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UNDERSTANDING TRANSFEREE ASSIMILATION THROUGH THE
ANALYSIS OF EGOCENTRIC NETWORKS

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degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

David George Harris
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A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
GRADUATE COLLEGE

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	viii
Abstract	ix
CHAPTER 1 – Introduction and Statement of the Problem	1
Introduction	1
Social Networks and Boundary Passages	4
Goals of Assimilation	7
Assimilation, Learning, and Egocentric Social Networks	8
Importance of this Research	11
CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review and Hypotheses	13
Importance of Assimilation	13
Dependent Variables	15
Organizational Assimilation	19
Organizational Socialization	21
Phase/stage model approach.	22
Organizational tactics approach.	26
Information Acquisition	30
Strategies of information acquisition.	31
Types of information sought.	33
Communication Networks	35
Newcomer Learning and Network Ties	35
Defining Communication Networks	36
Applicable Theories in Communication Network Research	41
Uncertainty Reduction Theory	43
Hypotheses	46
CHAPTER 3 – Methodology	65
Introduction	65
Purpose of the Research Project	65
Research Questions	66
Context of the Research	66
Participants	68
The Research Design	69
The Research Instrument	71
Data Collection Methods	75
Data Computation and Analysis	77
CHAPTER 4 – Results	82
Validity and Reliability	82
Generalizability	83
Factor Analysis	85
Network Structure and Initial Analysis	88
Hypothesis Testing	91
Conclusion	110
CHAPTER 5 – Discussion	111

Summary of the Research Project.....	111
Results of Data Analysis – Egocentric Networks	114
Job Type and Similarity	122
Limitations of the Research	127
Implications for Future Research.....	130
References	135
APPENDIX A – Survey Instruments.....	145
APPENDIX B – Definitions	150

List of Tables

Table 4.1	Population and Sample Characteristics	84
Table 4.2	Factor Analysis	87
Table 4.3	Coefficient Alpha	87
Table 4.4	Correlation Coefficients	90
Table 4.5	Hypothesis 1 – Knowledge of the Organization	92
Table 4.5A	Hypothesis 1 – Knowledge of the Organization Best Fitting Model	92
Table 4.6	Hypothesis 2 - Range	93
Table 4.7	Hypothesis 3 – Task Mastery	95
Table 4.7A	Hypothesis 3 – Best Fitting Model	95
Table 4.8	Hypothesis 3 – Role Clarity	97
Table 4.8A	Hypothesis 3 – Role Clarity Best Fitting Model	97
Table 4.9	Hypothesis 4 – Task Mastery	98
Table 4.10	Hypothesis 4 – Role Clarity	98
Table 4.11	Hypothesis 5 – Social Integration	100
Table 4.11A	Hypothesis 5 – Social Integration Best Fitting Model	100
Table 4.12	Hypothesis 6 – Social Integration	102
Table 4.12A	Hypothesis 6 – Social Integration Best Fitting Model	102
Table 4.13	Hypothesis 7 – Organizational Commitment	104
Table 4.13A	Hypothesis 7 – Organizational Commitment Best Fitting Model	104
Table 4.14	Hypothesis 8 – Previous Assignments	105
Table 4.15	Hypothesis 9 – Previous Friend	106
Table 4.16	Hypothesis 9 – Previous Information Point of Contact	106
Table 4.17	Hypothesis 10 – Type of Job - ANOVA	107
Table 4.18	Hypothesis 10 – Type of Job	108
Table 4.19	Hypothesis 11 – Job Similarity	108
Table 4.20	Hypothesis 11 – Job Similarity - ANOVA	109
Table 4.21	Selected Demographic Outcomes	110
Table 5.1	Job Classifications	123

Abstract

A great deal of research has been conducted over the past two decades focusing on the concept of organizational assimilation. This research has taken many approaches and made much progress. It is now understood that assimilation is an interactive process involving both the organization's attempts to mold the newcomer, and the newcomer's attempts to carve out an individualized niche within the acceptable bounds of the work center and organization.

However, much of this research ignores the interactive process and focuses either on the organizations molding efforts, or the newcomer's information-seeking behaviors that are used to personalize the position. Furthermore, the majority of literature addresses assimilation of individuals that are entering the work force for the very first time, while largely ignoring inter- and intra-organizational job transitions. Only recently have researchers begun to examine the informal social networks that newcomers form and how these networks influence the assimilation process.

This project expanded on early research and examined employees as they began a new job after undergoing an intraorganizational job transfer. Consistent with earlier research the results demonstrated support for the ideas that certain characteristics of egocentric networks can be used to predict the ability of transferees to successfully assimilate. Specifically, this study examined the informational and friendship egocentric networks that transferees develop and analyzed how these networks influenced the

mechanisms thought to most significantly influence organizational assimilation: (a) task mastery, (b) role clarity, (c) knowledge about the parent organization, (d) social integration, and (e) organizational commitment. The size and range of egocentric networks were found to support assimilation in all tests conducted. Density and tie strength displayed partial support for the hypotheses tested. The status of egocentric networks did not support any of the hypotheses as predicted.

CHAPTER 1 – Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Introduction

Kiechel (1987) estimated that more than 400,000 U.S. private sector employees accept intraorganizational job transfers each year. A Rand Corporation study (2002) reported that more than 100,000 active duty U.S. soldiers undergo permanent change of station assignments each year. A permanent change of station is an intraorganizational job transfer requiring a move from one geographic area to another.

As transferees (individuals undergoing intraorganizational job transfers) move from one sub-unit in the parent company to another, they cross both *geographic* and *inclusionary* boundaries. Geographic boundaries involve time and space. They exist between different operating sections or units within the same parent company. For example, moving from the department of sociology to the department of communication within a typical university requires not only a change in physical location but also a given amount of time to actually move from office to office, or building to building. In larger corporations, crossing geographic boundaries may include moving across town, across the state, across the nation, or to other countries and continents around the world.

Crossing an inclusionary boundary is more subtle than moving from location to location, but it is an integral part of crossing geographic boundaries during intraorganizational job transfers. Inclusionary boundaries involve *belonging*. For a transferee, crossing an inclusionary boundary

involves moving from organizational outsider to organizational insider. This boundary passage involves physically entering the new work center and over time, becoming an accepted member of the work group. It involves earning the trust of current members of the work group and learning to trust them. When transferees are allowed to cross the inclusionary boundary of the new work center they are accepted by the veteran members of the work center and become full-fledged members of the work group. Until the transferee is fully accepted by the veteran members of the new work center, he or she will not be able to gain full access to insider knowledge, information, and the unique ways of conducting business within the new work environment. Becoming an insider includes gaining access to all the relevant knowledge applicable to the work centers norms, values, ways of conducting business, sensemaking schemas, and routines. Much of the knowledge required to successfully cross an inclusionary boundary is tacit, contextual, informal, unofficial, shared, and emergent within the work center (Comer, 1991; Louis, 1990). W. E. Baker (2000) gathering data from the center for workforce development suggested that as much as 70% of learning occurring on the job takes place through informal interactions with other personnel at the work site. Because of this tacit, contextual, informal, unofficial, and emergent knowledge, the organizational hierarchy cannot grant a transferee passage across a work center's inclusionary boundary. Passage can only occur when the veteran members of the work center accept the transferee as one of their own and begin to share that information.

As transferees begin work in their new position (often referred to as the *encounter phase* of assimilation), they cross the geographic boundary within the parent organization and begin to see what the organization is like from the perspective of members in the new work center. Additionally, the transferee begins building the relationships necessary to cross the inclusionary boundary of the work center. Similar to an individual starting a new job with a new company, employees accepting intraorganizational job transfers must undergo the assimilation process as they begin working in their new environment.

During the second phase of assimilation, often referred to as the *metamorphosis phase*, the transferee learns the tasks required of the position, establishes new interpersonal relationships with his or her coworkers, clarifies his or her role within the new work center, and evaluates his or her progress toward becoming a full-fledged member of the new environment. In addition to successfully assimilating into the new work environment, the transferee must also remain committed to the parent organization in order for the intraorganizational job transition to be considered a success by the organization (Feldman, 1976).

Organizational assimilation is the process whereby the transferee integrates into the new work center and sub-culture of the organization (Jablin, 2001). During this conversion the transferee acquires the attitudes, behaviors, skills, and knowledge that he or she needs to function as an organizational member within the context of the new work environment

(Morrison, 2002; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Organizational assimilation encompasses two critical and interrelated processes: (a) socialization and (b) information acquisition (Jablin, 2001). Socialization involves the organization's attempts to mold the employee to the norms, values, culture, roles, and ways of conducting business within the particular work center. Information acquisition involves the transferee's attempts to individualize the position and role so as to better satisfy his or her own personal values, attitudes, and preferred ways of operating on the job (Anderson, Riddle, & Martin, 1999; Jablin, 2001; Morrison, 2002).

Social Networks and Boundary Passages

Several scholars have argued that the interactions between newcomers and veteran members of the work center offer important insights as to how the assimilation process unfolds (Feldman, 1981; Jablin, 2001; Louis, 1990; Morrison, 2002; Reichers, 1987). Recent studies have begun to focus on the social networks that employees form in the work center and how these networks influence the assimilation process. Research examining organizations from a social network perspective view organizations as groups of people tied together in webs of interrelationships. Network research examines the patterns of relationships in the work center rather than focusing solely on the individual employees or separate positions within the work center (Brass, 1995; Jablin, 2001). The object of this analysis is to try and understand the patterns and content of the interactions that take place within and between the various network members (Nelson, 1989). Individuals

develop informal social relations that bind them to interconnected groups of people within the work center. These groups have distinct norms, values, cultures, and ways of doing business (Scott, 2000). One of the assumptions underlying social network research is that the social relationships developed within the work center provide a better means of understanding organizational dynamics, such as assimilation, than studying only the individual attributes of the members within the work center (Morrison, 2002). Social network scholars argue that by examining the patterns of relationships within the work center, the researcher can better explain organizational phenomena and outcomes than if he or she only studied the relationships in isolation from the network (Brass, 1995).

However, the majority of social network research examining assimilation, organizational socialization, and information acquisition, focuses primarily on newcomers and ignores transferees (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner 1994; Morrison, 2002). Newcomers are traditionally viewed as individuals initially entering the full-time work force for the first time. The typical study (see Ashforth & Saks, 1995, 1996; and Morrison, 1993a, 1993b, 2002 for examples) normally analyzes recently graduated college students starting their first full-time job. With the exception of research conducted by Kramer (1993a, 1993b) little research examines the assimilation processes undergone by transferees.

This research project bridges that gap in the body of knowledge. Schein (1968) argued that entry into an organization is a time when newcomers learn

critical aspects of the values, beliefs, and behaviors considered *normal* within the organization. Entry is a time when experienced members of the organization demonstrate to newcomers what it *means* to be a member of that organization (Jablin, 2001). However, Van Maanen & Schein (1979) also noted that “the problems of organizational socialization refer to any and all passages undergone by members of an organization. From beginning to end a person’s career within an organization represents a potential series of transitions from one position to another” (p. 213). Whether through promotion, demotion, rightsizing, downsizing, or intraorganizational job transfer, employees may undergo the assimilation process multiple times throughout their careers.

This research examines the egocentric social networks of intraorganizational job transferees as they undergo the assimilation process after crossing a geographical boundary within their organization. An egocentric social network is an individual’s unique set of contacts (Morrison, 2002). As employees enter a new work center they interact with other newcomers, veteran members of the work center, and other significant individuals (employees of other work centers, customers, and suppliers for example). The initial interactions may be random, but over time a pattern of interaction develops (Brass, 1995). Through a process of trial and error the transferee learns who he or she can approach when seeking the various types of information necessary to learn the roles, responsibilities, relationships, and ways of conducting business within the work center. The

transferee also learns who he or she can approach when seeking social support in the new work environment. The repeated interactions and subsequent relationships that develop form the transferee's egocentric social network. This egocentric network is comprised of a sub-set of all the members within the new work center and organization. Ego repeatedly goes to this specific set of alters when trying to find the unique, tacit, informal, knowledge that he or she requires to successfully assimilate within the new environment.

Goals of Assimilation

As the transferee undergoes the assimilation process there are several tasks that must be completed before the assimilation can be considered successful. These tasks include (a) gaining sufficient knowledge of the parent organization to adequately understand the parent organization from the context of the new work center, (b) mastering the tasks of the specific job assigned, (c) understanding and fulfilling the expected role of the new position, and (d) fitting into the social fabric of the new work center while (e) remaining committed to the parent organization (Morrison, 2002). Successful assimilation is important for two critical reasons. First it is important because of the strong and lasting impact on the transferee's behavior and attitudes. Chao and her colleagues (1994) demonstrated that "people who are well socialized in their organizational roles have greater personal incomes, are more satisfied, more involved with their careers, more adaptable, and have a better sense of their personal identity than people who are less well

socialized” (Chao et al., 1994, p. 741). Second, successful assimilation is one of the primary ways in which a work center maintains its unique culture (Louis, 1980).

Assimilation, Learning, and Egocentric Social Networks

As transferees enter the new work center there are numerous requirements that must be accomplished to move from work center outsider to work center insider. One of these tasks is learning to function efficiently and effectively as a group member. Socialization scholars have emphasized three key learning areas that directly impact the assimilation process. The transferee must learn: (a) specific knowledge about the parent organization as it is understood in the context of the new work center, (b) what his or her role will be in the new work center, and (c) how to perform the specific tasks required of the new position.

Knowledge about the parent organization includes such things as norms, policies, reporting relationships, goals, history, and office politics (Morrison, 2002). Transferees may already possess a great deal of knowledge about the parent organization since they have held previous assignments elsewhere in the parent company. However, they must now learn to understand that knowledge in the context of the new work center. Reporting relationships may differ, norms in previous work centers may differ from the new work center, policies and procedures may be carried out differently, the history of the parent company may be viewed differently by members of the new work

center, and office politics may differ significantly in the new work center when compared to previous work centers.

The transferee must also learn the role that he or she is expected to undertake in the new position. Krackhardt (1999) argued that roles are sets of expectations about how individuals should relate to members in their group. As the transferee moves through the encounter and metamorphosis phases of the assimilation process, he or she will negotiate, with veteran members of the work center and his or her immediate supervisor, the acceptable responsibilities and constraints associated with interactions related to the new position. Role clarity is critical to efficient and effective interaction between work center members.

Third, the transferee must learn how to properly perform the job that he or she has agreed to undertake in the new work center. If the job is similar to previous assignments then the transferee only need learn the unique nuances specific to functioning effectively and efficiently in the new work center. However, if the job is significantly different from previous assignments the transferee must learn the details of the job and how they are performed within the new work center. Task mastery, to an acceptable standard, is essential for successful assimilation.

It is proposed in this research project that the informational egocentric networks formed by the transferee during the encounter and metamorphosis phases of assimilation will have predictable implications for the success or failure of these three types of learning: task mastery, role clarity, and

knowledge of the organization. In addition to learning, the socialization literature also emphasizes the importance of inclusion within the social fabric of the work group (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). O'Neill and Lenn (1995) have argued that workers take their jobs personally and that employees generally like the people with whom they work. Establishing satisfying work relationships and getting along with the people in the work center are critical elements of the successful assimilation process (Chao et al., 1994; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992).

Cox (1999) argued that groups attempt to alter individual member's behavior so that individual behavior conforms to group norms. If individuals resist conformity, and the cost to the group exceeds the benefits of the nonconforming individual's contributions, the group will begin to practice behavioral- and message-based communication strategies designed to force the deviant member to comply or voluntarily exit the group. For assimilation to be considered a success, veteran members of the work center must come to view the transferee as one of their own. Additionally, transferees must feel that they are a part of their immediate work group, while continuing to maintain an acceptable degree of attachment to the parent organization. Transferee egocentric friendship networks should provide predictable implications demonstrating both a sense of belonging to the immediate work group and a sense of commitment to the parent organization.

Importance of this Research

Organizations of the 21st century are changing or they are going out of business. John Kotter, in his 1996 best selling book, *Leading Change* argued:

By any objective measure, the amount of significant, often traumatic, change in organizations has grown tremendously over the past two decades. Although some people predict that the restructurizing, mergers, downsizing, quality efforts, and cultural renewal projects will soon disappear, I think that is highly unlikely...The more volatile economic environment, along with the need for more leadership and lifelong learning is also producing careers that look quite different from those typical of the 20th century...successful 21st century careers will be more dynamic. Already we are seeing fewer people doing one job the same way for long periods of time (p.3).

To date, the majority of organizational assimilation literature has focused solely upon newcomers individuals entering the full-time work force for the first time. Kotter points to the fact that more and more people will no longer remain in the same job with the same company for their entire working careers. Workers will change jobs within their companies, and workers will change companies. With rightsizing, downsizing, realignments, mergers, and redesigns, intraorganizational job transfers are an ever increasing phenomenon in the work force of the 21st century. Kiechel (1987) estimated that more than 400,000 people accept intraorganizational job transfers in the

US private sector each year and Rand Corporation (2002) reported over 100,000 annual transfers within the US Army each year. As Van Maanen & Schein (1979) noted, “the problems of organizational socialization refer to any and all passages undergone by members of an organization” (p. 213).

As transferees move from one work center in the organization to another, and cross geographical boundaries, they will also have to cross the associated inclusionary boundaries in order to assimilate successfully.

Because of the potentially strong and lasting impacts on transferees work behavior and attitudes, an examination of the egocentric social networks that transferees develop offers potentially important predictive implications for the organizational assimilation body of knowledge. Transferee behavior and attitudes directly impact the efficient and effective functioning of the new work center and the organization as a whole. This project will attempt to fill the information gap that presently exists in the research and increase the current understanding of how transferee egocentric networks influence learning, a sense of belonging, and organizational commitment as people undertake intraorganizational job transfers in the volatile business world of the 21st Century.

CHAPTER 2 – Literature Review and Hypotheses

Importance of Assimilation

There are several significant reasons why it is important to examine the assimilation process. First, understanding assimilation is important because of its potentially strong and lasting impact on newcomers and the organization (Feldman, 1981; Jablin, 1982; Morrison, 2002). Unsuccessful assimilation can be extremely costly to the newcomer and the organization. Many organizations invest considerable amounts of time and resources in selecting, training, and staffing positions. In 1971 a corporation spent approximately \$7,800 to transfer an employee (Magnus & Dodd, 1981), but by 2001, the Army was spending more than \$40,000 when transferring soldiers from one geographic location to another (L. Marshall, personal communication, October 21, 2002). In addition to paying for movement costs, many transferees spend weeks, months, and sometimes years in formal training, drawing full salary and benefits while making no real contribution to the organization. If these individuals do not successfully assimilate after training, the payback on the resources spent for training and their first permanent change of station move is not realized. If the individual leaves the organization, the company must search for another recruit to replace the one who failed to assimilate. This new recruitment process will again cost the organization all the expenses associated with training and geographical relocation. Even if turnover is not the final result from unsuccessful assimilation, the lower productivity, lower morale, and reduced performance that often accompanies an unsatisfied

employee can be expensive in real dollars and emotional energy expended within the work center.

Second, an effective organizational assimilation program can result in productive, committed, and satisfied employees. Successful assimilation can have a strong and lasting impact on the attitudes and performance of the newcomer, the transferee, and the veteran members of the work center (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998).

Third, the socialization aspect of organizational assimilation is the primary way in which organizational culture is transmitted to new members (Louis, 1980; Morrison, 2002; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Louis (1980) argued that there are different cultures between organizations and, to a lesser extent, cultural differences between functionally- and geographically-dispersed subordinate units of the same parent organization. Successful assimilation enables the transferee or newcomer to understand and accept the values, norms, roles, and behaviors of their specific work center while simultaneously developing an acceptable level of commitment to the parent organization (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998).

Finally, Fisher (1986) argued that the results of the assimilation process can range from disillusionment and turnover to satisfaction and commitment. It is important that the assimilation process be understood so that practitioners increase their chances of having satisfied and committed employees rather than disillusioned employees looking for the first available opportunity to leave the organization.

Learning is one of the critical tasks that must be accomplished for successful organizational assimilation to occur. Specifically, organizational assimilation involves the transferee learning about the parent organization in the context of the work center he or she is entering (knowledge of the organization), learning how to perform the particular job that he or she has been hired to perform within the new work center (task mastery), and learning his or her expected role in the context of the new work center (role clarity) (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Morrison, 2002; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Furthermore, the transferee must cross the inclusionary boundary of the new work center and become an accepted and recognized member of the work group (social integration) while still maintaining a sufficient level of attachment to the parent organization (organizational commitment) (Bauer et al., 1998; Chao et al., 1994; Feldman, 1981; Morrison, 2002; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Reichers, 1987). The various organizational assimilation processes are designed to assist in these learning and inclusionary requirements. Knowledge of the organization, task mastery, role clarity, social integration, and organizational commitment all serve as dependent variables in this research project and therefore require further explanation.

Dependent Variables

Knowledge of the organization is conceptually defined as the transferee's ability to understand the parent organization in the context of the local work center. It includes understanding the parent organization's norms, policies, reporting relationships, terminology, goals, history, politics, and culture as

seen in the context of the local work center. Knowledge of the organization is operationalized in this study using an eight-item scale originally developed by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) and replicated by Morrison (2002).

Role clarity focuses on learning the necessary referent information associated with work center role demands and understanding what work group members and supervisors consider appropriate behavior. Role clarity is conceptually defined as understanding the expectations about what the group believes to be the transferee's typical behavioral characteristics specific to the social context of the new work center (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Role clarity includes knowing the accepted boundaries of authority and responsibility associated with the new position (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993a; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) along with learning the behaviors and attitudes that are expected and rewarded in the new work center. Role clarity includes knowing what members of the work center consider to be good performance, knowing the responsibilities and constraints associated with the new position, knowing the social interactions acceptable and expected in the new work center, and knowing how much autonomy is available to modify the various routines of work performance. Role clarity is operationalized in this research project using an eight-item scale developed by Morrison (2002).

Task mastery is conceptually defined as learning and mastering the technical information and skills needed to perform the specific work tasks required of the new position. Comer (1991) argued that much of the knowledge needed to master required tasks in a work center can be informal,

work center specific, or both, and can only be learned after assuming the position in the new work center. Task mastery includes knowing all the requirements associated with each mandatory task, developing the necessary skills to perform all the essential tasks of the position, knowing how to perform each task according to the standards of the new work center, understanding the goals and objectives of the specific job as they are related to each task, and knowing how much authority is available to modify or change the way each task is performed. Task mastery is operationalized in this research project using a ten-item scale developed by Morrison (2002) that was based on her previous work (1993a) with input of three items from Chao et al. (1994).

In addition to learning, organizations want their employees to feel a degree of attachment to their specific work center while maintaining a high level of commitment and attachment to the parent organization. As the transferee undergoes the assimilation process and develops a level of attachment to the new work center (social integration), he or she must continue to maintain an acceptable level of attachment and commitment to the parent organization (organizational commitment).

Social integration involves becoming an accepted member of the new work center (Morrison, 2002). It is conceptually defined as the process whereby a transferee develops successful and satisfying work relationships with other group members so as to move from work center outsider to work center insider, thereby becoming a fully accepted member of the local work

group. Social integration implies that the transferee has crossed, or is on the path to crossing the inclusionary boundary within the new work center. Social integration involves the transferee being accepted by his or her new co-workers, feeling comfortable around his or her new co-workers, and being readily identified as a member of the new work center by both members of the work center and outsiders. Social integration is operationalized in this project using a seven-item scale developed by Morrison (2002) based on her previous research (1993a), with elements borrowed from Chao et al. (1994).

Finally, *organizational commitment* involves continued commitment to the parent organization following the job transfer. Allen & Meyer (1990a) argued that there are three separate components to organizational commitment: (a) affective commitment, (b) continuance commitment, and (c) normative commitment. Affective commitment is a measure of whether the transferee wants to become, or likes being, a member of the organization. Continuance commitment is a measure of the degree to which the transferee feels that he or she needs to continue working for the organization (i.e., the degree to which the benefits of staying outweigh the benefits of leaving). Normative commitment is a measure of whether the transferee feels that he or she ought to work for the organization (for example, if the organization paid for an expensive tuition the employee may feel obligated to stay). Network research in organizational assimilation is primarily concerned with the relationships that individuals build and the effect those relationships have on the individual's assimilation experiences. Therefore, organizational commitment is

conceptually defined in this research project as an affective or emotional attachment to the parent organization (e.g., the US Army in this research project) such that the strongly committed transferee identifies with the parent organization, is involved in the parent organization, and enjoys membership in the parent organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990a). Organizational commitment is operationalized in this research project using Allen & Meyer's (1990a) eight-item affective commitment scale.

Organizational Assimilation

“Organizational assimilation refers to the process by which organizational members become a part of, or are absorbed into the culture of an organization” (Jablin, 1982, p. 256)¹. Organizational assimilation is an elaborate process involving two dynamic and interrelated constructs: (a) organizational socialization and (b) information acquisition (Jablin, 2001).

Organizational socialization is conceptually defined as the process whereby an organization teaches an individual the knowledge and skills necessary to assume his or her organizational role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Organizational socialization involves teaching the newcomer the values, behaviors, social knowledge, and necessary work place skills needed to successfully assume an organizational role and participate as an organizational member (Louis, 1980; Schein, 1968). Van Maanen & Schein (1979) argued that, in order for the traditions of the organization to survive,

¹ This is a relatively new use for the word *assimilation* and the organizational communication definition (see appendix B) is quite different from the definition of assimilation developed and used in earlier disciplines and studies such as anthropology, physiology, and linguistics.

newcomers had to be taught to see the organizational environment as it is seen by their more experienced coworkers and colleagues. Much of the initial research on organizational assimilation viewed newcomers as passive recipients of organizational socialization influences, submissively allowing themselves to be molded by the corporation (Louis, 1990). However, Schein (1968) noted that there was room in the socialization process to allow a newcomer the opportunity to individualize certain roles so as to satisfy his or her own needs about how best to perform in the new position. Additional research over the past decade has acknowledged that newcomers are often proactive in facilitating the assimilation process (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Morrison, 1993a; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

The second element of organizational assimilation is information acquisition. Information acquisition is conceptually defined as a learning process whereby the newcomer actively and intentionally seeks information in order to reduce high levels of uncertainty and to facilitate his or her adjustment during the assimilation process (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). It is argued that information acquisition normally encompasses two distinct mechanisms: (a) active inquiry and (b) monitoring (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Furthermore, Louis (1990) argued that newcomers engage in information acquisition for two primary reasons, (a) to reduce the uncertainty associated with the new position and (b) because the information they need is frequently information that is not readily available, not available in a usable format, or not provided in a timely manner. The next section of the paper will discuss the

development of the organizational socialization literature followed by a review of the literature pertaining to the construct of information acquisition.

Organizational Socialization

The socialization of individuals as they enter a new work center requires that they come to understand and make sense of the new environment (Louis, 1980). It is generally believed that organizations attempt to socialize newcomers and transferees in areas such as role responsibilities, task performance, norms, and values (Hart, Miller, & Johnson, 2003). Socialization is necessary in all role transitions (Chao et al., 1994; Schein, 1968; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Organizational socialization is the process of learning the ropes, being taught, indoctrinated, or trained on what is important to the parent organization and the various work centers within the parent organization (Schein, 1968). Research addressing the process of organizational socialization has generally followed one of two approaches. The first approach examines the phases/stages that newcomers and transferees pass through as they move from outsider to insider. The second approach examines the tactics used by organizations as they attempt to socialize the newcomer or transferee (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Traditionally, in both approaches, the newcomer and transferee are viewed as passive participants, absorbing what the organization has to offer (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998).

Phase/stage model approach.

The literature consistently uses the term *phase* and *stage* interchangeably. For the purpose of consistency, only the term *phase* will be used throughout the remainder of this paper. Over the past few decades a considerable amount of research has focused on phase models (Anderson, Riddle, & Martin, 1999; Feldman, 1976; Jablin, 2001; Van Maanen, 1975). Most of these models include an anticipation phase, an encounter phase, and an assimilation phase; although more elaborate models may also include an antecedent phase and an exit phase (Anderson, Riddle, & Martin, 1999; Jablin, 2001). Phases are generally defined as specifically identifiable subdivisions within a total period of interaction. Each subdivision has a unique set of characteristics that the newcomer or transferee must progress through on their way from group outsider to group insider (Reichers, 1987). Organizational socialization researchers using a phase model approach generally examine only the anticipation phase, the encounter phase, and the metamorphosis/assimilation phase. The antecedent phase is generally believed to occur prior to the start of the assimilation process and the exit phase is generally believed to occur after the assimilation process is complete, or failed, so are not examined when studying assimilation.

The anticipatory socialization phase generally begins at the time the transferee or newcomer knows that he or she will be entering a new position, and extends until work actually starts in that new position. Anticipatory socialization is a time when the newcomer or transferee prepares him or

herself for entry into the new work center (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998).

The newcomer or transferee develops expectations about the new position and his or her ability to fulfill those expectations (Jablin, 1982, 2001). These expectations are based on knowledge gained during the recruitment process and from previous experiences in what the soon to be transferee perceives to be similar situations (Anderson, Riddle, & Martin, 1999; Jablin, 1982, 2001).

Organizational socialization within the work center actually begins during the encounter phase. As the newcomer or transferee begins to interact in the new work setting, veteran members of the work center, supervisors, and other members of the organization begin demonstrating and teaching the newcomer what it means to be a member of that particular work center (Schein, 1968; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Reichers (1987) argued that newcomers accomplish two significant tasks during the encounter phase: (a) they develop a situational identity and (b) they begin to make sense of procedures, organizational events, and ways of conducting business.

Metamorphosis, also referred to as *assimilation* in some research, is the process of integrating the transferee or newcomer into the culture and environment of the new work center (Anderson, Riddle, & Martin, 1999). Assimilation is complete when the newcomer or transferee has been absorbed into the culture of the new work center (Jablin, 1982), has moved from work center outsider to work center insider (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), has been fully accepted by veteran members of the work group

(Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998), and has mastered the skills necessary to perform the tasks and roles required of the new position (Morrison, 2002).

Although considerable attention has focused on the various phases of organizational socialization, Jablin argued that one of the major difficulties associated with this approach is determining exactly when one phase ends and the next begins (2001). The majority of the research studies examining phase models use a chronological approach to address an individual's transition from one phase to another. However Chao et al. (1994) have argued that learning is a continuous process and that there are rarely discrete points at which researchers or practitioners can quantitatively or qualitatively say that newcomers and transferees have moved from one distinct phase to the next. Furthermore, it is unlikely that newcomers or transferees develop competencies and acquire knowledge at a uniform rate across all occupations, organizations, and conditions (Jablin, 2001). It has been argued that assimilation varies depending on the support the transferee receives, the complexity of the job, and the similarity of the old and new jobs (Pinder & Schroeder, 1987). It may take incumbents in complex jobs or managerial positions more than a year to feel they have mastered the position and successfully assimilated, whereas blue-collar workers engaged in routine jobs that are seen to be very similar to previous positions may feel they have completed the assimilation process in only a few months.

Bauer, Morrison, and Callister (1998), in a review of assimilation literature, stated that research projects often use three-month intervals to

measure assimilation processes (for example, three, six, and nine months from arrival in the new position) but that there is no empirical evidence to support this choice of intervals. They argue that researchers continue to use three-month intervals based simply on three-month intervals being used in previous research.

To overcome this limitation in the research on assimilation, and in an attempt to discover empirically supportable time intervals, a survey of all employees with 15 or fewer months in the organization has been selected for this project. If previous research is correct, and assimilation occurs at different time intervals based on the complexity of the position and the degree of similarity between the old and new position, this research design may be able to capture some of those nuances and identify when the transitions occur. Two general findings are predicted. First, transferees in less complex positions (as defined by their position title) should assimilate earlier than transferees in more complex positions. Second, transferees who report their new position as being similar to their old position should report successful assimilation earlier than transferees who report their new position being significantly different from their old position. By surveying all transferees who have between one day and 15 full months in their new positions, it should be possible to find distributions of individuals reporting they have assimilated at different time intervals. These predictions are predicated on the validity of the assumptions discussed above.

A second reason why 15 months has been selected as the cut-off point (versus a longer time interval) is that soldiers rarely spend more than 15 months in the same position. Although soldiers in Europe normally do not undergo another permanent change of station for three or four years, soldiers are often transferred to another position within the subordinate command after 15 to 18 months on station. If a time period longer than 15 months is used, many transferees will be in the early months of a second position within the same subordinate element of the parent organization. This situation would confound the data since the individual would be attempting to master the tasks of the new position and understand his or her role in the new position, although having already successfully assimilated into the subordinate organization.

Intuitively, phase models make sense. Newcomers and transferees traverse through what can be labeled an anticipation phase, an encounter phase, and a metamorphosis or assimilation phase (Van Maanen, 1975). However, it has been difficult to quantify the exact time or event that signifies transition from one phase to the next and researchers continue to struggle with this dilemma.

Organizational tactics approach.

The second line of research on organizational assimilation examines the various tactics used by companies to mold newcomers into the culture or sub-culture of the work center. The most accepted model examining the tactics employed by organizations is that of Van Maanen and Schein (1979). Van

Maanen and Schein identified six tactics that organizations can use to shape newcomers:

- formal vs. informal (isolating newcomers for a period of socialization vs. absorbing them into the mainstream workforce)
- collective vs. individual (socializing all newcomers as a group vs. socializing them individually)
- sequential vs. random (having a clear sequence of steps which must be mastered vs. random events having to be mastered)
- fixed vs. variable (having a set timetable for newcomers that signifies progress vs. each newcomer mastering each event at his or her own pace)
- serial vs. disjunctive (having a predecessor train the newcomer vs. on-the job training)
- investiture vs. divestiture (encouraging the newcomer to retain his or her prior identity vs. molding a new identity for the newcomer)

Jones (1986) expanded on the initial concepts advocated by Van Maanen & Schein and argued that these six socialization tactics form a continuum with *institutionalized* socialization tactics at one end and *individualized* socialization tactics at the opposite end. Institutionalized socialization tactics are designed to mold the newcomer or transferee to organizational standards by processing them through a series of shared experiences isolated from the mainstream work environment (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Institutionalized

socialization tactics are comprised of the collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture approaches to socialization.

Individualized socialization tactics allow newcomers and transferees more freedom in designing the roles and responsibilities they will undertake as they assimilate into the new work center. Individualized socialization tactics include the informal, random, individual, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture socialization tactics used by organizations. Unlike institutionalized tactics, the transferee or newcomer is socialized within the mainstream workforce when the organization engages in individualized socialization tactics (Jones, 1986). Nevertheless, it must be noted that socialization is still viewed as a molding process. Regardless of the tactics an organization employs (institutionalized, individualized, or a combination of the two), newcomers and transferees are viewed primarily as passive vessels absorbing organizational ideas and methods, or at best, only reactive to organizational socialization tactics (Louis, 1980). The organizational socialization literature of the 1970s and 1980s did not espouse an active role for the newcomer.

Specific to this research, the US Army initially operates from an institutionalized socialization perspective. New recruits, whether enlisted or officer, are sent as a group to initial entry training where they undergo an intense institutionalized socialization process isolated from the mainstream workforce. In addition to being collective, the training is formal, there is a clearly established timeline that is followed, there is a defined sequence of events that must be mastered within that timeline, role models are used to

train the new recruits, and finally, recruits are encouraged to reject their prior identity and accept the identity of a soldier. Recruits either conform to organizational standards or they are removed from the training base and discharged from the service.

After completing initial entry training soldiers move to their first full-time assignment. The socialization process at the permanent assignment is comprised of many of the tactics associated with individualized socialization. Transferees are generally socialized individually, interacting daily with the veteran members of the work center. Often there is no timetable or sequence of events that the transferee must complete. Additionally, the transferee can affirm and maintain his or her unique identity within the broader construct of the soldier identity. Stated differently, there is room for individualization of identities and positions within the new work center as long as that individualization remains within the overall parameters of what the organization believes it means to be a soldier.

Similar to phase models, tactics models that are used to explain organizational assimilation are focused primarily on what the organization does to mold the newcomer or transferee to organizational standards. Both processes portray the transferee or newcomer as a passive recipient of organizational influence – or at best only reactive to those influences -- and give little attention to individual actions that may influence the assimilation process (Morrison, 1993b). However, Miller and Jablin (1991) reported that newcomers often feel they do not receive as much information as they need

or that they do not have the contextual experience to make sense of the information they do receive from the assimilation experience. When this occurs the individual must acquire the information he or she feels is missing or inaccurate. In the late 1980s researchers began to examine the strategies that newcomers and transferees might use to proactively acquire this information.

Information Acquisition

Researchers have recently begun to argue that assimilation is significantly influenced through the interactions of newcomers and other members of the group (Erickson, 1988; Louis, 1990). These studies have argued that new members take an active role in facilitating and managing the assimilation process, and that they are not simply passive vessels absorbing all the organization has to offer (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998; Morrison, 1993b; Reichers, 1987). During the encounter phase of organizational assimilation newcomers need, and often receive information from others. This information assists the newcomer and transferee in partially understanding his or her role and responsibilities in the work center. However, the information voluntarily provided by both others and the organization is often perceived as inadequate or unintelligible and the newcomer frequently experiences uncomfortably high levels of uncertainty (Louis, 1980). To reduce this uncertainty to acceptable levels, newcomers proactively engage in information acquisition strategies (Louis, 1980; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993a). Kramer (1993a, 1993b) demonstrated that transferees also

increase their information acquisition efforts as they move from one work center to a new work center within the same parent organization. Kramer's research demonstrates that information acquisition may be a strategy used in all boundary passages, and not just upon first time entry into an organization.

Information acquisition is seen as a deliberate and conscious effort on the part of the newcomer (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Newcomers and transferees actively monitor their environment searching for relevant information (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). During this search they can seek information from many different sources including their role set (peers, subordinates, immediate supervisors), other organizational members (secretaries, clerical staff, members of other work centers, etc.), extra-organizational sources (clients for example), published documents (both written and electronic), and the task itself (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Of these various sources of information, the newcomers role set, especially coworkers and immediate supervisors, is believed to be the most important routine source of information (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Strategies of information acquisition.

Ashford and Cummings (1983) argued that individuals use two primary strategies to seek information, *monitoring* and *inquiry*. Monitoring involves observing the environment and gathering relevant information based on cues received from other actors in the environment (role set members for example). However, monitoring involves constructing meaning by interpreting the actions of others and making inferences about those actions. Comer

(1991) has argued that much of the relevant knowledge necessary to function in an organization is tacit, informal, and work center specific. Combine this with (a) the idea posited in social cognition literature espousing that individuals have preconceived theories about how the world works and tend to process information in line with those theories (Ashford & Cummings, 1983), and (b) Weick's (1995) sensemaking idea that sufficiency and plausibility often take precedence over accuracy, and it is reasonable to assume that a newcomer could misinterpret the actions that he or she is monitoring. This is especially conceivable in light of Conrad and Haynes (2001) assertion that the meaning of information in organizations is context-bound and cannot be found in the information itself. Although frequently used, monitoring has the potential of creating problems for the transferee or newcomer if he or she makes inappropriate or inaccurate sense of what is monitored. To assist in alleviating this potential problem of monitoring, newcomers and transferees also engage in active inquiry. Inquiry involves directly asking other individuals in the environment for the needed information. However, inquiry is a public event that involves interaction with others (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Miller & Jablin, 1991). Inherent in this public interaction is the potential for loss of face if the information acquisition strategy is rejected or if the inquiry is perceived as a sign of weakness in the individual initiating the inquiry. Nevertheless, newcomers and transferees often feel they need more information to successfully perform their job, and seeking that information from relevant others assists them in filling in their

perceived information gaps. However, newcomers also know that the benefits of information acquisition carry penalties or costs (Morrison, 1993b).

Research findings indicate that as the perceived need and perceived value of missing information increases, the more actively and frequently newcomers will seek that information (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003). Individuals balance the perceived value of the missing information against the perceived cost of obtaining that information and then select an appropriate information acquisition strategy. Research over the past decade has demonstrated that newcomers actively engage in information acquisition strategies in an attempt to influence the organizational assimilation process and carve out an individualized niche for themselves (Ashford & Cummings, 1983; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993a, 1993b).

Types of information sought.

In addition to discovering that newcomers actively engage in information acquisition strategies, research has also made considerable progress in identifying what types of information newcomers most often seek. Morrison (1993b) has argued that there are four basic types of information that newcomers seek and their success at gathering this information is directly related to the success or failure of their assimilation experience. First, the newcomer needs information about how to perform the specific job they have been hired to perform. Therefore the newcomer will seek *technical* information germane to the specific job related skills and knowledge associated with the position. Second, the newcomer needs information on the

specific role he or she is supposed to perform in the new work center. Based on this need, the newcomer will seek information concerning the expectations of others (especially co-workers and supervisors) if relevant *referent* information is not available through monitoring. Third, the newcomer must understand the culture of the work center, its values and its norms. Therefore newcomers will seek out relevant *normative* information. Finally, newcomers need information on how they are doing and will therefore seek performance and social feedback.

At the same time the newcomer or transferee is actively seeking and making sense of the information, members of the organization are attempting to teach the newcomer his or her job, role, and social position within the new work center. Yet, despite the fact that research has come to understand that assimilation is a joint process between the organization's attempts to socialize the new member and the new member's attempts to carve out an individualized niche, there is a great deal that is not understood about how these interactions unfold during the assimilation process (Morrison, 2002). Research has demonstrated that the relationships and interactions between veteran members of the work center and the newcomer are important to the assimilation process, but little research has examined these relationships and interactions. The purpose of this project is to examine how the egocentric networks formed by transferees entering a new position influence the assimilation outcome.

Communication Networks

Newcomer Learning and Network Ties

Although a transferee may possess relevant organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity information specific to the recently departed work center, the transferee must again undergo the assimilation process and learn the requisite organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity information specific to the new work environment (Kramer, 1993a; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). In addition to learning the new task, role, and relevant organizational information requirements, the transferee must transition into the social fabric of the new work center (Chao et al., 1994) while still remaining committed to the parent organization (Morrison, 2002). Transferees must learn what is expected of them and develop a sense of belonging, both critical tasks that must be accomplished during the assimilation process. Recent research indicates that examining the informal communication networks of transferees as they transition from outsider to insider within the new work center can better explain the assimilation process than the more traditional phase models, tactics approaches, and information acquisition strategies previously examined (Morrison, 2002). This perspective acknowledges that learning often occurs as a result of personal interaction between the focal actor (the transferee in this case) and others (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003).

Defining Communication Networks

“In social network research, organizations are viewed as clusters of people joined by a variety of links” (Morrison, 2002, p. 1149). Rather than examining the individual actor and his or her attributes, network research focuses on the communication connection between the actors (Monge and Contractor, 2001). “Communication networks are the patterns of contact between communication partners that are created by transmitting and exchanging messages through time and space” (Monge & Contractor, 2003, p. 440). Having stated this, it must be realized that associated with every organization are numerous inter- and intraorganizational communication networks. With numerous networks to choose from, the question becomes where to focus the research. For the purpose of this study, the research will focus on personal contact, i.e., the *egocentric* networks of individual transferees as they begin work after transferring to a new work center within the same parent organization.

An egocentric network is the unique set of contacts established and maintained by the focal actor (a transferee in this study) and does not typically include all the members within the specific work center or subsidiary organization (Marsden, 1990; Morrison, 2002; Scott, 2000). The focus of egocentric network analysis is on the relationship of the focal actor and his or her unique set of personal links. It is common in social network research to call the focal actor *ego*. The focal actor, or *ego*, is the individual whose unique social network is being examined; therefore the network is called an

egocentric network. All other actors that comprise ego's social network are known as *alter(s)*. For this study, focal actors are transferees having between one day and 15 full months at their current duty station.

Members of an organization interact with each other. During the encounter phase and early stages of metamorphosis initial interaction may be random; however the transferee will begin to learn to whom he or she can go repeatedly for needed information and support. Over time, these repeated interactions form the transferee's egocentric network (Brass, 1984, 1995; Haythornthwaite, 1996). As transferees undergo the assimilation process they will begin to develop patterns of interaction with veteran members of the work center, supervisors, and other newcomers. Additionally, the transferee may continue to maintain some of his or her former contacts that were established during previous assignments within the parent organization. As the transferee enters the encounter stage of assimilation, he or she will begin to find certain individuals that are repeatedly approached when seeking information about perceptions of the parent organization, role clarity information, task mastery information, and social support. These repeated contacts will eventually form the transferee's egocentric network.

The relationship between actors is the critical aspect of network analysis and the relationship defines the nature of the communication association (Brass, 1995; Monge & Contractor, 2003). Learning during assimilation, whether institutionalized or individualized, is a unique process. Each transferee must learn the specific roles, responsibilities, and norms applicable

to his or her place within the social and formal structure of the new work center. It is believed that members of the egocentric informational and friendship networks will assist in explaining these learning processes.

Within the egocentric network, there are two levels of analysis: (a) measures assigned to the individuals within the network and (b) measures associated with the overall egocentric network (Brass, 1995). Although there are many variables associated with social network analysis (see Brass, 1995; Jablin, 2001; Monge & Contractor, 2001, 2003 the measures that are critical to this study are, density, status, strength, size, and range.

Density indicates the degree to which members of the network are connected to each other. Density of an egocentric network is the ratio of all possible links in the network compared to the actual number of links present in the network – disregarding the direct links between ego and alter (Brass, 1995; Monge & Contractor, 2003; Scott, 2000). Dense networks indicate that all individuals in the network interact with all other members, or at least a significant number of the other members. Less dense networks indicate that members in the network do not communicate directly with all other members on a regular and frequent basis. For example, in a less dense network, actor A may interact with B, B interacts with C, and C interacts with D. The only way for A to pass a message to D, and vice versa, is to pass that message through B and C. In a dense network actor A may interact directly with B, C, and D. Therefore, actor A could pass a message to any single alter, or all alters, without having to go through an intermediary.

It is important to note that in egocentric network analysis it is common practice not to count the direct links between ego and the various alters when determining the egocentric networks density (Scott, 2000). The direct relationships between ego and the various alters identified in the network will exist almost by definition, based on the research question. For example, in one of the questionnaires used in this research project, individuals are asked to “write the initials of the individuals who have been regular and valuable sources of information” (Phase II, Question I, located in Appendix A). To count the links to these individuals named by ego would automatically inflate the density of the network by the number of alters listed. If ego listed four contacts, which would equate to ten possible direct links in the overall egocentric network, 40% of the total possible links would be the four direct links from ego to the four alters he or she listed. Therefore any measure of density would be inflated by 40% if these direct links were considered. To alleviate this inflationary practice, the direct links from ego to alter(s) are not considered when determining the density of an egocentric network, only the links between alters are considered.

Status refers to the official position of an individual in the organizational hierarchy (Lin, 1999). A network’s status is determined by the various positions network members hold within the organizational hierarchy. The higher an individual’s position within the organizational hierarchy, the higher the official status of that position. Therefore, the status of an individual

egocentric network will be determined by the average status of all members comprising that egocentric network.

Size is a measure of how many individuals are in the egocentric network. Theoretically, the greater the number of actors in the network, the lower the density of that network (Brass, 1995). Maintaining relationships requires a certain level of effort and a certain amount of time. If ego maintains a large network, then he or she will theoretically spend less time and effort with each member in the network, since by definition, reoccurring patterns of interaction must occur in order for an alter to be considered a member of ego's network. Morrison's studies (1993a, 1993b, 2002) indicated that most egos only maintain six to eight alters in their various networks (friendship, informational, trust, etc.).

Range (also known as diversity) refers to the breadth of sources that are available to ego (Haythornthwaite, 1996). The number of ties ego maintains in diverse work centers of the organization will determine the range of ego's network. The more networks ego is connected to, the more exclusive is the information he or she should be able to gather from the various sources (Burt, 1992). Therefore, an egocentric network range is defined by the number of separate and distinct alters that ego is connected to that are working in separate and distinct work centers of the organization (Campbell, Marsden, & Hurlbert, 1986; Monge & Contractor, 2003).

Finally, the *strength of a tie* is an indication of how much time ego interacts with a given alter, the intensity of each interaction that occurs, and

the level of intimacy or reciprocal services provided by ego and alter during each interaction. Weak ties represent relationships characterized by relatively low levels of intimacy, intensity, and time expended on each contact (Granovetter, 1973). Conversely, strong ties between ego and alter indicate a relatively high level of intimacy, intensity, and time spent on each contact (Granovetter, 1973; Krackhardt, 1992). Burt (1992) argued that a network comprised primarily of weak ties would provide the actor with unique and diverse information whereas a dense network would provide ego redundant information.

With an understanding of egocentric network structure and measures, it is possible to examine these networks and their influence on assimilation. However, before stating the hypotheses of this study, it is first important to examine applicable communication theories relevant to this research project.

Applicable Theories in Communication Network Research

Monge & Contractor (2001) argued that structural analysis of organizations tends to cluster along three lines of inquiry: positional, relational, and cultural. These lines of inquiry impact network analysis research and ideas.

When examining relations from the positional perspective, communication network structure is viewed as a pattern of relationships based on official positions within the organization. Every position within the organization is assigned a formal set of roles that provide a relatively stable and enduring structure within the organization – regardless of the individuals who occupy

the roles of the specified positions. From the network analysis perspective, the positional venue would imply that communication patterns are dictated by the formal relationships assigned to positions, and not the individual actors physically occupying those positions. The position and associated roles dictate who communicates with whom; therefore, the positional approach argues that communication exchanges within the organization follow the path of the formal organizational structure.

An examination of communication from the cultural venue focuses upon specific messages transmitted within the communication network of the organization. It examines meaning, interpretations, and the use of symbols (Monge & Contractor, 2001). This perspective is concerned with the production and reproduction of meanings that emerge from communication interactions and how the actor's individually constructed meanings increase or constrain subsequent interactions between individuals. The focus is not upon who communicates with whom, rather it is upon the results of specific communication acts and their likelihood of increasing or constraining future interactions.

Finally, the relational approach focuses neither on the specific position nor the meaning obtained from individual communication acts. The relational venue focuses on observed communication acts that establish and maintain communication ties (Monge & Contractor, 2001). These communication patterns form the emergent communication network within the organization of study regardless of the formal positions or roles assigned the individual actors

that create those ties, or the meanings derived from individual communication acts. The relational approach examines the patterns of interaction between actors regardless of position or meaning.

Egocentric network research is concerned primarily with the relational aspect of the communication network. This research project will examine the emergent egocentric communication networks that form as transferees undergo the assimilation process, and consider how these networks influence assimilation. By focusing on the relational aspect of the communication network, and isolating the egocentric networks established by each transferee, I will not have to map the entire organizational communication network of the 21st Theater Support Command. It has been argued that newcomers and transferees form relational contacts with other members of the work center so as to learn what is required to successfully perform on the job and to reduce the uncertainty associated with the new position (Louis, 1980). The following section will address Uncertainty Reduction Theory and how this theory applies to the research project.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory

Organizations have their own languages, symbols, and ways of conducting business that are unique to the particular setting and environment (Monge & Contractor, 2001). Louis (1980) has argued that within organizations, subcultures develop based on functional or geographic boundaries. Comer (1991) has further argued that knowledge and information are often work center specific and tacit. Conrad & Haynes (2001) suggested

that meaning is only understandable in the context-bound use of that information and not in the information itself. Therefore, regardless of the number of previous transfer experiences, each boundary passage involves a degree of uncertainty for the newcomer or transferee. This is because much of the information that is needed or relevant is work center specific and tacit and cannot be learned elsewhere. Kramer (1993a) has argued that uncertainty reduction theory provides relevant structure for understanding the assimilation process.

Two of the seven axioms of uncertainty reduction theory are relevant to this research project. Axiom 1 suggests that “given the high level of uncertainty present at the onset of the entry phase, as the amount of verbal communication between strangers increases, the level of uncertainty for each interactant in the relationship will decrease” (Berger & Calabrese, 1975, p. 101-102). Axiom 3 suggests that “high levels of uncertainty cause increases in information seeking behavior” (p. 103). Axioms 1 and 3 provide the essential framework that the other axioms and theorems of uncertainty reduction theory are dependent upon (Kramer, 1999). Transferees face an increased level of uncertainty as they enter the new work center. Developing networks of contacts assists the transferee in reducing his or her level of uncertainty.

Transferees, similar to newcomers, communicate to reduce uncertainty in an attempt to make their new environments more predictable (Louis, 1980; Weick, 1979). Transferees face problems similar to those experienced by all

newcomers. Transferees must develop relationships with members of the new work center, learn the tasks necessary to master the position, understand the role relationships within the new work center, and gain the knowledge necessary to function within the environment of the new work center (Kramer, 1993a; Morrison, 2002).

The stress associated with this uncertainty (Louis, 1980) should cause transferees to seek information in an attempt to reduce the uncertainty and master the situation (Kramer, 1993a). Similarly, veteran members of the work center will experience an increased level of uncertainty until the new member is brought up to speed and integrated into the fabric of the work center.

Kramer (1993a) found that when transferees were able to develop communication networks that reduced uncertainty, those transferees had more positive attitudes than transferees who were unable to construct such networks. He argued that during the encounter and metamorphosis phases, newcomers and experienced members of the new work center increased their information exchanges to reduce uncertainty in the environment while developing communication links – i.e. networks.

In summary, a great deal of research has been undertaken examining organizational assimilation from both an organizational socialization approach and an information acquisition approach. However, given that the interactions between newcomers and veteran members of the work center play a major role in the assimilation process, too little research has been conducted examining social networks and their influence on organizational assimilation.

Morrison (2002) has begun to fill this gap, and this research project proposes to expand on Morrison's work by examining transferees rather than newcomers. Finally, an additional unique feature of this research project is that it looks at public organizations engaged in individualized socialization processes versus private organizations engaged primarily in institutionalized socialization processes.

Hypotheses

As transferees enter the new work center they must master the required tasks of their new position, they must learn their expected and accepted role in the immediate work group, and they must learn to view the parent organization (e.g., the US Army in this research project) as it is seen by veteran members of the new work center. Recent research (Morrison, 2002) has argued that the composition of the individual egocentric network can assist or hinder the various learning requirements associated with intraorganizational transition. As such, the structure of each transferee's egocentric informational network should provide insights into the mechanisms that allow this learning to occur.

The idea to use egocentric networks to examine assimilation sprouted from seeds planted in the arguments surrounding the use and purpose of strong and weak network ties. Granovetter (1973) argued that weak ties are more likely to link members of dispersed groups. As the number of weak ties expands away from ego's immediate group, the various alters are less likely to be interconnected, and many of these alters will not be connected directly

to ego. Having a large network of non-redundant informational contacts implies that the alters comprising this type of network will be employed in different sections of the organization and have access to information that is different from the information that is readily available to ego and members of his or her immediate work center. These weak ties can provide ego with unique, non-redundant information that can potentially be used to ego's advantage (Burt, 1992). Second, these individuals should be able to provide a unique perspective on the overall operations and functions of the organization.

These unique contacts could potentially provide increased understanding and knowledge about the parent organization. Knowledge of the organization is conceptually defined in this research project as the transferee's ability to understand the parent organization in the context of the local work center. It includes understanding the parent organization's norms, policies, reporting relationships, terminology, goals, history, politics, and culture as seen in the context of the local work center. Knowledge of the organization is operationalized in this study using an eight-item scale originally developed by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) and replicated by Morrison (2002). Although transferees in this research project are assigned to the 21st Theater Support Command, the parent organization is the United States Army. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₁ – Transferees with large, low-density informational networks of relatively weak ties will have greater knowledge of the US Army than transferees with small, dense networks of relatively strong ties.

In addition to network size and weak ties, the range of a transferee's egocentric network may provide additional information necessary for successful assimilation. Range for the purpose of this research project will be operationalized as the total number of different work centers represented by the various alters comprising ego's informational network. By maintaining ties with members of distinct and separate work centers within the subordinate organization (for example operations, logistics, and administrative sections), ego should be able to gain additional insight into how his or her particular work center and job fit within the overall structure of the US Army. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₂ – A transferee's knowledge about the US Army will be positively related to the range of his or her informational network, defined as the number of separate work units represented in the egocentric network.

However, organizational knowledge is only one aspect of learning during the encounter and metamorphosis stage of assimilation. Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) posited that for many newcomers organizational level issues become distal during the early stages of assimilation and the newcomer tends to focus on content areas relevant to the current position. As the transferee enters the new work center he or she must learn the specific expectations of the role required of the position and the skills necessary to

perform the new job to standard – in other words he or she must achieve role clarity and task mastery.

Again, role clarity focuses on learning the necessary referent information associated with work center role demands and understanding what work group members and supervisors consider appropriate behavior. Role clarity is conceptually defined as understanding the expectations about what the group believes to be the transferee's typical behavioral characteristics specific to the social context of the new work center (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Role clarity includes knowing the accepted boundaries of authority and responsibility associated with the new position (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993a; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) along with learning and modeling the behaviors and attitudes that are expected and rewarded in the new work center. Role clarity includes knowing what members of the work center consider to be good performance, knowing the responsibilities and constraints associated with the new position, knowing the social interactions acceptable and expected in the new work center, and knowing how much autonomy is available to modify the various routines of work performance. Role clarity is operationalized in this research project using an eight-item scale developed by Morrison (2002).

Task mastery is conceptually defined as learning and mastering the technical information and skills needed to perform the specific work tasks required of the new position. Comer (1991) argued that much of the knowledge needed to master required tasks in a work center can be informal,

work center specific, or both, and can only be learned after assuming the position in the new work center. Task mastery includes knowing all the requirements associated with each mandatory task, developing the necessary skills to perform all the essential tasks of the position, knowing how to perform each task according to the standards of the new work center, understanding the goals and objectives of the specific job as they relate to each task, and knowing how much authority is available to modify or change the way each task is performed. Task mastery is operationalized in this research project using a ten-item scale developed by Morrison (2002) that was based on her previous work (1993a) with input of three items from Chao et al. (1994).

A unique, diverse, non-redundant network of weak ties may not be the best network to enhance task mastery and role clarity. To learn the skills of the new job and the new role, the transferee needs contacts that he or she can go to repeatedly for information and assistance. In these learning situations the transferee needs reliable, accurate, consistent, and redundant points of contact that are familiar with the work center, the specific job, and the role responsibilities associated with the job. Researchers have generally argued that a dense, small network of relatively strong ties is the best type of network for learning specific details of a position and role (Krackhardt, 1992; Morrison, 2002). However, Morrison's research (2002) did not fully support this argument. In her research of new accountants entering their first full-time position, Morrison found that density and tie strength were both positively related to task mastery and role clarity. However, contrary to her

expectations, she found a positive relationship between network size for both task mastery and role clarity where she predicted a negative relationship. Stated differently, larger egocentric networks were positively associated with role clarity and task mastery where the literature normally indicates the opposite to be true.

However, large is a relative term and individual focal actors maintain many egocentric networks (for example, friendship, informational, trust, and advice networks to name a few). In research conducted by Ibarra (1992), Morrison (2002), and a pilot study for this project, newcomers generally reported less than ten contacts in any single informational or friendship network.

Brass (1995) argued that as the density or size of a network expands, the focal actor would be required to spend less and less time with each individual alter, suggesting that large networks are comprised primarily of weak ties. A person can only maintain a certain level of strong ties because of the time, intensity, and commitment that are required of strong ties. Ten or fewer alters may not be a 'large' network in the sense that Brass was discussing when examining whole networks but maintaining eight to ten members in any single egocentric network may be manageable, yet large in an egocentric network. A network consisting of ten members has 45 possible pair-wise connections in a non-directional network analysis and 90 possible pair-wise connections in a directional network analysis. For this research project, large egocentric networks will be operationalized as networks consisting of seven or more

members, medium-sized networks will be operationalized as having between four and six members and small egocentric networks will be operationalized as having three or fewer members. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₃ – Transferees with dense, larger informational egocentric networks of strong ties will have greater task mastery and role clarity than transferees with small, less dense networks of weak ties. That is, task mastery and role clarity will be positively related to informational egocentric network size, density and tie strength.

Social network studies (Ibarra, 1995; Lin, 1999) have also emphasized the value of having higher status individuals in one's network. Generally speaking, the higher the formal position within the organization, or the greater the prestige of a position within the organization, the higher the status of that position. Lin (1999) defined network *status* as the degree to which members of the network occupied higher status positions within the organization under examination. Louis (1990) and Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992) have argued that members occupying higher levels in the organization possess certain types of information, and can provide that information to new comers and transferees, which is simply not available from the transferee's peers or subordinate contacts. Status in this research project was determined by averaging the staff levels of all alters listed in the respondent's egocentric network. Status ranged from a score of 1, which means all network members are subordinates, to a score of 4, meaning that all network members are senior leaders.

In addition to having greater knowledge and information than peers, immediate supervisors and superiors in the military have often held the positions of their subordinates prior to receiving their promotions. Therefore, supervisors and superiors potentially possess not only greater knowledge of the organization; they also often possess specific knowledge about how to perform the required tasks of their subordinate's job and they more clearly understand the role expected of their subordinates. Because of the potential that a supervisor or superior has already performed the task and occupied the specific role of a subordinate (or at least has spent time supervising the previous individual occupying the position that the transferee now fills), it is hypothesized that:

H₄ – A transferee's task mastery and role clarity will be positively related to the status of his or her informational network, defined as the average hierarchical level of network members.

In addition to learning the role, task, and knowledge of the organization, the transferee must also fit within the social fabric of the new work center and move from work center outsider to work center insider. O'Neill and Lenn (1995) have argued that workers take their jobs personally and generally like the people with whom they work. Establishing satisfying work relationships with other members of the work center is a critical element of the successful assimilation process (Chao et al., 1994; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Morrison (1993a) defined fitting into the social fabric of the immediate work center as social integration.

Social integration involves becoming an accepted member of the new work center (Morrison, 2002). It is conceptually defined as the process whereby a transferee develops successful and satisfying work relationships with other group members so as to move from work center outsider to work center insider, thereby becoming a fully accepted member of the local work group. Social integration implies that the transferee has crossed, or is on the path to crossing, the inclusionary boundary within the new work center. It involves the transferee being accepted by his or her new co-workers, feeling comfortable around his or her new co-workers, and being readily identified as a member of the new work center by both members of the work center and outsiders. Social integration is operationalized in this project using a seven-item scale developed by Morrison (2002) based on her previous research (1993a), with elements borrowed from Chao et al. (1994).

A transferee's friendship egocentric network is comprised of the unique set of contacts that provide social support and a sense of belonging within the work center and organization (Brass, 1984; Morrison, 2002). Although these contacts may be members of ego's informational network, research has supported the argument that individuals form distinct informational and friendship egocentric networks with some overlap between groups (Brass, 1995; Morrison, 1993b, 2002; Shah, 1998).

Similar to the informational egocentric network structure providing evidence of learning during the assimilation process, the structure of friendship egocentric networks should provide insight into the socialization

aspects of assimilation. Friendship egocentric networks influence attitudes (Brass, 1995), attachment (Krackhardt & Porter, 1985, 1986), selection of referent others (Shah, 1998), and a sense of support within groups and organizations (Morrison, 2002). Friendship in this research project is operationalized as organizational members who ego would be willing to see socially outside of work, or when not working together on a project. To expend the energy and effort to voluntarily spend time with another person outside of work implies that the friendship tie is a strong tie.

Podolny and Baron (1997) argued that friendship egocentric networks were most likely dense networks of strong relationships. Friends should provide reliable, consistent, and redundant social cues that the transferee can turn to again and again as he or she seeks social support, social integration, and attachment to the work center. Developing an egocentric network of contacts that one interacts with at work, and socializes with after work, requires time and effort. Since an individual only has a certain amount of time outside of work to devote to members from the work place, it is argued that friendship egocentric networks are often comprised of interconnected members with strong ties (Brass, 1995). It is generally argued that dense networks comprised of strong ties are usually smaller than networks of less well connected weak ties. Density and tie strength are normally inversely related to size because of the time and effort that ego must spend maintaining these strong, dense relationships (Brass, 1985; Burt, 1992; Morrison, 2002; Scott, 2000).

However, similar to the argument about network size and learning previously addressed in the section discussing hypothesis 3, the term size may be relative. In research conducted by Ibarra (1992), Morrison, (2002), and a pilot study for this project, newcomers generally reported less than ten contacts in any single informational or friendship egocentric network. Brass (1985) argued that as the density or size of an egocentric network expands the focal actor would be required to spend less and less time with each individual alter, thus indicating that large egocentric networks are comprised primarily of weak ties. A person can only maintain a certain level of strong ties because of the time, intensity, and commitment that are required of strong ties. However, ten or fewer alters may not be a 'large' egocentric network in the sense that Brass was discussing. Maintaining eight to ten members in any single egocentric network, although large compared to three or four members, may be manageable in an egocentric network. Therefore it is hypothesized that:

H₅ – Transferees with larger, dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties will have a greater sense of social integration than those with smaller, dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties.

H₆ – Transferees with dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties will have a greater sense of social integration than those with less dense friendship egocentric networks comprised of weak ties, regardless of the size of the network.

However, fitting into the social fabric of the local work center is only part of the assimilation process. In addition to developing a positive sense of attachment to the immediate work center, for the assimilation process to be considered a success, the transferee must also continue to maintain a sufficient level of attachment to the parent organization (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister 1998; Feldman, 1981; Reichers, 1987). Morrison (1993a) defined maintaining attachment to the parent company as organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment involves continued commitment to the parent organization following the job transfer. Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982) argued that measuring organizational commitment required determining the relative strength of an employee's involvement in and identification with the parent organization. Organizational commitment is characterized by the newcomer accepting the shared values of the organization, developing a desire to continue employment with the organization, and developing a willingness to expend energy and effort on the organizations behalf (Allen & Meyer, 1990). As such, organizational commitment is conceptually defined as an affective or emotional attachment to the parent organization (i.e., the US Army) such that the strongly committed transferee identifies with and enjoys being a member of the parent organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990a). Organizational commitment is operationalized in this research project using Allen & Meyer's (1990a) eight-item affective commitment scale.

As new recruits enter the Army, they undergo an intense institutionalized socialization process. Jones (1986) argued that newcomers undergoing an

institutionalized socialization process would be more committed to the parent organization than individuals undergoing an individualized socialization process. During the institutionalized socialization program newcomers are exposed and indoctrinated in an information-laden environment that is supportive of the organization. In such an environment there is little chance of receiving inconsistent messages that might lead the newcomer to question whether he or she should form a commitment to the organization. However, once new recruits finish the institutionalized socialization process they undergo their first job transfer. Rather than going through another institutionalized socialization process at the new work center, transferees in the U.S. Army undergo an individualized socialization process.

As part of the assimilation process in the new work center, the transferee must learn to understand and appreciate the parent organization as it is seen by veteran members of the work center. In an individualized socialization program, the transferee may be exposed to numerous conflicting messages about the parent organization. These mixed messages may influence his or her continued commitment to the parent organization.

Allen & Meyer (1990) found support for Jones's hypotheses. In a study of 132 college graduates beginning employment with a new company, those who underwent an initial institutionalized socialization process reported higher levels of commitment at six months than those new employees undergoing an individualized socialization process. However, at twelve months the support disappeared and there was no significant difference in organizational

commitment between newcomers that had undergone an initial institutionalized socialization process and those that had undergone an individualized socialization process. Allen & Meyer (1990) surmised that whatever was responsible for the statistical difference at six months was no longer operational at twelve months. They suggested that perhaps the cause of this change was brought about by changes in the socialization practices as time passed during the course of the first year. The institutionalized socialization experience ended and newcomers joined their permanent work groups. In the permanent work groups socialization continued, but in an individualized environment rather than an institutionalized environment.

As transferees in this research project enter the new work center they undergo an individualized socialization process. It is reasonable to believe that as a transferee interacts with veteran members of the work center, he or she will encounter individuals who have a range of commitment to the Army. These alters will send mixed messages, some supporting a commitment to the Army, others expressing a lack of commitment to the Army. These inconsistent messages may increase the transferee's anxiety and confusion about their level of commitment to the Army. However, if the transferee develops a network of friends in multiple work centers in the organization, and if these new friends occupy different status levels, he or she may be able to work through this increased anxiety and confusion. Members of different work centers and different status levels will offer varying perspectives based on their exposure to different aspects of organizational life. By maintaining

friendships with members of distinct and separate work centers (for example operations, logistics, and administrative sections), and by maintaining friends of different status (implying different experiences and differing amounts of time in the Army), ego should have sufficient ties that provide positive support for continued commitment to the Army. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₇ – A transferee's organizational commitment will be positively related to the range and status of his or her friendship egocentric network.

Transferees are not new to the parent organization. By definition they have worked in at least one other subordinate element of the parent organization prior to undergoing their intraorganizational job transfer and moving to their current position. In organizations like the US Army, where virtually all members transfer ever three or four years, it is quite possible to serve multiple assignments in the same subordinate unit, with breaks in-between assignments. Having served a previous assignment in the work center should enable the transferee to assimilate faster than individuals that have no prior experience in the work center. A transferee having a previous assignment in the new work center has some level of familiarity with the organization that is not available to a transferee that has no prior work experience in the subordinate organization. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H₈ – Transferees who have had previous assignments within the work unit will assimilate faster than people who are assigned to the unit for the first time.

Rand Corporation (2002), in a study conducted for the Department of Defense, reported that one-third of the Army undergoes a permanent change of station each year. The majority of moves occur during the summer and fall; however some individuals do transfer during the winter and spring. Because of this high rate of turn-over it is possible that a transferee may encounter individuals in the new work center that he or she worked with in previous assignments. If these individuals were members of ego's former friendship or informational egocentric networks, it is reasonable to believe that ego will try to reincorporate these former contacts into his or her emergent egocentric networks, thus speeding up the assimilation process.

By already knowing individuals in the new work center from previous assignments, ego should have reliable contacts that require less work to incorporate into his or her emerging egocentric networks. Knowing someone already in the work center will allow ego to have an immediate, known alter. Ego will not have to go through the relationship-building process with this previously known alter. Ego can immediately start seeking information and support from this individual. This known alter (that is a former member of ego's informational or friendship egocentric networks from a previous job assignment) should assist ego in learning his or her job, assist ego in understanding his or her new role, assist ego in understanding the parent organization as it is understood by veteran members of the work center, and assist ego in becoming a fully accepted member of the new work center. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₉ – Transferees who find members in their new work center that were members of previous informational or friendship egocentric networks will reincorporate these members into their new informational and friendship egocentric networks and assimilate faster than transferees who find no former contacts in the new work center.

Chao et al. (1994) argued that learning is a continuous process and there are rarely discrete points where researchers or practitioners can quantitatively or qualitatively say that newcomers and transferees have moved from one distinct phase to another. Additionally, it is unlikely that newcomers or transferees develop competencies and acquire knowledge at a uniform rate across all occupations, organizations, and conditions (Jablin, 2001). Pinder and Schroeder (1987) argued that the time to assimilation may vary based on the complexity of the job. Furthermore, management positions may take a year or more before the incumbent feels he or she has mastered the position and successfully assimilated (Weick & Ashford, 2001). These arguments lead to two additional hypotheses. First, blue-collar positions are generally believed to be more routine and simpler to perform than white-collar jobs, and management is often more complex than either white-collar or blue-collar jobs. “Conceptually, white-collar workers hold salaried or professional jobs and usually do not perform manual labor. In contrast, blue-collar workers hold hourly jobs that generally involve some physical tasks. On average, white-collar positions require more formal education and training, while most blue-

collar skills are acquired relatively quickly” (Groshen & Williams, 1992). Based on the above arguments it is hypothesized that:

H₁₀ – Blue collar workers will assimilate faster than white collar workers and managers.

Furthermore, as members transfer from one subordinate position in an organization to another, some of those individuals will move into positions very similar to a previous assignment while others will move into positions unlike any job they have ever occupied before. Similarity should be negatively associated with uncertainty. Stated differently, if a transferee moves into a new position that is very similar to a previously held position his or her level of uncertainty should be less than if he or she moves into a new position that is very different from anything he or she has previously done. If the new position is very similar to a previous position held in the parent organization, the transferee only needs to learn the aspects of the job that are unique to the new work center. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H₁₁ – Transferees who move into positions similar to previous positions will assimilate faster than individuals that assume positions that are very different from previous positions.

In conclusion, knowing one’s role within the work center, understanding how to perform the specific tasks of the job assigned, understanding the role required of the new position, successfully integrating into the new work center, and remaining committed to the parent organization are all indicators of successful assimilation. The development and composition of egocentric

social networks should provide indications of how well transferees master the requirements and social relationships needed to become fully functioning members of the local work center while still remaining committed to the parent organization.

CHAPTER 3 – Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will explain the research design and address data collection and analysis. The first section addresses the purpose of the research. The second section addresses the research design and its rationale. The third section addresses the context and setting in which the research took place. The fourth section provides a description of the participants involved in the research project. The fifth section addresses the research instrument and discusses the instruments development. The sixth section addresses the processes used to administer the instruments, and the final section addresses the methods used to test the hypotheses.

Purpose of the Research Project

The research project examined the egocentric social networks formed by transferees following intra-organizational job transfers and attempted to explain how those networks influenced assimilation. I examined how various egocentric social network characteristics influenced the dependent variables associated with the assimilation process. There were five dependent variables tested in this study.

1. Knowledge of the Organization
2. Task Mastery
3. Role Clarity
4. Social Integration
5. Organizational Commitment

Research Questions

The goal of the study was to answer four specific research questions. The four research questions being addressed in this study were:

1. Do egocentric informational networks formed by transferees influence their ability to (a) master the specific tasks of the job, (b) fulfill the role of the new position, and (c) understand the parent organization in the context of the new work center?
2. Do egocentric friendship networks formed by transferees assist in their social integration within the new work center while still enabling them to remain committed to the parent organization?
3. Are there aspects of the degree of difference between the old and new positions that provide some predictive indications on how difficult the assimilation process will be for an individual transferee?
4. Does the type of job influence the assimilation process?

Context of the Research

The setting for the study was a subordinate organization of United States Army Europe. During the time of the study this organization was engaged primarily in logistics support operations. The unit was headquartered in Kaiserslautern, Germany. However, members of the organization were located throughout Germany, the BENELUX countries, and Italy. The organization employs approximately 3,800 full time active duty soldiers. During the data collection period the unit was heavily involved in fighting the Global War on Terrorism. Approximately one-third of the unit had recently

returned from deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Another one-third of the unit was on deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan. The remaining one-third of the unit was preparing for possible deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The data collection phase occurred in the May-June time period and these deployments did not occur until the October-December time period. Although the knowledge of impending deployments may have added to the stress levels of individual respondents I do not believe they had an impact on respondent answers to the survey questions. A condition established by the organization before granting permission to conduct the research was that I not survey members of the organization that were currently deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, so these individuals were not part of the sample population.

The primary mission of the organization was to support the combatant commander and the fighting units of United States Army Europe. As such, the vast majority of soldiers in the unit provided either logistical support or security. Logistical operations included materials management, materials requisitioning, warehousing, distribution management, transportation mode management, and truck transportation operations. Security operations included military police, K-9 dog teams, and explosive ordnance disposal teams. Other ancillary unit functions included religious coverage in the form of chaplains and chaplains' assistants, legal assistance, resource management, and both fixed and rotary-wing aircraft operations and maintenance. With such a wide array of occupations, there were blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, and managers assigned to the unit.

Participants

As mentioned previously, the organization employed approximately 3,800 active duty soldiers. Of these individuals, nearly 1,400 were deployed in Afghanistan or Iraq and not considered available for this research project. Of the nearly 2,400 remaining individuals, 1,373 had been in the organization less than 15 full-months, thus meeting the criteria to participate in the research project. The human resource department did not have current mailing addresses for 43 of the 1,373 soldiers so those 43 individuals were dropped from the potential pool of participants. An additional 49 members were serving as guards at the United States Confinement Facility in Mannheim, Germany. Because of the negative publicity the Department of Defense had recently received over the treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, these 49 soldiers were also dropped from the potential pool of participants at the request of the chief of staff of the organization. As a result, 1,281 individuals were mailed a survey packet and invited to participate in the research project. Of the 1,281 surveys mailed, 222 were returned as non-deliverable. Follow-up research indicated that these individuals were no longer members of the 21st TSC and had moved to other organizations within United States Army Europe. Of the 1,059 surveys that possibly reached participants, 213 individuals completed the instruments and returned them to the researcher. Of the 213 returned responses, 17 were incomplete and could not be used in the data analysis

phase of the project². 196 completed surveys were received and used in the data analysis phase of the research. This represents a response rate of 19%. Although this response rate is lower than desirable from an organizational perspective, the demographic composition of the sample is useful for a study such as this since the unit of analysis is the individual and his or her perceived egocentric network.

Analysis of the responses indicates that there are some characteristics of the sample that differ from the sample population. Specific demographic characteristics are provided in Table 4.1, and a discussion of the results is addressed in Chapter 4.

The Research Design

Much of the literature investigating organizational assimilation examines newcomers entering their first full-time employment following graduation. However, as noted earlier, Van Maanen & Schein (1979) have persuasively argued that “the problems of organizational socialization refer to any and all passages undergone by members of an organization” (p. 213). Although there is a large body of organizational assimilation research examining newcomers, there is little work examining assimilation following intraorganizational job transitions. Furthermore, the majority of assimilation research is focused on the individual, examining personal attributes and ignoring the interaction that occurs between the new member and veteran members of the work center.

² Six individuals did not return Part I and II of the survey, seven individuals did not complete Part III of the survey, and four individuals failed to complete Part IV of the survey.

Recent research (Morrison, 2002) examining organizational assimilation has begun to analyze egocentric social networks, exploring the interaction between newcomers and veteran members of the work center. This study expands on the research begun by Morrison and utilizes several survey instruments to gather data for analysis.

Survey research involves the collection of data from individuals through their response to questions. The purpose of survey research is to generalize from a sample group to a population in an attempt to make inferences about certain attributes of the population (Schutt, 2001). A survey approach was chosen for this research project for four primary reasons. First, the survey is an efficient method of gathering data from people who have limited time to devote to the researcher's project. Second survey research is particularly well suited for gathering data from people who are dispersed over a wide geographic area. Third, the versatility of survey research allows for data collection on several aspects of the same phenomenon without unduly intruding on the subject's time and space. Fourth, when perceptions of communication processes are the focus of the investigation, self-reports are often the most appropriate means for collecting data (Miller, 2001). Finally, a survey design was chosen for this project because members of the armed services are familiar with survey research.

Researchers have only begun to examine organizational assimilation in the context of egocentric network formation. By expanding the sample population, examining a different aspect of the phenomenon, and examining a

different environment in which the phenomenon occurs, this study will add to the body of knowledge associated with both organizational assimilation and egocentric network analysis.

The Research Instrument

All surveys used in this research project were based on existing instruments that demonstrated internal validity and reliability in previous research projects examining egocentric networks. Transferee egocentric networks were examined using two instruments initially used by Morrison (2002). Dr. Morrison provided the instruments via email and stated that they were not under copyright. The instruments were modeled after surveys used in prior studies (Chao, et al., 1994; Ibarra, 1992, 1995; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Podolny & Baron, 1997).

Part I of the survey was designed to measure the friendship network that the transferee developed after arriving at the new work center. On the first line of the instrument each respondent was asked to write the initials of all the people employed in the new work center whom he or she considered to be a friend. *Friendship* was operationalized to mean 'other employees that you might choose to see socially outside of work, or when you are not working together.' Respondents were instructed to list as many or as few friendship contacts as were relevant.

After listing their friends on the first line, respondents were asked a series of questions about each relationship. Specifically they were asked to fill in the friends 'staff level,' 'staff section,' 'how they met,' a series of questions

about 'the closeness of their relationship,' and 'the number of other people in the egocentric network that they thought each 'alter' would consider to be one of his or her friends.'

Part II of the instrument was designed to gather data about each respondent's informational egocentric network. On the first line respondents were asked to list the initials of 'people in the work center that have been regular and valuable sources of job-related or organization-related information.' Again, respondents were asked to list as many or as few informational contacts as were relevant.

Similar to Part I, the wording and instructions in this section of the instrument were adapted from previous measures (Ibarra, 1992, 1995; Morrison, 2002). After completing the header row, respondents were asked a series of questions about their egocentric information network ties. Specifically they were asked to list each alters 'staff level,' 'staff section,' 'how they met,' 'the total number of months they have been working with each alter,' a series of questions about the frequency of contact with each alter, 'what types of information they receive from each alter,' and 'during any given week how often they thought each alter talked with or worked with other alters listed on the survey.' These two instruments provided the data needed to determine the informational and friendship egocentric network independent variables of: size, range, density, status, and tie strength.

Part III of the research instrument included three sections that were designed to gather data related to the various aspects of learning that are

believed to occur during the encounter and metamorphosis phases of organizational assimilation. Part III collected information pertaining to knowledge of the organization, task mastery, and role clarity. First, knowledge of the organization was measured using an eight-item scale originally developed by Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) and modified by Morrison (2002). Second, task mastery was measured using a ten-item scale. Three items were first used by Chao et al. in their 1994 study, and the other items were developed and used by Morrison in 1993a and 2002. Morrison also used the three items developed by Chao and her colleagues in her 2002 study. Third, role clarity was measured using an eight-item scale developed by Morrison (1993a, 2002).

Part IV of the instrument measured organizational commitment using an eight item scale originally developed by Allen and Meyer (1990a) and replicated by Morrison (2002). Finally, Part V of the instrument measured social integration using a seven item scale previously used by Morrison (1993a, 2002) and Chao et al. (1994). All survey questions in Part III - V of the instrument were assessed using a five-point agree/disagree Likert-type response scale.

In addition to the five instruments that captured data pertaining to the dependent and independent variables, a sixth instrument was administered to collect pertinent demographic information. See Appendix A for copies of each instrument.

Prior to initiating the research a pilot study was conducted to establish the clarity of instructions, gather information about how long it would take participants to complete the survey, verify the number of spaces needed for participants to list alters, and to ascertain if there was any confusion with the wording of the questions and instructions. Twelve members from a section of the organization that was not included in the research project participated in the pilot study. Immediately after completing the instruments a focus group was conducted to gather feedback from the subjects. Subjects reported that, on average, it took about 30 minutes to complete the survey. There was some confusion on question 8 of both Parts I and II of the study. In the Morrison study, and the initial pilot study, question 8 was worded as follows: 'During any given week, this person works or talks with _____ of the other persons listed? (enter appropriate number or DK for "don't know.')." The desired response was to have ego enter the appropriate number in the column reporting how frequently he or she thought each alter exchanged information/communicated with each other alter listed. However, several members of the pilot group entered a number in the blank space in the question and left the columns blank. The question was reworded to state: 'During any given week, this person works or talks with how many of the other people that you have listed? (enter the appropriate number, or write DK for 'don't know.')." By eliminating the blank space in the question itself, this rewording eliminated the possibility of making the error discovered during the pilot study. Part I and II of the survey were given to another 12 individuals and

they reported no problems with question 8 so the change was incorporated in the final version of the instrument.

Because no subject in either pilot study entered more than ten alters, ten spaces were made available for respondents to list their appropriate alters in Parts I and II of the instrument. This is consistent with previous research in the area of egocentric network analysis. Ibarra (1992) provided ten spaces, Podolny and Baron (1997) limited respondents to five alters, and Morrison (2002) made eight spaces available for each respondent in her study.

Data Collection Methods

All surveys were mailed to participants via the military postal system. The military postal system abides by all the rules, regulations, and procedures followed by the United States Postal System. The one exception to USPS rules is that there is no charge to mail items from one military post office to another if both military post offices are outside the United States.

Two weeks prior to mailing the questionnaires, I contacted the human resource department of the organization and received a mail listing of all military members of the organization who had less than 15 full months in the organization. Pinder and Schroeder (1987) argued that the time to assimilate varies depending on the support the transferee receives and the similarity of the old job compared to the new job. Additionally, complex jobs and managerial positions may take more than a year before incumbents feel they have mastered the position and successfully assimilated. Bauer, Morrison and Callister (1998), in a review of assimilation literature, stated that research

projects often use three-month intervals (for example, three, six, and nine months from arrival in the new position) to measure assimilation processes but there is no empirical evidence to support this choice of intervals. They argued that researchers continue to use three-month intervals simply because that is what has been used in previous research. In an effort to break this pattern, a single-shot survey method was used. All employees with 15 or fewer full months in the organization were selected for this project. If Pinder and Schroeder are correct, and assimilation occurs at different time intervals based on the complexity of the position and the amount of similarity between the old and new position, this research design should be able to capture some of those nuances.

Each subject was mailed a packet that included the survey instruments, a self-addressed return envelope, and a consent form that explained the research project and the participant's rights in accordance with the Internal Review Board approval for this research project.

Three weeks after the initial mailing all individuals were sent a follow-up letter. The follow-up letter served three purposes. First the letter contained a paragraph thanking those subjects that had already completed and returned the survey. Second, the letter reminded the remaining subjects of the survey and asked for their cooperation in completing the instruments and returning them to the researcher. Third, the letter asked subjects that might have lost, misplaced, or never received the survey if they were still interested in participating. The letter instructed subjects that if they were still interested in

participating in the research project, but did not have a survey packet, to send an email to the researcher. In the email the subjects were told to provide their mailing address so that a replacement survey could be sent. Thirty-four subjects requested that a replacement survey be mailed.

Data Computation and Analysis

Correlations were computed for the dependent variables *knowledge of the organization, task mastery, role clarity, social integration, organizational commitment, and assimilation*. Through a series of regression, multiple regression, or analysis of variance tests (based on the variables associated with each hypothesis) the predictions of each hypothesis were examined using the following independent variables in the friendship and informational egocentric networks: density, status, tie strength, range, and size.

Density indicates the degree to which members of the network are connected to each other. Density was calculated as a ratio of all possible links in the network compared to the actual number of links present in the network disregarding the direct links between the respondent and the various alters the respondent listed on the questionnaires (Brass, 1995; Monge & Contractor, 2003; Scott, 2000). In egocentric network analysis, it is common practice not to include the direct links between ego and the various alters when determining the egocentric networks density (Scott, 2000). These direct ties from ego exist almost by definition, based on the research questions used in Part I and II of the survey instrument. Counting the direct ties would inflate the measure of density by the number of contacts listed by the respondent.

Density was computed using the formula $\sum T_j/n(n-1)$. T is the number of links from alter j and n is the total number of alters identified by the respondent (Morrison, 2002; Scott, 2000).

A network's *status* was determined by the various positions network members held within the organizational hierarchy (Lin, 1999). The higher an individual's position within the organizational hierarchy, the higher the official status of that position. Therefore, the status of an individual egocentric network was determined by averaging the overall status of all members comprising that egocentric network. Status in this research project was measured by averaging the staff levels reported for each of the alters listed by the respondent. Status ranged from 1 – all subordinate members to 4 – all senior leaders.

The *strength of a tie* indicates how much time ego interacts with each alter he or she has listed on the instrument. For informational egocentric networks, tie strength was measured by averaging the frequency with which ego communicated with each alter in the network. Scores ranged from 1 – communicates with all listed alters less than once a month, to 5 – communicates with all listed alters daily. For the friendship egocentric network tie strength was computed by averaging the reported closeness to each alter listed. Scores on closeness ranged from a low of 1 – not very close to all alters, to a high of 3 – very close to all alters reported.

Range (also known as diversity) refers to the breadth of sources that are available to ego (Haythornthwaite, 1996). The number of ties ego maintains in

diverse work centers of the organization (and the organizations client members) determines the range of ego's network. Range was computed in this research project by adding the number of different staff sections represented by the alters listed in the egocentric network of each focal actor.

Size is a measure of how many individuals are in the egocentric network, i.e., how many alters the respondent listed on the instrument. In this research project, the size of an egocentric network was the summation of alters listed by a respondent.

Hypotheses 1 – 7 should provide information supporting egocentric network influence on the various aspects of learning, social integration, and organizational commitment associated with assimilation. To test hypotheses 1 – 4, I used regression or multiple regression analysis, to test the independent variables (size, density, tie strength, range, and status) influence on the dependent variables (knowledge of the organization, task mastery, and role clarity) as applicable. To test hypotheses 5 – 7, I regressed the dependent variables of social integration and organizational commitment on the respective friendship egocentric network independent variables (size, density, strength, range, and status) as applicable.

Hypotheses 8 – 11 examined when transferees feel they have successfully assimilated. Each of these hypotheses was tested using Analysis of variance procedures. To test hypothesis 8, data were analyzed on all transferees who reported they had previous assignments in the subordinate organization.

To test hypothesis 9 data were analyzed on all transferees who reported reincorporating previous information contacts, or friends, into their newly developed egocentric networks. The dependent variable for this test was the respondent's reported assimilation scores.

To test hypothesis 10 data were analyzed on blue-collar positions, white-collar positions, and management positions. The dependent variable for this test was the respondent's reported assimilation scores. After completing the analysis, I developed frequency distributions for each of the positions and then compared each distribution's score at three month intervals to further clarify the relationship between assimilation and type of position.

Finally, to test hypothesis 11, data were analyzed on the dependent variable assimilation using the independent variable job similarity. I used analysis of variance to determine if respondents reported assimilation scores were influenced by their perceptions of how similar or dissimilar their current job was in relation to previous jobs. After completing the regression analysis I developed frequency distributions for each of the categories and then compared each distribution's score at three-month intervals to further clarify the relationship between assimilation and similarity of the current job to previous jobs.

Several demographic variables were of concern when considering successful assimilation. For example, does gender, ethnicity, or level of civilian education provide indicators of successful versus unsuccessful

assimilation? To test these demographic variables an analysis of variance was performed searching for significant relationships or interactions.

Details of the data analysis will be discussed in Chapter 4. Descriptive statistics in the form of tables and charts were developed to explain the results. All computations were conducted using the software package SAS Learning Edition 1.0.

CHAPTER 4 – Results

In order to use survey instruments such as those used in this project, it is important to establish the reliability and validity of the measures. The issue of validity and reliability will be addressed in the following section.

Validity and Reliability

Analyzing the egocentric networks of employees is a relatively new approach to studying and understanding organizational assimilation. Therefore, I first attempted to position the issue within the current theories and literature addressing organizational assimilation and social network analysis. This positioning grounded the discussion in terminology reflective of the theoretical bases associated with both constructs and provided face validity to the project. Furthermore, the research design for this project incorporated proven instruments. This was done in an attempt to expand the applicability of those instruments and to avoid yet another line of instrument development which could possibly lead to further fragmentation of the field of exploration.

To address the issue of internal consistency within the questionnaires, and to test for convergent and discriminant validity, the entire set of 41 questions was factor analyzed. Following factor analysis, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed to measure inter-item reliability for each of the factors. Results will be discussed later in this chapter.

Generalizability

The generalizability of a study is the ability of the study's results to apply to other individuals, samples, or populations that were not included in the study. There are two basic types of generalizability, sample generalizability and cross-population generalizability (Schutt, 2001).

To determine sample generalizability, an analysis of key demographic variables was conducted to ascertain the distribution of subjects available within the 21st TSC. The demographic characteristics used for this analysis were gender and rank. I then compared the 21st TSC population characteristics on these two variables to the subjects that met the requirements for participation in the research project. I then further examined those subjects who responded to the questionnaires. The data are displayed in Table 4.1.

When examining the characteristic of gender, the 21st TSC population N , the sample N , and the response n were consistent. However, these results were skewed when compared to the US Army and US population demographics for gender. For results see Table 4.1. When examining the characteristic *rank*, there were some inconsistencies within the 21st TSC. Lower enlisted soldiers (E1-E4) were under represented in the sample N (.37) as compared to the 21st TSC population N (.41) and even further under represented in the response n (.21). The senior noncommissioned officers (E7-E9) were over represented in the sample N (.24) as compared to the 21st TSC population N (.21) and even further over represented in the response n

(.29). In the officer ranks, junior officers (O1-O3) were accurately represented in the sample *N* (.10) when compared to the 21st TSC population *N* (.10), but were over represented in the response *n* (.15). The same held true for senior officers, (O4-O6). The sample *N* (.04) is consistent with the 21st TSC population *N* (.03) but the response *n* (.09) is over represented. These results indicate that the individual soldiers who responded to the questionnaires comprised a skewed representation of the 21st TSC population. Impacts and implications of these results are discussed in Chapter 5.

Characteristic	US Population (281,421,906)	Army Population (494,291)	Army Population %	Population N (3,741)	Population %	Sample N (1,281)	Sample %	Response n (196)	Response %
Gender									
Male	0.490	421,608	0.852	2473	0.661	862	0.673	135	0.689
Female	0.509	72,683	0.147	1268	0.339	419	0.327	61	0.311
Total				3741		1281		196	
Race									
Caucasian	0.778	297,068,891	0.601	Not Available				110	0.561
Hispanic	0.152	50,911,973	0.103					52	0.122
Black	0.147	112,204,057	0.227					24	0.265
Asian	0.044	18,783	0.038					6	0.030
Rank									
E1 - E4	N/A	213,017	0.431	1563	0.418	483	0.377	41	0.209
E5 - E6	N/A	137,283	0.278	746	0.199	253	0.198	40	0.204
E7 - E9	N/A	53,248	0.108	768	0.205	310	0.242	57	0.291
W1 - W2	N/A	6,946	0.014	37	0.010	13	0.010	3	0.015
W3 - W5	N/A	5,475	0.011	142	0.038	44	0.034	9	0.046
O1 - O3	N/A	41,810	0.085	356	0.095	128	0.100	29	0.148
O4 - O6	N/A	27,614	0.056	129	0.034	50	0.039	17	0.087

Table 4.1 – Population and Sample Characteristics

Cross-population generalizability was addressed by reviewing the most recent demographic information (US Census, 2000) pertaining to the US population, and the most recent demographic information pertaining to the United States Army (Army Profile 2004) using two characteristics: (a) gender and (b) race³. In the US population gender is almost equal (50.9% female and 49.0% male). The Army population is very different, 85% male and 15% female. The 21st TSC population *N* and the sample *n* (69% male and 31%

³ Race was a self-report demographic variable on the research instrument. Respondents were simply asked to list their 'racial identity,' they were not provided categories to choose from.

female) where a somewhat better reflection of the national population but are quite different from the Army population. As a result, it may be difficult to generalize the findings of this study to either the overall Army or US population. One explanation for the high number of female soldiers in the 21st TSC as compared to the Army may be that the 21st TSC is a logistics organization. Women are prohibited from serving in combat arms units (Infantry, Armor, Field Artillery, and Special Operations) which comprise an ever increasing percentage of the active force. As such, the majority of female soldiers who are in the active Army are in logistic commands such as the 21st TSC. So, although this sample may not be an accurate representation of the overall Army, it may be an accurate representation of the logistic and support commands within the active Army. In regards to the demographic variable *race*, blacks appear to be over represented in the Army (23%) and even more over represented in the sample *n* (27%) when compared to the US population (15%) while soldiers of Asian decent appear to be under represented; US population (.045%), Army population (.04%), and in the sample *n* (.03%).

Factor Analysis

To address the concern of convergent and discriminant validity, a factor analysis was conducted to determine if the number of factors and the loading of individual questions conformed to expectations based on previous research using these same instruments. First, I factor analyzed the 15 items from the organizational commitment and social integration scales and found a two-factor solution. I then factor analyzed the 26 items from the task mastery, role

clarity, and knowledge of the organization scales and found a three-factor solution. These findings are consistent with previous research conducted by Morrison (2002) using the same instruments. SAS Learning Edition PROC FACTOR was used to conduct the factor analysis using the principal factor model (with the PRIORS=SMC option) and varimax rotation. The criterion for retention of questions required loadings of at least .30. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.2. Four of the questions displayed mixed loadings (OC4, TM9, RC11, and RC16). However; I made the decision to keep these questions in the survey instrument. This decision was based on two factors. First, the reliabilities of the five dimensions as measured by Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha displayed robust scores above .867 for each of the five factors. Based on these high inter-item reliability indices I felt it was better to keep the more complex survey at the sacrifice of minimal parsimony. Second, previous researchers (Chao et. al., 1994; Ibarra, 1995; Morrison, 2002) used these same or similar instruments and found no internal inconsistencies. Again, in an attempt to maintain consistency across studies, and with the support of the high Cronbach Coefficient Alpha indices, I made the decision to leave the questions in the survey instrument that display mixed loadings.

Rotated Factor Pattern Socialization		
	Factor1	Factor2
OC1	0.74	.
OC2	0.73	.
OC3	0.61	.
OC4	0.31	0.32
OC5	0.67	0.32
OC6	0.83	.
OC7	0.73	.
OC8	0.77	.
SI1	0.34	0.60
SI2	.	0.74
SI3	.	0.83
SI4	.	0.78
SI5	0.34	0.59
SI6	0.31	0.69
SI7	.	0.71

TM = Task Mastery
 RC = Role Clarity
 KO = Knowledge of the Organization
 OC = Organizational Commitment
 SI = Social Integration

Rotated Factor Pattern Learning			
	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
TM1	0.54	0.31	0.30
TM2	0.60	0.34	.
TM3	0.69	.	.
TM4	0.63	0.32	0.38
TM5	0.63	.	.
TM6	.	.	0.46
TM7	0.30	.	0.62
TM8	0.56	.	0.37
TM9	0.41	0.40	0.40
TM10	0.62	.	0.41
RC11	0.59	.	0.50
RC12	0.71	.	0.34
RC13	0.74	.	.
RC14	0.72	0.34	.
RC15	0.65	.	.
RC16	0.48	0.43	0.37
RC17	0.65	0.42	.
RC18	0.59	0.45	.
KO19	0.39	0.66	.
KO20	0.48	0.61	.
KO21	0.48	0.69	.
KO22	.	0.75	.
KO23	.	0.77	.
KO24	.	0.71	.
KO25	.	0.69	.
KO26	.	0.66	.

Table 4.2 – Factor Analysis

Following the factor analysis, Cronbach's coefficient alpha indices were computed for each factor to test for inter-item reliability. The five factors demonstrated strong internal consistency by achieving alpha coefficients of .867 or greater. The alpha coefficients for each factor are listed in Table 4.3 – Coefficient Alpha.

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha	
Task Mastery	0.869
Role Clarity	0.867
Knowledge of the Organization	0.887
Organizational Commitment	0.889
Social Integration	0.907

Table 4.3 – Coefficient Alpha

Network Structure and Initial Analysis

Prior to testing the hypotheses, I compared the initials of the alters listed by ego and selected demographic information (rank and section) to ensure that the friendship and informational egocentric networks were unique. Results showed that 26% of alters were members of both the friendship and informational egocentric network and 74% of the members were unique to either the friendship egocentric network or the informational egocentric network – indicating the two networks were separate and distinct. There is a possibility that these results are not completely accurate. To protect the identities of the subjects in the research project, the instructions on the instruments asked that respondents mask the true identities of the individuals they listed as alters. This was done to protect the respondents and their listed alters in the event a survey instrument was left unattended in the subject's work or living environment and found by a third party. Because the directions on the instrument asked the respondent to mask the true initials and identity of the alters that he or she listed, it is possible that a respondent may have been thinking of the same individual when completing the instruments but used one set of initials on the friendship questionnaire and a different set of initials for the same individual on the information point of contact questionnaire. Or, vice versa, the respondent could have been thinking about two different individuals but used the same set of initials on both instruments. However, the results in this study (26% overlap) are similar to the results in

the Morrison (2002) study (30% overlap) so I do not think these anomalies occurred often, if at all.

To test the hypotheses, regression analysis, multiple regression analysis, and analysis of variance were used depending on the characteristics of the particular hypothesis. Correlations for the variables were computed and appear in Table 4.4. Tables 4.5 through 4.21 present the statistical results examining the specific hypotheses presented in Chapter 2.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients																							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Team Maturity: Role Clarity																							
	.870																						
	.001																						
Knowledge of Org		.699																					
	.698																						
	.001	.001																					
Org Commit		.639		.714																			
	.639																						
	.001	.001	.001																				
Social Int					.574																		
	.618	.641	.481	.574																			
	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001																		
Alignment						.767																	
	.900	.986	.846	.839	.767																		
	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001	.001																	
FSB		.053	.027	-.016	.036	.007	.026																
	.053		.027	-.016	.036	.007	.026																
	.825	.619	.918	.714	.825	.619	.918	.714															
F Range		.157	.214	.104	.174	.170	.192	.267															
	.157		.214	.104	.174	.170	.192	.267															
	.028	.003	.149	.015	.017	.000																	
F Tm		.114	.055	.128	.072	.088	.197	.407	.261														
	.114		.055	.128	.072	.088	.197	.407	.261														
	.433	.433	.073	.316	.222	.135	.001	.000															
F Density		.143	.129	.054	.114	.179	.144	.206	.187	.276													
	.046	.071	.456	.111	.012	.044	.004	.009	.001														
	.182	.181	.135	.141	.194	.321	.649	.343	.224														
F B20		.011	.011	.059	.049	.006	.006	.001	.001	.001	.002												
	.011		.011	.059	.049	.006	.006	.001	.001	.001	.002												
	.008	.008	.103	.116	-.085	.034	.220	.130	.041	.001	.155												
F B		.214	.020	.149	.106	.235	.632	.002	.020	.567	.912	.010											
	.214		.020	.149	.106	.235	.632	.002	.020	.567	.912	.010											
	.198	.249	.164	.190	.078	.299	-.033	.499	.021	.099	.358	.013											
F Range		.005	.000	.021	.008	.280	.003	.650	.001	.769	.159	.001	.858										
	.005		.000	.021	.008	.280	.003	.650	.001	.769	.159	.001	.858										
	.167	.151	.216	.168	.203	.211	.083	.201	.041	.099	.180	.133	.205										
F Tm Strength		.020	.035	.002	.019	.004	.003	.250	.005	.567	.167	.012	.061	.004									
	.020		.035	.002	.019	.004	.003	.250	.005	.567	.167	.012	.061	.004									
	.149	.105	.155	.125	.188	.166	.065	-.038	.081	.303	-.028	.050	-.038	.340									
F Density		.038	.144	.030	.080	.008	.019	.362	.597	.260	.001	.698	.488	.600	.001								
	.038		.144	.030	.080	.008	.019	.362	.597	.260	.001	.698	.488	.600	.001								
	.280	.277	.101	.254	.121	.265	.075	.477	.029	.063	.620	-.004	.477	.135	-.139								
F B20		.001	.001	.011	.000	.090	.000	.297	.001	.684	.301	.001	.959	.001	.059	.052							
	.001		.001	.011	.000	.090	.000	.297	.001	.684	.301	.001	.959	.001	.059	.052							
	.224	.234	.206	.286	.249	.281	.168	.263	.142	.147	.294	.005	.117	.150	.107	.257							
F B		.002	.001	.004	.001	.000	.001	.019	.000	.048	.039	.001	.949	.103	.036	.136	.000						
	.002		.001	.004	.001	.000	.001	.019	.000	.048	.039	.001	.949	.103	.036	.136	.000						
	.247	.269	.276	.348	.217	.320	.176	.176	.063	.094	.168	.160	.230	.132	.060	.260	.972						
F B into Conflict		.001	.000	.001	.002	.001	.014	.014	.377	.191	.019	.025	.001	.066	.406	.000	.001						
	.001		.000	.001	.002	.001	.014	.014	.377	.191	.019	.025	.001	.066	.406	.000	.001						
	.056	.077	-.077	-.096	-.124	-.035	.059	.031	-.006	.009	.079	-.010	.067	-.087	-.018	.101	.012	.003					
F Gender		.432	.285	.284	.180	.083	.465	.410	.665	.734	.902	.272	.888	.352	.226	.007	.161	.866	.962				
	.432		.285	.284	.180	.083	.465	.410	.665	.734	.902	.272	.888	.352	.226	.007	.161	.866	.962				
	.171	-.190	-.173	-.202	-.189	-.217	.079	.013	.091	-.100	.086	.012	-.106	-.009	.022	.008	-.119	-.128	.112				
Job Similarity		.016	.008	.015	.005	.008	.002	.272	.860	.207	.162	.228	.865	.138	.899	.760	.172	.097	.074	.117			
	.016		.008	.015	.005	.008	.002	.272	.860	.207	.162	.228	.865	.138	.899	.760	.172	.097	.074	.117			
	.158	.075	.050	.147	.222	.151	.087	.053	.047	-.028	.007	-.107	.089	.105	-.044	-.077	.174	.170	-.029	-.120			
QV Ed Level		.027	.298	.482	.039	.002	.035	.226	.461	.511	.697	.176	.134	.214	.142	.517	.281	.015	.017	.684	.095		
	.027		.298	.482	.039	.002	.035	.226	.461	.511	.697	.176	.134	.214	.142	.517	.281	.015	.017	.684	.095		
	-.029	-.011	-.041	-.076	-.066	-.052	.089	-.120	.010	-.078	-.034	-.033	-.168	-.190	.000	.040	-.098	-.136	.218	.205	-.191		
F B		.686	.877	.567	.288	.356	.470	.213	.003	.894	.274	.641	.647	.019	.008	.212	.541	.172	.057	.002	.004	.007	
	.686		.877	.567	.288	.356	.470	.213	.003	.894	.274	.641	.647	.019	.008	.212	.541	.172	.057	.002	.004	.007	
	-.204	-.161	-.069	-.031	-.074	-.128	-.021	-.019	-.039	-.047	-.030	-.031	-.091	-.101	.002	-.017	.026	-.060	.066	.084	-.209	.137	
F Alignment Element		.004	.025	.337	.447	.305	.074	.264	.704	.587	.516	.678	.666	.204	.159	.916	.818	.722	.402	.360	.244	.003	.006
	.004		.025	.337	.447	.305	.074	.264	.704	.587	.516	.678	.666	.204	.159	.916	.818	.722	.402	.360	.244	.003	.006
	.192	.199	.243	.361	.290	.300	.113	.094	.070	-.038	-.051	.124	.193	.029	-.043	.221	.213	-.122	-.197	.630	-.256	-.156	
Type of Job		.007	.005	.001	.001	.001	.114	.191	.333	.595	.463	.540	.083	.007	.693	.546	.001	.003	.007	.006	.001	.000	.000
	.007		.005	.001	.001	.001	.114	.191	.333	.595	.463	.540	.083	.007	.693	.546	.001	.003	.007	.006	.001	.000	.000
	.192	.199	.243	.361	.290	.300	.113	.094	.070	-.038	-.051	.124	.193	.029	-.043	.221	.213	-.122	-.197	.630	-.256	-.156	

Table 4.4 – Correlation Coefficients

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 predicted that knowledge of the organization would be positively related to the size, density, and strength of ties among members of the informational egocentric network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$KO = b_0 + b_1(\text{tie strength}) + b_2(\text{density}) + b_3(\text{size}) + \varepsilon$$

Results of multiple regression analysis indicate that this model is statistically significant ($F = 5.91$, $p < .001$) and that 9% ($R^2 = .09$) of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by variance in the model's independent variables, see Table 4.5 for results. The size of the informational egocentric network was directly and significantly related to ego's understanding of knowledge of the organization ($\beta = .18$, $t = 2.52$, $p < .01$). The strength of ties between egocentric network members was also directly related and statistically significant ($\beta = .15$, $t = 1.98$, $p < .05$). The density of the egocentric informational network was also directly related to knowledge of the organization as predicted, but only approached statistical significance ($\beta = .13$, $t = 1.73$, $p < .09$). These results indicate that the full model is too complex and that the density of the informational egocentric network does not add sufficient value when trying to predict ego's ability to comprehend knowledge about the parent organization. Therefore, as an extension of the analysis I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model were statistically significant ($F = 7.3$, $p < .001$) and explained 7% ($R^2 = .07$) of the variance in the dependent variable based on variance of the two

remaining independent variables. See Table 4.5A for results. The data indicate that the best fitting model for hypothesis 1 is:

$$KO = 2.86 + .14(\text{Tie Strength}) + .06(\text{Size}) + \varepsilon$$

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	3	6.802	2.267	5.910	0.001	
Error	192	73.640	0.384			
Corrected Total	195	80.442				
		Root MSE	0.619	R-Square	0.085	
		Dependent Mean	3.680	Adj R-Sq	0.070	
		Coeff Var	16.830			
Parameter Estimates						
		Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	2.749	0.229	12.020	<.0001	0.000
I Tie Strength	1	0.109	0.055	1.980	0.050	0.148
I Density	1	0.370	0.214	1.730	0.086	0.130
I Size	1	0.074	0.029	2.520	0.013	0.179

Table 4.5 – Hypothesis 1 – Full Model

Hypothesis 1 Best Fitting Model					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	2	5.655	2.828	7.300	0.001
Error	193	74.786	0.387		
Corrected Total	195	80.442			
		Root MSE	0.622	R-Square	0.070
		Dependent Mean	3.680	Adj R-Sq	0.061
		Coeff Var	16.916		
Parameter Estimates					
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate = b	Standard Error		
Intercept	1	2.856	0.221	12.910	<.0001
I Tie Strength	1	0.144	0.052	2.790	0.006
I Size	1	0.064	0.029	2.210	0.028

Table 4.5A – Hypothesis 1 – Best Fit

Hypothesis 2 predicted a direct relationship between the dependent variable knowledge of the organization and the informational egocentric network independent variable range. Results of the regression analysis support this

hypothesis, see Table 4.6. The range of the informational egocentric network was positively associated with knowledge of the organization and statistically significant. ($\beta = .16$, $t = 2.32$, $p < .02$) indicating that a transferee's egocentric informational network range does influence his or her ability to understand the parent organization following intraorganizational job transfer. The best fitting model for hypothesis 2 is: $KO = 3.44 + .10(\text{range}) + \epsilon$

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	1	2.172	2.172	5.380	0.021	
Error	194	78.270	0.403			
Corrected Total	195	80.442				
		Root MSE	0.635	R-Square	0.027	
		Dependent Mean	3.680	Adj R-Sq	0.022	
		Coeff Var	17.261			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	3.444	0.111	30.960	<.001	0.000
I Range	1	0.104	0.045	2.320	0.021	0.164

Table 4.6 – Hypothesis 2 – Range

Hypothesis 3 predicted that task mastery would be positively related to the size, density, and strength of ties among members of the informational egocentric network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$TM = b_0 + b_1(\text{size}) + b_2(\text{density}) + b_3(\text{tie strength}) + \epsilon$$

Results of multiple regression analysis indicate that this model is statistically significant ($F = 8.62$, $p < .0001$) and that 12% ($R^2 = .119$) of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by variance in the model's independent variables, see Table 4.7 for results. The size of the informational egocentric

network was directly and significantly related to ego's ability to master required tasks ($\beta = .29$, $t = 4.21$, $p < .0001$). The density between egocentric network alters was also directly related to task mastery and statistically significant ($\beta = .17$, $t = 2.25$, $p < .03$). The strength of ties between network members of the egocentric informational network was also directly related to task mastery as predicted, but not statistically significant ($\beta = .07$, $t = .96$, $p < .34$). These results indicate that the full model is overly complex and that the tie strength of the informational egocentric network does not add sufficient value when trying to predict ego's ability to master required tasks within the new work center. Therefore, as an extension of the analysis I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model were statistically significant ($F = 12.46$, $p < .0001$) and explained 11% ($R^2 = .114$) of the variance in the dependent variable based on variance of the two remaining independent variables. See Table 4.7A for results. The data indicate that the best fitting model for the ability to predict task mastery for hypothesis 3 is: $TM = 3.01 + .11(\text{Size}) + .47(\text{Density}) + \epsilon$

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	3	7.018	2.339	8.620	<.0001	
Error	192	52.132	0.272			
Corrected Total	195	59.150				
		Root MSE	0.521	R-Square	0.119	
		Dependent Mean	3.749	Adj R-Sq	0.105	
		Coeff Var	13.899			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	2.901	0.192	15.070	<.0001	0.000
Strength	1	0.045	0.046	0.960	0.336	0.071
I Density	1	0.405	0.180	2.250	0.026	0.166
I Size	1	0.104	0.025	4.210	<.0001	0.294

Table 4.7 – Hypothesis 3 – Task Mastery

Hypothesis 3 - Task Mastery - Best Fitting Model						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	2	6.765	3.383	12.460	<.0001	
Error	193	52.385	0.271			
Corrected Total	195	59.150				
		Root MSE	0.521	R-Square	0.114	
		Dependent Mean	3.749	Adj R-Sq	0.105	
		Coeff Var	13.897			
Parameter						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate = b	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate
Intercept	1	3.012	0.154	19.560	<.0001	0.000
I Density	1	0.469	0.167	2.800	0.006	0.191
I Size	1	0.108	0.024	4.480	<.0001	0.307

Table 4.7A – Hypothesis 3 – Task Mastery – Best Fit

Results of the analysis concerning role clarity were not as significant as those for task mastery but the data showed partial support for the hypothesis. Hypothesis 3 predicted that role clarity would be positively related to the size,

density, and strength of ties among members of the informational egocentric network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$RC = b_0 + b_1(\text{size}) + b_2(\text{density}) + b_3(\text{tie strength}) + \varepsilon$$

Multiple regression analysis indicate that the model is statistically significant ($F = 7.26$, $p < .0001$) and that 10% ($R^2 = .102$) of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by variance in the model's independent variables. See Table 4.8 for results. The size of the informational egocentric network was directly related to ego's ability to understand his or her role in the new work center, ($\beta = .28$, $t = 4.03$, $p < .0001$). The density between egocentric network alters was also directly related to understanding the new role but not statistically significant ($\beta = .12$, $t = 1.62$, $p < .11$). The strength of ties between network members of the egocentric informational network was also directly related to understanding of the role as predicted, but not significant ($\beta = .07$, $t = .97$, $p < .33$). These results indicate that the full model is excessively complex and that the density and tie strength of the informational egocentric network do not add sufficient value when trying to predict egos ability to understand his or her role in the new work center. Therefore, as an extension of these findings I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model analysis show that informational egocentric network size is still significant ($\beta = .28$, $t = 4.10$, $p < .0001$) and can be used to explain 8% ($R^2 = .077$) of the variance in the dependent variable. See Table 4.8A for results. This result is consistent with the simple correlation of these variables in Table 4.4. The

data indicate that the best fitting model for the ability to predict role clarity for hypothesis 3 is: $RC = 3.23 + .12(Size) + \epsilon$.

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	3	8.721	2.907	7.260	0.0001	
Error	192	76.846	0.400			
Corrected Total	195	85.567				
		Root MSE	0.633	R-Square	0.102	
		Dependent Mean	3.765	Adj R-Sq	0.088	
		Coeff Var	16.805			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate
Intercept	1	2.830	0.234	12.110	<.0001	0.000
Task Strength	1	0.055	0.056	0.970	0.334	0.072
Task Density	1	0.353	0.218	1.620	0.108	0.120
Task Size	1	0.120	0.030	4.030	<.0001	0.284

Table 4.8 – Hypothesis 3 – Role Clarity

Hypothesis 3 - Role Clarity - Best Fitting Model						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	1	6.551	6.551	16.080	<.0001	
Error	194	79.016	0.407			
Corrected Total	195	85.567				
		Root MSE	0.638	R-Square	0.077	
		Dependent Mean	3.765	Adj R-Sq	0.072	
		Coeff Var	16.952			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate b	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	3.226	0.142	22.760	<.0001	0.000
Task Size	1	0.117	0.029	4.010	<.0001	0.277

Table 4.8A – Hypothesis 3 – Role Clarity – Best Fit

Hypothesis 4 predicted a direct relationship between the dependent variables task mastery and role clarity and the independent variable status in the informational egocentric network. The data did not support this hypothesis for

either task mastery ($\beta = -.007$, $t = -.11$, $p < .91$ – Table 4.9) or role clarity ($\beta = .008$, $t = .11$, $p < .91$ – Table 4.10). These results were unexpected and the opposite of what Morrison (2002) found when studying newcomers starting their first full-time work experience ($\beta = .56$, $p < .001$ and $\beta = .21$, $p < .05$ respectively). Results will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Regression Results					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	0.004	0.004	0.010	0.914
Error	194	59.146	0.305		
Corrected Total	195	59.150			
		Root MSE	0.552	R-Square	0.000
		Dependent Mean	3.749	Adj R-Sq	-0.005
		Coeff Var	14.728		

Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate
Intercept	1	3.76532	0.15618	24.11	<.0001	0
I Status	1	-0.0069	0.06377	-0.11	0.914	-0.00776

Table 4.9 – Hypothesis 4 – Task Mastery

Regression Results					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	0.006	0.006	0.010	0.909
Error	194	85.561	0.441		
Corrected Total	195	85.567			
		Root MSE	0.664	R-Square	0.000
		Dependent Mean	3.765	Adj R-Sq	-0.005

Parameter						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate
Intercept	1	3.744	0.188	19.930	<.0001	0.000
I Status	1	0.009	0.077	0.110	0.909	0.008

Table 4.10 – Hypothesis 4 – Role Clarity

Hypothesis 5 predicted that social integration would be positively related to the size, density, and strength of ties among members of the egocentric friendship network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$SI = b_0 + b_1(\text{size}) + b_2(\text{density}) + b_3(\text{tie strength}) + \varepsilon$$

Results from multiple regression analysis found partial support for this hypothesis. The data indicate that the model is statistically significant ($F = 3.87$, $p < .01$) and that 6% ($R^2 = .057$) of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by variance in the model's independent variables. See Table 4.11 for results. The size of the egocentric friendship network was directly related to ego's ability to integrate within the social fabric of the new work center and statistically significant ($\beta = .17$, $t = 2.18$, $p < .03$). The density between egocentric friendship network alters was also directly related to the ability to integrate socially within the confines of the new work center and statistically significant ($\beta = .14$, $t = 1.96$, $p < .05$). The strength of ties between network members of the egocentric friendship network was inversely related to social integration and not significant ($\beta = -.009$, $t = -.11$, $p < .91$). This result was unexpected and quite different from what Morrison discovered in her 2002 study examining newcomers ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$). Overall, these results indicate that the full model for hypothesis 5 is overly complex and that the tie strength of the egocentric friendship network does not add sufficient value when trying to predict ego's ability to socially integrate within the new work center. Therefore, as an extension of the analysis I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model show that egocentric friendship network size and density both

remain statistically significant ($\beta = .16$, $t = 2.26$, $p < .03$ and $\beta = .14$, $t = 1.99$, $p < .05$ respectfully) and that these independent variables explain 6% ($R^2 = .057$) of the variance in the dependent variable. See Table 4.11A for results. The data indicate that the best fitting model for the ability to predict social integration for hypothesis 5 is: $SI = 3.061 + .05(\text{Size}) + .36(\text{density}) + \varepsilon$

Regression Results					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	3	4.945	1.648	3.870	0.010
Error	192	81.886	0.426		
Corrected Total	195	86.832			
		Root MSE	0.653	R-Square	0.057
		Dependent Mean	3.444	Adj R-Sq	0.042
		Coeff Var	18.963		

Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	3.075	0.170	18.040	<.0001	0.000
F Tie Strength	1	-0.010	0.088	-0.110	0.911	-0.009
F Density	1	0.364	0.186	1.960	0.052	0.144
F Size	1	0.052	0.024	2.180	0.030	0.165

Table 4.11 – Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 - Best Fitting Model					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	2	4.940	2.470	5.820	0.004
Error	193	81.892	0.424		
Corrected Total	195	86.832			
		Root MSE	0.651	R-Square	0.057
		Dependent Mean	3.444	Adj R-Sq	0.047
		Coeff Var	18.914		

Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate
Intercept	1	3.061	0.122	25.000	<.0001	0.000
F Density	1	0.359	0.181	1.990	0.049	0.142
F Size	1	0.051	0.023	2.260	0.025	0.162

Table 4.11A – Hypothesis 5 – Best Fit

Hypothesis 6 predicted that the egocentric friendship network independent variables density and tie strength would both be directly related to, and would both support social integration, regardless of the size of the egocentric friendship network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$SI = b_0 + b_1(\text{density}) + b_2(\text{tie strength}) + \varepsilon$$

The results of multiple regression analysis found partial support for this hypothesis; see Table 4.12 for results. The overall model supported the hypothesis ($F = 5.84$, $p < .004$). The combined effect of the independent variables in the model explains 6% ($R^2 = .057$) of the variance in the dependent variable. The strength of ties between friends in the egocentric network was directly related to social integration and statistically significant ($\beta = .16$, $t = 2.11$, $p < .04$). The density of the egocentric friendship network under hypothesis 6 was also directly associated with social integration and approached statistical significance ($\beta = .14$, $t = 1.81$, $p < .07$). Overall, these results indicate that the full model for hypothesis 6 is overly complex and that the density of the egocentric friendship network does not add sufficient value when trying to predict ego's ability to socially integrate within the new work center. Therefore, as an extension of the analysis I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model show that egocentric friendship network tie strength remains statistically significant ($\beta = .20$, $t = 2.89$, $p < .004$) and explains 4% ($R^2 = .041$) of the variance in the dependent variable. See Table 4.12A for results. The data indicate that the best fitting model for the ability to predict social integration for hypothesis 6 is:

$$SI = 2.87 + .16(\text{Tie Strength}) + \varepsilon$$

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	2	4.953	2.476	5.840	0.004	
Error	193	81.879	0.424			
Corrected Total	195	86.832				
		Root MSE	0.651	R-Square	0.057	
		Dependent Mean	3.444	Adj R-Sq	0.047	
		Coeff Var	18.913			

Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	2.796	0.207	13.490	<.0001	0.000
Tie Strength	1	0.120	0.057	2.110	0.036	0.157
Density	1	0.399	0.220	1.810	0.072	0.135

Table 4.12 – Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 - Best Fitting Model						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	1	3.562	3.562	8.300	0.004	
Error	194	83.270	0.429			
Corrected Total	195	86.832				
		Root MSE	0.655	R-Square	0.041	
		Dependent Mean	3.444	Adj R-Sq	0.036	
		Coeff Var	19.024			

Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	2.872	0.204	14.070	<.0001	0.000
Tie Strength	1	0.155	0.054	2.880	0.004	0.203

Table 4.12A – Hypothesis 6 – Best Fit

Hypothesis 7 predicted that organizational commitment would be positively related to the range and status of the members of the egocentric friendship network. The full model for this hypothesis is:

$$OC = b_0 + b_1(\text{range}) + b_2(\text{status}) + \varepsilon$$

Results of multiple regression analysis found partial support for this model. The overall model is statistically significant ($F = 3.02$, $p < .05$) and explains 3% ($R^2 = .03$) of the variance in the dependent variable based on variance in the models independent variables. See Table 4.13 for results. The range of the egocentric friendship network was directly related to ego's ability to remain committed to the parent organization and statistically significant ($\beta = .18$, $t = 2.41$, $p < .02$). The status between egocentric friendship network alters was inversely associated with the dependent variable and not statistically significant ($\beta = -.01$, $t = -.16$, $p < .88$). This negative relationship indicates that I may have predicted the wrong direction of the influence of egocentric network friendship status on organizational commitment. This result was unexpected since Morrison (2002) found a direct, statistically significant relationship between friendship status and organizational commitment ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$). However, the findings for this hypothesis were consistent with the earlier analysis of *status* when it was examined in the egocentric informational network discussed in hypothesis 4. Overall, the results of hypothesis testing indicate that the full model for hypothesis 6 is too complex and that the status of the egocentric friendship network does not add value when trying to predict ego's ability to remain committed to the parent organization. Therefore, as an extension of the analysis I conducted a second regression analysis on the more parsimonious reduced model. Results of the reduced model show that egocentric friendship network range remains statistically significant ($\beta = .17$, $t = 2.46$, $p < .02$) but could be used to explain only 2% ($R^2 = .015$) of the variance in the dependent variable.

See Table 4.13A for results. The data indicate that the best fitting model for the ability to predict organizational commitment for hypothesis 7 is:

$$OC = 3.193 + .10(\text{range}) + \varepsilon$$

Regression Results						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	2	2.766	1.383	3.020	0.051	
Error	193	88.231	0.457			
Corrected Total	195	90.996				
		Root MSE	0.676	R-Square	0.030	
		Dependent Mean	3.417	Adj R-Sq	0.020	
		Coeff Var	19.787			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	3.217	0.182	17.640	<.0001	0.000
F Status	1	-0.013	0.081	-0.160	0.875	-0.012
F Range	1	0.097	0.040	2.410	0.017	0.177

Table 4.13 – Hypothesis 7

Hypothesis 7 - Best Fitting Model						
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	
Model	1	2.754	2.754	6.060	0.015	
Error	194	88.242	0.455			
Corrected Total	195	90.996				
		Root MSE	0.674	R-Square	0.030	
		Dependent Mean	3.417	Adj R-Sq	0.025	
		Coeff Var	19.737			
Parameter Estimates						
Variable	DF	Parameter Estimate	Standard Error	t Value	Pr > t	Standardized Estimate β
Intercept	1	3.193	0.103	31.050	<.0001	0.000
F Range	1	0.095	0.039	2.460	0.015	0.174

Table 4.13A – Hypothesis 7 Best Fit

Hypothesis 8 predicted that previous assignments within the work unit would be directly related to successful assimilation. 38 respondents reported working in the 21st TSC during a previous assignment. The data did not support this hypothesis ($F = .52$, $p < .47$, mean = 3.68), see Table 4.14 for results.

Results of ANOVA					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	0.155	0.155	0.520	0.470
Error	194	57.367	0.296		
Corrected Total	195	57.522			
		R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	Assimilation Mean
		0.003	15.015	0.544	3.622
Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Previous Assignment	1	0.155	0.155	0.520	0.470

Table 4.14 – Hypothesis 8

Based on the large number of intraorganizational transfers that soldiers undergo during a career it was hypothesized that some members of the sample population would find individuals in the new work center that had been friends or information points of contact in previous work centers. These individuals would have transferred into the unit prior to egos arrival. Hypothesis 9 predicted that transferees who encountered and reincorporated these old friends or information points of contact into their newly forming egocentric networks would assimilate faster than transferees that found no prior friends or information contacts in the new work center. The data supported this hypothesis. Finding, and re-incorporating an old friend ($n = 69$, mean = 3.83) in the new egocentric friendship network was directly related to assimilation ($F = 16.63$, $p < .0001$) and explained 8% ($R^2 = .079$) of the variance, see Table 4.15 for results. Finding an alter that had been a previous information point of contact ($n = 67$, mean = 3.86) and reincorporating that individual in the newly formed egocentric informational network was also directly related to assimilation and statistically significant ($F =$

22.09, $p < .0001$). Reincorporating a previous information source can be used to explain 10% ($R^2 = .10$) of the variance in assimilation based on this hypothesis, see Table 4.16 for results.

Analysis of Variance					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	4.541	4.541	16.630	<.0001
Error	194	52.981	0.273		
Corrected Total	195	57.522			
Root MSE			0.523	R-Square	0.079
Dependent Mean			3.622	Adj R-Sq	0.074
Coeff Var			14.429		

Table 4.15 – Hypothesis 9 – Previous Friend

Analysis of Variance					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	5.880	5.880	22.090	<.0001
Error	194	51.643	0.266		
Corrected Total	195	57.522			
Root MSE			0.516	R-Square	0.102
Dependent Mean			3.622	Adj R-Sq	0.098
Coeff Var			14.246		

Table 4.16 – Hypothesis 9 – Previous Information Point of Contact

Hypothesis 10 predicted that blue collar workers would assimilate faster than white collar workers and managers. Analysis of variance was used to test this hypothesis since the independent variable is categorical. Results of the analysis of variance procedure support the predictions of the hypothesis ($F = 10.77$, $p < .0001$). The type of position a transferee occupies following an intraorganizational job transfer can be used to explain 10% ($R^2 = .10$) of the variance in assimilation for transferees, see Table 4.17 for results.

Analysis of Variance					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	2	5.776	2.888	10.770	<.0001
Error	193	51.747	0.268		
Corrected Total	195	57.522			
		R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	Assimilation Mean
		0.100	14.297	0.518	3.622
Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
BC=1, WC=2, MGMT=3	2	5.776	2.888	10.770	<.0001

Table 4.17 – Hypothesis 10

To further explore these results frequency distributions were computed and corresponding assimilation scores examined. The results of this analysis showed that for blue collar workers (n = 59, mean = 3.40), their second highest assimilation score was during the first 1 - 3 months on the job (3.518), See Table 4.18 for details. Their average score declined at 4 - 6 months (3.153), rose slightly at 7 - 9 months (3.399), rose to an all time high at 10 – 12 months (3.668) but then dropped again to a level below their 1 -3 month score at 13 - 15 months (3.273). White collar workers (n = 98, mean = 3.75) appear to increase assimilation scores over time but they plateau for nine months (waverling between 3.661 and 3.694) before rising to their highest average assimilation level during the 13 – 15 (4.188) month time interval. Managers (n = 39, mean = 3.90) have a steady increase in their assimilation scores throughout the duration of the study – going from a low of 3.581 to a high of 4.463. These results lend support to previous research (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) where it was argued that managers may take a year or more to successfully assimilate once entering a new position.

Months in Position					
	1 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 - 15
Blue Collar (N=59)	3.518	3.153	3.392	3.668	3.273
White Collar (N=98)	3.512	3.694	3.688	3.661	4.188
Managers (N=39)	3.581	3.713	3.814	3.94	4.463

Table 4.18 – Hypothesis 10

Hypothesis 11 predicted that transferees undertaking positions very similar to previous positions would assimilate faster than transferees entering positions very different from previous positions. Analysis of variance was used to test this hypothesis. The data support this hypothesis ($F = 3.23$, $p < .02$) and the similarity of job type to previous positions explains 5% ($R^2 = .048$) of the variance in assimilation, see Table 4.19 for results.

Analysis of Variance					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	3	2.764	0.921	3.230	0.024
Error	192	54.758	0.285		
Corrected Total	195	57.522			
		R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	Assimilation Mean
		0.048	14.746	0.534	3.622
Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Job Similarity	3	2.764	0.921	3.230	0.024

Table 4.19 – Hypothesis 11

As the data in Table 4.20 (below) indicates, when job similarity moved along the continuum from very similar to very different the average assimilation scores decreased (3.772 to 3.387) indicating that assimilation was more difficult as job similarity decreased. With the exception of transferees who found themselves in jobs very similar to previous jobs, all other categories of transferees experienced higher assimilation scores the longer they were in their new position. Transferees

who assumed positions that were very different from any position they had occupied in the past (even those that had been on the job 13 – 15 months) reported an average assimilation score (3.522) that was lower than any interval score for transferees that occupied positions that were believed to be very similar or somewhat similar to a previous job assignment. These data indicate that the greater the difference between the new job and previous jobs, the longer the assimilation process.

Job Similarity	Months in Position					
	1 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 9	10 - 12	13 -15	Average
Very Similar (N=28)	3.857	3.618	4.028	3.707	3.650	3.772
Somewhat Similar (N=62)	3.641	3.717	3.711	3.711	3.862	3.728
Somewhat Different (N=62)	3.088	3.551	3.536	3.799	3.685	3.532
Very Different (N=44)	3.390	3.273	3.375	3.376	3.522	3.387

Table 4.20 – Hypothesis 11

Finally, I anticipated that several demographic variables (gender, civilian education, and ethnicity) might influence successful assimilation but I had no a priori knowledge of how these variables might affect assimilation, or the direction that affect would take. Rather than dummy coding the variables, I used analysis of variance to test this hypothesis. The overall model was not statistically significant ($F = 2.23$, $p < .09$) and only one of the three variables showed significance. Civilian education was statistically significant ($F = 4.62$, $p < .03$) indicating that education is important for success following intraorganizational job transitions. Neither gender nor ethnicity were statistically significant ($F = .23$, $p < .64$ and $F = 1.85$, $p < .18$ respectively). See Table 4.21 for results.

Analysis of Variance					
Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	3	1.946	0.649	2.230	0.086
Error	191	55.522	0.291		
Corrected Total	194	57.468			
		R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	Assimilation Mean
		0.034	14.892	0.539	3.621
Source	DF	Type I SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Gender	1	0.065	0.065	0.230	0.636
Civ Education	1	1.342	1.342	4.620	0.033
Ethnicity	1	0.538	0.538	1.850	0.175

Table 4.21 – Selected Demographic Variables and Assimilation

Conclusion

Analysis of the data indicate that studying egocentric informational and friendship networks does offer valuable information about the assimilation process for individuals accepting intraorganizational job transfers. Chapter 5 will discuss these findings, address shortcomings of the current research and discuss possible avenues for future research in this field.

CHAPTER 5 – Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the results presented in the previous chapter and discuss their relationship to the overall objectives of this project. The first section of the chapter will summarize the research goals and objectives. The second section will address the results presented in Chapter 4 and relate those results to the primary research questions of the project. The third section will discuss the strengths and limitations of the study and the final section will address suggestions for future research.

Summary of the Research Project

The goal of this research project was to study the egocentric informational and friendship networks formed by transferees and determine whether those networks provide insight into successful assimilation experiences following intraorganizational job transitions. Several scholars have argued that a critical aspect of assimilation is the interaction that occurs between new members and veteran members of the work center (Feldman, 1981; Louis, 1980; Morrison, 2002; Reichers, 1987). However, little research has examined this claim and explored the roles egocentric networks play in the assimilation process. The purpose of this study was to expand on the initial research (Morrison, 2002) conducted in this area and attempt to answer four general questions pertaining to transferee assimilation experiences following intraorganizational job transitions. The four questions are:

1. Do egocentric informational networks formed by transferees influence their ability to (a) master the specific tasks of the job, (b) fulfill the role of the new position, and (c) understand the parent organization in the context of the new work center?
2. Do egocentric friendship networks formed by transferees assist in their social integration within the new work center while still enabling them to remain committed to the parent organization?
3. Are there aspects of the degree of difference between the old and new positions that provide some predictive indications on how difficult the assimilation process will be for an individual transferee?
4. Does the type of job influence the assimilation process?

To answer these questions eleven hypotheses were proposed and examined. The eleven hypotheses are:

1. Transferees with large, low-density informational networks of relatively weak ties will have greater knowledge of the US Army than transferees with small, dense networks of relatively strong ties. The data found support for the independent variables size and tie strength but no support for density.
2. A transferee's knowledge about the US Army will be positively related to the range of his or her informational network. The data found support for this hypothesis.
3. Transferees with dense, larger informational egocentric networks of strong ties will have greater task mastery and role clarity than

transferees with small, less dense networks of weak ties. The data found support for the independent variables size and density but no support for the independent variable tie strength.

4. A transferee's task mastery and role clarity will be positively related to the status of his or her informational network, defined as the average hierarchical level of network members. The data found no support for the independent variable status in relation to either of the dependent variables in this hypothesis.
5. Transferees with larger, dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties will have a greater sense of social integration than those with smaller, dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties. The data found support for the independent variables size and density but no support for tie strength.
6. Transferees with dense friendship egocentric networks composed of strong ties will have a greater sense of social integration than those with less dense friendship egocentric networks comprised of weak ties, regardless of the size of the network. The data found support for the independent variable tie strength and approached significance ($p < .07$) for the independent variable density.
7. A transferee's organizational commitment will be positively related to the range and status of his or her friendship egocentric network. The data found support for the independent variable range but no support for status.

8. Transferees who have had previous assignments within the work unit will assimilate faster than people who are assigned to the unit for the first time. The data found no support for this hypothesis.
9. Transferees who find members in their new work center who were members of previous informational or friendship egocentric networks will reincorporate these members into their new informational and friendship egocentric networks and assimilate faster than transferees who find no former contacts in the new work center. The data found support for this hypothesis.
10. Blue collar workers will assimilate faster than white collar workers and managers. The data found support for this hypothesis.
11. Transferees who move into positions similar to previous positions will assimilate faster than individuals who assume positions that are very different from previous positions. The data found support for this hypothesis.

Results of Data Analysis – Egocentric Networks

Overall, the results of this study support the argument that egocentric informational and friendship networks formed by transferees following intraorganizational job transition involving geographical transfers are important factors in successful assimilation. These findings advance the study of assimilation by shifting the focus from phase models or tactics approaches to the examination of egocentric social networks. The first two research questions asked how transferee egocentric informational and friendship networks

influenced ego's ability to (a) master the new position, (b) learn the new role, (c) understand the parent organization in the context of the new work center, (d) integrate into the social fabric of the work center, and (e) remain committed to the parent organization. The results of data analysis indicate that egocentric informational and friendship networks can be useful tools to help explain certain aspects of the assimilation processes following intraorganizational job transfers.

All tests examining the *size* and *range* of informational and friendship egocentric networks were statistically significant. The size of ego's friendship network predicted his or her ability to successfully integrate into the social fabric of the new work center. The size of ego's informational network successfully predicted his or her ability to (a) master the tasks associated with the new job, (b) adapt to the new role in the organization, and (c) understand the parent organization in the context of the new work center. Data indicate that the range of the informational and friendship egocentric networks can be used to predict ego's ability to improve his or her knowledge of the parent organization and improve his or her commitment to that organization. Density and tie strength displayed mixed results that generally supported the research questions. Density was found to support ego's (a) knowledge of the parent organization, (b) ability to master the task associated with the new position, and (c) integrate into the social fabric of the new work center. Tie strength was found to support ego's (a) knowledge of the parent organization, and (b) ability to integrate into the social fabric of the organization. Status was not significant in any test or hypotheses conducted during this research project.

One of the most intensely debated issues in social network research revolves around the *size* of the network and the various advantages and disadvantages associated with that size. On one side of the argument Granovetter (1973) has suggested that a large network of relatively weak ties is best suited for providing non-redundant, unique information that ego can use to his or her advantage. The weak ties in these large networks provide new information from disparate sub-units of the organization and subsequent research in this area has generally supported Granovetter's arguments (see Burt, 1992 for a good example). On the other side of the argument Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992), along with Morrison (2002), have argued that not all situations require the need for unique information. Transferees who must learn the specific skills necessary to master a task, negotiate a role, or integrate into the social fabric of a work center may require a network that provides redundant and repeated bits of information, not unique pieces of information. Networks that provide redundant, repeated information are generally thought to be small, dense and composed of members who have strong ties to one another.

Maintaining the high levels of intimacy, emotional intensity, time, and reciprocal services that are required to warrant a tie being labeled 'strong,' are argued to be unsustainable in large networks (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973). Based on these assumptions, Morrison (2002) proposed that egocentric networks should be small when a newcomer is trying to master a task, learn his or her role in the new organization, or integrate into the social fabric of the work center because mastering these skills requires ego to repeatedly go to the same

alters so he or she will receive consistent responses. In spite of her prediction, Morrison's (2002) research with newcomers did not find support for this argument. She predicted that a small egocentric network would best be suited to provide the newcomer the necessary access to the detailed, specific types of information that are often needed to master a task, fulfill a role, or integrate into social environment of the work center. In each case she found no support for small networks, or a positive association when she predicted a negative association. The results of the Morrison study led me to question whether the assumptions associated with network size (Brass, 1995; Burt, 1992; Jablin, 2001) apply equally when the level of analysis shifts from the whole network to the egocentric network.

I propose that large is a relative term depending on the level of network analysis. In this research project, and the research conducted by Morrison (2002), subjects indicated that they had ten or fewer alters in their egocentric networks. In a complete network ten members may be considered small but perhaps in an egocentric network focused on a specific aspect of assimilation (for example trust, information, or friendship) ten members may be considered large. In the research project conducted by Morrison, and in this project, ten members was the upper limit to the size of respondent's egocentric networks.

Soldiers in the 21st TSC normally spend between 8 and 12 hours a day on the job, and they often work weekends and holidays. When working 40 – 60 hours a week among the same group of colleagues, perhaps a network of eight to ten people (although large for an egocentric informational or friendship

network) is manageable. If this is true then perhaps a large egocentric network will provide the focal actor with the redundant, repeated pieces of information that he or she needs to master the job, adjust to his or her role, and integrate into the social fabric of the work center. The data supported these ideas. When examining *task mastery*, *role clarity*, and *social integration*—the dependent variables that are hypothesized to need redundant, repeated sources of information—large egocentric networks were positively, and significantly associated with success at these assimilation skills. These results indicate that the meaning of *large* and *small* are potentially different in egocentric network analysis than they are when addressing *whole* networks.

For egocentric networks, large networks were positively associated with both unique information requirements (H_1) and information requirements thought to need redundant, repeated types of information (H_3 and H_5). Further research should be conducted in this area using different populations, different environments, and different work settings.

The *range* of a transferee's egocentric network was tested in two hypotheses (H_1 and H_7) to determine whether this feature of the network could be used to predict success at the more distal aspects of assimilation. The dependent variable *knowledge of the organization* measured how well the transferee came to understand the parent organization (US Army in this study) as seen from the new position within the new work center. The dependent variable *organizational commitment* measured how well the transferee remained committed to the parent organization after transferring to a new work center within the same parent

organization. In both hypotheses *range* was found to be statistically significant. These findings lend support to the argument that to understand more distal aspects of the work place (i.e., aspects of the organization beyond the immediate work group) the focal actor should develop an egocentric network that has members from work centers other than his or her own work center. Alters in these different work centers can provide ego with varied opinions and unique knowledge about the work center that ego may not be able to obtain if the egocentric network is comprised only of members of the immediate work group.

Density in egocentric informational and friendship networks also appears to improve the ability of a transferee to master the required skills necessary to successfully assimilate within a new work center following intraorganizational job transition. In four of the five tests examining the independent variable density, results were either significant or approached significance. Density was found to positively influence the dependent variables task mastery, role clarity, knowledge of the organization, and organizational commitment (although only approaching statistical significance on the last two DVs). Only when examining role clarity was the independent variable *density* not significant.

This non-significant result may be based on a limited understanding about how density is believed to act within social networks. Kilduff and Tsai (2003) cautioned that “despite the popularity of density as a concept...it sometimes produces counter-intuitive results” (p. 31), as in this instance. Previous research, although not definitive, proposed that co-workers help newcomers understand subtle values, norms, and expectations within the work group (Schein, 1968) and

enable the newcomer to adequately integrate and understand the mixed messages (Louis, 1980) that he or she may receive upon entering a new organization. However, Pinder and Schroeder (1987) have shown that supervisors are the primary members of the focal actor's social network who are most responsible for a new member learning his or her role within the work center. Perhaps for a transferee, the density of his or her egocentric informational network is not as influential as his or her immediate supervisor. Additional research should be conducted on this aspect of egocentric network since this study and previous research conducted by Morrison (2002) produced conflicting results.

Tests of *tie strength* produced mixed results. Hypothesis 1 examined knowledge of the organization. It was predicted that transferees would need egocentric information networks consisting of weak ties in order to successfully master this skill. The data supported this hypothesis and is consistent with the literature. However, in tests associating the need for strong ties with the dependent variables *task mastery*, *role clarity*, and *social integration*, the data did not support the hypotheses. These results were opposite of Morrison's (2002) findings. She found support for strong ties in her research examining new accountants starting their first full-time job with a major accounting firm when looking at *task mastery*, *role clarity*, and *social integration*. Perhaps having a large egocentric network that provides the redundant elements of information necessary to learn what is needed to master the task, learn the role, and integrate into the social fabric of the work center eliminates the need for strong

ties within the network for transferees. Having already worked in the parent organization, transferees may not need to develop strong bonds with their co-workers to successfully assimilate. Transferees may only need consistent access to the various alters in their informational and friendship egocentric networks. One possible explanation for the difference in findings may be the composition of the sample populations and the difference in research parameters. Morrison surveyed entry level employees after they had been in their first full-time position nine months. The demographics of the sample population in this study, and the parameters for inclusion in the study are significantly different than in Morrison's research project. Subjects in this study were at many different levels within the organization and at different stages in their careers. Furthermore, subjects in this research project varied in their amount of time in the new position (from as little as one month to as long as 15 full months) while those in the Morrison study all had been with the company for nine months. Further research should be conducted to examine the difference between the results of this research project and previous studies. Perhaps a new research question needs to ask if it is possible for ego to develop repeated, redundant contacts with selected alters but not develop strong ties with those alters.

The *status* of egocentric networks does not appear to influence assimilation as expected. It was predicted that status would positively influence task mastery, role clarity, and organizational commitment but the results presented in the previous chapter do not support these hypotheses. For task mastery and organizational commitment the results were inversely related to status, indicating

a negative relationship, and for role clarity the results were positively associated but with a beta of .008, $p < .91$. This was unanticipated and opposite what Morrison (2002) discovered when studying newcomer assimilation experiences.

One possible explanation for these findings may be that newcomers welcome support and assistance from members higher up in the organizational hierarchy whereas transferees may view this same input from higher level organizational members as interference or micromanagement. The results of this study indicate that transferees were negatively impacted by having higher status egocentric informational and friendship networks when exploring their ability to master assigned tasks, conform to the role required within the new work center, and remain committed to the parent organization. More research should be conducted addressing the status of egocentric networks.

Job Type and Similarity

The third and fourth research questions in this study asked how the type of job a transferee assumed, or how the similarity of the new job to previous jobs might influence assimilation. I will first address the complexity of the job and then undertake a discussion of the transferee's familiarity with his or her new position.

Within the 21st Theater Support Command there are individuals in traditional blue-collar positions, traditional white-collar positions, and management positions⁴. General consensus argues that blue-collar positions are normally less

⁴ The Federal Government generally classifies white-collar jobs as jobs typically being found in the administrative, management, science and professional fields, while blue-collar jobs are reserved for general labor and trade occupations according to the Office of Personnel Management's Occupations of Federal White-Collar and Blue-Collar Workers report (James, 2002). This report was used to classify job titles of respondents in this research project.

complex than white-collar positions and management positions. Blue-collar positions involve skills that can be learned relatively quickly and require less training and less education than the average white-collar position. Management positions can take a year or more to master (Groshen & Williams, 1992; Weick & Ashford, 2001). A list of job titles and classifications from survey respondents are shown in Table 5.1.

Job Title	Classification
Cook	Blue Collar
Material Handler	Blue Collar
Mechanic	Blue Collar
Supply Clerk	Blue Collar
Telephone Operator	Blue Collar
Truck Driver	Blue Collar
Water Treatment Spec	Blue Collar
Warehouse Clerk	Blue Collar
Administrative Specialist	White Collar
Chaplain	White Collar
Helicopter Pilot	White Collar
Illustrator	White Collar
Intelligence Specialist	White Collar
Legal Assistant	White Collar
Military Police	White Collar
Operations NCO/Officer	White Collar
Quality Control Spec AVN	White Collar
Training NCO	White Collar
Transportation Coordinator	White Collar
Unit Ministry Team Member	White Collar
1SG/CSM	Manager
Commander	Manager
Chief of Staff/Section	Manager
Executive Officer	Manager
Platoon Leader	Manager
Squad Leader	Manager

Table 5.1 – Job Classification

Results of analysis of variance supported Hypothesis 10 which proposed that (based on complexity of position) blue-collar workers would assimilate faster than white-collar workers and managers. These results remained statistically significant even when controlling for the potentially extraneous demographic variables age, number of permanent changes of station, civilian education, rank, and total active service. The data indicate that as the complexity of the position increases, the time to assimilation increases. These results expand the

generalizability of previous arguments to the current sample of government employees undergoing intraorganizational job transfers.

In addition to job complexity, Pinder and Schroeder (1987) argued that a transferee's familiarity with his or her new position, as compared to previous positions, would influence the time to assimilation. To test this hypothesis, participants were asked to rate how similar their new position was to previously held positions. Results of analysis of variance find support for this hypothesis. Similar to job complexity, I controlled for the potentially extraneous demographic variables age, number of previous permanent changes of station, rank, total years of active federal service, and level of civilian education and still found statistically significant results supporting the argument that job familiarity enhances successful assimilation. These results also expand the generalizability of previous arguments to the current sample of government employees undergoing intraorganizational job transfers. The results of data analysis indicate that moving into positions similar to previous positions and moving into less complex jobs positively influences the assimilation process.

An additional goal of this study was to examine the possibility that finding and reincorporating alters which had been friends or informational points of contact during previous assignments would enhance egos rate of assimilation. Data analysis found support for this argument. Transferees who found old friends or informational points of contact at their new work centers, and reincorporate them into their newly developing egocentric informational and friendship networks had higher assimilation scores than transferees who found no old friends or

information points of contact in the new workplace. I believe this to be a significant discovery for organizations that routinely transfer employees between geographically dispersed locations or work groups. These types of organizations should consider the results found in this study when making decisions about employee transfers.

Finally, participants in this study were individuals who had recently transferred from a geographically distant sub-unit of the parent organization to the sub-unit under examination. In the United States Army, soldiers undergo permanent change of station moves every three to four years. Because of this frequency of movement, I believed I would find soldiers in the sample population who had been assigned to the 21st TSC at some previous time in their career, moved to another geographical location for a few years, and then were back in the 21st TSC during the time of this research project. I hypothesized that an individual transferring back to a subordinate unit of the parent organization that he or she had been assigned to sometime in the past, would assimilate faster than an individual with no previous assignments in the subordinate unit. I predicted a positive influence believing that the soldier experiencing a second tour with the 21st TSC would have an advantage over soldiers who were serving in the unit for the first time because soldiers serving a second tour would have prior knowledge and exposure to the organization. Results from data analysis did not support this hypothesis. There are two possible explanations for this result. The vast majority of soldiers that return for a subsequent tour in the 21st TSC do not return to the same position they held during their previous assignment.

Normally they have received at least one promotion during their absence and return to a different and more complex position. Being in this different position would not present any advantages for the transferee in respect to the dependent variables measured in this project. A second possible cause for this negative result may be sampling error. With only a 19% response rate the data may not accurately capture the true status for soldiers serving a second or subsequent tour in the 21st TSC.

Being assigned a second time to the same subordinate element of the parent organization did not improve the likelihood that the transferee would assimilate any better than someone being assigned to that subordinate element for the first time. Perhaps individuals returning to the same work center after undergoing a lengthy period of separation have a more difficult time adjusting to the new surroundings than I anticipated. One explanation for these results could be that transferees may have preconceived expectations of how the work center should function based on their past experiences, but when those expectations are not met, it increases the difficulty of assimilation in the new environment. The statistical relationship for this hypothesis was positive but not significant. So, if there are any unmet expectations that hinder a faster assimilation process, they appear not to be severe enough to negatively impact that process. Therefore, assigning someone to the same subordinate element of the parent organization a second time does not appear to negatively influence the assimilation process, but it does not appear to help it either.

In conclusion, I believe that examining the egocentric networks formed by transferees following intraorganizational job transfers adds to the body of knowledge addressing both network analysis and assimilation. The size, range, density, and to some extent tie strength of a transferee's egocentric network appear to positively influence the assimilation process. Furthermore, the ability to find old friends and information points of contact in the new work center, which were known in previous work centers, appears to assist in the assimilation process. Finally, the complexity of the position and the transferee's familiarity with the requirements of the position influence his or her ability to successfully assimilate into the new work center.

Limitations of the Research

All research projects have limitations and this project is no different. One limitation of this study involves the demographic characteristics of the sample population. While it is possible and likely that this sample is representative of major logistics organizations, there are aspects of this sample that restrict its generalizability beyond this type of organization therefore possibly affecting external validity. First, the gender composition of the US Army (85% males, 15% females) is considerably different than that of the US population (49% males, 51% females) and the gender composition of the 21st TSC (66% male, 34% female) is very different from that of the US Army. Because of these differences, it is unlikely that the results of this study can be generalized to populations that have more balanced gender percentages, or to organizations that have more extreme gender differences. However, the differences in gender at the 21st TSC

appear to closely approximate gender differences in the logistics career field.

Baker (2002) conducted an analysis of gender equity within the logistics field and found it to be comprised of 70% males and 30% females. The response *n* in this research project had a gender composition of 69% males and 31% females.

Baker's findings indicate that generalizing the conclusions of this study to populations within the logistics profession may be reasonable.

In addition to the stated problems with generalizability along gender lines, an analysis of the rank structure of the response *n* indicates that this sample over-represents higher military ranks and under-represents lower military ranks.

Because of these differences in demographics it may not be possible to generalize to other military organizations with different rank structures.

A second limitation of the study was the relatively low response rate (19%). Results of this study could not be safely generalized to examinations of organization wide networks; however, with regards to internal validity, the response level is sufficient to examine egocentric networks formed by focal actors within an organization. This is possible because the unit of analysis in the study does not address organizational or network levels but focuses on the individual and his or her perceived egocentric network. With the unit of analysis being the individual, a sample size of 196 subjects is sufficient to properly analyze the variables addressed in this research project.

A third potential weakness of this study is the timing of when the research instrument was administered. The pace of activities and the stress levels of members of the 21st TSC were very high at the time this research project was

conducted. Approximately one-third of all soldiers assigned to the 21st TSC had recently returned from deployments in Iraq or Afghanistan. Another one-third of the soldiers assigned to the 21st TSC were serving in Iraq or Afghanistan during the time of the study. These deployed soldiers were not asked to participate in the study. However, everyone not deployed knew these soldiers were potentially in harms way and this added to stress levels felt by the remaining soldiers still in Europe. Finally, the remaining one-third of the soldiers that had not yet deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan were fairly certain they would be the next to go. The high levels of stress and increased activity caused by deployments, or pending deployments may have unknowingly skewed the results. Soldiers having recently survived a combat zone, and other soldiers knowing they could possibly deploy to a combat zone in the next several months may overstate their levels of assimilation believing they are a more integral member of the team than they actually are. This potential skewing of data limits the ability to generalize these results to organizations not undergoing increased levels of stress and activity. However, Kotter (1976) points out that virtually all organizations operating in the 21st Century will be experiencing increased levels of stress and activity, so there may be few organizations that these results would not apply to in these rapidly changing times in the business world. Recent geopolitical events indicate that the levels of stress and increased activity are also prevalent in many governmental organizations.

Implications for Future Research

This final section will address what I see as the most logical expansions of this research project. First and foremost I believe this study adds validity to the argument proposed by Morrison (2002): Egocentric networks are a viable method for examining organizational assimilation. Further research should be conducted to provide a more comprehensive test of this argument. This particular study examined the influence of egocentric networks on a focal actor's ability to successfully assimilate following an intraorganizational job transition involving a geographic transfer in the U.S. Army. However, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) argued that assimilation must occur following all job transitions. Research on egocentric network characteristics should be expanded to include assimilation as it occurs at other times in an individual's career – such as following promotions, organizational realignments, organizational restructuring, downsizing, rightsizing, and transfers from one organization to another. If Kotter (1996) is correct, organizations and work centers will change on a regular and more frequent basis in the 21st Century. If these changes involve moving people, then existing egocentric networks will be disrupted. After these disruptions, new egocentric networks must be formed so that members impacted by the disruption can assimilate into the new environment. Research examining egocentric network formation should be conducted to determine how those networks influence assimilation following the different types of job transitions mentioned above.

Furthermore, this study and the Morrison study (2002) examined populations comprised mostly of Americans. Additional populations should be studied so as

to increase the cross-population generalizability of this line of research. These populations should be in both the private and public sector, and future research should also examine cross-cultural populations. For example, will results differ in an organization that is embedded in, and composed primarily of members that were raised in a high context society where views about the work place and one's role in that work place differ from the populations already examined? Furthermore, different individuals are better at forming networks than other individuals. Future research needs to examine individual attributes such as introversion, negative-affectivity, and agreeableness to see if these attributes influence the types of egocentric networks that focal actors form following organizational transitions.

This research project focused on both the content for measuring assimilation success and the social environment in which that content is mastered. Traditional socialization literature examined phases that newcomers passed through as they moved from 'outsider' to 'insider,' or it examined the tactics used by organizations to socialize new members. A significant shortcoming of these lines of research was their lack of an objective measure of socialization. Knowing that organizations engage in either (or both) institutional or individualized socialization tactics and that individual newcomers pass through various phases during the assimilation process is important, but it does not explain how assimilation occurs.

Research (Chao, et al., 1994; Ibarra, 1992; Morrison, 2002) has begun to examine specific content areas believed to concretely measure the

assimilation process. These studies have argued that newcomers must learn what is required of them in the new environment and they must fit into the social fabric of the work center and organization. Specific content areas that newcomers must master include: (a) the skills required to adequately perform the new job, (b) the necessary actions, attitudes, and behaviors expected of the role, and (c) a working knowledge of the parent organization as viewed from the immediate work center. In addition to mastering these skills, the newcomer must also fit (at least reasonably well) into the social fabric of the work center and develop a sense of commitment to the parent organization. This line of research explores specific content variables that can be used to objectively measure assimilation.

In addition to examining aspects of assimilation that can be readily measured, Morrison (2002) took the next logical step in the quest to fully understand and explain the assimilation process. Her research examined the egocentric communication networks that are a vital part of any assimilation experience. A newcomer attempting to assimilate into a new work center does not do this by him or herself. Assimilation is a reciprocal process. Veteran members of the work center attempt to mold the newcomer so that he or she will match the group's idea of how the newcomer should fit into the new environment and the newcomer attempts to carve out a personalized niche for him or herself within the new work center.

To address this dynamic of social interaction, this research project, as well as Morrison's (2002) research, examined the egocentric social networks

that newcomers form as they undergo the assimilation process. These research studies, along with Kramer's (1993a, 1993b), have argued that assimilation is primarily a communicative process and requires the interaction of the newcomer and veteran members of the organization. Examining the egocentric networks that newcomers form during the encounter and metamorphosis phases of assimilation can be used to help explain the transformation of the newcomer. These discoveries are important for both practical and theoretical considerations. It is important for organizations to know and understand that the types of egocentric networks that newcomers form influences the success of their assimilation experience. It is also important for researchers to understand that assimilation is a reciprocal process and the interactions that occur between newcomers and veteran members of the group must be taken into consideration when trying to explain or understand the assimilation process.

This recent literature has added a high degree of content to the already established base of 'how' assimilation occurs in organizations. It is perhaps time to take the next step. From a theoretical and practical perspective, research to this point only explains a portion of the process that occurs when a newcomer assimilates into a new environment. Anytime an individual joins a group that individual changes. This research project, along with Morrison's (2002) earlier work, helps explain how that change occurs. However, anytime a new individual joins a group and goes through the assimilation process, the group in which he or she is attempting to assimilate also changes. In addition to the newcomer

learning and adjusting, veteran members of the work center must also learn and adjust as the environment of the work center shifts based on the addition of a new member, even if that member is later rejected by the group. Therefore, I would argue that the next logical step in examining the assimilation process is to develop a multi-dimensional research design that examines both the egocentric network formed by the member joining the group and the *whole* network of the group he or she is joining. This multi-dimensional network approach should help explain the experiences undergone by the newcomer as he or she joins the group. It should also help explain the experiences and changes that the veteran members of the group must go through as the newcomer impacts and changes the interactions within the environment.

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APPENDIX A – Survey Instruments

1. Think about whether there are people in your work center that you consider to be friends, that is people that you might choose to see socially outside of work, or when you are not working together. Please begin by listing across the first row the initials of anyone who you consider to be a friend. The initials are to help you keep track of your responses - I am not interested in identifying anyone by name. List as many or as few people as are relevant. You do not need to use all columns.

Once you have listed the appropriate initials across the first row, please complete rows 2-9 for each of the persons listed.

	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Person 9	Person 10
1. Write the initials of the people that you consider to be friends										
2. The person's staff level is: (1 = subordinate; 2 = peer; 3 = supervisor 4 = senior leader; 5 = other - please explain)										
3. The person's staff section: (for example, S3, 1st PLT, supply room, SPO, etc.)										
4. How did you meet this person (1 = on the job; 2 = during training; 3 = other - please explain)										
5. What is the total amount of time that you have worked with this person since you assumed your current job (months or weeks)?										
6. How close is your relationship with this person? (1 = not very close; 2 = reasonably close; 3 = very close)										
7. On average, how frequently do you talk, e-mail, or socialize with this person? (1 = less than once a month; 2 = once or twice a month; 3 = 2-5 times a month; 4 = a few times a week; 5 = daily)										
8. This person is a friend of how many of the other persons listed. (enter the appropriate number of other friends, or write DK for Don't Know.)										
9. Did you know this person in a previous job assignment? (Yes or No)										
10. If you answered yes to question 9, how long have you known this person (years & months, including this assignment)?										
11. If you answered yes to question 9, was this person a friend of yours in the previous assignment?										

11. Think about people in your unit that have been **regular and valuable sources of job-related or organization-related information** for you. Please begin by listing across the first row the initials of each of these people. The initials are for your use only, to help you keep track of your responses - I am not interested in identifying anyone by name. You should list as many or as few people as are relevant. You do not need to use all the columns.

Once you have listed the appropriate initials across the first row, please complete rows 2-11 for each of the persons listed.

	Person 1:	Person 2:	Person 3:	Person 4:	Person 5:	Person 6:	Person 7:	Person 8:	Person 9:	Person 10:
1. Write the initials of the individuals who have been regular and valuable sources of information										
2. The person's staff level is: (1 = subordinate; 2 = peer; 3 = supervisor 4 = senior leader; 5 = other - please explain)										
3. The person's staff section: (for example, S3, 1st PLT, supply room, SPO, etc.)										
4. How did you meet this person (1 = on the job; 2 = during training; 3 = other - please explain)										
5. What is the total amount of time that you have worked with this person since you assumed your current job (months or weeks)?										
6. On average, how frequently do you talk, email, or socialize with this person? (1 = less than once a month; 2 = once or twice a month; 3 = 3-5 times a month; 4 = a few times a week; 5 = daily)										
7. What types of information do you generally get from this person? 1 = mainly information related to my job 2 = mainly information about things going on in the organization 3 = equal amounts of both types of information										
8. During any given week, this person works, or talks with how many of the other people that you have listed? (enter the appropriate number, or write DK for don't know)										
9. Did you know this person in a previous job assignment? (Yes or No)										
10. If you answered yes to question 9, how long have you known this person (years & months, including this assignment)?										
11. If you answered yes to question 9, did you get information from this person in the previous assignment?										

<p>III. The statements below reflect some of the feelings that people may have about their job and about how much certainty or uncertainty they are experiencing. Think about how well each statement reflects your own feelings. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number. Please answer honestly. There are no right or wrong responses.</p>						
<p>For questions 1 - 18 please focus on your current job within the context of your work section. For questions 19 - 26, please think about the Army in general.</p>						
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I feel very competent in conducting job assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have learned how to successfully perform my job in an efficient manner.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have not fully developed the appropriate skills and abilities to successfully perform my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am confident about the adequacy of my job skills and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5	It seems to take me longer than I plan to complete task assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I rarely make mistakes when conducting job assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I have mastered the tasks that are expected of someone at my level.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I feel very competent dealing with customers.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I feel certain about how much authority I have on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I understand the goals and objectives for my job.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I know that I have divided my time properly on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I know what my job responsibilities are.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I know exactly what is expected of me on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Explanations about what has to be done on my job are clear.	1	2	3	4	5
15	What constitutes "good performance" is unclear to me.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I know how much I can define or modify my tasks and duties.	1	2	3	4	5
17	It is clear to me what I can do to perform my job well.	1	2	3	4	5
18	The criteria used to judge my performance are very clear.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I feel very knowledgeable about the Army's goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I feel very knowledgeable about the Army's policies, procedures and rules.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I feel very knowledgeable about the Army's important norms and values.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I feel very knowledgeable about the special language and jargon used in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I feel very knowledgeable about the channels of authority in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I feel very knowledgeable about who has real power in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I feel very knowledgeable about how to get ahead in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
26	I feel very knowledgeable about the various legends, myths, and stories about the Army.	1	2	3	4	5

Listed below are several statements that people might make about the Army . Think about how well each statement						
IV. reflects your own feelings about the Army . For each statement, indicate your agreement or disagreement by circling the appropriate answer.						
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I enjoy discussing the Army with people outside of it.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I really feel as if the Army's problems are my own.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I do not feel like part of the family in the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I do not feel emotionally attached to the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The Army has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to the Army.	1	2	3	4	5
V. The statements below reflect some of the feelings that people may have about their co-workers . Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number.						
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I look forward to being with my co-workers each day.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I feel comfortable around my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel accepted by my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
4	With my co-workers, I am easily identified as "one of the gang."	1	2	3	4	5
5	I do not feel that I have much in common with my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I feel little attachment to my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I often feel like an outsider when I am around my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5

Age: _____

1. Gender

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Total number of PCS moves (including the move that brought you to this current assignment)

3. Current Job Title

4. What section do you currently work in?

5. How many months have you held your current position?

6. How similar is this job to previous jobs you have held?

- ☐ Very similar
☐ Some what similar
☐ Some what different
☐ Very different

7. What is your highest level of civilian education?

- ☐ High School Diploma
☐ Some College
☐ Associates Degree
☐ Bachelors Degree
☐ Graduate Degree
☐ Post Graduate Degree

8. What is your highest level of military education?

9. Have you had a previous assignment in 21st TSC?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

10. If you answered yes to question 12, when were you here last and for how long?

11. Racial identity

12. Total years of active service

13. Total years of reserve service

14. Are you currently in a supervisory position?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

APPENDIX B – Definitions

Egocentric Network – An egocentric network is composed of a focal actor's relationship to other actors and is measured from the perspective of the focal actor (Brass, 1995).

Information Acquisition – is a learning process whereby the transferee actively and intentionally seeks information in order to reduce high levels of uncertainty and to facilitate his or her adjustment during the assimilation process (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Network Size – is the total number of actors in the egocentric network. It is operationalized in this research project by adding the total number of alters listed in an egocentric network.

Network Density – of an egocentric network is the ratio of all possible links in the network compared to the actual number of links present in the network; disregarding the direct links between ego and alter (Brass, 1995; Monge & Contractor, 2003; Scott, 2000). It is operationalized in this research project using the formula $\sum T_j / n(n-1)$, where T is the number of links from alter j and n is the total number of alters identified by ego (Morrison, 2002; Scott, 2000).

Network Range – is the breadth of sources available to ego (Haythornthwaite, 1996). It is operationalized in this research project by adding the total number of distinct work centers occupied by the various alters listed in the egocentric network.

Network Status – is determined by the positions network members hold within the organizational hierarchy (Lin, 1982). It will be operationalized by averaging the staff levels of all alter's listed in the respondent's egocentric network. Status can range from 1 – all subordinates to 4 – all senior leaders.

Organizational Assimilation – is the process by which individuals become integrated into the culture of an organization (Jablin, 1982). It includes two interrelated concepts; (a) the planned and unintended efforts of the organization to “socialize” the transferee, and (b) attempts by the transferee to “individualize” the work environment to better satisfy personal values, attitudes, and needs (Jablin, 2001).

Organizational Commitment – is an expression of the strength of an employee's attachment and involvement in an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1990a). Organizational commitment is characterized by the newcomer accepting the shared values of the organization, developing a desire to continue employment with the organization, and developing a willingness to expend energy and effort on the organizations behalf (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Organizational commitment in this study is operationalized using Allen & Meyer's (1990a) eight-item affective commitment scale.

Organizational Socialization – is generally defined as the “process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and participating as an organizational member” (Louis, 1980, p. 229-230).

Knowledge of the Organization – involves understanding one's parent organization in the context of the local work center. It includes understanding the parent organizations norms, policies, reporting relationships, terminology, goals, history, politics, and culture as seen in the context of the local work center (Morrison, 2002). It is operationalized in this research project using an eight-item scale developed by Ostroff & Kozlowski (1992).

Role Clarity – is the understanding of expectations about what the group believes to be the transferee's typical behavioral characteristics specific to the social context of the new work center (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). It is operationalized in this research project using an eight-item scale developed by Morrison (2002).

Social Integration – is the process whereby the transferee develops successful and satisfying work relationships with other group members so as to cross the inclusionary boundary of his or her immediate work center and move from work center "outsider," to work center "insider," thereby becoming a fully accepted member of the local work group. It is operationalized in this research project using a seven-item scale developed by Chao et al. and Morrison.

Strong Ties – are a measure of the amount of time, intensity, intimacy, or reciprocal services associated with a relationship between two actors (Brass, 1995). For informational egocentric networks the strength of a tie was operationalized by averaging the frequency with which ego communicated with each alter in the network. Scores ranged from 1 – communicates with all

listed alters less than once a month, to 5 – communicates with all listed alters daily. For the friendship egocentric networks, tie strength was computed by averaging frequency of contact as discussed with the informational network plus averaging the reported closeness to each alter listed. Scores on closeness can range from a low of 1 – not very close to all alters, to a high of 3 – very close to all alters.

Task Mastery – is the ability to perform the specific tasks required of the work position. It is operationalized in this research project using a ten-item scale developed by Morrison (2002) based on her previous research (1993) and incorporating elements of a measure developed by Chao et al. (1994).

Transferee – is an employee that accepts an intraorganizational reassignment, moving from one geographic location to another in order to assume a new position within the same parent organization (Kramer, 1991). The definition of a transferee is operationalized in this research project to mean a member of the 21st Theater Support Command (21st TSC) that has undergone a permanent change of station assignment within the previous 15 months.