors (Arghode et al., 2017). In summary, how the instructors or trainers interact with the learners may impact how the learners receive and interpret the information.

Studies on adult education in corporate America were conducted to help understand the benefits of teaching adults and the impact on employee morale, bottom line, process improvement, employee interaction, data security, corporate and environmental responsibility, and interpersonal relationships amongst employees (Hughes-Lartey et al., 2021). Although adult education and training in the industry have, for the most part, been in face-to-face settings (Tan et al., 2020), there is a significant rise in remote training due in large part to factors like globalization of industry, remote working, and flexibility in training approaches (Tan et al., 2020).

Due to the globalization of industry, advancement in digital technology, and competitive work structures, the nature and composition of the 21st-century workplace have changed (Craft, 2020). Current research has been able to test learning in face-to-face workplace environments, with inconclusive findings related to the positive and negative effects of telecommuting (Narayanan et al., 2017). One conclusive negative that is continually raised is the lack of educational development for vocations (Pearson & Chatterjee, 2010). As a result, industries and institutions have decided to take a proactive approach to remote training, which relies on corporate trainers (Abelsen et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Petryshen et al., 2020).

### ***Corporate Trainers***

Employers expect their employees to function at increased levels, be responsive to the changing environment, and be flexible to organizational goals and missions (Das, 2017). Corporate trainers in most organizations are responsible for using the constructivist approach to transition employees from the AS-IS to the TO-BE. They are also responsible for bridging identified or recognized knowledge gaps and driving employees towards organizational goals (Das, 2017). In essence, corporate trainers are accountable for introducing the employees to new or updated concepts (Boyd et al., 2017). Corporate trainer's knowledge of the training content,

mission of the organization, and understanding how to educate effectively is critical when training employees (Das, 2017; Boyd et al., 2017). Hence, corporate trainers' role in the development of training content is integral to organizational success. Today, regardless of formal educational preparedness and expertise (Gray, 2015; Kwon & Cho, 2020), corporate trainers further the work of traditional learning institutions and function in the role of designer, organizer, leader, moderator, teacher, expert, partner, ally, and facilitator (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Kwon & Cho, 2020). Serving in these roles constitutes a burden of expectation on corporate learners who may or may not have experience with workplace education and successful learning outcomes (Gray, 2015). However, when outliers like unprecedented disasters that disrupt the norm occur, employers and corporate trainers are hard-pressed to transition the employees to the new normal seamlessly.

Currently, there is insufficient research on trainers' perspectives of students' learning outcomes and best practices. Previous literature within this field has shown that the ramifications of not adhering to effective data management and security can be catastrophic (Harrison & Jürjens, 2017); however, there is no qualitative information on the benefits, issues, risks, or impacts from the trainers' perspectives. Trainers need to know how the adult learners are receiving the information, specifically with the added factor of remote learning, to guide future training. This phenomenological study will analyze corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content for remote situations to shed light on trainers' perspectives. As corporate trainers use years of experience and seasoned pedagogy to enhance learning for their participants/students to meet corporate objectives, it is important to understand how corporate trainers prepare employees who may already have preconceived notions about disaster training and established processes in novel situations and lend a voice to

challenges and victories that these trainers have encountered. Understanding trainers' perspectives will significantly impact corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments.

### **Summary**

Chapter Two focused on the literature by examining Kim and Sohn's (2018) disaster risk management theory and the four phases of disaster risk management theory -mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. There is an interrelationship between organizational culture, risk management, data management, and the efficacy of organization-wide training in the corporate environment. The literature explored corporate trainers' role in corporate training and preparedness in HR and IT work streams and how organizations perceive corporate trainers and their role in the organization (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Kwon & Cho, 2020).

The literature review showed that despite the pivotal role corporate trainers have in educating employees, there is barely any research or findings on standard processes for corporate trainers nor a standardized level of experience and certifications that qualify corporate trainers to train employees in an organization. So, when outliers like unprecedented disasters disrupt the day-to-day training process, corporate trainers may be hard-pressed to create the right training content to prepare, mitigate, respond, or recover from a disaster situation. The literature drew comparisons between two sister companies where the Fukushima Daini employees could tackle ambiguous problems, enhance resilience, and successfully avert a similar catastrophe to Fukushima Daiichi due to practical disaster preparedness. Unfortunately, the employees of Fukushima Daiichi were less prepared to mitigate, prepare, respond, and quickly respond to the station blackout technological disaster (Murata, 2021). The literature review also showed that some employees and businesses are unprepared for the implications of working virtually. When

an external catastrophe like COVID-19 occurs, employers, employees, and business owners are hard-pressed to determine the next steps of working in an environment that, although they may comprehend, they may not have personally experienced or planned. Additionally, where training is concerned, there is no definitive way to determine how training and facilitation are received or how effective the outcomes are without understanding trainers' perspectives.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Overview

This phenomenological study aimed to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. Corporate trainers' perspective was critical to the study because of the pivotal role they have during the dissemination and, in some cases, implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This study explored perceived risks, issues, rewards, and the associated impacts that arose for the participants; as well as recommended approaches that contributed to maintaining safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning and implementation of environments for the students/participants (Drejer, 2017; Williams et al., 2020). Using Kim and Sohn's (2018) disaster risk theory as a theoretical framework, I interviewed twelve corporate trainers to investigate corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments. Data was collected using semi-structured individual interviews, document analysis, and observations. The eventual goal was to help drive excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance (Baum & Haveman, 2020).

The focus of chapter three is to provide a complete description of the methods and measures used to conduct this qualitative phenomenological study. This chapter outlines the research design, highlights the research questions, describes the research setting and applicable limitations, justifies the proposed sampling method, and notes the participant selection criteria. The proposed research procedure and detailed information about my positionality as the researcher is discussed. Data is collected and analyzed ethically to meet the study's objective of understanding the experiences of corporate trainers in developing training content for pandemic-

type situations. Other areas discussed in this chapter include the data collection plan, research procedure, trustworthiness of the research, justification for the study, and the ethical considerations for the analysis.

### **Research Design**

I utilized a qualitative, phenomenological research method to examine corporate trainers' perceptions about developing training content on data security, risk management, and organizational culture for disaster situations. Qualitative research is the best approach for this study, as it will help to understand the depth of trainers' perspectives. Furthermore, the study's outcome could help fashion how organizational training objectives are developed (Polo, 2018), established, and grow within organizations. This study will be a phenomenological study because I collected and analyzed data to help describe and interpret corporate trainers' perceptions on their content development experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The type of phenomenological study I also utilized a hermeneutic phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenological research suggests that theory should be based on interpretations or perspectives (Cohen et al., 2000).

My reason for choosing the hermeneutic approach for this phenomenological study was to explore how and why participants utilize the methods they use and the experiences and techniques that drove their decision to use those methods. As interpretations of theory vary by the researcher, it is prudent not to be biased or view any of my observations from one lens as the current research is conducted. Additionally, with hermeneutic research, there is value in subjectivity, context, and detailed explanations; therefore, personal inclinations will be appropriately articulated (Cohen et al., 2000) to ensure that my personal biases are distinguished from that of the participant, mainly because ideas and philosophies on any given topic evolve.

Understanding the individual inputs helped me draw comparisons in experiences and

reported results from the participants (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990). By using the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, I was able to interpret and comprehend the phenomena I am studying, and by gathering and analyzing the data collected from the participants, I examined and interpreted the phenomenon from the participants' perspective, which helped clarify gaps in the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). The chosen theoretical framework guided this study because the responses received helped me see any alignment between the considerations for how corporate trainers develop content for disaster situations and Petak's (1985) four-phase disaster risk management framework. Specifically, by instituting preventive safety measures and conducting an evaluation of the disaster management system or process.

## **Research Questions**

### **Central Research Question**

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing disaster or pandemic driven training content?

### **Sub Question One**

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments?

### **Sub Question Two**

What factors, barriers, issues, and risks impact corporate instructors experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content?

### **Sub Question Three**

What successes and lessons contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

## **Setting and Participants**

## **Setting**

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has somewhat affected the dynamics of face-to-face interactions (Hilbe et al., 2020). Nonetheless, individuals, organizations, schools, and churches are increasingly adapting to the 'new normal' (Hilbe et al., 2020) by holding virtual sessions, conferences, and meetings to maintain business continuity (Woolston, 2020). I chose participants from small to large-sized organizations. A quiet remote setting with no external distraction was the preferred and only setting for data collection, specifically through video-conferencing remote technology. Therefore, I used Microsoft Teams for the interviews. This tool was an intuitive video conferencing and messaging platform usable on any device with an internet connection (Nash, 2020).

Using this platform and setting will provide the feel of face-to-face interviews yet give me an added layer of observation. One of my data collection methods is observation; video conferencing will help me see how the participants interact in the remote setting. Opting to hold virtual interviews is also borne out of convenience and conscientiousness for health, and human safety reasons post COVID-19 Pandemic (Chandra et al., 2020). The goal is to reduce the likelihood or concern of transmitting or contracting the coronavirus. Moreover, interviewing participants in this remote setting may make them feel more comfortable and reduce the probability of any hesitation to provide information (Krueger & Casey, 2014; Morgan, 1997). Further, interviewing the participants in this remote setting will lend credence to the study, as it will help me observe interactions and draw parallels with participants' responses.

## **Participants**

I selected twelve participants for this study using the non-probability (Setia, 2016), purposeful sampling method (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The justification for choosing this method

is that I wanted to have a measure of control over the process of selecting the participants. This is important because of my selection criteria. While convenience sampling may have worked, the potential limitations of the convenience sampling method would have invalidated this study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012; Sedgwick, 2013). Using the purposeful sampling method will improve the generalizability of the results (Setia, 2016) and contribute to the study's credibility and the versatility of participants' responses. There is no geographical restriction on the organization's location except that the organizations must be USA-based organizations, and the corporate trainers must primarily teach in the USA. The inclusion criteria for participants consist of corporate instructors who have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, conducted training in remote and face-to-face environments, and developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture.

I could not find any research describing corporate trainers' experiences on any topic, including when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content, which was empirical evidence of the gap in this research. Before approaching the participants, I secured approval to contact participants from the Liberty University International Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter). Once approval was confirmed, I completed outreach to the participants through referrals and comprehensive linked in searches. I also reached out to corporate HR departments (see Appendix B: Sample Permission Communique to Human Resources) and direct contact with the participants (see Appendix C: Sample Recruitment Email to Corporate Trainers).

### **Researcher Positionality**

The driver for this research is to understand from an axiological perspective and

constructivism perspective how individuals view, interpret, and deal with the situation they are thrust into as well as how they best manage the situation. From the standpoint of the study, the axiological perspective focuses on the thought that standards assumed by different people are comparable and that even though an individual does not personally engage in the activity, may understand the reason the activity occurs (Ney Matos et al., 2018). From the social constructivism perspective, a personal and insightful assessment and or potential interpretation of how the participants handle unique situations.

### **Interpretive Framework**

Social constructivism is the research paradigm that guides this study. This research paradigm can also be described as interpretivism (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Interpretivism in hermeneutical research facilitates finding logical ways whereby my experience and interpretation of the responses from the study can bridge to the phenomenon's essence (Moustakas, 1994). Finally, the social constructivism framework is critical to utilize because the issues, best practices, and risks identified by the participants may differ from a personal approach, so understanding the perception and application by others is critical for this study will help shape recommendations and future application (Ney Matos et al., 2018).

### **Philosophical Assumptions**

Axiologically, in addition to garnering the value-rich data from the participants, it is equally as vital for me to not only parse the data (identify and hopefully understand and document the substantiated facts from personal feelings, reactions, and emotions) but help shape the narrative based on the perspective and perceived feasibility of the information reported while ensuring that internal biases do not skew the data (Creswell & Poth, 2015). Finally, the social constructivism framework is critical to utilize because the issues, best practices, and risks

identified by the participants may differ from a personal approach, so understanding the perception and application by others is critical for this study will help shape recommendations and future application (Ney Matos et al., 2018).

### ***Ontological Assumption***

As a Christian, I believe in God and the power of his might. I believe that my reality and decisions are based on this as well. Suppose I am unable to grasp that what I do in the world, even though I am not of the world (Romans 12:2), ought to be sacred. In that case, I am yet to connect that my very existence as a child of God should define all my actions (Solomon, 1998) and, most importantly, glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:3). Therefore, as an ambassador of Christ, I am responsible for doing everything, including researching with that premise in mind.

Ontologically, while one objective truth exists, my participants may have unique perspectives of truth (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My responsibility as a researcher is to objectively report how the participants view their experiences (Moustakas, 1994) because obtaining and sharing knowledge as a Christian is not only a calling (Mark 16:15), but it is a duty as a steward and disciple of Christ.

### ***Epistemological Assumption***

An essential component of this study is to investigate epistemological perspectives on how the training content is constituted and developed by the corporate trainers and understand the consequences or outcomes of the objectives from their viewpoint. Recent research conducted by Hiim (2017) on ensuring curriculum relevance in vocational education and training with a focus on epistemological perspectives in a curriculum research project concluded that knowledge is not only contextual, but it also comprises of social constructivism attributes including physicality, motor skills, interpretation of concepts, values, and verbalized concepts. As a result,

my epistemological inclination points to the fact that I can begin to form a reliable conclusion and recommendations by analyzing my participant's perspectives in combination with personal knowledge and recognized industry expectations or standards (Cheryl & Poth, 2018).

### ***Axiological Assumption***

From an axiological standpoint, indeed, the value of the participants' perspectives cannot be overemphasized. The value extends to the researcher's process, the concept utilized, and the social/cultural standards for the researcher and the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2015).

Additionally, the conception that standards assumed by different people are comparable and that even though an individual does not personally engage in the activity, may understand the reason the activity occurs (Ney Matos et al., 2018) applies to this framework.

The axiological perspective applies to the study because, in addition to garnering the value-rich data from the participants, it is equally as vital for me to not only parse the data (identify and hopefully understand and document the substantiated facts from personal feelings, reactions, and emotions) but help shape the narrative based on the perspective and perceived feasibility of the information reported while ensuring that internal biases do not skew the data (Creswell & Poth, 2015).

### **Researcher's Role**

My name is Seeke Diana Hughes, and I am the researcher for this study. I function as a program manager and risk management resource in a small business organization supporting a government agency. In this role, risk management, quality management, schedule management, training and development, IP preservation, data security, and project completion are part of my daily tasks. In this role, I sometimes function as a corporate trainer, have developed training content, and oversee corporate content developers. Recently, I researched industry standards and

certifications for corporate trainers in the IT field. While I found some corporate training certifications like Management and Strategy Institute- Corporate Trainer Certified (CTC)<sup>TM</sup> (MSI, 2021) and ATD Certified Professional in Learning and Performance (CPLP), none of the organizations I worked for required any of the certifications for trainers outside of Human Resources. This realization was fascinating to me because outside of Human resource matters, training of the employees on Subject Matter expertise-related items were relegated to individuals who had expertise in the topics but not necessarily effective content creation. There were no mandates or expectations on how experienced these trainers were to function in content development, nor was there a comparable standard for measurement. Successful or unsuccessful outcomes were subjective and based on how effusive the trainers were and not necessarily how practical the training was for the learners (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Garrick & Clegg, 2001; Gray, 2015).

When the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic hit, this gap was even more evident. There was no consistent standard for developing disaster-related content, so some organizations bore the brunt of the unpreparedness. The driver for this research is to understand how the training standards assumed by different trainers are comparable to McLoughlin's (1985) and Petak's (1985) Disaster Risk Management Theoretical Framework. This consideration is essential because corporate trainers may not personally engage in industry best practices. However, they could offer a unique perspective on how certain activities occur (Ney Matos et al., 2018) and how individuals view, interpret, manage, and deal with difficult situations.

An organization by itself cannot affect change in anyone's life. However, the people that constitute or make up the organization can. Therefore, effective planning and organizing can contribute to organizational growth in the best possible way (Merida, 2015). Furthermore, the

importance of implementation of safety and security measures; and the practical teaching, coaching, and mentoring of employees can provide stakeholders with insight into the social architecture, environment (internal and external), and training effectiveness of their given organization (Farrell, 2019), and how this has changed during the global pandemic.

As much as I have quickly adapted to the remote working environment, this was not the case for everybody. Some employees struggled with teaching, working with, or leading geographically distributed teams (Craft, 2020; Gerke, 2006). The participants I hope to select for this study should be versed in my topic and help to illuminate the processes, which can apply to future circumstances. While the community is a global village, I intend to recruit participants outside my immediate professional circle.

### **Procedures**

The first step for this study was to determine the viability and feasibility of the qualitative study type (in this case, phenomenological research), the intent of the study, and the sampling procedure (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). The next step was that I submitted my Institutional Review Board (IRB) application using the electronic IRB application tool (CAYUSE) to determine that my research will be conducted in a fair and ethical manner. Once I secured approval from Liberty University's IRB (see Appendix A) to proceed with my research, I conducted outreach to help with the participant selection process. I completed outreach to the participants through referrals and comprehensive linked in searches. I also reached out to corporate HR departments (see Appendix B: Sample Permission Communique to Human Resources) and through direct contact with the participants (see Appendix C: Sample Recruitment Email to Corporate Trainers).

- For document analysis: Utilize no less than twelve training plans, training objectives,

feedback reports, success criteria documents. ( I categorized the document and identified themes to help enhance the interview sessions)

- For Observation: Observe at least one training video per participant to observe the interactive nature of the training would help me draw comparisons of training efficiency. Post course materials like surveys, tests, and course completion processes will serve the same purpose. These observations helped to identify themes that bolstered and enhanced the information gathered from the interview sessions. The importance of this data collection method served to help me observe the trainer in their natural environment and draw comparisons between the corporate trainer's objectives and my interpretation of the outcomes of the training sessions. For this study, while the plan was to collect the materials before the interviews, most participants sent the information after the interviews session.)
- For interviews: I met with corporate instructors who have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience identify themes to help enhance the interview sessions), conducted training in remote and face-to-face settings, developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture.

Once I secured consent from the participants and organizations ( see Appendix L), I scheduled the meeting invitations. Some participants sent the consent forms before the interviews, while some sent them after the interviews. Due to the busy schedule of some of the participants, I had to send reminders to a couple of the participants. At the end of the data collection process, I commenced data analysis by pulling themes from the categorized documents, training, and transcribed interview sessions. To protect the identity and

confidentiality of the organizations and participants, I assigned pseudonyms to the companies and participants (I created a separate document to prevent confusion and ensure traceability), then began the process of coding responses to categories. This process is known as bracketing, open coding, thematic analysis, and the essence of the experience (if any, between personal observation, in-person interviews, and interviews). The process increased the credibility of the collected data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Malmqvist et al., 2019).

### **Permissions**

To lend credibility to my request for participation and review of organizations training documents and processes, I waited to send requests to my potential participants after receiving approval from Liberty University's IRB (see Appendix A). On receipt of approval, I reached out to individual and corporate entities through LinkedIn and email referrals. Examples of the entities I conducted outreach and recruitment included individual corporate trainers, human resource departments, and training departments in small, medium-sized, and large organizations.

### **Recruitment Plan**

There was no geographical restriction on the organization's location except that the organizations were US-based organizations, and the corporate trainers primarily teach in the US. The reason for this flexibility is that while the concepts and experiences I hope to learn about are not restricted to a geographical location. I sent my recruitment requests to the participants, corporate human resources departments (see Appendix B) and independent corporate trainers (see Appendix C). After receiving approval, I shared the consent form, data requirement request and package (see appendix L) in meeting invitations. The consent package included the following items:

- Background information on the study,

- The role each participant will play in the study,
- Assurance of Confidentiality,
- Information about applicable risks and benefits of participating in the study,
- Steps to take if the participant wishes to withdraw from the study, Information on compensation for participating in the study,
- Statement of consent, and
- Points of contact should the participant or authorizing parties have any questions.

### **Data Collection Plan**

Before collecting data, I received approval from Liberty University's IRB (see appendix A). After receiving the approval from the IRB, I validated that the participants who respond to my request (see Appendix B & C) have met the selection criteria I have set for the study. I also confirmed that the participants/organizations have the documentation I need to reach triangulation; I began the data collection process, including Document Analysis, Interviews, and Observations immediately upon receipt of data. For the actual analysis of the data, I used bracketing, open coding, clustering, thematic analysis, and the essence of the experience. When used collectively, these methods helped provide a measure of credibility to the collected data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Individual Interviews**

Interviews are among the best methods for collecting information in a qualitative study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Attaining explanations of experience through first-hand or first-person recounting is beneficial during interviews (Moustakas, 1994). I submitted the questions to other experts and the IRB for review first (Cohen, 2006). I received constructive feedback which made the questions wholesome and flow better. Once the questions were

reviewed, and the feedback has been incorporated, Microsoft Teams virtual interviews meeting invitations were scheduled and delivered to the participants. There was no need for follow-up interviews after the initial interviews even though participants were informed of the possibility. Due to the critical nature of the corporate trainers' perspective for the phenomenological study (Moustakas, 1994), the data collection was carried out in three phases; Phase one included securing the documents, phase two was the observations, and phase three was the interviews. Phases one and two occurred concurrently, but the individual interviews will be conducted last for most interviews, however, due to constraints with some participants, the order needed to be reorganized for some participants. The change in data collection for some of the participants did not affect the integrity of the data analysis.

Each interview as applicable, delved into the corporate trainers' experiences with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry; how the industry has impacted the corporate instructors' content development during disaster or pandemic situations; and barriers, issues, and risks experienced during the process, as well as any successes and lessons learned. I chose to conduct the interviews last because it will allow me to analyze the other two items before conducting the interviews thoroughly.

Before the interview commenced, I validated that the participants understood the background of the study, expectations, and all the items contained in the signed consent package (see Appendix L). Once understanding was confirmed, I began the interview. The interview questions (see Appendix G, H, and I) attempted to solicit individual background information and environmental scan inquiries. Secondly, the questions investigated corporate readiness and training related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management in remote environments. The third part consisted of lessons learned and closeout (Roberts, 2020)

activities. As this study was a hermeneutic phenomenology, the objective was to collect and analyze data to help describe and interpret corporate trainers' perceptions of their content development experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The interpretive framework was only possible when I, as the instrument, understand the phenomenon before explaining it (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Qualitative interviewing is a proven way to complete this study effectively (Roberts, 2020).

### **Central Research Question**

What experiences do corporate instructors have with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

### **Sub Question One**

How did the industry impact corporate instructors' content development during disaster or pandemic situations?

### **Sub Question Two**

What barriers, issues, and risks did corporate instructors experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

### **Sub Question Three**

What successes and lessons did corporate instructors experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

### ***Individual Interview Questions***

1. Let's get to know you. Please tell me about yourself, how, and why you became a corporate trainer.
2. Please describe your experiences developing in-person versus remote training content.

SQ1

3. Please describe your experiences teaching in-person and in remote settings. SQ1
4. What are some of the perceived impacts of remote work for staff working in small business organizations? SQ 1
5. How does the transition to remote work affect the interpersonal relationships and communication of staff within the organization? SQ1
6. How does Human Resource (HR) hiring, training, and onboarding affect IT securing and deployment of technology and access? (Hiim, 2017; Hughes-Lartey, 2021; Price & Reichert, 2017). SQ 2
7. What data management processes and procedures have been implemented for this environment? (Guo, 2018; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017) SQ2
8. What data security procedures have been implemented and how have they differed from the face-to-face environment? (Kewon et al., 2019) SQ1
9. What best practices can be implemented to help stem the tide of attrition or dissatisfaction in the workplace? SQ3
10. What are the unique risk factors and how can these risks be managed or averted? (Becker, 2004; Wright, 2017) SQ2
11. How effective is/was the training and what could be done better? (Jain, et al., 2021) SQ3
12. Do trainers fully grasp the threat or are the objectives not sufficiently applicable? SQ3
13. Is there a gap between the overall objective and the training content? SQ1
14. Are there behaviors that drive learning or the lack of assimilation of the content? SQ3
15. How does the remote situation help or aggravate the learning curve? SQ1, SQ2, SQ3
16. Is online content and platform helping or hurting? Why (Jain, et al., 2019; Richardson, et al., 2017; Stenbom 2018;) SQ1, SQ2, SQ3

17. Are preventative measures identified effective and how do these measures take into consideration the human factors? (Hughes-Lartey, 2021). SQ3

### ***Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan***

After the interview process, I used bracketing, open coding, and thematic analysis to analyze the data. When used collectively, these methods will provide a measure of credibility to the collected data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a project and risk manager, who periodically creates training content with risk management, data management, and organizational adherence content, it is vital to bracket my knowledge, assumptions, training, and expertise to help proceed with an unbiased study. I utilized the racketing method by bracketing my experiences through the setting aside of my preconceived notions (Moustakas, 1994). When the participant's opinions vary from my experience and expectations, I documented them in my journal to ensure I do not introduce any forms of bias during the interview process.

A more established process for data analysis involves organizing the data collected, efficiently coding, and organizing themes identified, properly representing the data, and effectively interpreting the information collected (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Saldaña (2011), a code is a word or phrase that assigns pertinent attributes to a portion of visual data. Codes and themes, which are regulated into a patterned/categorized form, stimulate practical thinking during the analytical memo-documentation process. Of the thirty documented techniques and approaches for coding, the method I used is a combination of descriptive coding (to help with categorization and indexing); and versus coding (stakeholders, their perceptions/actions, and the current issues at stake) (Friese, 2014; Saldaña, 2011).

### **Document Analysis**

For my study, document analysis was conducted in tandem with the interviews. The plan

was to utilize documents from the participants I interviewed. I used training plans, objectives, feedback reports, and success criteria documents for the document analysis. The purpose of the documents I selected are described as follows:

- Training Plans –
  - To understand how the training aligns with the organization's culture and expectations.
  - Identify themes that address planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. To help understand how instructors plan training for pandemic situations.
  - Identify how/if successful learning is defined and measured.
  - Identify how/if data security is a component of the training.
  - Identify how/if the training plans are mapped to corporate objectives.
- Training Objectives –
  - To compare how the training objectives align with the content of the training.
  - Identify how/if the training objectives map to the training plans.
  - Identify how/if employee implementation or follow-through is tracked and traced to learning.
- Feedback Report –
  - To assess if the participants document and understanding of the training objectives. While this document is not a primary tool, the purpose of this document is to utilize a tertiary tool to view students' feedback against objectives identified in the training.

***Document Analysis / Data Analysis Plan***

I utilized bracketing, open coding, and thematic analysis to analyze the data. I was able to bracket my experiences by setting aside my preconceived notions (Moustakas, 1994). When the participant's opinions varied from my experience and journaled to exclude most forms of bias during the interview process. The documentation process contributed to identifying and documenting critical concepts and emergent ideas during and post interviews, documents, and observations. The documentation process also enabled me to conduct coding, identification of themes, comparative and validation of the themes, and form categories of data for further analysis. Secondly, I represented the data through interpretation of the information and through natural generalizations of what was learned. The process allowed me to understand the findings better (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Observations**

For observation, I planned to attend live or recorded training sessions and post course materials, for each corporate trainer. The training sessions were related to data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management conducted in remote environments. The purpose of this data collection method was to observe the interactive and relevant nature of the training and would help me draw comparisons of training efficiency. Post course materials like surveys, tests, and course completion processes will serve the same purpose. These observations were designed to help me identify themes that could have bolstered and enhanced the information gathered from the interview sessions. The importance of this data collection method served to help me observe the trainer in their natural environment and draw comparisons between the corporate trainer's objectives and my interpretation of the outcomes of the training sessions. For this study, while the plan was to collect the materials before the interviews, most participants sent the information after the interview's session. However, insufficient recordings

were received due to privacy issues hence the data received was insufficient to draw generalizability data from any of the documents or recorded sessions

### ***Observations Data Analysis Plan***

I used bracketing, open coding, and thematic analysis to analyze the data. I was able to bracket my experiences by setting aside my experiences and preconceived notions (Moustakas, 1994). When the participant's opinions vary from my experience, I documented them in excel to ensure I do not introduce any forms of bias during the interview process. The documentation process will include identifying and documenting critical concepts and emergent ideas from the interviews, documents, and observations. The documentation process will also enable me to conduct coding, identify themes, compare, and validate the themes, and form categories of data for further analysis. Secondly, I represented the data through interpretation of the information and through natural generalizations of what I learned. The process allowed me, as the researcher, to understand the findings better (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Data Synthesis**

After gathering and collating the transcript, documents, and notes from the sessions I observed, the plan is to begin horizontalization by manually listing, grouping, and documenting relevant expressions, themes, and emergent ideas (Creswell & Poth, 2018, Moustakas, 1994). The documentation process will include identifying and documenting critical concepts and emergent ideas from the interviews, documents, and observations. Depending on the volume of data grouped, I may need to conduct the process of recategorization, reduction, and elimination to ensure that the information I am analyzing is necessary, precise, and not repetitive. The documentation process will also enable me to conduct coding, identify themes, compare, and validate the themes, and form categories of data for further analysis. I represented the data

through interpretation of the information and through natural generalizations of what was learned. The process will allow me, as the researcher, to understand the findings and essence of the experience better (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994).

### **Trustworthiness**

Establishing trustworthiness in a study is important and can be achieved by following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) unique credibility, authenticity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability processes. These are critical validation techniques for internal and external validation, reliability, and objectivity (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To ensure that my study is trustworthy, I adapted these precepts as described in the following sections.

### **Credibility**

To ensure my study was completed in a credible, reliable, and valid manner, I used the triangulation of data for data collection (Moustakas, 1994). Credibility facilitates internal validity and focuses on establishing a match between the structured experiences of participants and the experiences represented by the researchers (Cope, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Sinkovics, 2009). The concept of credibility points to the accuracy of the data or the participants' views and the researcher's clarification and interpretation (Polit & Beck, 2012). In essence, credibility is heightened by the researcher's understanding of events and verification of said events by the participants. When human experience is recognized by individuals that share the same experience, a qualitative study is considered credible (Sandelowski, 1986).

To verify credibility for this study, I used triangulation and consensual validation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eisner, 1991; Moustakas, 1994). For the triangulation method, I achieved credibility through semi structured interviews, document reviews, and observations. For the consensual validation or member checks method, which aimed to "seek a confluence of

evidence that breeds credibility, and that allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations, and conclusions" (Eisner, 1991, p. 110), I shared the raw transcripts with the participants for validation and verification. The reason for choosing consensual validation, in addition to the triangulation method, is because these methods are designed to not only seek the opinions of others but also to confirm that the interpretation is accurate (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Eisner, 1991; Moustakas, 1994). I received no requests for edits from the participants.

### **Transferability**

Transferability is the process or ability to transfer the information in a study to other settings or contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The phenomenon is considered equivalent to external validity or generalization in given quantitative research studies. This process is dependent on the extent to which relevant conditions overlap or match (Crawford et al., 2000). Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested that a way to ensure findings are transferable between the researcher and the participants is to collect rich or detailed-thick descriptions. 'Detailed-thick' descriptions refer to the level of detail that the researcher attributes to the definition of a case or a theme (Cohen, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2018). So, I implemented the accountability standard of transferability by describing my study to help with replication by future researchers (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A secondary method I used was through maintaining an audit trail. I recorded every interview and validated the transcription of recordings with the participants through member checks. Finally, all the documents that were analyzed were identified and categorized for ease of traceability. The purpose of planning to implement these actions was to aid in replicating future studies.

### **Dependability**

Dependability is comparable to reliability, as both are equally concerned with the solidity of the findings over time (Sandelowski, 1986). As a researcher, I had to show evidence that my data and the conclusions drawn from my analysis was grounded outside of my thought processes, was comprehensible, and assembled logically (Ghauri, 2004).

Further, to help with the data replication, an audit check of the research process (Creswell & Poth, 2018) was conducted. The audit checks standards such as structural corroboration to support or contradict the interpretation; the confluence of evidence that maintains credibility and bolsters a feeling of confidence in the findings; consensual validation (seeking the opinion of others); and referential adequacy (Eisner, 1991), served as proof for maintaining the credibility of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I also worked towards achieving dependability through member checks and effective detailing, organization, and maintenance of the documentation and document management process. The member check process gave access to the participants to review my transcripts and analysis and enabled the sharing of feedback (see appendix K). Once approval and or validation (oral/written) was received from the participants, this served to increase the reliability of my future recommendations (Moustakas, 1994).

### **Confirmability**

Dependability (verifiable) and confirmability (authenticity) are processes that are determined through an audit of the research process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Using standards such as structural corroboration to support or contradict the interpretation; establish a confluence of evidence that maintains credibility and bolsters a feeling of confidence in the findings, consensual validation (seeking the opinion of others), and referential adequacy (Eisner, 1991) as proof for maintaining the credibility of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Because my sample participants are experts in their fields, I conducted confirmability through

documenting the comparative opinions and perspectives of the corporate trainers during the interviews. Thus, comparing and contrasting the information received from the participants (Eisner, 1991).

In the audit trail detailed and transparent information was shared regarding the steps taken throughout the research study. The process that demonstrates my audit trail is evidenced in appendices D, J, L, M, and N and includes data collection methods, template for research memos, observation protocol, excerpts from the interview, transcripts, transcript review request and descriptive list of documents analyzed .

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations for this study took three primary forms. The first form was through developing a trustworthy and personal relationship with participants by ensuring that respect for the participants was evident from the outset. Referential adequacy, structural corroboration (using information gathered through my triangulation method), consensual validation, and confidentiality (using pseudonyms) was implemented to facilitate respect and care for the participants. The second form was planning for and showing concern for the welfare of the participants by ensuring participants did not come to any harm because of my interview techniques or be subjected to a line of questioning that may in any way be uncomfortable. Sharing personal ideologies and or empathizing with the participants went a long way to contributing to reciprocity. Finally, the third form ensured that there was equality between participants, which was achieved by asking them the same set of questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participant confidentiality was paramount, so besides protecting the identity of the participants using pseudonyms, participant access was obtained through permission

letters/email/LinkedIn communications, informed consent was obtained from all participants, and participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the study and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The participants' responses and documented interviews are stored on a personal system and will be destroyed after three years to help facilitate confidentiality.

## **Summary**

The purpose of the phenomenological study is to understand corporate trainers' experiences and perspectives on the effectiveness of data security training programs in pandemic-like situations. With the occurrences of global disasters like COVID-19, there has been a necessity for organizations to transition to remote work and learning. While some corporations and their training curricula focus on the typical policy and procedural areas, their focus could be directed towards improving varying skill levels, abilities, and learning styles to accommodate the ever-changing and dynamic landscape of how we do business in this digital era. As a result, analyzing and researching risks and issues that arise is not only germane, but the research should provide insight on the potential application of best practices when facilitating learning in high-risk and dynamically changing environments.

Corporate trainers play a pivotal role in helping employees adjust to their new environment. While training on data security exists and has been disseminated to learners, the efficacy of the training content development as impacted by a pandemic has not been thoroughly evaluated and understood. Therefore, this study will shed light on these areas to help future corporate trainers understand what worked well and plan improvements for future disruptive situations. The content of this chapter provided information on how this can be achieved and replicated by identifying, describing, and justifying the qualitative methods that will be used for this phenomenological study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS**

### **Overview**

This phenomenological study aims to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. The central research question was: What are the experiences of corporate instructors when creating disaster or pandemic-driven training content? The sub-questions were: Sub-Question 1: What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments? Sub-Question 2: What factors, barriers, issues, and risks impact corporate instructors' experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content? Sub-Question 3: What successes and lessons contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry? This chapter commences with a brief description of the 12 selected and recruited participants through the non-probability purposeful sampling method. I started with a distinct list of participants, then progressively expanded upon the list until I attained my 12 participants. Data collected from the participants was received through electronic transfers and semi-structured interviews. The rest of the chapter discusses researched and analyzed data, as well as a discourse on the meaningful findings.

### **Participants**

The list of participants consisted of corporate trainers who have been actively working in the industry for five years to almost four decades. All the participants were college graduates, with two having doctoral degrees, five who had earned master's degrees, and five that earned bachelor's degrees. The participant pool consisted of corporate trainers from multiple industries

and departments to add variability to the responses, including consulting, military, healthcare; education; training and development, employment and law, cybersecurity, and information security; and finance. The table below provides a synopsis of the final participants, while the following section gives a brief overview of the participants' professional experience:

Table 1

*Corporate Trainer Participants*

| Corporate Trainer | Years Taught | Highest Degree Earned | Content Area   | Industry                      |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Juneau            | 24           | M.B.A                 | Intellectual Property  | Corporate Training            |
| Boise             | 14           | M.B.A                 | Human Resources  | Christian Healthcare Services |
| Topeka            | 46           | Ph. D                 | Information Technology. Project Management and Business Analysis | Multiple                      |
| Augusta           | 16           | B.A                   | Behavioral Training  | Multiple                      |
| Saint Paul        | 36           | M. Sc.                | Information Technology   | Corporate Training            |
| Helena            | 23           | Ph. D.                | Corporate Culture  | Consulting                    |
| Pierre            | 22           | B.B.A                 | Human Resources  | Construction                  |
| Austin            | 5            | B.Sc.                 | Management   | Military                      |
| Madison           | 20           | B.Sc.                 | Intellectual Property Mgmt.                                      | Asset Management              |
| Cheyenne          | 37           | M. Ed.                | Information Technology   | Employment and Law            |
| Providence        | 14           | B.Sc.                 | Cybersecurity  | Training and Dev.             |
| Trenton           | 24           | M.B.A                 | Financial and Life Preservation                                  | Finance & Operations          |

**Juneau**

Juneau is a driven entrepreneur with over 24 years of teaching experience. He earned his master's in business administration. He has provided corporate training services to clients with

upwards of 55 million dollars in revenue, helping to ensure that organizations, specifically the human resources departments, implement competency-based interviewing as a process while assisting organizations in building relevant and practical capabilities. One of Juneau's passions is helping organizations affect results-oriented change and mature through training. Juneau's expertise includes e-learning and on-premises training management and instruction.

### **Boise**

Boise is an experienced training professional with over 14 years of leadership training and development in different industries, including but not limited to health and wellness and financial services industries. He holds a master's in business administration (M.B.A) and currently directs the training and development department in a Christian-based organization and has led change initiatives in training. Boise's expertise includes e-learning and on-premises training management and instruction.

### **Topeka**

Topeka is an experienced adult trainer and educator specializing in Project Management, Business Analysis, and Information Systems/Technology course content areas. Topeka has over 46 years of working experience and has trained in various industries, including but not limited to consulting, technology, education, research, data management, and defense. Topeka holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in information technology, a master's in business administration (M.B.A) in information systems and has substantive expertise in e-learning and on-premises instruction.

### **Augusta**

Augusta is a highly skilled, engaging, and personable trainer. Having over 16 years of work experience, Augusta has used her expertise in various industries to help inspire the

development of healthy behaviors in the workplace. Augusta delivers training to fortune 1000 organizations, including but not limited to colleges, healthcare, and government agencies.

Augusta's expertise includes course delivery in e-learning and on-premises instruction.

### **Saint Paul**

Saint Paul is a trainer with over 36 years of experience and more than 25 years of practical project management and business analysis experience. Saint Paul holds a Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Computer Software Engineering and has had a successful career in technology, aerospace, healthcare, and consulting industries. Saint Paul has successfully facilitated courses in his content areas both locally and internationally, and his content delivery expertise includes e-learning and on-premises instruction.

### **Helena**

Helena is a professional training administrator with over 23 years of work experience. Fifteen of those years have been spent in the corporate learning environment. Helena has significant global learning and talent development expertise directed at a national and international audience. Helena's expertise includes oversight of educational projects that encompass change initiatives and remediation processes. Helena holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in professional services and has utilized her training expertise in strengthening relationships with her students, co-workers, and leaders in diverse environments. Helena has been able to conduct these types of training in both e-learning and on-premises instruction.

### **Pierre**

Pierre has over 22 years of work experience and has most recently utilized his training expertise in the construction industry, specifically in the human resources department. Pierre

holds a Master's in business administration and has experience in delivering course content to his adult learners in both the e-learning and on-premises environments.

### **Austin**

Austin holds a Bachelor of Science in applied management and is a training manager in an organization with over 200 employees. His experience in the defense industry is related explicitly to crisis management, emergency management, and Intelligence. Austin has experience in delivering course content to his adult learners in both the e-learning and on-premises environments.

### **Madison**

Madison has over 20 years of combined work experience and currently works in intellectual property and asset management. Madison manages and delivers the training for her current organization and is the only resource doing so. While Madison's e-learning expertise was honed due to the recent pandemic, she has delivered course content to his adult learners in on-premises environments.

### **Cheyenne**

Cheyenne holds a master's in education (M. Ed.) in adult education and has hands-on expertise in legal and financial practice industries. With over 37 years of combined work experience, Cheyenne is skilled in corporate training delivery, virtual learning development and delivery, software documentation, business process development, and improvement and organizational change development. Her content is developed and delivered in both virtual and face-to-face environments.

### **Providence**

Providence has over 14 years of training experience. She holds a Bachelor of Science in management studies, business administration, and management and operations and is responsible for managing the development and delivery of training content in different industries. Currently, Providence has significant expertise in managing content development in the cyber-security industry. The content is now delivered in a virtual environment; however, Providence has experience teaching in virtual and face-to-face environments.

### **Trenton**

Trenton has over 24 years of combined industry experience in financial planning, asset management, investment analysis, wealth management, and private equity. In addition to actively working in the industry, Trenton holds a master's in business administration and has been developing and facilitating content in financial and life preservation course content to virtual and face to face audiences nationally and internationally.

### **Results**

This research sought to understand the experiences and perspectives of corporate trainers when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content, using one central research question and three sub-questions. Participants shared recordings of completed training sessions, participated in semi-structured interviews, and provided supporting documentation to shed more light on their experiences. In relation to the literature review and theoretical framework, findings showed that corporate training, organizational culture, and data management were key to organizations and played a role in determining next steps during the recent COVID-19 pandemic. While the four phases of the DRM framework were handled on the organizational level, it was evident that the participants in this study were more active in the prepare and respond phases of the DRM lifecycle.

Figure 3. Thematic and Theory Mapping



The two major themes and seven sub themes (preparedness [experience and industry knowledge, exposure to risks and threats, risk planning] and risk response [training and risk remediation, training to aide business continuity, training integration, and technology’s effect on training]) align with the literature classification, and are organized to address the level of expertise of the corporate instructors, the level of exposure the participants have to the phenomenon, associated planning, and preparation practices, how training and technology play an integral role in response to disaster situations as well as the overall integration of training. The section discusses significant outliers as well as provides summary responses to the central question and sub research questions.

## **Preparedness**

Preparedness was one of the major themes the participants highlighted in different ways. Like Hangerott (2021) and Older (2021) surmised, effective planning and preparedness remain essential in every situation. Their findings indicated that a shift in normal processes might help mitigate the effects of disastrous occurrences from spreading. Topeka and Trenton validated these findings and others from Cheng et al. (2017); He et al. (2019); Hughes-Lartey, (2020); Ibrahim et al. (2020); Harrison & Jürjens (2017). They agreed that a lack of preparedness could contribute to data breach or loss, ineffective understanding or implementation of training received, and intellectual property loss known in the technology and financial sectors.

The way corporate trainers exhibited and discussed the preparedness skill varied depending on the years of experience of the corporate trainers, the level of exposure to threats or external determinants witnessed by the participants, as well as the leeway available to the participants to conduct effective planning for known and identified threats. With ongoing preparedness, the corporate trainers were able to navigate various kinds of discomfort, as mentioned by Augusta. For example, some of the corporate trainers attributed preparedness to all the plans that occur before the class to the inclusion of course development, course feedback, testing the technology, and selecting the facilitation platform. However, corporate trainers like Helena, Trenton, Topeka, Boise, and Saint Paul referred to the ongoing preparedness even during their facilitating class. As a result, they found out things that worked depending on the audience, class size, and class dynamics. Augusta shared how the change in the audience impacted the interaction and class dynamics. Further, Boise expressed how the engagement levels of the learners differ between the virtual and face-to-face platforms.

While all participants were very knowledgeable about potential threats and or disasters to their industry, only two of the twelve participants had been directly aware of data breaches and could speak about their limited and indirect knowledge in those situations. All participants, however, acknowledged the role that experience, interpersonal relationships, training, and technology plays in planning and preparing for disaster situations and training. As a result, they leveraged these elements as they created the content post-COVID-19 disaster to help the employees adjust to the new normal.

### ***Experience and Industry Knowledge***

The corporate trainers' years of experience ranged from five to forty-six years of active corporate training practice. The industries that the participants teach in have included Corporate Training, Christian Healthcare Services, Consulting, Construction, Military, Asset Management, Employment and Law, Training and Dev., Finance & Operations. The content areas the participants have experience in include but are not limited to specialties like Intellectual Property, Human Resources, and Information Technology. Project Management and Business Analysis, Behavioral Training, Information Technology, Corporate Culture, Human Resources, Management, Intellectual Property Mgmt., Information Technology, Cybersecurity, Financial and Life Preservation.

The roles of the participants included:

- Directors in various sectors, including learning and development, finance, human resources, and operations.
- Training and development managers and specialists.
- Human resource management personnel.
- Corporate instructors and facilitators.

- One president and CEO.

However, despite the variability, depth, and breadth of the experiences of the corporate trainers, all trainers had the same thing in common when it came to discussing the importance of learning and training in organizations and how it plays a significant role in preparing organizations for day-to-day activities. They all agreed that training ought to be tailored to the audience and industry, especially as risks and challenges can potentially affect remote conditions and actively develop their training content, have oversight over the development of the content, or provide feedback and change requests for already established training content.

This hands-on approach seemed to stem from the fact that the participants leaned toward the fact that learning and application of learning (earned from experience) was a critical factor for the corporate trainers. While some corporate trainers like Pierre, Boise, and Helena had already been introduced to and begun implementing remote-based training for different reasons to the inclusion of increasing participation and flexibility for the students, the participants shared that at the height of the pandemic, they were able to lean on their experience to help with the transition to the new normal. The shift meant that the corporate trainers rallied with the organizations to help employees seamlessly and effectively update the training content to the new normal for learning. Topeka reported that the pandemic hit mid-way through a class he was teaching, so he and his team worked with the client to complete the course virtually. According to Topeka:

“We, like everybody else, had become pretty good at it in the last couple of years. But I was literally in the middle of a course, and it was a public course through a large community college here in my state. That teaches both the public and corporate. They

also have a branch that markets to the corporate world for corporate training... and we did the switcheroo. And then the learning began for everybody.”

Similarly, Trenton reported that before 2020 (COVID-19), teaching remotely was a novelty; however, it is now the only way he teaches and tries to facilitate learning. Madison also stated,

“I would say I did remote training in 2020. (Now) I've developed a lot of online learning modules between then and now. So, I created all content, and I think it was challenging because this (the pandemic) happened while migrating asset management systems... However, one of the things I would say is that really shifted during the pandemic, and it's something we're still trying to like really to implement is just getting our staff ... to own their learning. And part of that was, you know, with the pandemic, they had to learn all these new processes... So, it was trying to get them to apply what they were learning.”

Despite the absence of information and the unexpected nature of the pandemic to organizations and the corporate trainers, Topeka surmised that

“I think it's a wonderful thing. I think we've adapted very well. The disaster that arose in the form of a worldwide pandemic has really accelerated our knowledge and our experience with technology and being able to use that in the education and training world has been wonderful. And it has been a leap forward, I think, for humanity because of what we've learned in the last couple of years. And how to adapt to a disaster that occurred and not miss very many steps as we made the transition”.

This leads me to believe that the trainers I interviewed have a personal connection to their craft and are passionate and invested in developing and delivering the training content. While

they may not have all the answers, as Topeka surmised, they were flexible and learned on the fly to adapt to the new environment. While they also all admitted that the new normal affected interpersonal relationships between staff and their class participants, half the participants like Boise thought the new environmental determinants provided a positive shift for their organization, while others like Providence lamented the loss of personal and social ability to connect with the participant, technical challenges, inability to read body language due to not seeing all participants, and distractions associated with developing and facilitating training in alternate environments.

### ***Exposure to Risks and Threats***

In discussing threats and disaster scenarios with the corporate trainers, familiarity with risk management was evident across the board. The trainers were familiar with known risks and disasters and had organizational plans or mitigations in place to try to mitigate those disasters. For instance, Cheyenne discussed how natural disasters like outages, earthquakes, hurricanes, and tornadoes affect businesses in her state and the proactive measures her organization takes to mitigate those known natural disasters with actions like going down in the caves to guarantee business continuity. For Madison's industry, she shared how organizational and governmental policies could impact the business process and how the reception of these policies could be potentially disastrous without sufficient preparation. She shared that preparedness through planning effective responses is the definer of effective disaster management for her organization. In other words, risk management helps with the seamless implementation and reception of policy. Providence shared that in her industry, examples of risk disasters include unavailable networks for users to log in and that data is wiped, corrupted, lost, or not backed up. She clarified that "If data is not usable, whether it's daily or irrecoverable for the remainder of the workday,

term or year, that data loss would be a potential disaster for certain industries. Users not being able to access information potential disaster." Trenton shared that job loss could be considered a disaster for his clients, and his training is a risk mitigation strategy that helps to effectively prepare the clients for the impact of that scenario using industry best practices.

As a result of these known risks, all the instructors did agree that adequate planning and preparation were critical to help mitigate retrospective action on the parts of organizations. However, that still leaves open unknown risks and disasters, which the instructors agreed required effective collaborative planning on the part of the organizations. The participants did discuss an integrated collaboration when developing course content. However, the corporate trainers do not partake in the strategic discussions that drive the definition of the training. Helena shared that often, organizations would present a plan of action and response strategy to a problem, then after which the question arises about how to train based on the established process. In other words, corporate trainers and content developers rarely are involved in strategy creation or definition.

From the training standpoint, the exposure to understanding and following up on threats was less of a proactive approach and more of a retrospective solution. Additionally, the process of securing data was outside of the training department and was handled by the information security department for the participants in this study. However, the participants all agreed that thinking outside of the box, preparedness, and adequate pre-planning was beneficial. When Madison expressed:

"But it's like they need to think about these things. I mean, three years ago, nobody would have ever thought this. Nobody would have ever imagined if you had told me, like three years ago, that (I was going to) be sent home from work. The whole

company wouldn't, and we'll be working from home for two years. I would have been like; you are crazy! It's not (possible). I don't want to be in disaster mode, but I think organizations need to start thinking about what we would do if this happened again like we now know, and we have succeeded. Yeah, it's like they need to think about these things. And you know, maybe don't have to put together like a 10-point plan, you know, but start to have those conversations because nobody can predict it.”

### ***Risk Planning***

As previously defined, risk is anything, positive or negative, that impacts an activity, task, project, or endeavor. Risk management planning involves taking a proactive approach to managing and responding to any positive or adverse event or activity. Risk planning is vital for several reasons. Because it facilitates efficient and effective business operations, which improves internal and external reporting and increases the possibility that a business will meet its objectives, builds confidence in stakeholders, and enhances the organization's resilience which contributes to the reduction in operational surprises and losses. The planning process includes:

- Process development – Developing effective process that will help implement work
- Integration with the training departments. – integrating training with other departments outside of training like IT, HR, etc. to streamline work and make organizational training seamless
- Effective risk management planning – adopt an effect framework for enterprise or organizational risk management to help with keeping up with internal and external environmental changes and proactive approaches to staying ahead of the curve

- Creation of training content – aligning course content to organization objective to ensure that content creation maps to organizational vision and helps the organization stay prepared and informed.

However, not all corporate trainers are involved in the risk planning process on the organizational level. Sometimes the approach to training is prescriptive instead of collaborative. Helena expounded on this by stating,

"Bringing the learning and development and human resources folks into the planning process the business continuity planning process is beneficial so that our part is not a rush job when the situation or when the thing (disaster) happens, right? So, we get information the day after everything hits the fan. And then we got to throw something together based on what had been decided, maybe months, even years before. So (the direction is usually to) just incorporate more dialogue around the best way to handle getting people up to speed. If or when there's an immediate shift that needs to take place."

Pierre also shared that

"Just not something that I personally, thought about on a daily basis. I never really thought anything would have. I mean, I don't know, if anyone planned, you know, no one planned for what would happen if we couldn't go to the office anymore and not have people travel and all that stuff. So having gone through it, I see planning and preparedness as super important. I think it's huge. I mean to be able to think about facts like, what if you can't get employees to the office? What if you can't get the class participants' their training materials? If you can't do hands-on training with them here at the corporate office? So, I would say preplanning is super important. Probably more so now. I would have never thought about it. But now I believe that it's essential. And we

discussed how some areas like recruiting were not impacted. But what if those processes were?"

Trenton said, "But having a plan, I think, is the most important. Have a plan that everyone understands, and everyone knows what to do. So, I would also say having a training plan and informing people. Yeah. That's just a simple way to do it. Yeah. Better training pretty much that feeling." Of the 12 participants interviewed, only a quarter shared training plans which showed significant course-related planning for the class. Two of the recordings showed an engaging atmosphere and alignment to the objectives as stated at the beginning of the class.

### **Mitigate and Respond**

Implementation of effective processes that had been prepared during the preparedness phase, planning while utilizing inherent experience and lessons learned seemed to be the consistent ideologies for how the facilitators believed disaster responses should be handled from the training perspective. Providence stated that "They (organizations) could probably do better by, having a response team, something like a continuous operation, sort of team that meet somewhat regularly and act through or think through (disaster) scenarios or potential events that could happen and could potentially have an impact and ensure that standard operating processes, procedures or guidance was already created for that could be probably a bit more proactive with creating training with like with the thinking of potential risks in mind, even if they haven't already occurred." Boise categorically stated that as a practical response strategy, "drive as much engagement in alignment with your objectives.... keep it focused on the learner and make sure the tools are there to support that focus".

### ***Training and Risk Remediation***

The idea of remediation comes with the expectation that a previously identified threat is can be fixed. This means effective planning is in place to help or contribute to mitigating the threat, issue, or disaster. Corporate trainers like Pierre had begun the process of thinking ahead. His organization had already implemented the digitalization of training content before the pandemic. Hence, while the concept of the organization being sent home was novel to the day-to-day practices, the training team already had some processes in place, which enabled the training team to begin the arduous process of implementing remote learning and remote training onboarding. This prior insight helped the remediation process go smoother. The pre-planning process ended up being a cost-saver for his organization. Boise's organization also created a plan that helped remotely access information and data. While it did not have anything to do with COVID-19, it helped facilitate an effective remote working environment. In other words, they were able to effectively utilize the solution for another problem for the novel coronavirus situation.

Similarly, Topeka explained that "it (remote training capability as a response strategy to identified business needs) was something that we (his training team) were we were a little bit more informed about. And those of us that had gotten a jump on it, those of us that have followed distant learning. And I was pleased to know that even though I had my doctorate in eLearning, from a perspective of project managers and project management, the keen interest in my colleagues, and learning the tools, we all were just like little kids at Christmas. We've got new toys. So, I think it's a wonderful thing. I think we've adapted very well. The disaster that arose in the form of a worldwide pandemic has accelerated our knowledge, our experience with technology, and being able to use that in the education and training world has been incredible. I

think it has been a leap forward for humanity because of what we've learned in the last couple of years and how to adapt to a disaster that occurred and not miss very many steps as we made the transition.”

### ***Training to aide Business Continuity***

The corporate instructors all agreed that while different behaviors drive learning, training staff or employees is a logical way to respond to disaster situations or occurrences. Topeka said, "Always have a business continuity plan for your training. What do you and I know what we will do if something occurs that prevents us from meeting a goal?... Companies that don't do that (business continuity planning) with their training got stuck. They got stuck in and or were left behind, unlike the rest of us who were already familiar with the online tools and transforming an online on premises course into an online environment. So that business continuity plan works for training as well as it does for strategic planning”

Boise shared that "one of the things that drive learning, or someone's lack of learning is their direct perceived connection of the knowledge to how it applies to their work role it does, they believe this will have an immediate impact on their work plan and success." This means that training as a response strategy effectively responds to a disaster situation (for continuity). There must be a connection between the training and how it helps or affects the learner. Like all participants agreed on, the motivating factor or behavior that drives learning and eventual risk response implementation.

### ***Training Integration***

Following Petak's (1985) disaster risk management framework, which covered key areas of disaster planning and preparedness, including mitigation, monitoring/control or preparedness, response, and recovery, came McLoughlin's integrated disaster management model (1985). This

four-phase disaster risk management framework covered key areas of disaster planning and preparedness, including mitigation, monitoring/control or preparedness, response, and recovery.

Augusta referenced a pending study being conducted in collaboration with a leading university to measure learning change after participants have attended their training and see how that could potentially impact day-to-day interactions with different people. The resonating part of that study is that as different people from different backgrounds in various locations try to work towards a singular goal in an organization, cultural or environmental differences may affect how people interact and implement plans. Hence Boise's recommendation that training should be integrative and "drive as much engagement in alignment with your objectives ."He further stated that "a classroom 60% or more of the time should involve the activity, discussion, or engagement of the learners, as opposed to the facilitator 60 to 70% of the time, the learners should be the ones talking, doing the showing, testing, giving feedback. And if they're spending the bulk of the time playing in that safe room environment, testing ideas, breaking ideas, and then finding what works for them—and then remembering their application. I believe what will stick, so what I recommend is based on what learning objectives are and based on driving a high level of engagement in a class... so keep it focused on the learner".

Because like Austin remarked, "searching for the best way to ensure that everything including training kept moving in the right direction, even though the pandemic and the crisis and whatnot" is a sure way to help the employees make the connections between the training and their work.

### ***Technology's Effect on Training***

“We rely too heavily on technology and the tools we use. I would say, 50% of the time, there will be some kind of glitch,” says Helena. When it comes to facilitating sessions, Boise

agreed with this sentiment when he said, "I believe overall, it is making the learning more difficult if given a choice to do fully on-site learning or fully virtual learning. I would choose fully on-site in person every time." Similarly, Topeka cited internet and connectivity issues during training sessions. Trenton highlighted the disruption from audio issues, internet and bandwidth inconsistencies, user errors, and possible remote experiences with using and accessing training. Other items highlighted by Augusta include power loss, incorrect links, unfamiliarity with the time zones, incorrect settings for the meetings, cell phone distractions, and people multi-tasking.

Looking at developing and delivering content as a whole, the trainers rely heavily on technology from the development perspective. Helena thought that any tool that seamlessly helps with the creation of learning, ease of access, and delivery of content was good. She went further to say that "the LMS is a great tool when used properly. But we know that we only use about 10% of most of the tools and technology. But in my experience, I think technology helps when used effectively, when we can put good data in, and when we can point people to how to understand and quickly access the content. And when we can also use the data that we can pull out of the LMS to assess and adjust. Like that's a good thing." Three of the trainers thought that the virtual platform for learning hurt the learning process; five of the trainers thought it helped; while the rest believed it helped and hurt depending on different variables, including but not limited to the user's knowledge, experience, motivation, and exposure. However, the trainers all agreed that technology was necessary to develop and conduct training using efficient and practical tools. Some of the tools that have been utilized include Microsoft Office PowerPoint, Word documents, Poly, Kahoot, Adobe Captivate, Kahoot, and Learning Management Systems

(LMS). The tools used varied by the maturity of the organization, type of industry, course content, and student participants.

### **Outlier Data and Findings**

The purpose of the training was to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to any identified deficits. Although the trainers were in different industries, the experiences reported were like each other, except for the data breach experience. Of the twelve corporate trainers that were interviewed, only two had anything to say about data breaches.

#### ***Outlier Finding #1***

While all the corporate trainers were aware of what constituted a data breach, only two of the trainers had indirect knowledge and some experience of data breach scenarios. The first breach scenarios constituted exposure to financial information of bank customers resulting in lost funds. The second incident that was shared, constituted database related exposure. In both cases, the corporate trainers reported that in their experience, the data breach events were due to a lack of misunderstanding and not following through on documented and communicated processes. One of the instructors did recommend vigilance to prevent roaming gremlins from disrupting the day-to-day operations.

#### ***Outlier Finding #2***

Only one corporate trainer (Providence) had never experienced any technical issues during training facilitation, stating that "Even though technology has, you know, proven to challenge, and kind of there's been obstacles that have been in the way I can't say that there's been a time that it's been detrimental." While this was a unique scenario, no other background information was provided about the unique situation.

## Research Question Responses

The following section provides an overview of the participant's responses to the central questions and sub-questions.

### Central Research Question

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing disaster or pandemic driven training content?

Published research by Loke (2021), Gunay et al. (2020), Scott et al. (2013) Williams et al. (2008) found that while there is a need and effectiveness attributed to disaster management training, the level of preparedness and training in organizations was insufficient and was not always tailored to suit the disaster. In trying to understand corporate trainers' perspectives on this conclusion, I found that while the participants are acutely aware of situations that could potentially constitute a risk, issue, or disaster in their organizations, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting effects of the disaster were admittedly the worst they had dealt with as it affected all areas/departments in the organization and most organizations were unprepared for it.

From the data/information security perspective, Topeka and Trenton were the only participants who had an indirect experience with data breaches. While neither Topeka nor Trenton developed any content to help with the remediation effort, they had a solid understanding of the root cause-effect of the data breaches. In their opinion, a lack of adherence to defined processes caused the data breach in both cases. From the organizational culture preservation and risk management perspectives, while the corporate trainers are adept at preparing for the known unknowns, they are not typically pulled in to proactively help in the preparation and planning process. Figure 3: Characterization of Unknown Unknowns (Kim, 2012) below, provides a graphical representation of the schematic structure of risk categories

which shows where the instructors perceive they are in the risk identification process which is in the identified known category.

|                            |  |                                    |                                     |                                 |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Identification \ Certainty |  | Certain (Known)                    | Uncertain (Unknown)                 |                                 |
|                            |  | Identified (Known)                 | Known known (identified knowledge)  | Known unknown (identified risk) |
| Unidentified (Unknown)     |  | Unknown known (untapped knowledge) | Unknown unknown (unidentified risk) |                                 |

|                            |             |                                    |                                     |            |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Identification \ Certainty |             | Certain (Known)                    | Uncertain (Unknown)                 |            |
|                            |             |                                    | Impact                              | Occurrence |
| Identified (Known)         |             | Known known (identified knowledge) | Known unknown (identified risk)     |            |
| Unidentified (Unknown)     | Consequence | Unknown known (untapped knowledge) | Unknown unknown (unidentified risk) |            |
|                            | Event       |                                    |                                     |            |

Figure 3: Characterization of Unknown Unknowns (Kim, 2012)

Madison shared that she would appreciate it if the integration between the organization's corporate trainers and executive strategizing was better. Helena also shared that from her experience:

"The last people to find out (about training needs) is the people part, the HR and the L&D (on) what is needed. (The executives will reach out to the L&D team and say) Okay, now that we have this big plan, this grand strategy and how we're going to respond, business continuity, okay, now, how do we train? How do we make sure people are ready? Oh, that's just my experience."

As a result. At the same time, the instructors retrospectively created content to help organizations transition to the remote working environments. Madison enthused that "one of the things I would say that shifted during the pandemic. We're still trying to implement something. We're just getting our staff to own their learning, and part of that was, you know, with the pandemic, they had to learn all these new processes (retrospectively)".

**Sub Question One**

What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments?

From the DRM framework perspective, scholars posited that regardless of the industry, training ought to be tailored to the audience and industry, especially as disasters, risks, and challenges can potentially affect remote working conditions or situations (Loke et al., 2021; Williams et al., 2008, Tsai et al., 2020, Meng et al., 2020; Opdyke et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). The breadth of knowledge and experience of the corporate trainers that participated in the interview spanned multiple industries and departments. Additionally, all the corporate instructors that I interviewed either developed or had oversight over the development of their training content in the outputs of preparation, mitigation, and response phases of the DRM lifecycle. When asked about personal experiences with developing and implementing the training, Juneau responded that the sole goal of his organization was to get the corporate training implemented because after transitioning to virtual instruction, it was a much more robust experience, with much more participation. Augusta shared that for her, she constantly had conversations with the course developers to finetune the material, which she, in turn, presented to her clients. The corporate trainer's collaboration in content creation (output of the preparation phase) was a common theme they agreed was crucial because, just like Providence expressed, she had to make sure that the course content and material were updated with pertinent information to the end-user. Helena, Topeka, Trenton, and Saint Paul were vocal about the importance of being able to read the room and seamlessly tailor the delivery of the content to the audience. An in-depth understanding of the course content could only be achieved when the corporate trainers owned the content, enthused Trenton.

The team sometimes tangential collaboration and resource expertise involved in content creation pre-disaster, during a disaster, or post-disaster situations are valuable due to the corporate trainers engaging in risk management in at least one of the phases (identification of the risk, assessment of the risk, mitigation or remediation of the risk, monitoring, tracking, or following up on the risk). Without the corporate trainers practical and relevant experience, course development and delivery processes may be stunted. For instance, trainers like Pierre had to integrate additional processes to cater to their diverse audiences. While trainers like Saint Paul and Helena shared:

"If a portion of the content does not work with a classroom or virtual environment, we have an activity, and we've run it three times, and every time it goes over time, or every time, there are several questions about one particular part of the activity or the content, then that would go back to the instructors, instructional designers, but it would be more of a formal discussion on what next? What should be there? Or how do we interpret the feedback? Is the feedback correct? Right. And then from that output would be either a change in the content, or a removal of it from the contents or a deeper dive into explanation of why it's there. So sometimes we choose not to change it. But we add more facilitation notes around how to set it up or how to explain it better."

While the corporate instructors that participated in the study may be scattered across the nation and teaching in different industries with different years of experience, it quickly became apparent during the interviews that regardless of the department, experience level, organization size, etc., the majority of the instructors had similar experiences in their course development processes, response to disasters, exposure to pandemic situations, and general expectations towards educating the employees they are responsible for teaching.

## **Sub Question Two**

What factors, barriers, issues, and risks impact corporate instructors experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content?

As established previously, corporate instructors could face many barriers while working in a remote environment. These challenges may include the possibility of a training session interfering with work, isolation or lack of interaction, difficulties with communication, environmental interferences, security risks, inconsistent processes or procedures across industries, challenging remote group learning behavior and poor team learning, behavioral or motivational differences, and management in a virtual or remote environment. The major hurdle reported by the instructors included developing content for an audience that struggled with the idea that learning could happen in a virtual environment.

Helena and Trenton stressed that though people may have previously participated in virtual training due to ease of accessibility and affordability, people did not quite understand the value virtual learning could bring to them. As a result, according to Topeka, the process was painful for some people at a point. Madison, Providence, and Juneau managed content creation amid process and technological changes, staff turnover, and office/workspace challenges. In a concluding remark on my question to describe associated barriers, issues, and risks that impacted her experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content, Providence responded:

"I think with everything is, you don't know what you don't know. The person doing the teaching doesn't always have all of the resources they would need to complete or create the best training out there. There are limitations or restrictions, and you can

only, you know, sometimes you can only put out what you possibly can in a short time. So sometimes the quality might be impacted by that."

As discussed by multiple participants, the increase in class and student sizes in a virtual environment made connecting with the students on a personal level harder. While the experienced instructors were able to read the virtual room and pivot the training as needed based on the needs of the audience, the corporate trainers indicated that it was not always an easy thing to do, especially when the participants are distracted by emails or other external factors outside of the training.

### **Sub Question Three**

What successes and lessons contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

A common response from the participants was on the importance of planning, thinking ahead, and preparedness. Trenton shared that having a plan and effectively informing and training people was a sure way to help course development and disaster planning, especially when going into the development process. Particularly with utilizing past experiences as a yardstick to drive content development. Pierre shared his experience in detail and how it helped develop his content. According to him:

"I never really thought anything like this would have happened. I mean, I don't know if anyone planned for what would happen if we couldn't go to the office anymore and not have people travel and all that stuff. So going through it, I see it as super important because it just happened that when they hired me, one of the things they wanted to do was to modernize everything if I wouldn't have been able to spend the time before getting the course content online, that training content would (not) have been

valuable. There would have been no way to put that out there. I mean, I may have found a way to get it onto a screen, but no one would have been able to access it or, or anything. So even though I didn't plan on it being for disaster, I just did it for convenience and modernization. That preplanning turned out to be huge. I mean to be able to think proactively and be prepared for risks! Unfortunately, a lot of that became a trial by fire.

If we had planned it all out, while there would probably have been kinks to work out, it would have been a lot easier. And we probably could have made the changes and implemented stuff faster during the planning stages. So, I would say preplanning is super important. Probably more (essential). So now, I would have never thought about it because it's never really been something I would have considered. But now I believe that it's important”

Topeka shared that they were slightly more prepared for his organization and the trainers and departments that had gotten a head start on virtual instruction. Adding on, he clarified that he thought that trainers that stayed abreast of distant learning adapted very well. Topeka concluded his thought by stating that

“I think the disaster that arose in the form of a worldwide pandemic has accelerated our knowledge, our experience with technology, and being able to use that in the education and training world has been wonderful. And it has been a leap forward, I think, for humanity because of what we've learned in the last couple of years. And how to adapt to a disaster that occurred and not miss very many steps as we made the transition.”

On the other hand, Madison expressed that while the world knows about COVID-19 today and how to deal with it, the next pandemic or disaster will be different and necessitate a

whole new planning and preparation process. So, thinking and planning outside the box is a surefire way to be successful when developing materials for this disaster situations.

### **Summary**

This chapter presented a description of the research results illustrating the themes that emerged while investigating corporate trainers' perspectives during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content. The results were displayed as they addressed the central research questions, and three sub-questions of what experiences corporate instructors have when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry. An analysis of data collected through interviews, observation, and document analysis, showed that risk management, resources, organizational culture/ requirements, and technology played a role in impacting the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content.

It quickly became evident to me that regardless of the industry, experience level, or department the corporate instructors functioned in or supported, the majority of participants had similar experiences, including but not limited to post-secondary or high school education; subject matter expertise in their areas of training; inexperience with data breach incidents; knowledge of known risks as it affects their organization; and a desire to play a more active role in the organizational strategy to name a few. However, most corporate instructors expressed the retrospective process involved in disaster training development as they are not involved in the strategic definition of what training should be. The corporate instructors did share that while they were aware of the known risks and disasters in their fields and industry, the COVID-19 pandemic was an unthinkable disaster. As a result, it would be beneficial to start risk planning/identification by thinking outside the box. This way, there could potentially be proactive approaches to preparing employees and reducing the stress/shock factor for all when

responding and recovering from disaster or pandemic situations.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION**

### **Overview**

This Hermeneutic phenomenological study aims to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and suggest a baseline response to any identified deficits. Corporate trainers' perspective on most topics constitutes a gap in the literature. However, they play a pivotal role in disseminating and sometimes implementing corporate training programs. As a result, this study explored perceived risks, issues, rewards, and the associated impacts for the participants in hopes of filling the gap in the literature. The study will explore and recommend approaches to maintain proactive, safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning for the students/participants. The following sections provide an interpretation of findings, implications for policy and practice, theoretical and methodological implications, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for future research.

### **Discussion**

The study's premise was to explore corporate instructors' experiences when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content. While none of the participants contributed to planning for disaster situations, and only two of the participants had an indirect knowledge or experience of data-driven breaches, no other participant had experienced any disruptive disasters outside of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the participants' experiences were restricted to discussing developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first research question delimited the experiences of the participants to the following training content areas- developing data/information security (IT), culture preservation (HR), and

risk management training content (RM) in remote environments. For the study, each of the areas had four participants.

- Risk Management:
  - Juneau - Focuses on business development strategies to surpass competitors by thinking innovatively and on a global scale. Juneau also studies trends and best practices and delivers results to outperform current business standards. Doing so requires a significant measure of risk and change management expertise. Working with industries to redefine their processes was an individual qualifier and showed his exposure and qualification for the study.
  - Austin – He is highly skilled in managing crises, conducting intelligence analysis, working with the government, handling emergencies, and applying intelligence management techniques with his military background. His unique skills provided the study with advanced risk management knowledge and insight from the training perspective.
  - Madison - As the only resource managing training in her organization, Madison must think critically, holistically, and quickly to ensure that when a new policy is released, she is ready to create the content while thinking about the effect the policy will have on her client base.
  - Trenton – He not only teaches about personal financial risk (financial planning, investment analysis, wealth management, and personal equity), but he also helps his client base to do the same. He also creates training that allows the client to mitigate or remediate risks to their livelihood.

- Information Technology (IT):
  - Saint Paul - Teaches practical IT project management, has a career in the high technology and aerospace sector, teaches and is experienced in business process re-engineering, iterative agile development, and holds advanced masters' certifications in IT project management courses. Has served in high-ranking IT roles in government and private sectors in different roles including but not limited to enterprise architecture, analyst, program manager, and engineer.
  - Cheyenne – Is an IT training professional with over thirty-seven years' experience. Currently working in the employment and law sector, Cheyenne ensures that the employers are trained on all new technologies procured and implemented in her organization. She created associated job aides to make assimilation of content easy and ready to use for the employees.
  - Providence - Is a certified instructor specializing in cybersecurity. She has experience with data-driven decision-making processes and training content and helps to increase efficiencies through supplemental training aides. She has designed, developed, and delivered IT training on multiple platforms. Providence has also worked in both the private and public sectors.
  - Topeka - is an educator and trainer of adult learners with deep experience in information systems and project management. Topeka's teaching and research interests include:

- E-learning and self-directed learning for professional development.
  - Brain-compatible learning.
  - Educational technology use and acceptance by adult learners.
- Human Resources:
    - Boise – Is an experienced professional in human capital improvement, operations training, instructional design, sales, and customer service. Passionate about leading change, motivating individuals, building teams, and maximizing workplace engagement through holistic transformational leadership.
    - Augusta – Is an educator that trains corporate and healthcare audiences on topics of developing resilience, diversity and inclusion, and customer service. Has delivered content to Fortune 500 and above companies, colleges, government, and private sectors.
    - Helena – Is an experienced professional with knowledge in engagement planning and implementation, building relationships, curriculum design & development, critical thinking, and solving problems, developing leaders, managing projects, and skills development.
    - Pierre – Is an experienced corporate instructor with a history of successful training implementation in multiple industries. Possesses skills in coaching, culture development, aligning organizational vision, customer service management, entrepreneurship, habit building, and operations.

All participants, except for Augusta, actively create their training content in their current environment. However, Augusta does provide feedback and recommendations for the training

she facilitates. To better understand the experiences the corporate instructors had when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments, The participants were asked six basic questions which addressed the length of time they had been teaching remotely, the content area they facilitate as well as their industry, their experiences transitioning their training content from in-person to virtual instruction, how the entire experience affected personal and interpersonal relationships with their co-workers and students as well as understanding their experiences with the technical side to preparing the students for training and onboarding.

These questions helped address the pertinent aspect of the instructor's experience in this study. The questions addressed elements of the HR, IT, and RM, and the participants' responses helped explain to what extent they were familiar with the areas of the study. The variability of the participant's experiences, subject matter expertise, and industry also helped assess if the different subject matter areas and industries would affect the generalizability or variability of the findings for the participants as we discussed the phenomenon. Findings suggest that while the corporate instructors that participated in the study may be scattered across the nation and teaching in different industries with different years of experience, the majority of the instructors had similar experiences in their course development processes, response to disasters, exposure to pandemic situations, and general expectations towards educating the employees they are responsible for teaching. There was a consensus that the process was disruptive and retrospective in some cases. However, their knowledge helped them achieve what they needed to achieve.

The second research question addressed what factors, barriers, issues, and risks impacted the corporate instructor's experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content. This sub-question was to help gauge deterrents to their success and identify

deficits that could help future instructors. To better understand their exposure and experiences, I asked six primary questions that addressed what opportunities the trainers had to collaborate with executives in the organization to help drive training strategy, what known disasters they were aware of and their experiences with those disasters, and their perception of what drives learning for their students, how the remote learning environment aids or affects learning, and a direct request to discuss other risks and issues in the course development process.

While the corporate trainers were knowledgeable about their industry and content areas and could navigate the new normal, they did report the following issues, which fell into the technology-related and human resource categories:

- Technology – under technology, they experienced issues like inconsistent processes or procedures across industries, security risks, Internet outages, power outages, bandwidth issues, insufficient exposure/knowledge of technology requirements, interfacing with technology instead of paper materials, time zone constraints, and transitioning from one program to another.
- Human factor – under the human factors, the corporate trainers experienced issues and challenges like lack of motivation from their students, culture shock, isolation, or lack of interaction, ineffective or challenging communication related occurrences, external distractions, competing priorities, environmental interferences, challenging remote group learning behavior and poor team learning, behavioral or motivational differences, different levels of understanding and assimilation of content.

The process of navigating the challenges added an extra layer to the corporate instructor's process for managing training in the new environment. So, they did not only have to manage

changing the content to fit the new audience and platform, but they also had to manage the new dynamics for training their students. The corporate trainers agree that they have been successful so far, but the process keeps evolving.

The third research question sought to understand what successes and lessons learned to contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry so that instructors who may have gone through any of the issues identified in the second question may have remediations they can implement for themselves. To better understand, I asked the instructors eight questions that addressed the tools they used and if any of the tools failed them, their experiences with and how their organizations handled data breaches, proactive and preventative measures for practical training, changes, and updates to training style between the two environments, how trainers can support organizations proactively as well as any other lessons learned. The instructors' responses fell into the following categories: environmental awareness, proactivity, implementation process, and conscientiousness.

- Environmental Awareness – As employers expect that their employees function at optimum levels, be quick to respond to the changing environment, and maintain flexibility to organizational goals and missions under normal expectations, the same seems to be the expectation in the new environment, so the corporate trainers recommended that organizations expand their horizons, hire the needed talent or whole departments (like external IT shops), develop achievable objectives and work towards achieving it by driving as much engagement in alignment with said objectives, identify and test the viability/durability of new ideas for the organization, understand the current and ever-changing tools and

technology available to help the organization stay ahead of the curve where necessary.

- Proactivity – Published research showed that integrating resources to prevent or stem the effects of a disaster requires effective leadership. Suppose insufficient resources have been invested in evaluating the level of understanding amongst the emergency management employees, the necessity for trained personnel increases. With words like having foresight, planning, and thinking outside the box, the participants validated the findings of Rohli et al. (2018) that training personnel helps improve organizational preparedness when dealing with novel or disaster situations. Whether it is a part of the organization's culture or not, training helps to strengthen relationships, improves response and mitigation to challenges in internal and external environments, and enhances overall organizational effectiveness. Finally, Madison stated that just because people found solutions to remediate the effects of COVID – 19, that does not mean the same resolutions will work should another disaster hit, so proactively thinking of business continuity plans is beneficial.
- Implementation Process – Topeka said it best when he said always have a business continuity plan for training that helps one know what to do if something occurs. Furthermore, as Augusta said, training is only one piece of the implementation process. She cited a 2015 Gallup study that claimed only 10% of people promoted into leadership roles have the natural talent to do the job well. About 70% of people in leadership positions get promoted because they have tenure and not because they are qualified to implement (Rigoni & Nelson, 2015).

She concluded that getting the right people in the right roles and developing them will help them be better leaders/implementers.

- Conscientiousness – The fact that people, when assessed individually, are handled uniquely was another recommendation. In other words, corporate instructors may need to be prepared to address individuality respectfully without detracting from the whole class or the other students learning experience was another recommendation. Sometimes instructors may forget that the students are at different growth levels or trajectory levels and may inadvertently develop coursework, cues, and activities that way. In a remote environment, the participants recommended that instructors pay attention to uniqueness and individuality to help promote learning as much as possible. However, the facilitators also reminded that the assimilation of learning content is dependent primarily on an individual's motivation. The corporate instructor can only provide the knowledge as best as possible by adhering to the objectives. However, the follow-through will need to be completed by the students in the class.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

The following section provides an overview of the interpretation of the findings with a specific focus on preparedness and risk response strategy. As shown in figure 4, the congruence of the literature review, the theoretical framework, and the responses from the participants validate the benefits of risk management in the training of employees in HR (organizational culture) and IT (data management) areas. Most significantly, as it relates to this study and disaster risk management theory (preparation, mitigation, responding, and recovery), the trainers did express how their experiences coincide with the theory, albeit in a compressed format. Their

experiences were categorized into two major themes (risk preparedness and risk response) based on their role in the disaster risk management process. While their organizations employ variations of the disaster risk management framework, corporate trainers are not always involved in all the areas. However, their contribution does contribute significantly to realizing organizational objectives, including supporting the outputs of planning and disaster recovery efforts.

### ***Summary of Thematic Finding***

As discussed in chapter four, two major themes and seven sub-themes discussed the corporate trainers' experiences when developing disaster-driven training content. The themes showcased the underlying and overarching factors contributing to developing IT, HR, and RM training content in disaster and pandemic situations. They helped provide recommendations (environmental awareness, proactivity, implementation process, and conscientiousness) to the identified deficits (technology-related and human resource-related).

**Organizational Preparedness.** From previous and current research, it is evident that organizations implement different measures to stay ahead of the curve and remain marketable and competitive in the ever-changing and demanding economically diverse climate. One of the areas is through competitive hiring processes to help foster organizational objectives. However, staying competitive necessitates continuous education, skills renewal, and resource engagement, which is where the corporate trainers are primarily utilized. Looking at figure 4, we see that corporate training is critical on an organizational level. However, the trainers reported that they are precluded from the actual organizational preparedness strategy sessions related to disaster preparedness, although they are vital in implementing the training-related outputs from the preparedness sessions. Summarily, it would appear that precluding the corporate trainers from

the sessions may contribute to a siloed approach to training and development across the organization. consequently, some departments may have training expectations/requirements which other departments may not follow.

**Organization Integration.** As established, while knowledgeable and skilled in subject matter expertise, corporate trainers are not always involved in the strategic planning for disaster scenarios. From the conversations, training development and delivery fall in the response strategy part of the DRM theoretical framework. Corporate trainers are not included in the preparedness portion because the instructors work at the department levels instead of the corporate level based on conversations with the instructors. Another reason could be that some of the corporate trainers are external to the organization (there is no budget to have full-time corporate trainers on staff). A final possibility could be because corporate executives want to define strategy at the executive level, and training should follow that strategy. Should the recommendation by Helena to integrate learning and development into strategy development and risk/threat identification sessions be adhered to, there could be opportunities for better synergy and seamless implementation of training across organizations. This may also significantly help with the planning and preparation process. The instructors believe this to be the case because of their years of experience and feel that there may be open doors of communication to proactively and better plan for risk and threats to the organization, which will, in turn, help with an effective response strategy. Right now, according to nine of the participants, without executive buy-in, the current process for disaster preparedness for risk planning sits in the known known and known unknown areas (see Figure 3: Characterization of unknown unknowns), and the training response is mostly retrospective and retrospective (Kim, 2012).

**Risk Management and Training.** Preparedness through planning effective responses is the definer of effective disaster risk management. In other words, risk response could best be defined in the risk planning and identification phase to help implement a better disaster risk response strategy. As the participants were all corporate trainers, their risk response strategy focused on how training can be an effective response strategy. The trainers discussed training and risk remediation procedures, how training can aid business continuity, how training can be more effective if the learning and development team are integrated with other departments, as well as how people and technology impacts the efficacy of training.

### **Implications for Policy or Practice**

While there is only one recommendation (organizational policy on managing risks and team integration) for the implication to policy based on the scope of this study, there are three distinct practice areas that could potentially be impacted should the recommendations for the implications to practice be implemented. These implications include integrating learning and development in organizational strategy, embedding or integrating learning and development teams into other departments like IT and HR to foster consistency, and incorporating consistent risk management planning and training practices.

### ***Implications for Policy***

While some organizations may have internal and external policy-related standards that affect how they conduct businesses, based on research and conversations with the participants, the findings indicate that the organization's maturity may influence the types of policy that could potentially be impacted. For instance, some organizations that engage in planning for and managing risks in any industry and by any standard, be it the Project Management Institute (PMI) standard (Project Management Institute, 2000), Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)

standards (Sax & Anderson, 2019; Wright, 2017), or the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) standards (Sharma & Dadhich, 2020), strategic risk management and governance (Hoffman, 2015) should be a top-down initiative with the direction coming from the top. Considering this, one option or tool to help effectively manage risks could be establishing or developing a defined risk management methodology policy and controls to ensure that the methodology is being followed or adhered to organization wide. The aide implementation of organization-wide adoption, staff training to help with competence, periodic audits to evaluate adherence to the methodology, and reporting to track trends and inform how adherence is mapping to organization goals and expectations could be included in the organization-wide policy. Organizational governance of proactive risk management could help in the facilitation of effective management and contributes to long-term success in the organization (Woods, 2011).

### ***Implications for Practice***

This research study revealed a few training implications for corporate trainers in organizations. While it is evident that the training teams are instrumental in developing training content, several corporate trainers expressed that they were not included in the development of organizational strategy. So, the corporate trainers' support was mainly restricted to retrospective course development, development of training content based on defined needs by executives, and utilizing lessons learned to update course content within the parameters they have been given. Based on the corporate trainers' recommendations for effective pre-disaster planning as it relates to the effective development of course materials and practical learning, it may be beneficial to include and integrate the learning and development teams in organizational development strategy sessions, which could potentially help with the assimilation of content by the participants.

Including and integrating the learning and development teams in organizational development strategy sessions may be a practical first step. However, to effectively implement the proactive approach as recommended by the corporate trainers, the organizations may need to make a conscientious effort to embed or integrate learning and development teams into other departments like IT and HR to foster applicability and consistency. For instance, when an organization outsources its IT training, the training may be general and focus on general IT principles. However, suppose the training team integrates with the IT department and plays a role in developing or updating content. In that case, that training could include organizational-specific items that incorporate the organization's culture, practices, and principles, making the training far more relevant to the employees. Sometimes with self-directed learning that does not showcase the what's-in-it-for-me easily, folks may lack the motivation to bring the training home to themselves. The training may not have the relevant examples that can help with understanding and assimilation, and as a result, the participants may disconnect from the training or may potentially scroll through the training to check the proverbial box.

The final implication for practice is the process of incorporating proactive risk management planning and training practices to help with the strategic planning for proactive risk and disaster planning. While integrating the training teams with other departments may bring about cohesive training programs, the process of incorporating organizations' risk management principles and practices proactively may impact the response times of team members, speed of delivery and implementation, proactive approach to preventing data leaks, and breaches as well as incorporating risk management principles in day-to-day business operations.

### **Theoretical and Empirical Implications**

**Theoretical Implications.** Despite the high likelihood and impact of natural and man-made disasters (Adikaram & Nawarathna, 2018), the response strategy for disaster situations as reported by the participants, is geared towards loss-reduction and resiliency frameworks (Ahangama & Prasanna, 2016; Cheng et al., 2017; He et al., 2019; Hughes-Lartey, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Harrison & Jürjens, 2017). Primarily due to a lack of predictability of disasters, hence the recommendation to try and proactively understand (using past precedence as a driver) each disaster and plan effectively for unknown unknowns. The theoretical framework which forms the ideology of how training can be developed and delivered (Dewey, 1897; Helle et al., 2006; Thorburn, 2018) in disaster and post-disaster working environments; specifically related to data security, organizational culture, and learning focuses on planning for and working with unknown unknowns (Kim, 2012).

Findings from the study show that organizations follow the four phases of Petak's disaster management model (including variations of disaster mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster response, and disaster recovery (Kim & Sohn, 2017)); however, on the organizational level, the participants for the study, conducted their disaster mitigation activities in the prepare and respond phases. Participants in the study showed from their responses that corporate training and risk management were a part of their organizations' culture. They also showed that effective information and data management protection fell under the umbrella of risk management. Due to the novel nature of the COVID-19 disaster, the participants had to employ elements of the four phases as they developed and delivered their course content. As established, disaster risk management theory and models can be applied during the content preparation process, responding to the unique scenarios, providing coaching in a mitigation capacity, and supporting the organization through organizational recovery from disaster situations. Trenton, Saint Paul,

Topeka, and Helena shared how their past experiences prepared them to mitigate and respond to unique situations almost spontaneously.

While the crux of the training content did not change for most participants, a few updates and considerations were critical in their disaster mitigation scenarios, including the impact on the delivery process and methods, the integration of technology, and the preservation of the organizational culture. Concerning process and methods, the participants utilized condensed and updated change management processes while navigating varying and somewhat disruptive interpersonal relationships, communication styles, requirements, and deadlines with co-workers operating in remote environments. The integration of technology (new and familiar) did present some challenges and benefits to the participants, none of which involved the preservation of intellectual property or data preservation. All the participants agreed that intellectual property protection and data preservation were critical to their organizations (Haqaf & Koyuncu, 2018). However, the maintenance and follow-through were either outsourced to contractors (Gupta, 2017) or a function of the IT departments, not the training and development departments. Which provided no data to help clarify if training has any impact on data breaches (Cheng et al., 2017; Elsevier, 2014; Elsevier, 2015; Goldberg, 2013; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Mao & DeAndrea, 2019; Tondeur et al., 2017; Weissman, 2018). Similarly with corporate culture, Augusta and Trenton validated the criticality of maintaining team morale while educating employees about the impact of the changing external environment on organizational mission, vision, and employees' personal growth and development (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Duke II & Edet, 2012; Fekete & Börcskey, 2011; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Saffold, 1998; Yesil & Kaya, 2013; Zheng et al., 2010).

DRM theory was created to help anticipate the unexpected (Petak, 1985) and help organizations recover from the effects of disaster situations. Drawing parallels for the purpose of this study, the training approach to responding to disasters aligns with the study's theoretical framework because the theoretical construct identifies factors that could potentially support the participants' reported experiences and recommend practical applications to organizations struggling to stay competitive (Abelsen et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Petryshen et al., 2020). As previously established, human resources simultaneously drive the occurrence and mitigation of risks and are an organization's greatest asset and most significant challenge (Ahmed, 1998; Arzubiaga et al., 2018; Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Ling et al., 2020; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Saffold, 1988; Yesil & Kaya, 2013; Zheng et al., 2010). As a result, disaster risk management theories evolved to benefit employers, employees, and corporate trainers (Kim & Sohn, 2017). The trainers agreed that while organizations plan for pre-disaster scenarios, trainers mainly were involved (in an implementation capacity) in the response and post-disaster phases. However, in each of the phases, they did go through the four stages of preparation (course updates), response (facilitations), mitigation (making changes based on the needs), and recovery (post-course activities including updating course content and assessing learning using post-course assessments) (Kim & Sohn, 2017).

**Empirical Implications.** While there is some uncertainty regarding incomplete scientific knowledge, coupled with inconclusive or insufficient empirical statistics on hazards and organizational vulnerabilities (disruptions to organizational costs and budget), Etkin (2016), in his book *Disaster Theory: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Concepts and Causes*, thought that the success of any project did not necessarily depend on the project teams choice of comprehensive emergency management (mitigate, prepare, respond, and recovery) as opposed to

disaster risk recovery, but more on the organizational culture, resources, commitment, and the knowledge and experience of the individuals who are working collaboratively on a shared goal, mission, vision, or project. The significance of this study was to substantiate the current methodology and practice utilized by corporate trainers to see how adequate their applicable processes were to effectively prepare employees (Ling et al., 2020) in competitive/disaster-related situations and see how beneficial it was to the ever-changing corporate landscapes we are all contributors to (Abelsen et al., 2020; Kweon et al., 2019; Petryshen et al., 2020). Corporate trainers, for this study, constitute a group of the experts that Etkin (2016) referred to in his study and help to propagate learning for the resources they are responsible for (Ahmed & Khaleque, 2017; Gray, 2015; Kwon & Cho, 2020).

As established during the interviews, the participants' current experiences are related to the study's theoretical framework. However, the corporate instructor's experience and application were for only known – a linear process where the risks may be known – risks (Kim, 2012) disasters and rarely ever for unknown unknown risks. The disaster risk management framework covered key disaster planning and preparedness areas, including mitigation, monitoring/control or preparedness, response, and recovery, as evidenced by the corporate trainer's post-disaster response to training. While the disaster risk management process occurred for known unknowns (Kim, 2012) same was not always the case for pre-disaster scenarios.

The participants, however, evidenced their understanding and desire to apply their experience to help identify unknown risks in a collaborative forum, and Helena bemoaned the lost opportunity. Based on the interpretation of the responses provided, though there were no exceptions to applying this concept of variations of this framework (Kim & Sohn, 2017), it was evident that the participants all had similar processes that helped them achieve success in

planning for and delivering the course content in the new environment. Because disaster measurement was outside of the scope of this study and the corporate instructors' purview, this precluded the request to measure the impact of the training on disaster recovery. However, to validate that learning occurred, the instructors did utilize tools like post-session surveys and knowledge checks. The application of the learning, however, was the responsibility of the learner and outside the scope of the corporate trainers' control.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

Even though there was no geographical restriction on the participant's client base or work location, the organizations needed to be restricted to USA-based organizations. The corporate trainers must primarily teach in the USA. The study was delimited to corporate trainers or instructors who have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, conducted training in remote and face-to-face environments, and developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture. This group of participants was selected because of the gap in the literature as it concerns or describes corporate trainers' experiences on any topic, including when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content, which was empirical evidence of the importance of this research.

There were multiple limitations to the study. One major limitation was the incomplete and inconsistent data collected (this did not help with the generalizability of the data points). The data collected differed significantly by industry, instructor style, and class objectives. The majority of the corporate trainers did not share documentation due to privacy reasons and only discussed what was included during the training sessions. The sensitivity of the information and protecting intellectual property prevented delving and divulging in-depth information, restriction

of the geographical location to strictly US-based organizations prevented generalizability of information and comparing practices with international organizations; Stringent and difficulty in finding participants did not allow for extended variability in the resource pool. Insufficient exposure by the participants to validate or invalidate the premise that insufficient training directly correlates to data breaches. The need to protect the anonymity of the participants precluded delving further into the participants' industry or practices outside of the course development processes. As a result, there may be other significant results or themes that impact the process that was not revealed during the interviews.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The first recommendation would be to study how corporate instructors globally handle the process. The inclusion criteria for the participants restricted the organization's location to USA-based organizations, and the corporate trainers must primarily teach in the USA. Finding that the corporate trainers in the US-based companies are precluded from collaboration on defining organizational training standards, it may be beneficial to conduct a quantitative analysis to measure the efficacy of this policy globally and understand the justification for global audiences.

The majority of the instructors agreed that the onus of learning is on the learner, and the learners are responsible for motivating themselves to learn. A second recommendation is to understand the successful or unsuccessful interaction between corporate pedagogy and learning. The study may be conducted using a qualitative analysis of learning in organizations that have suffered data breaches or other disastrous occurrences to assess the efficacy of the learning and help understand if the training was indeed sufficient from the learner's perspective. The information collected will help inform course content creation.

The inclusion criteria for participants consist of corporate instructors who have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, conducted training in remote and face-to-face environments, and developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture. The purpose was to focus only on the HR and IT departments. A final recommendation for future research would be to conduct an analysis of corporate trainers in other disciplines to see if they have similar experiences and measure if the gaps identified by the participants in this study translate. Conducting this research could drive an assessment into policy review and potentially drive a more integrative approach for organizations that do not practice a more collaborative approach to training.

### **Conclusion**

The problem driving this study was that some employees, corporate trainers, and organizations are unprepared for the ramifications of working and training staff in alternative environments, so when disasters like the COVID-19 disrupted the standard business operations, business owners struggled to determine the next steps of training employees to preserve organizational culture, intellectual property, and data security. This study aimed to understand the experiences of corporate trainers when creating disaster-driven training content to identify those deficits and recommend potential solutions.

Most participants shared that from the training perspective, in some cases, the lack of preparation was due to ineffective risk identification of unknown known and unknown unknown risks/disasters, which could be because the hands-on SMEs are not always included in the strategizing sessions. Their knowledge remains untapped, and the corporate instructors end up implementing corporate strategy retrospectively. As a result, it may be beneficial to consider

integrating the hands-on learning and development resources (skip level) in organizational strategy, potentially embedding or integrating learning and development teams into other departments like IT and HR to foster consistency and incorporate consistent risk management planning and training practices.

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## **Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter**

# LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 3, 2022

Seeke Hughes  
Matthew Ozolnieks

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-28 Managing Risk: A Hermeneutic Phenomenology on the Experiences of Corporate Instructors When Planning and Developing Disaster Driven Training Content

Dear Seeke Hughes, Matthew Ozolnieks,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

**Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB.** Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at

[irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,  
**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**  
***Administrative Chair of Institutional Research***  
**Research Ethics Office**

## **Appendix B: Permission Communique to Human Resources**

Date

Human Resources Department

My name is Seeke Diana Hughes, and I am a graduate student in the school of Education Doctorate Program at Liberty University. As part of my study, I am conducting qualitative research for my doctorate degree in organizational leadership. The **topic** of my study is ‘Managing Risk: A Hermeneutic Phenomenology on the Experiences of Corporate Instructors when Planning and Developing Disaster Driven Training Content’. The **purpose** of my study is to understand corporate trainer’s perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic driven training content and programs. Corporate trainers’ insight in content development and delivery is critical because of the pivotal role they play during the dissemination and in some cases implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning. **The study will explore** perceived risks, issues, and rewards that arise for the participants, the impacts, and recommended approaches that contribute to maintaining safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning and implementation environments for the employees. The eventual goal is to help drive excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance in organizations.

**I would like to request** your permission to reach out to the corporate trainers in your organization for my study as well as request the use of the following documentation for my analysis. Below is a breakdown of how the information will be used:

- For document analysis: At least one training plan, training objective, feedback report, success criteria documents per corporate trainer.
- For Observation: Observe at least one training video or live session per corporate trainer
- For interviews: I require the trainers to have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, have conducted training in remote and face-to-face settings, developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture.

The data collected **will be confidential and pseudonyms** will be used to protect both the trainer and the organizations' privacy. Data received is purely for scholastic purposes and will be compared to the Disaster Risk Management framework (Petak, 1985; McLoughlin, 1985) and could potentially help future corporate trainers understand where to begin when developing training content for disaster situations like we experienced with COVID-19. Other scholars and trainers may also benefit from the outcomes of the study. Participation in the study is voluntary and the participants may choose to discontinue at any time during the process.

The interview time commitment for participation will be no longer than one and a half hours. Should you grant me permission and access, I will be furnishing you with informed consent information. I will be available to respond to any questions you have and appreciate your consideration of my request. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm Regards,

Seeke Diana Hughes, PMP, MBA

Liberty University Doctoral Student

## Appendix C: Recruitment Email to Corporate Trainers

Good day to you Corporate Trainers!

My name is Seeke Diana Hughes, and I am a graduate student in the school of Education Doctorate Program at Liberty University. As part of my study, I am conducting qualitative research for my doctorate degree in organizational leadership. The **topic** of my study is ‘Managing Risk: A Hermeneutic Phenomenology on the Experiences of Corporate Instructors when Planning and Developing Disaster Driven Training Content’ and the **purpose** of my study is to understand corporate trainer’s perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic driven training content and programs. Corporate trainers’ insight in content development and delivery is critical because of the pivotal role they play during the dissemination and in some cases implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning. The study will explore perceived risks, issues, and rewards that arise for the participants, the impacts, and recommended approaches that contribute to maintaining safe, secure, conducive, and effective learning and implementation environments for the employees. The eventual goal is to help drive excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance in organizations.

**I would like to request** your participation in the study as well as request the use of the following documentation for my analysis. Below is a breakdown of how the information will be used:

- For document analysis: Training plans, training objectives, feedback reports, success criteria documents.
- For Observation: At least one training video or live session
- For interviews: I require that you have had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, have conducted training in remote and face-to-face

settings, developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture.

The **data collected will be confidential and pseudonyms** will be used to protect your privacy. Your participation will potentially help future corporate trainers understand where to begin, utilize lessons learned and potentially begin a process which can be standardized. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this study, I will be furnishing you with informed consent information. I appreciate your consideration of my request and look forward to hearing from you through this email address.

Warm Regards,

Seeke Diana Hughes

Liberty University Doctoral Student

## **Appendix D: Observation Protocol**

Observation Type: Recording, and Live Training

Interview Protocol Topic:

Time of interview:

Date:

Location:

Interviewer Name:

Participant Name:

Designation/Role of Participant:

Objective of Observation: to document perceived baseline of participant behavior, to observe trends and assess behavior during the pandemic, and document perceived variances in behavior specifically as it relates to the participants use of communication devices.

Inputs into Observation: Course objectives, Interview responses and training plans.

Closeout: For live sessions, express appreciation, reiterate confidentiality, and remind of the possibility of future interviews or clarifications

**Appendix F: Participant Interview Schedule and Status**

| <b>#</b>  | <b>Pseudonym</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Status &amp; Duration of interview<br/>(complete/incomplete)</b> |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|---|
| <b>1</b>  | Juneau           | 2/10/2022   | Complete: 26 Minutes  |
| <b>2</b>  | Helena           | 2/23/2022   | Complete: 23 Minutes  |
| <b>3</b>  | Boise            | 2/21/2022   | Complete: 35 Minutes  |
| <b>4</b>  | Saint Paul       | 2/21/2022   | Complete: 70 Minutes  |
| <b>5</b>  | Pierre           | 2/16/2022   | Complete: 40 Minutes  |
| <b>6</b>  | Trenton          | 3/3/2022    | Complete: 37 Minutes  |
| <b>7</b>  | Topeka           | 3/8/2022    | Complete: 55 Minutes  |
| <b>8</b>  | Augusta          | 3/7/2022    | Complete: 27 Minutes  |
| <b>9</b>  | Madison          | 3/17/22     | Complete: 38 Minutes  |
| <b>10</b> | Austin           | 3/17/2021   | Complete: 42 Minutes  |
| <b>11</b> | Cheyenne         | 3/13/2022   | Complete: 61 Minutes  |
| <b>12</b> | Providence       | 3/7/2022    | Complete: 26 minutes  |

## **Appendix G: Sample Interview Questions (A)**

**Central Question:** What experiences do corporate instructors have with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

**Sub-Question 1:** What are the experiences of corporate instructors when developing data/information security, culture preservation, and risk management training content in remote environments?

- 1.) Have you been teaching remotely and if yes, How long have you been doing so?
- 2.) Do you create your content or was it created for you?
- 3.) Describe your experience with creating or updating training content related to Resource management and Information Technology or security
- 4.) Describe the differences you implemented when developing these training in in remote environments?
- 5.) In your experience, does the transition to remote work affect the interpersonal relationships and training of staff within the organization? How?
- 6.) How does Human Resource (HR) hiring, training, and onboarding affect IT securing and deployment of technology and access? (Hiim, 2017; Hughes-Lartey, 2021; Price & Reichert, 2017).

## **Appendix H: Sample Interview Questions (B)**

**Central Question:** What experiences do corporate instructors have with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

**Sub-Question 2:** What factors, barriers, issues, and risks impact corporate instructors experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content?

- 1.) Are L and D teams given an opportunity to help organizations plan for disasters?
- 2.) What are potential disasters that occur in your industry?
- 3.) Have any of the agencies you have been working with experienced any of the disasters?
- 4.) For learning; Are there behaviors that drive learning or the lack of assimilation of the content in face to face and remote environments and how does the remote situation help or aggravate the learning curve?
- 5.) Is online content and platform helping or hurting? Why? (Jain, et al., 2019; Richardson, et al., 2017; Stenbom 2018;)
- 6.) How did the content you were developing impact learning in remote setting?
- 7.) Please describe associated barriers, issues, and risks that impacted your experience during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content?

## Appendix I: Sample Interview Questions (C)

**Central Question:** What experiences do corporate instructors have with developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

**Sub-Question 3:** What successes and lessons contribute to corporate instructors' experiences during the development of disaster or pandemic-driven training content in their industry?

- 1.) What tools do you use?
- 2.) Has the technology ever failed you? and been detrimental to your process?
- 3.) In your experience, have any or the organizations you have trained experienced data breaches? Do you feel these organizations were prepared for it?
- 4.) Specifically, and generally, do you feel organizations' preventative measures are effective and how do these measures take into consideration the human factors and organizational culture? (Hughes-Lartey, 2021).
- 5.) How effective was the training and what could be done better? (Jain, et al., 2021)
- 6.) Did your training change based on the upgrades/updates to the organization's systems?
- 7.) What lessons learned and best practices can be implemented to help stem the tide of data loss and breaches?
- 8.) How can trainers help organizations get better prepared for disruptions?
  - a. Will people and technology affect the recommendations?

## **Appendix J: Other Data Collection Procedures**

Due to the mandatory work from home order, all interviews will be conducted using web conferencing tools. Particularly, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, and Skype for Business. Meeting invitations will be constructed and delivered using in Microsoft outlook calendar features. Using this tool makes it easy to view and validate participant availability. Due to time constraints (30 minutes per interview), the meeting agenda and invitation will include the questions to act as a preparation guide and enable to participants prepare prior to the meeting and understand the parameters of the conversation. A request for clarification will be sent in the invitation as well to ensure participants are fully prepped for the interview. In addition to the meeting invitation, a request will be forwarded to the participants to invite me to attend any upcoming training sessions they have, share their course objectives, feedback reports, and training plans for live and recorded sessions. This will provide the researcher insight into the participants communication style and approach and help with traceability to the theoretical framework.



## Appendix L: Sample Consent Form

**Title of the Project:** Managing Risk: A Hermeneutic Phenomenology on The Experiences of Corporate Instructors When Planning and Developing Disaster Driven Training Content

**Principal Investigator:** Seeke Diana Hughes, PhD Candidate, Liberty University

### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a corporate instructor who has had at least one instance of disaster-related corporate training experience, conducted training in remote and face-to-face environments, and developed or facilitated training content on risk management, data management, intellectual property preservation, or organizational culture. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

### What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to understand corporate trainers' perspectives when developing disaster or pandemic-driven training content and programs and suggest a baseline response to identified deficits. Corporate trainers' perspective is critical because of the pivotal role they have during the dissemination and, in some cases, implementation of training programs and their insight into employee morale and learning. The eventual goal is to help drive excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance

### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Provide vocal or electronic permission (electronically can be either through email, drop box, file sharing or any associated electronic methods), at any time prior to the interview for me to review at least one instance of a recorded training session and training documentation.
2. Participate in one individual interview, which will take approximately one hour to complete. The interview will be audio and video recorded and take place remotely via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.
3. As a participant, you will have an opportunity to review the interview transcripts for accuracy.

### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

However, benefits to society include contributing research toward driving excellence in learning and innovative procedural performance in the corporate world and learning environments.

### What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

#### **How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on my password-protected computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records from the participants will be deleted. Only my analysis and results will be retained.
- Interviews will be audio and video recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

#### **Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or any of the organizations you consult with. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

#### **What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

#### **Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

#### **Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to audio record and video record me as part of my participation in this study.

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Printed Subject Name

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Signature & Date

**Appendix N: Sample Email of Gratitude for Participation in the Study and Review  
of Transcription Data**

Dear Participant,

I would like to sincerely thank you for taking time to participate in my research project, 'Corporate Trainers' Perspective When Developing Disaster or Pandemic: A Phenomenological Study.' Without your participation, this study would not have been possible.

Before beginning the study, I informed you that I would transcribe your responses to help me most accurately sort the data. As the researcher of this study, I want to make sure I have clearly transcribed the individual interview session, focus group meeting, and the visual representation activity you completed as part of my study. Attached to this email is a copy of the transcription from your individual interview activity. Please take some time to review the transcriptions and see if there are any modifications or changes you would like to make. If you would like to schedule an additional time to complete another interview so that I can better communicate your perceptions, please let me know. If you approve of the transcriptions of the interviews, please let me know you are satisfied with the transcriptions. Once again, thank you so much for completing my study. If you have any other questions or concerns about this research project, please feel free to email me. It has been a pleasure and honor to learn from your content development perceptions.

Sincerely,

Seeke Diana Hughes

Liberty University Graduate Student, Principal Researcher