You've Got a Friend in Me:

An Analysis of Coworker Friendship Relationships

———————————————

Presented to the Faculty

Liberty University

School of Communication Studies

———————————————

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Masters of Arts In Communication Studies

by

Ebonee Johnikin

May 2011

Thesis Committee

_____

Faith Mullen, Ph.D., Chair   Date

_____

William Mullen, Ph.D.   Date

_____

Randall Pruitt, Ph.D.   Date

This Project is Dedicated to My Family—

You have been a wonderful support system through this process.

Acknowledgements

It is incomprehensible how the thesis writing process begins and ends in what seems like the blink of an eye. From the first day of graduate school to final moments of the graduation ceremony, the thought of completing a work of which I and my thesis committee members can attach their name is truly an incredible experience. After much hard work, dedication, and many sleepless nights, a completed thesis is reality. It is a pleasure to express thanks to those who served as contributors to my thesis and the thesis writing process.

It is an honor to offer my deepest gratitude to my family, Orlando, Carrie, Dorenus, and Dorell, whose support and guidance has provided me hope, confidence, and encouragement. Without your unconditional love and unremitting motivation in my endeavors, this process would have been painful and incomplete. Thank you for teaching me the love and compassion of Christ. Without your examples and assistance, I would not realize the significance of my Godly purpose and my life. I truly love you all.

I am especially appreciative of my mom, Carrie Johnikin, who has spent countless hours and endless days and nights offering advice, guidance, love, correction, and a faithful reminder to always "see what the Lord says." Your selflessness, the sacrifices you have made for our family, and your relentless pursuit for perfection in all areas of life are admirable and duly noted. To rephrase your words, I thank God for giving you a daughter whom you love and who loves you in return. You are undoubtedly the best mom ever.

I also extend thanks to those professors who have contributed to my educational success. I especially would like to thank Dr. Stephen King as he is a prime contributor to my love and passion for the field of communication. Dr. King's faith and belief in me means the world to me. I am honored to have had him as a mentor and a professor. I would also like to express gratitude

for my thesis chair, Dr. Faith Mullen, as her patience, guidance, and advice helped keep me focused and grounded through this process. I am grateful for Dr. William Mullen and Dr. Randall Pruitt as their contributions assisted in producing a quality piece of work.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation for my close friends and my graduate student assistant coworkers; their relational support contributed significantly to my accomplishments. I would like to specifically express gratitude to Tiffany Renalds as she was part of my inspiration for this work. The numerous, late night hours we spent working together, talking, laughing, and mutually expressing grief will never be forgotten. Thanks, Tiffany for being a true friend and coworker. You will always have "a friend in me."

Abstract

Relationships between individuals fashion themselves in many settings and on various levels. Friendships are pivotal relationships that significantly contribute to social life, health and well-being, job satisfaction, and workplace interaction. More specifically, coworker friendship relationships are unique in their length, measurement, development, and maintenance as their formation occurs within mutually shared environments outside of family relationships. This study employed a mixed methods procedure to specifically examine these relationships. Three research questions guided the first study in an attempt to find if gender and length of friendship relationships significantly affect strength measurements of the relationship. The second study was guided by two additional research questions and employed Fisher's Narrative Paradigm Theory as a method for collecting stories on how coworker friendship relationships are developed and maintained. Data were collected from 51 participants by way of survey administration. From the 51 survey participants, 10 participants were randomly selected to complete an interview. The responses were analyzed with regards to organizational settings—workspace, proximity, and commonalities.

Key words: Friendship relationship, coworker relationship, short-term and long-term relationship, relationship strength, relationship development, relationship maintenance, Narrative Paradigm Theory, stories, narratives

You've Got a Friend in Me:

An Analysis of Coworker Friendship Relationships

Table of Contents

Relax.

Relate.

Release.

Chapter One – Introduction

Relationships are pervasive and comprehensive components of human life. The unique relationships one develops with others directly affect and influence mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual stability. Relationships, from intimate to professional, are prevalent in every aspect of humans' lives. Close friendships habitually evolve from existing formal relationships in the workplace (Morrison 1). Relational partners within work settings will likely develop a more united and cohesively attached relationship as communication becomes more frequent, intimate, and personal (Sias and Cahill 291-292). Madlock and Booth believe coworker relationships are interpersonal in nature and are thus maintained through socially supportive interpersonal communication, behaviors, and interactions (1-35). Although personal relationships are often studied separately from the context in which they occur, this study focuses particularly on relationship formation or development between coworkers in organizational settings. This study will also examine length, gender, and strength of coworker friendship relationships, and strategies for which coworker relationships are maintained.

Several individually related studies have addressed coworker relationships and relationship development, but few studies have been found which address coworker relationship development, maintenance, length, and strength conjointly. Sias and Cahill's study concentrates on peer friendship development in the workplace (273-299), while Madlock and Booth-Butterfield examine relational maintenance strategies most prevalent among coworkers, how coworker relationship maintenance affects job satisfaction, communication satisfaction, and organizational commitment (1-35). Bridge and Baxter, on the other hand, explored blended relationships—those relationships that include relational partners who are both friends and coworkers (200-225). Despite several research studies conducted on coworker friendship

relationships, coworker maintenance, and coworker relationship development, surprisingly no experiential studies have explored relationship formation and maintenance between coworkers. Presently, very little research has been found that combines coworker relationship formation and development and maintenance strategies. This study will address the issue of lack of inclusion of these two components and examine how relationships are developed and maintained between coworkers in organizational settings.

Developing and maintaining relationships in organizational settings are critical to organizational success. The inference is the more satisfied workers are with their job atmosphere and their peers, the more likely they will be satisfied with their job atmosphere, performance, and work relationships. Effective and consistent communication affords employees windows of opportunities for healthy relationships with or within the organization, which also cultivates, fosters, and nurtures performance. Deeper exploration of this topic will highlight the way relationships form in organizations and the manner in which relationships are maintained in organizations. Using Narrative Paradigm Theory, this study gathers stories for how coworker friendship relationships are developed and maintained.

Relationship processes are perpetual because of the human need to share ideas and interactions with others, which one primarily does through storytelling. Relationships are continuously formed through personal or distant narratives inherently shared through self-talk and with others through imaginations that become realities. People carry theirs and stories shared by others with them at all times. In theory, people's lives are like infectious diseases— spread and transmitted from person to person and place to place. Over time, people begin to make personal associations with individuals and events based on narratives previously heard or told, thus creating stronger bonds. These relationships can become friendship relationships.

This investigation will further enhance our understanding of the role of friendships and coworker relationships and their affect on organizational processes. This study poses the following research questions:

RQ$_1$: Does length of relationship influence strength of coworker relationships?

RQ$_2$: Does length of relationship influence types of communication among coworkers?

RQ$_3$: Does gender influence strength of coworker relationships?

RQ$_4$: How do narratives reveal the manner in which coworker relationships are developed?

RQ$_5$: How do narratives reveal the manner in which coworker relationships are maintained?

The purpose of this mixed methods study will be to examine length and strength of relationships, and relational development and maintenance strategies of coworkers within organizations. This study will employ both quantitative and qualitative instruments in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding for how coworker relationships are developed and the specific strategies used to maintain these relationships. The first phase of this study will consist of quantitative measurements that will measure relational strength between coworkers while the second phase consist of qualitative measures that gather information on relationship development and maintenance. Research questions will determine whether length and gender influence strength of coworker relationships, and how coworker relationships are developed and how coworkers within various organizations maintained these relationships. Data gathered from the first phase will be further explored through a qualitative phase. The second phase will consist of qualitative narrative analyses to explore essential components for how coworker relationships are developed and maintained with 10 participants who also were involved in the quantitative portion of the study. The qualitative research follows the quantitative research to

provide a more detailed analysis of responses taken from the quantitative questionnaire and to foster comprehension and explication of qualitative results.

 Chapter two of this study provides a review of the literature that encompasses several categories and descriptive sections that will provide a more detailed understanding and relevant emphasis for this particular study.

Chapter Two – Review of Literature

Relationships developed in organizational work settings are typically initiated by members of similar or like personalities, social preferences, social or economic status, job positions, personal interests, or cultural backgrounds. These developed relationships are commonly referred to as work, peer, employee, or coworker relationships. Developing and maintaining these types of relationships in organizational settings by these relationship groups are critical to the success of organizational functions and processes. Employee relationships can directly affect organizational environments, settings, and ultimate progress. Effective, consistent communication affords employees the ability to develop healthy relationships with or within the organization, which further cultivates, fosters, and nurtures employees and organizations' performances. The central tenet of this study encompasses organizational relationships. More specifically, this study focuses on how coworker or employee relationships, which excluded past and present romantic relationships. This study assessed employee interpersonal relationship development and maintenance between coworkers in the work environment. Exploration of this topic identifies the manner in which interpersonal relationships form and develop in organizations and the techniques utilized to maintain interpersonal organizational relationships.

Existing research is limited on coworker relationship development and maintenance, however, some research has examined similar types of relationships—including blended relationships (Bridge and Baxter 200-25), peer relationships (Kram and Isabella 110-32), and coworkers as friends (Sias and Cahill 273-99). "Relationships are defined by patterned interaction that occurs over time" (Sias, Krone, and Jablin 616), and collegial peer relationships are "characterized by communication regarding both work and personal issues and by moderate levels of trust, self-disclosure, emotional support, and friendship (Sias, Krone, and Jablin 619).

Though all forms of personal relationships share common features, sufficient research is lacking on how coworker relational formation and maintenance are depicted.

This chapter is divided into six categories, and each category provides subsequent details that serve as the foundation for this particular study.   Focusing particularly on employee interpersonal relationship communication, verbal and nonverbal, this study demonstrates the degree of significance organizational communication levied on the formation of employee interpersonal relationships. Categories to be explored and reviewed in this section include friendship relationships, coworker relationship, relationship maintenance, relationship development, and Fisher's Narrative Paradigm Theory.

Friendship Relationships

Relationships are an essential factor in everyday life—whether in personal, family, social, spiritual, or work environments, people desire fellowship or association with other people. Meeting and interacting with others become the essence of people's character. Since people constantly encounter new acquaintances and form unique bonds, they become as dynamic as their relationships. With this change, people learn to adapt to others and find unique ways to develop more relationships. Relationship formation and development are thus fluid processes— forever forging new paths and deepening old ones.

Friendship relationships have played pivotal roles in people's lives for centuries. Greek philosophers have examined, studied, and provided commentary on friendship relationships and how these relationships affect the self, others, and individuals' actions and thought processes. In Gadamer's article on friendship and solidarity, he explains how Kant, whom is described as "a master of philosophical thought worthy of admiration", expresses his idea that "[A] true friend is as rare as a black swan" (3). These words invite one to ponder the role of friendship

relationships in one's personal life and how camaraderie or friendship companionship

contributes to solidarity or exist within society (Gadamer 3). Naturally, through the processes of

life, people develop both cordial and intimate relationships with others. Ranging from friend,

close friend, and best friend, relationships are based on a variety of factors. In Gadamer's

attempt to decipher Greek philosophers' rationale and ideals of friendships, he points to a

Socratic question that asks whether friendship is "based on like finding like." He concludes that

friendship is a choice likely formed by "differences worthy of admiration and love that one

discovers in another" (Gadamer 5).

This notion of choice appears to encapsulate the foundation of friendship relationships.

Unlike most relationships, friendship relationships are developed solely by choice rather than on

obligatory terms. Because most friendship relationships are established by choice, not only are

people able to determine who their friends are, but they ultimately decide the nature and degree

of their relationship, how the relationship affects their personal and social life, and the length of

the relationship. Developing a friendship relationship may come more easily than locating one at

which some consider as a true or complete friendship relationship. This suggestion can be

likened to the struggle people often battle when making life altering decisions—deciding to

surrender to good and bad, or hideous and evil (Gadamer 5). Finding true and complete

friendship relationships can be a struggle within the inner self, and it often comes with emotional

baggage ("The Value of Friendship" 4)—emotional baggage that leads to a friendship

relationship complete with compassion and love.

Gadamer proclaims friendships can be established either on desirous, sensual happiness,

and the pleasure that friends find with one another, or on profit and advantage. Whatever the

terms of the relationship, friendship relationships serve personal or social purpose that affects all

parties involved. In lieu of the aforementioned relationships, there is what is known as genuine

friendships. Genuine friendships must first exist with one self. Gadamer supposes this type

friendship is necessary for one to be unified with or bound to another person (7-8). Friendship

inscribes social realities, psychological, and historical context that alters with context and time.

Friendships have a tendency to shift toward emotional attachment that may be common for

romantically intimate relationships.   During this progressive stage of the relationship, friends

have a heightened sense of trust, comfort, support, and attachment to each other. More simply,

love is involved. These relationships are synonymous with passionate friendships that border

boundaries of love and extreme degrees of emotional commitment. Those attaining this degree

of connection do not measure their relationship on the same scale with romantically intimate

partners but with an equivalent amount of faith, adoration, and devotion romantic partners posses

as this love implies an "exclusive attitude" to another (Vernant 77).

 Friendship relationships people create with others become significant elements of their

lives. Friendship relationships matter. Oftentimes, people frequently overlook the value and

importance of friends and friendship relationships. Friends can positively affect one's health,

work success, relationship stability, and the capacity to reach one's potential ("The Value of

Friendship" 4). Vernant, in an effort to expound on woven friendships, constructs the proposal

that these relationships are intertwined within the fabric of people's identity. He states:

> One fabricates one's own identity with others and with some others, but not just any
>
> other. That is where friendship comes in. You must have some "interlocking atoms" in
>
> common with this other who is going to be facing opposite you and who is going to make
>
> you reflect upon yourself. Asking yourself why you feel some affinities for someone
>
> else, why you experience pleasure in being with that person—all that implies an

emotional knowledge, a sympathy toward the other, and thereby, a return to yourself and

a change in yourself—a self-fabrication that is, at the same time, a fabrication of the

other, for the other, too, is constructed" (84).

Friends provide another with a heightened sense of family and community. Through shared

experiences, principles, morals, and opinions, friendships lead to enhanced solidarity and unity.

As Vernant explains, friends are individuals who share common essentials—experiences, values,

and memories. This commonality signifies the existence of a relationship of equality by virtue of

which private life is shared with others (263).

The experiences, beliefs, and practices from previous relationships serve as foundational

roots for how individuals attempt to build and sustain existing or future relationships. These

relationship building and sustaining tactics and skills typically stem from adolescence and

subsequently continues through adult relationships. Most activities and social interactional skills

individuals practice during adulthood are a result of adolescent communication and experiences.

This section of the literature review comprises studies and scholastic expertise on adolescent,

young adult, and older adult relationships, which also includes male, female, same sex, and cross

sex friendship relationships.

Engaging in friend-related activities are essential for building any friendship relationship

as it fosters friends to become acquainted with each other's likes and dislikes, allows them to

disclose personal thoughts, disclose social, educational, and physical or athletic competencies,

and it constructs a more defined social relationship. "What friends do together defines the

substance of their friendship" (Mather and Berndt 365). Researchers have found that

participation in activities with friends significantly affects the development of adolescents'

friendships. Mather and Berndt found that activities with friends provide a sense of enjoyment,

satisfaction, and fun while affording additional opportunities to learn new skills. They found that adolescents who engaged in socialized sporting events and media related activities, such as watching television, listening to music, and playing games had a more enhanced friendship (Mather and Berndt 379-385). Mather and Berndt also found that adolescents who participated in more socialized activities perceived that their friendships were higher in self-esteem enhancements, prosocial interaction, and intimacy (382).

Intimacy, attachment, and self-disclosure also play vital roles in friendship relationships. Intimacy can be described as openness and closeness to another individual in sharing and describing ideas, thoughts, feelings, and opinions (Bauminger, et al. 409). Adolescents' intimacy is predicted by their attachment characteristics, tendency to disclose confidential thoughts and feelings, and sense of coherence (Bauminger, et al. 421). Cassidy asserts that intimacy integrates several abilities: to seek support, provide support, negotiate, and feel comfortable as and with an autonomous self (121-146). Self-disclosure, on the other hand, functions as an intermediary between attachment and intimacy. Mikulincer and Nachshon illustrate how attachment strategies assist in structuring an individual's self-disclosure and reactions to another's self-disclosure. Secure individuals were found more likely to self-disclose, be more responsive to another individual's disclosure, apt to disclose more personal information, and feel more relaxed when interacting with other individuals who were high disclosers. They were also more attentive to and expanded upon issues and concerns raised in another's disclosures (Mikulincer and Nachshon 327-329). In addition to intimacy, attachment, and self-disclosure, friendship relationships transform with time—the older a person becomes, the more experiences, perceptions, and expectations change, and as a result, friendship behaviors, communication, and interactions change.

Life experiences typically change people's perceptions and expectations thus permitting them to develop different relationships with diverse types of people (Katz 45). The significance and meaning of friendship relationships deepen with age and experience. For example, young adulthood is a period of considerable change in the structure and makeup of personal and social relationships. During this particular life phase, friends were reported to be the most favored companion and confidants (Cabery and Buhrmester 404). Several studies report findings that reveal relationships one develops in college are life-altering relationships that considerably affect the way relationships are developed after the college, young adult phase of life. Alemán found that women perceived their college female friends as agents of intellectual growth, and they found these relationships to be an amnesty from stress and anxiety. Women also characterized the role they played in their friend's intellectual growth as stimulating, supportive, and intellectually challenging (Alemán 562-563). Through the relationship changing process, people seek emotional and social support from existing and future relationships. Carbery and Buhrmester found that people search for intimacy and support in friendships and that during the young adulthood phase friendships reach their peak of functional significance. Friends are found to be the primary confidants, companions, and social support systems of young adults (Carbery and Buhmester 405-406). Relational closeness has also been found to be an important characteristic of young adulthood relationships.

Friendships help establish a unique bond between human beings—one that is similar to no other form of human encounters. They assist in generating a union between human beings that further permits them to conquer diverse boundaries among individual subjects (Dreher 401-402). Research has shown that closeness is an important principle for assessing the status of friendship relationships. Kelley et al, defines a close relationship as "one of strong, frequent,

and diverse independence that lasts over a considerable period of time" (38). Ledbetter, Griffin, and Sparks found that friendship strength is associated with friends' ability to communicate efficiently. Friends who desire to maintain closeness also seek to invest time discussing how each other makes "sense of the world" (Ledbetter, Griffin, and Sparks 350). Closer friendships are also found to be more prevalent among female relationships than male relationships (Baumgarte and Nelson 911). Additionally, friends are instrumental in the support of one's identity and daily life experiences through closeness and emotional support. Friends offer companionship, protection against loneliness, enjoyment, practical assistance, and they have been shown to be beneficial for one's health (Sarason, Sarason, and Gurung 547-573). Research on friendship relationships is widely studied for various age groups and genders. A significant amount of research has been conducted on gender relationship similarities and differences.

Roy, Benenson, and Lilly conducted a replica study that analyzed sex differences in individual's desire to spend time with their intimate friends in problematic or difficult times and in times of accomplishment and success. Researchers found females were more responsive when friends experience negative or destructive events, more receptive to close friends when celebrating success, and they were more interested in acknowledging theirs and their friends' life events. Roy, Beneson, and Lilly's results also verified that females focused on negative, private events and positive, public events in friendship relationships (Roy, Beneson, and Lilly 93-101).

In an effort to find differences in same-sex and opposite-sex friendship patterns of men and women, Aukett, Ritchie, and Mill conducted a study to assist in rectifying research deficiencies by examining sex disparities in friendship patterns among New Zealand University students. They found that women favored few close, intimate same-sex friends, preferred conversing with friends (rather than doing), derived more emotional support from their female

friends, frequently discussed personal problems with their same-sex friends, and developed more therapeutic value and worth from same-sex friendships. Women's intimate and emotional, trusting, loving, affectionate, and tolerant nature was found to have intrinsic therapeutic value. Women were also found to least likely to cancel an engagement to go out with another friend (Aukett, Ritchie, and Mill 57-66). Though female friendship relationships have been found to encompass increased intimacy and relational closeness, the study of coworker friendship relationships is a rising area interest that endeavors to detail the nature of friendship relationships in the workplace.

Coworker Relationships

One under-investigated aspect of coworker relationship strength, length, formation, and development is the affect culture has on work relationships. Morris, Podolny, and Sullivan examined coworker relationships in American, Chinese, German, and Spanish cultures (517). They maintained that employees in diverse countries convey different behaviors and expectations about communication interactions and relationships into the workplace, which leads to dissimilar patterns of informal/casual communication in the organization (517). The authors proposed that culture is conceded by relational patterns in which people are embedded or familiar (517-18).

In the article titled, "Women's Friendship at Work," Andrew and Montague investigated women's friendship in the gendered workplace. The authors provided personal accounts and explanations of their workplace friendship relationship. The article focused specifically on positive and negative inferences or implications for work relationships and friendships when public and private boundaries are unclear. Andrew and Montague explained the nature of women's relationship by stating how the women "have helped each through hard times and good

times, including work and domestic crises, and have shared many work and leisure activities"
(355). They asserted that their friendship provided support, encouragement, inspiration, and
stimulation when dealing with work-related or personal issues. The significance of their work-
based friendship included shared talk and laughter. Andrew and Montague believed that an
indicator of friendship is "having someone to confide in and knowing that person will listen
sympathetically to what you have to say" (356). The authors also explained how workplace
friendships are largely shaped by work, but these friendships also have a relationship outside of
work where friends socialize with each other either via telephone or in face-to-face interaction.
Female friends occasionally desired to provide space for each other—they need space to be
themselves, and to be "real friends" (Andrew and Montague 358). Female friendships are also
described as unlikely to initiate social change. These friendships cannot offer freedom or
liberation, but they can provide rationale and explanations for identity. Relationships of this
type are "far from entrenching" but rather "empowering" (Andrew and Montague 361).

Researchers have defined organizational peer relationships as relationships between
individuals who have equal authority. Members of organizations, who are in peer relationships
within the organization, become rapidly and efficiently acclimated to the organizational settings
(Comer 64). Myers and Johnson hypothesized that solidarity, self-disclosure, and trust are
connected to individuals in close relationships; therefore, perceived solidarity, self-disclosure,
and trust are dependent upon the relationship between interacting organizational members. The
purpose of this study was to examine whether or not organizational members' perceived
solidarity, self-disclosure, and trust differed between collegial peers and information peers. Trust
and perceived solidarity were found to be lower with information peers than with special peers or

collegial peers. Perceived solidarity was also found to be higher with special peers than with collegial peers (Tardy and Hosman).

Engaging in self-disclosure with others is one way in which individuals attempt to develop, maintain, or enhance relationships. Individuals are found to be more flexible and open in disclosure to strangers than in their disclosure with friends. Organizational peers or coworkers have more significant reasons to engage in self-disclosure than to develop and maintain relationships (Tardy and Hosman 96-97). Myers and Johnson fail to demonstrate how perceived solidarity, self-disclosure, and trust are perceived by organizational members and how these principles affect organization communicational and relational development.

Coworker relationships are the building blocks for understanding workplace or employee relationships. Hodson attempts to understand coworker relationships by developing and explaining three dimensions of coworker relations—group cohesiveness and solidarity, conflict, tension and bullying, and peer supervisions. These dimensions determine the major influences on relationships, the different coworker relationships, major influences on coworker relationships, and the role of management in more socially active workplaces. Hodson goes on to further define and examine each dimension as focus is shifted toward the specific study. Employee involvement is associated with greater workgroup cohesion and with increased coworker conflict, which can gradually wear away positive outcomes (Hodson).

Hodson found employee involvement increases the intensity of all aspects of social relations at work. Understanding changing coworker relations in workplaces is an increasingly important project for workplace analysis and theories of employment relations. Findings also reveal employee involvement increases power and intensity of supportive and conflictual social work environment relationships. Supportive human relations practices and management

competencies were found to be central to outcomes in the work environment. Hodson explains that employees desire to work in "well-functioning" work environments, complete tasks, and exhibit pride in those tasks. However, employees do not take pleasure in working with others if situational circumstances of being at risk on a moment-to-moment basis are a livelihood of the organization (Hodson 186-187).

Bridge and Baxter used relational dialectics theory to examine blended or close friendships within a work environment. The term "blended relationships" is used in order to focus on a plethora of personal relationships. Five dialectical tensions utilized include instrumentality and affection, impartiality and favoritism, openness versus closedness, autonomy versus connection, and judgment and acceptance (Bridge and Baxter 203-204). Bridge and Baxter assert that work employees who are also friends should experience dual-role tension in a formalized organization. Bridge and Baxter proposed three strategies of relationship groups that communicatively managed opposing tensions perceived in their personal relationships— selection, separation, and integration. The purpose of Bridge and Baxter's study was to examine irreconcilable demands associated with the roles of "friend" and "work associates" (202). Friendships are built on expectations of shared affirmation and acceptance, while work associates are situated with knowledge of familiarity and organization that provides empathy and sympathetic understanding. The premise of this study focuses on organizational development and employee cohesion likely demonstrating a relationship with "dialectical tensions and blended friendships" (205).

Beneficial work associations were supported in four ways by friendship relationships. First friends were found to provide assistance to others, often serving as a "second pair of eyes and ears" (Information Access); second friends assisted one another to accomplish occupational

tasks (Work-related Assistance*)*; third friends reduced another's job-related anxieties by providing empathy, understanding, and comfort (Psychological Support); fourth friends assisted in making work relationships with associates more trusting and open on the job (Improved Work Relationship) (Bridge and Baxter 215-216). Additionally, participants also acknowledged three ways cooperating with others facilitated their friendships—Accessibility, Commonality, and Bonding Opportunity. Accessibility is the realization of how proximity enhances and allows friendships to develop and continue in work environments. Commonality shows individuals' perceptions for how working together allowed friendships to develop based on similarities and commonalities. Bonding Opportunity demonstrates how opportunities made available from work environments and associations permitted individuals to build or demonstrate each person's loyalty and trust (Bridge and Baxter 216). Results of this study conclude dual-role tension is positively associated with organizational formalization and negatively related to tension in relationship closeness. Friends who are closer, experience fewer multiple role tensions when compared to less close friends. Close friends are more empathetic than more distant friends in their understanding of work-related issues. They have more diverse and flexible communication than less close friends, and they manage to connect friendships and work relations in ways that do not result in double role tensions and frustrations (Bridge and Baxter 222). This study shows that personal relationships are not just intertwined in social networks of friends and family but are also prevalent in organizational settings and environments.

Mentor relationships are described as providing young adults with career skills that assist in establishing organizational roles and in preparation for advancement. Kram and Isabella conducted a study to understand peer relationships among managers and professionals in an organizational setting. The authors hypothesized that mentors provide young adults with career-

enhancing functions that help younger, less experienced adults establish a role in the organization. The results of the study suggest that peer relationships offer an alternative to conventional mentoring relationships by providing developmental support for personal and professional growth. This study also uses a continuum of peer relationships, which includes information peer, collegial peer, and special peer. Each type of relationship offers a variety of opportunities for growth through distinctive functions it provides. This study also suggests that mentoring and peer relationships have several common attributes. For example, both have potential to support developmental successive career stages. Peer relationships offer unique developmental opportunities such as providing a forum for shared exchange where an individual can achieve an awareness of proficiency, empathy, and equality that is typically absent from mentoring programs (Kram, Kathy E., and Lynn A. Isabella 110-132). Though mentor relationships are critical to some organizations and new employees, relationship length and strength can also tremendously impact the nature coworker friendship relationship.

Relationship Length and Strength

Rarely have relationships been studied to measure strength and length. What appears to be a common focus of relationship study is relational closeness, rather than strength of relationships. Most researchers venture on quests to find just how close relationships, specifically romantic relationships, are. Although relational closeness has been widely studied, this particular area of study has centered on romantic relationships rather than friendship relationships or coworker relationships. Very few studies have been found to concentrate on the measure of closeness and length of coworker friendship relationships. Because of ambiguity of measuring relationships, these particular areas of research are infrequent and uncommon. However, to further grasp friendship relationships and relational strength, this section provides a

brief analysis of research studies that have attempted to find a connection between relational closeness and length of relationship. Distinctively, this section explores research that shows slight similarities in relational strength and/or closeness and length. Article areas of discussion include relational strength, close relationships and dependency, short and long term relationships, and close coworker relationships.

Lambert et al. conducted a study to examine whether expressing gratitude to a relationship partner enhances one's perception of the relationship's communal strength. As defined in the article, "a communal relationship is one in which an individual feels a sense of responsibility for meeting the needs of the partner, and in which benefits are given noncontingently in response to the partner's needs." Researchers assert that people's motivation to respond without contingency to a partner's needs differs across different acquaintances, friends, and family members. In conducting three studies, the researchers demonstrated a relationship between expressed gratitude and perception of communal strength. They found that having expressed gratitude was associated with greater perceived communal strength of the relationship. Expressing gratitude predicted an increase in perceived communal strength of the relationship over time. Researchers also found expressing gratitude to a partner increases the perceived communal strength of the relationship (Lambert et al. 574-579).

In addition to communal relationship strength several researchers have explored dependency in close relationships. Mutual dependence is critical for friendship relationship partners as dependence affects relational satisfaction and relational maintenance. In an attempt to find when a person can accept his or her partner's dependency, Feeny conducted a study that included individuals who were in a committed relationship. Respondents participated in two studies. The first study videotaped respondents as they discussed life goals. The researcher also

requested participants to complete a survey of their attachment style, the degree to which they

accepted that their partner was dependent on them, and their perception of themselves as

independent. The second study asked participants to complete the same survey after a six month

time period. The researcher found that acceptance of dependency needs by one relationship

partner is linked to higher levels of autonomous functioning by the other relationship partner.

The researcher also found that when dependence is accepted during the first time period,

independence, autonomous functioning, and self sufficiency are more likely to occur during the

second time period. Conversely, when dependence is not present during the first time period,

independence is unlikely six months later. Results show that there is inconsistency in

dependence and independence in close, intimate relationships. Results of these studies further

provide strong empirical support that accepting dependency promotes independence.

Inconsistency in close relationships negatively contributes to relationship satisfaction, trust,

interaction, and confidence (Feeny 268-284).

Hosman and Tardy conducted a study in an attempt to identify the role of self-disclosure

and reciprocity in interactions between short and long-term friends and acquaintances. They

found that persons who disclose intimately, regardless of the initial speaker's level of intimacy or

relationship with another speaker, are perceived as less predictable than persons who do not

disclose intimately. Results also reveal that persons failing to reciprocate an initial high-

disclosure message were seen as highly incompetent. Making a highly intimate disclosure to

another person increases one's vulnerability and is a sign of trusting behavior. Results revealed

that the relationship between trust and self-disclosure is complex and beneficial to short and

long-term relationships. Researchers also found that a person was perceived as being typically

higher in amount of disclosure when they disclosed intimately to an acquaintance than when they

disclosed intimately to a friend. Results show that intimate disclosure is common in highly developed friendships, and high disclosure in an initial interaction can be interpreted as abnormal behavior (Hosman and Tardy 20-29).

Studies pertaining to relationship length are another area that has noticeable deficiencies. One study was found that examined length of friendship and perceived intelligence. This study attempted to determine if the within-person perspectives of perceived similarity, friend-ideal friend congruency, and self-concept support are more important correlates of friendship attraction than the two between-person perspectives of actual similarity and objective similarity, and if these within-person and between-person attributions of intelligence vary with long and short, male and female acquaintance. Results of the study show that perceived intelligence similarity was a more reliable feature for longer friendship acquaintances in both males and females. Regardless of sex or length of friendship acquaintance, a high significant correlation was found between the perception of one's own intelligence and the view of one's intelligence by the friend. No significance was found between perceived intelligence of the friend and perceived intelligence of an ideal friend on the data from the two male acquaintance groups. Results also demonstrate that perceived intelligence may be a significant dimension in male and female friendships, and the correspondence between one's own perceptions may be more important in maintaining friendship than the correspondence between friends' self perceptions or actual intelligence. This study also found that females are more deliberate in selecting a friend and that the friend must more closely approximate their ideal friend. On the other hand, males were willing to maintain a friendship with a person that failed to meet the standard of the ideal as far as intelligence is concerned (Bailey, DiGiacomo, and Zinser 635- 640).

One unique area of relational closeness relates to stress and well-being. Rath and Harter assert that strong relationships are vital to one's health, happiness, and productivity at work. Relationships function as a buffer during tough times, which in turn decreases stress levels. In an attempt to study how close relationships influence one's physical health, researchers designed an experiment that studied how stress levels affect the time it takes to recover from a wound. They found that individuals who were in a close relationship had a short recovery time than those who reported their relationship was distant. It was also found that strained relationships are more stressed, which, in turn, hinders the healing process. Social well-being was also found to influence the rate in which individuals recover from conventional risk factors, such as anxiety and nervousness (Rath and Harter 1-2).

Friendship relationships have tremendous implications in the workplace. A team of researchers conducted extensive studies on the value of workplace friendships. They noted that one of the most revealing questions asked to 15 million employees around the world was whether they had a "best friend at work." Researchers found that 30% of employees had a best friend at work, and those who did were reported as seven timely more likely to actively engage in their jobs, produce quality work, and experience higher well-being. They were also less likely to get injured on the job. Having a best friend at work was found to significantly affect workplace outcomes and outside-of-work relationships. In short, close friendship relationships can drastically affect workplace achievement, contribute to job success, and influence job productivity and personal well-being (qt. in Rath and Harter 3). Despite a scarcity of research relating to relationship length and strength, a vast amount of research has been conducted exploring relationship development and maintenance. Several scholars have taken interest in revealing more information on how friendship relationships are formed, more specifically how

coworker friendship relationships commence and progress. Additionally, relationship development plays a key role in the success and maintenance of relationships, specifically organizational relationships between coworkers.

Relationship Development

People develop and maintain relationships across a lifespan, and these relationships play significant roles in the psychological comfort and well-being of people as well as in identity development during various stages of life (Shelton, Richeson, and Bergsieker 180). The relationship development process also has a central role in relationship stability, strength, and significance. The type of relationship individuals develop with another person is immensely influenced by communal and ongoing expectations for the relationship. Questions such "What is it?", "What will it become?", or "What behavior is expected?" are typical questions that arise during the developmental process of relationships (Knapp and Vangelisti 32). However, deficiencies in relationship developmental processes have raised unanswered questions for friendship relationships. Thus, scholars have largely ignored the developmental turning points associated with friendship relationships. An extensive amount of research on relational development has focused primarily on heterosexual romantic relationships, but few studies focus on friendship or coworker relationship development. This section of the literature review seeks to address the omission of relational development process for friendship and coworker relationships by further reviewing and examining the developmental process of relationship development—friendship and coworker.

Scientists and scholars are perpetually searching to understand "a seemingly chaotic world," which involves human interactions, processes, and stages of relational growth and development. Knapp's model of interaction stages establishes a solid foundation for

understanding the developmental process for relationships. There are two processes of

interaction, coming together or coming apart. Each process consists of a staircase model that

vividly explicates the formation or termination of relationships (Knapp and Vangelisti 35). For

the nature of this study, relationship formation was the primary focus. All human

communication transpires within the confines of a relationship. As relationships begin with the

developmental process, communicative interactions and behaviors that subsequently enhance the

relationship building progression, individuals can anticipate relationships to move through stages

of interaction. Knapp offers a model that proposes a structure for exploring communicative

behaviors in conversations, in relationships, and throughout the lifespan. Knapp's model of

interaction is neither an exclusive model for romantic relationships nor is it limited to cross-sex

relational pairs. This model of interaction may be applicable for all relationships that experience

the formation or building process of relationship (Knapp 14). Each stage offers comprehensive

explications for coming together that help to define each stage of the relationship. The five

stages of the coming together process are [1]initiating, [2]experimenting, [3]intensifying, [4]integrating,

and [5]bonding.

The first interaction stage, initiating, integrates all processes ratified when one first comes

together with another. As one examines another, each considers his/her stereotypes, previous

interactions with the other, expectations for the situation, or prior knowledge of the other's

standing or reputation. During this phase, one often wonders whether the other is attractive or

not, or if each should attempt to initiate communication. Next, one attempts to determine if the

other is unoccupied for an encounter. In other words, "is he or she busy, in a hurry, surrounded

by others" (Knapp 17). Finally, one searches for a fitting or suitable opening line to engage the

other's attention (Knapp 17). The actual initiation stage is possibly less than fifteen seconds—

most impressions are being processed mentally. Knapp further declares that during this stage, individuals are attempting to display themselves as "pleasant, likable, understanding, and socially adept" (Knapp and Vangelisti 38). Additionally, individuals are cautiously observing the other to diminish uncertainty one may have—eager to gain explanation of interest, mood, and features of the other's public personality (Knapp 17).

Once communication has been initiated, the experimental process commences, which is when one attempts to "discover the unknown" (Knapp 17). During the start of this phase, individuals' primary interests are exchanged for demographic information—name, hometown, occupation, et cetera. At this stage, people are assiduously searching for commonalities such as common interest, experience, or an integrating topic. Knapp believes the extent to which one assist another in finding an integrating topic demonstrates the amount of interest in continuing the interaction. It also shows the willingness to pursue a relationship with the other. Since more people spend a considerable amount of time experimenting within the relationship, it is reasonable to suggest that strangers and friends are cautiously continuing their search for possible similarities—both are anxious to setup a follow-up encounter. Relationships at this stage are described as pleasant, blatantly uncritical, casual, and relaxed. Commitments are also limited (Knapp 18-19).

Close friendship relationships are indicative of an intensified relationship. Thus, during the intensifying stage, individuals are typically engaged in active participation and greater awareness of the relationship process. Before proceeding in the relationship, individuals exercise caution meaning they anticipate confirmation from the other before proceeding. It is also during this phase where request for physical or psychological favors are sometimes used to validate the subsistence of intensity in the relationship. This stage is also characterized by personal

disclosures and where previously withheld secrets are shared with the other. Disclosure topics typically relate to any area, but they relate more toward communication dealing with relationship development as this is a crucial component of this stage. This phase also distinguishes types of interaction. Individuals address the other more informally, "I" statements become "We" statements, which means both parties consider their relationship to be unified and cohesive. They begin to develop a unique form of communication—language patterns change causing conventional language forms to have understood, private meanings, and more expressions of commitment likely appear. Nonverbal message transmission also increases during this stage of the relationship, and the more the relationship intensifies, the more individual uniqueness is unfolded, and there is a genuine blend of one's personality with the other (Knapp 19-20). Once relationships reach the integrating stage, it is evident that individual's personalities have fused more than before. Characterization for the stage of the relationship varies, and it is evident that the connection between individuals is intermixing. Relationship partner's attitudes, opinions, interest, and taste are obviously nurtured and developed. There is a heightened sense of similarities in dress, manner, and verbal behavior, and empathic processes climax and explanation and prediction of behavior are much easier. Knapp explains how integration does not mean total togetherness or loss of individuality. As individuals participate in the integration process, they are also intensifying and minimizing features of the complete self. According to Knapp, when one person commits to integrating with another, that person also becomes another individual (20-21).

The final stage of coming together is bonding. This stage is typically identified and befitting for romantic relationships, but this stage of relationship development can also be applicable for friendship and coworker relationships. During bonding Knapp refers to the

cementing of the relationship as the "institutionalization of the relationship" (21). However, at this stage of the relationship it is evident that relationship partners have reached an intense point of commitment to the relationship. Most of Knapp's references to bonded relationship relates to the commitment of marriage. Friendship relationships that reach this bonding stage of interaction understand that bonding is an extension of integration and is a way to stabilize one's individuality and integrated selves (Knapp 22).

Several studies have been conducted using Knapp's relational stages model as his model epitomizes a complete progression of a relationship (Avtgis, West, and Anderson 281). Avtagis, West, and Anderson utilized Knapp's relational stage model to provide preliminary information to identify the stages of coming together and coming apart. During the initiating stage, researchers found the individuals talk about relaxing things, ask questions regarding demographics and commonalities. Individuals are typically nervous, cautious, hesitant, and curious, and while interacting, they give inviting body language, shake hands, and show nonverbal interest. In the experimenting phase, individuals talk about past relationships and family hobbies. They have a sense of uncertainty, comfort and connectedness, hold telephone conversations with the other, eat a meal together, or attempt to impress the other. Throughout the intensifying stage, individuals feel the relationship is loving, warm, gives an impression of closeness, and provides feelings of being wanted. They buy gifts for the other as well as make plans together. Researchers found that during the integrating stage, individuals share feelings and reflect on common experiences. Individuals are comfortable around the other, and they sometimes go on vacations together. Researchers have also found that individuals make promises, feel a sense of relaxation and unity, make sacrifices, and engage in activities apart (Avtgis, West, and Anderson 283-284).

In addition to Knapp's stages of relationship development and termination, several studies have been conducted that examine the friendship relational development process. In an attempt to examine intercultural friendship development, White et al. found that participants felt cultural differences, cultural similarities, prior intercultural experience, and targeting socializing influenced the development of their intercultural friendship. They found cultural differences enhanced rather than hindered friendship development primarily because participants found differences interesting and exciting, and they were open and anxious to learn about another culture and develop relationships with people from other cultures (White 3-11). In a study on intergroup roommate friendship development, Trail et al. found that participants' perception of commonality affected their friendship with their cross-group roommates over time, and it exerted an independent influence on how they assessed their friendship. Researchers also found that minority students who had White roommates with low perceptions of commonality showed decline in friendship overtime; whereas, those who had White roommates with high perceived commonality showed no decline in friendship (Trail, et al. 1270).

In an effort to describe the turning points individuals' experience as friendships develop, Miller, Hefner, and Scott found that one of the first turning points of friendship development was the initial meeting, which is when participants stated meeting their friends during childhood years, in high school, and in dorms where they were introduced by mutual friends or through family friends. The turning point of quality time was frequently mentioned by respondents. Quality time encompasses the importance of shared interest and commonalities between friends, that includes shared hobbies or activities such as playing sports, mountain biking, watching movies, or vacationing together. Researchers found communication, disclosure, and quality time together were instrumental in the friendship development. Respondents also expressed

facilitation of friendship development during hardships, in the realization of relational

importance, and during relational and structural change (Miller, Hefner, and Scott 11-16).

Zorn and Gregory attempted to examine how male friends viewed the influence of their

friendships on their assimilation into medical school and how the assimilation process

concurrently influenced their developing friendships. Researchers found medical school student

friendships were constructed according to their location and task. Participants noted that their

medical school relationships initiated with frequent contacts—meaning they were most likely to

develop friendships with those they had the most physical contact, either through lab discussion

sessions or because of assigned lab desk. Common membership in the medical school cohort,

interaction in lab settings, and frequent interaction with members encouraged and contributed to

the development of these friendships. Participants constructed their male medical friends as

people with shared goals and experiences or a common bond. Participants stated that the

essential reason for their friendship with particular classmates was their shared professional goal

of becoming a physician (Zorn and Gregory 217-226).

Researchers found participants to state that their friends were "people who helped them

and whom they helped." Their friendship relationship development also included frequent

incidences of joking and teasing during daily interaction. These interaction mechanisms were

primarily used to "blow off steam, relieve boredom, conveying closeness, or diffusing a

potentially stressful situation" (221). Participants also expressed their enjoyment of sharing

activities, such as sports, exercising together, and going out to local bars, with friends.

Participants also stated their sense of comfort in their new surroundings that was created from

their developing friendships. These friendships appeared to assist male medical students feel

more comfortable in their new environments and contributed to them desiring to spend more

time there. They felt that their common experiences with their classmates through a collective, structured socialization process, contributed to friendship formation. Participants' male friendships also served to make the men feel more comfortable, less alone, and it helped them in the course of the difficult adjustment process (Zorn and Gregory 217-226).

Rawlins explains that "friendships cannot be imposed on people; it is an ongoing human association voluntarily developed and privately negotiated" (9). Furthermore, friendships are developed by choice rather than by force or compulsion. Though extensive research has been conducted and examined on friendship relationship development, few studies have focused on how coworkers develop friendship relationships. Employees typically have little involvement in deciding who their coworkers will be; therefore deciding to develop interpersonal and more intimate relationships with employees is strictly voluntary. Organizational relationships that are formed are based on selection and choice. Sias and Cahill examined friendship development between peers in the workplace and exploration of communication changes and factors, they attempted to determine the associations with the relationship development between employees in the work environment. Researchers assert that peer relationships offer an inherent reward for employees, can decrease job dissatisfaction, and create a barrier to occupational stress. More specifically, Cahill and Silas's study analyzes friendship development both contextually and individually.

Contextual factors include influences from friendship development and individual factors include issues that derive from individuals involved in the friendship (Sias and Cahill 276). The study is divided into relationship development stages or transitions. Transition 1 is Acquaintance to Friend, which is when coworkers change from being perceived as acquaintance to being a friend. Transition 2 is friend to close friend, which refers to when coworkers move from being

perceived as a friend to being professed as a "close friend." Transition 3 is close Friend to "almost best" friend, which is coworkers change from being perceived as close friend to being perceived as "almost best" friend. Relationship development stages were shown to transition intermittently within a four year time period. Results revealed that contextual workplace factors play a significant role in friendship development and physical proximity was shown to be a major cause to friend development. As coworkers developed relationships, communication became more frequent, personal, and intimate. As friendships develop so does communication (Sias and Cahill 290-293).

Morrison's study examined gender differences in supposed advantages or benefits of workplace friendships and the relationship between organizational issues and friendship issues. A Chi square test was used in order to determine whether there was a gender difference in ways females and males reported gaining benefits from friendships in the workplace. Women were expected to distinguish benefits of friendships to involve social and or emotional support, while men perceived workplace friendships as having useful and practical career related benefits. Results of this study show most of the open-ended responses were either describing "social/emotional support or functional help with work/career assistance" (7). Women were significantly more likely than men to perceive benefits of friendship to involve social and or emotional support, or to more likely utilize their workplace friendships in a similar way. On the other hand, men were more likely to perceive workplace friendships as having functional task or career related benefits (Morrison).

Morrison's study also revealed how job satisfaction does not show a relationship with friendship prevalence for women, but for men there was a relationship between job satisfaction and friendship prevalence. Also, this study supports how work friendships were connected with

different intentions to leave for men and women. Opportunities for friendships at work were strongly connected with the amount of shared workloads for women and men, and there was no difference in gender for how friendships at work relate to social support. Findings in this study also supported the proposition that friendships existing in organizations function differently for men and women (Morrison). The overall findings supported the notion that organizational friendships operate and function differently for men and women—in terms of benefits resulting from the relationship and in organizational background or history and results (Morrison 9).

Employee relationship development and maintenance is an area that proves interesting for organizational and interpersonal researchers. Relationship development, on the other hand, has not received as much attention as relationship maintenance; however, each study has provided extensive amounts of information for organizational employee relationships and the affect it has on employee interaction. Ferris, et al. state that relationships have come to form the foundation of organizations and the contemporary image of how most work gets accomplished (1379). Previous studies examined peer relationships, mentor relationships, the difference in relationship formation and interaction between males and females, and how employee relationships and interactions contributed to or affected job satisfaction, productivity, and commitment. Relationship maintenance, on the other hand, is the common practice relationship partners employ in as an attempt to sustain their relationship. As review in the next section, several research studies have found distinctive relational maintenance strategies relational partners use.

Relational Maintenance

Madlock and Booth-Butterfield examined the effectiveness of coworkers when maintaining organizational relationships, the strategies coworkers utilized to maintain these

relationships, and the communication styles also used to maintain relationships. Using the Relational Maintenance Scale, the researchers examined seven categories that included relational maintenance strategies, communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work alienation. The seven maintenance strategy typologies included positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, sharing tasks, conflict management, and advice giving. Madlock and Booth-Butterfield found that employees used relational maintenance strategies while communicating with coworkers, when managing conflict, while sharing task, during work alienation, engaging in communication situations, and in job satisfaction. Coworker relational maintenance communication was related to organizational commitment, communication satisfaction, and job satisfaction. The lower satisfaction and commitment are, the less likely employees will be to interact in communication that is helpful and encouraging, essential components in maintaining coworker relationships (Madlock and Booth-Butterfield 18-19).

Friendship relationships play a pivotal role in individuals' lives. These relationships affect a person's mental and physical happiness and well-being; therefore, in addition to relational development, it is essential to consider the factors that help hold relationships together—relational maintenance. Once friendship relationships are developed, consistent effort on the part of both friends is necessary to keep a relationship a live and functioning. Friends must engage in behaviors that continue and develop the relationship. Deficiencies in friends' efforts to sustain the relationship likely results in broken or shattered friendship relationships. During the time between initiating a relationship and ending it, friendship partners must willingly and actively engage in behaviors that sustain it (Hall and Larson 3). Canary and Dainton mentions what some consider a simple question, "Why do some relationships succeed and others do not?" This question is explained as one that defies a simple answer—relational maintenance

(Canary and Dainton 727). The central goal of this section of the literature review is to examine, explain, and define relational maintenance, note strategies typically associated with the relational maintenance process, and identify relational maintenance characteristics and practices.

One of the most essential steps to examining relational maintenance processes and strategies is to identify previous scholars' definition for maintenance, particularly relationship maintenance. According to Duck, " 'Relationship maintenance' refers generally to the vast unstudied void in relational research—that huge area where relationships continue to exist between the point of their initial development (which has been intensively studied) and their possible decline (which has also been studied but somewhat less intensively)" (45). Canary and Dainton identify maintenance as activities and actions wherein partners engage to preserve or continue desired relational properties—specifically examining how commitment or love might be promoted. This definition implies a focus on the interaction between people's desired goals for their close relationships and methods in which they attempt to achieve those goals (Canary and Dainton 728). According to Ayres, relational maintenance is keeping a relationship in a stable state, consequently keeping it from de-escalating or escalating (62-63). Dindia defined relationship maintenance as a dynamic process that assists in preserving a relationship (289). In general, relationship maintenance refers to the behaviors engaged in between initiation and termination of a relationship (Oswald, Clark, and Kelly 414). As indicated by Oswald et al., the theoretical perspective in current research is that friendship maintenance behaviors are engaged in with the goal of maintaining the friendship at a satisfying and committed level (414). Prior to reviewing relational maintenance definitions, Dindia asserts that no single definition of relational maintenance exists, but further declares that,

"Relational maintenance, as a dynamic process, refers to all the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dynamics involved in maintaining a relationship. When we speak of relational maintenance, we might be referring to a relationship that is in the process of being maintained (i.e., kept in existence, in a specified state or condition, in a satisfactory condition, or in good working condition) or to all the processes involved in maintaining the relationship (including, but not limited to, relational maintenance strategies)" (Dindia "Relational Maintenance"287).

To better understand relational maintenance, Dindia and Canary present four definitions of relational maintenance that vary in interchangeability and distinction: "to keep a relationship in existence," "to keep a relationship in a specified state or condition," "to keep a relationship in satisfactory condition," and "to keep a relationship in repair" (163). The first definition of relational maintenance, "to keep a relationship in existence," implies that a relationship continues without termination. This definition does not specify whether relationships modify or remain stable during the maintenance phase of relationships. Depending on the nature of the relationship, activities associated or connected with maintaining the existence of a relationship will likely have a dramatic variation (Dindia and Canary 164).

The second definition of relationship maintenance is "to keep a relationship in a specified state or condition," which refers to sustaining the current level of significant qualities of relationship development (Dindia and Carnary 164). This definition implies that the fundamental nature of the relationship is maintained as it currently exists. Relationship maintenance also indicates maintaining the stage of the relationship and the characteristics of the relationship related to that particular stage of the relationship. Most people refer to relationship maintenance as an attempt to keep the relationship in static mode, which can include maintaining

the existence of a relationship, trust, commitment, or the liking. Failure to sustain these essential

properties of a relationship constitutes a failure to maintain the relationship. Maintaining a

particular stage of the relationship prevents the relationship from escalating, de-escalating, or

terminating; however, maintenance is not synonymous with continuation (Dindia 3). According

to Wilmot, stable relationships contain three elements: [1] participants reach minimal agreement

about the relationship; [2] relationships can stabilize at different levels of intimacy; [3] a stable

relationship, nevertheless, has considerable change occurring in it (qt. in Dindia 164). People

can continue to develop a relationship, but maintenance implies static movement within the

relationship—keeping the relationship intact or in a particular phase (Dindia 3).

The third definition of relational maintenance is "to keep a relationship in satisfactory

condition," which refers to maintaining a satisfying relationship (Dindia and Canary 165).

Relational maintenance is often theoretically and operationally defined as maintaining relational

satisfaction, or it is defined as relational continuity. However, the operational definition of

relational maintenance is relational satisfaction by reason that predicting relational continuity is

more difficult than predicting relational satisfaction. In spite of this, relational satisfaction and

maintaining relationships are not tantamount. Relationships can be maintained whether

satisfying or not. Relationship maintenance, in this sense, involves maintaining a satisfactory

relationship—including involuntary and circumstantial/conditional relationships. In other words,

relationships that are not satisfying are yet maintained.

The fourth definition of relational maintenance, "to keep a relationship in repair,"

includes relational maintenance and repair. Dindia notes repair implies that some aspect of the

relationship has gone awry, whereas maintenance does not. Keeping a relationship in repaired

utilizing preventative and corrective maintenance, prevents the relationship from further

deescalating and terminating (Dindia 4). This definition also invokes a dual sense of the word 'repair'. The first is "to keep a relationship in good, sound or working condition," and the second is to "repair a relationship that has fallen apart." Though maintenance and repair can overlap, some researchers prefer to keep the two concepts separate as relational maintenance refers to "keeping the relationship in its present state, and repair refers to "changing" a relationship from its present condition and restoring it to a previous state after decline or decay (Dindia and Carnary 166).

For the nature of this study, relational maintenance refers to the processes involved in maintaining the relationship and can thus be defined as behaviors, interactions, and actions relational partners use in an effort to sustain an existing relationship. Relational maintenance also refers to engaged behaviors between the initiation and termination of a relationship. These behaviors also include communication strategies, structures, and practices.

As explained by Dindia, strategies, structures, and practices associated with communication are pivotal components in relational maintenance and thus is central to relational maintenance. To maintain a relationship, relationship partners must establish concrete lines of communication with one another (Dindia, "Definitions and Perspectives" 1-2). Dindia emphasizes how relationships are existent as long as people communicate. The end of the relationship occurs when people cease to communicate. Relationships, are therefore continuous in spite of discontinuous periods of physical and interactional co presence. However, once two people stop communicating and there is no anticipation for future contact or interaction, the relationship has entered the termination phase. To maintain the quality of a relationship, individuals must maintain the quality of communication as communication constitutes the principal way we maintain relationships (Dindia, "Definitions and Perspectives" 1-2). Relational

maintenance communication is also a typology of relational maintenance strategies, which can be classified as "conscious and intentional behaviors designed to maintain the relationship" (Dindia, "Definitions and Perspectives" 9).

Interpersonal communication researchers have offered a variety of thoughts and ideas of maintenance and related typologies for examining strategies individuals use to maintain their relationships. In an attempt to derive a comprehensive taxonomy of relational maintenance behaviors, Canary et al. elicited 579 undergraduate students to participate in a pilot test in which students were asked to write about positive and negative behaviors employed in three different types of relationships—friends, romantic, family, work, other. Researchers then coded strategies of 100 participants in creating an exhaustive and inclusive list of maintenance behaviors. Researchers found ten inductively derived strategies: [1] Openness (self-disclosure, sharing secrets, listening, giving advice); [2] assurances (supportiveness, comforting each other, putting the other first, overt love expression); [3] (shared) joint activities (spending time together, rituals, planned events, designated time to talk); [4] positivity (cheerful and pleasant interactions, upbeat and positive to each other, showing affection) [5] cards/letters/calls (mediated communication, writing letters/cards to each other, telephone conversations); [6] avoidance (evasion of partner or issues, topic and personal avoidance); [7] shared tasks (performing routine tasks and chores); [8] anti-social behaviors (unfriendly or coercive behaviors); [9] social networks (relying on friends and family for support); and [10] humor (positive and negative jokes or sarcasm). Researchers also found relational maintenance strategies to vary according to relationship type—family, romantic, friends, and work (Canary et al.11-13).

Ideally, social relationships directly affect individuals' lives—physically and emotionally—despite how detrimental or satisfying (Bushman and Holt-Lunstad). These

relationships serve as fundamental components of life and, in turn, create an urgent desire to maintain certain types of relationships. Nonvoluntary relationships are defined by Thibaut and Kelley as "a relationship in which the person is forced to stay even though he [or she] would prefer not to" (169). Nonvoluntary relationships include family relationships (i.e. siblings or in-laws), work relationships (i.e. supervisors, students, or colleagues), and social relationships (i.e. church members, roommates, or organizational members) (Hess 459-460). Hess positions that relationships, through interpersonal communication, are a path toward intimacy and being close to others is what individuals also attempt to achieve in interpersonal relationships. Despite desires to maintain relationships and closeness with others, individuals have a desire to keep distance in relationships, particularly in some nonvoluntary relationships. Hess found that people create distance in everyday relationships with well-liked and unliked partners, associates, colleagues, or friends. Distance is a relational dimension that individuals regulate and control. Reasons for distancing oneself from others include personal protection from getting injury, protecting others from injury, avoiding obligations of friendship, dislike for things with which another person is associated, distance for philosophical reasons, desire to avoid temptation, public vs. private distinctions, or rejuvenation. These perceptions and reasons for distancing from others in nonvoluntary relationships can change (Hess 480-482). Maintaining relationships, including nonvoluntary relationships, can also prove beneficial and rewarding.

Through the relationship maintenance process, individuals' attachment styles and maintenance strategies affect conflict and relationship maintenance behaviors. Bippus and Rollin assert that individuals' attachment style differences reflect interaction with "significant others." Their goal was to determine if perceptions of conflict styles and relational maintenance strategies differed in friendship contexts as a function of attachment styles. Their findings reveal

individuals' attachment styles affect behaviors regarding adult friendships (Bippus and Rollin 113-123). Canary, et al. hypothesized relational maintenance strategies varied among relational types, which included friendships, romantic relationships, or family relationships. They found individuals were less concerned with maintaining friendship relationships than with family and romantic relationships. Maintenance strategies, positivity, openness, assurance, sharing task, and cards/letters/calls differed based on relationship types. Waldron found, however, that individuals sanctioned the use of strategies to maintain coworker relationships (289-306). Bippus and Rollin found maintenance strategies and behaviors to include humor, social networking, sharing activities, and using mediated communication.

Coworker Relationship Maintenance

Relationships surrounding organizational settings are typically nonvoluntary, and they require different maintenance strategies and tactics than do some family, social, or romantic relationships. Madlock and Booth examined how effective coworkers are when maintaining organizational relationships, the strategies coworkers use to maintain these relationships, and the communication styles also used to maintain relationships. Using the Relational Maintenance Scale, the researchers assessed maintenance strategies used between coworkers. Madlock and Booth specifically examined seven categories that included relational maintenance strategies, communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work alienation. The seven maintenance strategy typologies included positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, sharing tasks, conflict management, and advice giving. Positivity includes interacting with others in an uncritical, joyful manner; openness is disclosing desires for the relationship plainly and overtly as well as discussing the nature of the relationship directly; assurance is attempting to continue the relationship by communicating personal desires for the relationship;

social networks is using affiliations, membership groups, and relationships; sharing task is carrying out responsibilities (Canary and Stafford 254-257). Conflict management and giving advice were added strategies taken from Stafford, Dainton, and Haas in an attempt to provide a comprehensive view of relational maintenance (Madlock and Booth).

Madlock and Booth found that employees use relational maintenance strategies while communicating with coworkers, when managing conflict, during task sharing, handling work alienation, and communication situations and in job satisfaction. Coworker relational maintenance communication was related to organizational commitment, communication satisfaction, and job satisfaction. This form of relational communication negatively affected work alienation. The lower satisfaction and commitment are, the more likely employees are to not interact in helpful and encouraging communication essential assist in maintaining coworker relationships. Relational maintenance strategies generally used among family members and friends were found as suggestive for social support among coworkers (Madlock and Booth 18-19). Relational maintenance strategies are also found and can be applicable to friendships and coworker relationships.

Narrative Paradigm Theory

Fisher first presented the narrative paradigm theory in 1984. He referred to humans as homo narrans, which is what he believed to be a suitable explanation for how humans are separated from other humans. In other words, "to be human is to tell stories" (Clark 3). Narrative paradigm theory therefore serves as the framework for this study. Humans create stories as individual tools to share experiences, construct meaning, understand processes and events, and to develop and maintain relationships. Stories are an essential part of our everyday lives. We subconsciously use them to make sense of our environments and to further develop a

comprehensive understanding of people and our surrounding situations. Fisher describes

narration as a "type of human interaction—an activity, an art, a genre, or mode of expression"

(Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm" 6). Stories are personal expressions shared through words.

We use stories to help us further gain knowledge and appreciation for ourselves and relationship

partners. They build bridges that foster connections between and among people, events, ideals,

experiences, communication, and relationships. This means of communication builds

relationships based on commonalities, cultural backgrounds, and interest. Through stories we

attempt to define ourselves, create knowledge, build relationships, and construct and grasp

identities (Kellas 242).

According to Fisher's theory, humans are natural storytellers (Fisher, "Narration as a

Human" 4). Fisher defines narration as "symbolic actions—words and/or deeds—that have

sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (Fisher, "Narration as a

Human" 2). One purpose of the narrative paradigm is to mirror existing thoughts and ideas

shared by scholars from varied disciplines (Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm" 347). As

storytellers, we subconsciously invite others into our world—allowing opportunities to construct

meaning and assess events of their lives as well as our own. Through narrative paradigm we

continuously share personal worlds and experiences with others. Fisher further explains the

rationale for narrative paradigm:

> "The narrative paradigm is a paradigm in the sense of a philosophical view of
>
> human communication; it is not a model of discourse as such. The primary function of
>
> the paradigm is to offer a way of interpreting and assessing human communication that
>
> leads to critique, a determination of whether or not a given instance of discourse provides
>
> a reliable, trustworthy, and desirable guide to thought and action in the world. It

predicates that all normal human discourse is meaningful and is subject to the tests of narrative rationality" (Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm" 351).

Fisher describes narration as a "type of human interaction—an activity, an art, a genre, or mode of expression" ("The Narrative Paradigm" 6). He also presents five presuppositions that structure the narrative paradigm. These presuppositions include: [1]humans are storytellers; [2] the model of human decision-making and communication is "good reasons" that varies amid communication situations and media; [3]history, biography, character, and culture govern good reasons; [4]rationality is determined by narrative beings—awareness of narrative probability, which is what constitutes a logical story, and narrative fidelity, which determines truthfulness of stories; [5]the world is a collection of stories that are chosen to live the "good life" in a process of "continual recreation" ("Narration as a Human" 7-8). These presuppositions are guiding forces for this pragmatic theory.

Narratives also provide a unity of life (Williams 305). Individuals unify their lives through coherent, well-descriptive narratives of events—specifically personal events. "If we make sense of our experience through storying, it follows that we construct our understanding of ourselves narratively" (Clark 4).

In the article entitled, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of the Public Moral Argument," Fisher explains his propositions of the narrative paradigm. He explains initial inspirations of narrative paradigm, rationales for narrative paradigm, and presuppositions that structure narrative paradigm. Alasdair MacIntyre's book titled, "After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory," stimulated Fisher's idea for development of narrative paradigm. Fisher explains the most impressive and impacting section of the book states how in man's actions, practices, and fictions, he is "essentially a story-telling animal" (quoted in

"Narration as Human" 1). Dramatic enacted narratives are necessary for characterization of human actions and behaviors ("Narration as Human" 2). The narrative perspective is described as having significance to real and fictional worlds, "to stories of living and to stories of the imagination" ("Narration as Human" 2).

Fisher further explains narration as a "type of human interaction—an activity, an art, a genre, or mode of expression" (Narration as Human" 6). These stories are also described as ways to verify a meaningful life-world, and a way of relating to "truth" about human conditions ("Narration as Human" 6). Additionally, Fisher presents five presuppositions that structure the narrative paradigm. These presuppositions include: [1]humans are storytellers; [2]the model of human decision-making and communication is "good reasons" that varies amid communication situations and media; [3]history, biography, character, and culture govern good reasons; [4]rationality is determined by narrative beings—awareness of narrative probability, which is what constitutes a logical story, and narrative fidelity, which determines truthfulness of stories; [5]the world is a collection of stories that are chosen to live the "good life" in a process of "continual recreation" (Narration as Human" 7-8). These presuppositions are guiding forces for this pragmatic theory.

Fisher's Narrative Paradigm has been used in various areas of communication. From media, politics, health, inter

cultural, rhetoric, organization, and interpersonal, Fisher's theory has undoubtedly shown its relevance, practicality, and usefulness across the field of communication. Based on the wide range of study, it can be alleged and noted that Narrative Paradigm Theory is an acclaimed and extensively used theory. Several research articles have employ Fisher's Paradigm as an attempt

to examine relationships, discourse, or the workplace. The following articles provide a review and evaluation of this theory and its expansive use.

Page attempts to find what stories are told and how these stories are persuasively performed on the television network, Home and Garden Television (HGTV). A rhetorical analysis of the reality-genre network attempts to determine whether Narrative Paradigm Theory can be applied to visual representations to reveal implicit stories and values. Results reveal that television shows can be interpreted by associating Narrative Paradigm Theory's concepts of narrative probability to image contents, and concepts of narrative fidelity to the descriptive images. Results also show that nearly every episode aired on HGTV provides a foreshadowing of the ideal early in the narrative, often arranged with images of the problematical present. In short, Page found that moralizing and materialistic myths of the American Dream are present in programs presented on the HGTV network (Page 12-22).

Narratives are explained as an important way for individuals to structure and interpret the world; therefore, narratives told between friends can have an important role in the socialization that takes place within peer groups. Cheshire analyzes narratives told between adolescent friends. This study validates the importance of narratives in the construction of friendship, and the interpretation of past experiences according to norms of peer groups. Results show that boys establish a sense of group identity through the joint activity of 'telling'. On the other hand, for girls, the links are between individual selves, which are constructed through their stories or tales. Girls were found to tell stories in a style that respect their friends' speaking rights—this behavior can be labeled as cooperative. Boys were found to tell stories that can be described in the nature of competing for the floor and striving for "one-up-manship," which includes behaviors such as interrupting, using insults, contradictions and jokes. In spite of this, boy's narratives were also

found to have characteristics typical of a cooperative speech style, such as repetition of words and phrases, latching of turns, completing the clause of the previous speaker and using simultaneous speech that does not appear to violate the turn-taking rights of the current speaker. Additionally, girls were found as being more inclined to seek connection through their talk with friends whereas boys were found to seek separateness to mask the complexities of conversational interaction (Cheshire 258-260).

In the article titled, "Strategic Application of Storytelling in Organizations," Barker and Gower examine internal and external workplace diversity. Using Narrative Paradigm Theory as a framework, this study shows how storytelling serves as an organization communication tool, and explains how to effectively apply storytelling in diverse work environments. The researchers propose that Narrative Paradigm Theory correlates with the organizational diversity communication challenges. Organization diversity continuum is defined as "the levels of workforce diversity, within cultures and between cultures, with respect to age, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, and personal experiences that occur within a firm and between a firm and its partners and stakeholders" (Barker and Gower 297). Since most organizations are comprised of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, Barker and Gower believe storytelling is essential for demystifying organizational effectiveness. Barker and Gower also propose the Storytelling Model of Organizational Communication (STMOC), which serves as a mixture of individual and organizational socialization and communication needs in order to recognize the significance of heterogeneity and time (301). This model further discusses the effectiveness of storytelling in organizational settings to help develop a swift communication environment. A swift communication environment is described as fostering symbiotic understandings among participants and behaviors that benefit the organization. Barker and Gower also assert that the

ways in which stories are told affects how well stories are received, and that story preparation and careful consideration for the audience and the purpose are keys to creating good narratives (303-305).

Stutts and Barker analyze an image advertisement using techniques from Narrative Paradigm Theory. This study explores image advertising of Exxon, a megabrand petroleum industry. The specific medium explored is Exxon's Driver Human campaign's introductory television advertisement, which examples visual language and further conveys its message without verbal language. Narrative Paradigm Theory's two point approach—rational and value laden—provide useful assessment tools for predicting believability, long-term success, and saliency for image advertising. This theory is used to examine Exxon's Driver Human campaign to potentially reveal value-oriented audience content conflicts within advertisements. Seventy-three participants and one advertising representative were included in this study. The essential aims of the study were to determine if there were discernable similarities and differences in perceptions of Narrative Probability and Narrative Fidelity between advertising professionals and students, and if Narrative Probability and Narrative Fidelity expose impending value conflicts among television advertising audiences. Researchers found that although Exxon, the storyteller, was not perceived by participants as intentionally deceiving the audience, advertisements are created to endorse the message of the storyteller in the absence of alternative arguments (Stutts and Barker 209-240).

In the article titled, "Family Business Members' Narrative Perceptions: Values, Succession, and Commitment," Barker, et al. attempted to determine whether demographic factors influenced levels of commitment in family businesses. They investigated and identified similarities and differences between themes perceived in selected stories, evaluated similarities

and differences in perception of Narrative Probability and Narrative Fidelity, and they investigated and identified relationships between perceived values for selected stories. Fifty-four respondents from family-owned businesses acted as participants for this study. Eight stories were constructed and a category of open-ended questions were developed and distributed to participants and returned via mail. Researchers found that commitment was related to demographic factors that may be associated to the level of shared organizational culture inside the family business. They found that narrative analysis of the eight developed stories did support the idea of value congruity and awareness of themes in family business success.

Extensive research has been conducted on friendship relationships, coworker relationships, strength and length of relationships, and relational maintenance and development. Though extensive amounts of research have be conducted on such a unique area of relationships, few studies have been found to explore coworker friendship relationship formation, maintenance, length and strength. In an attempt to explore this distinctive area of study, the current study employed a mixed methods research design to gather more information on coworker friendship relationships. Using surveys and interviews, this study assessed the role of coworker relationships, intimacy, self-disclosure, and cohesion of coworker friendship relationships. The next chapter explores methodological processes employed is this research study.

Chapter Three – Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology and specific techniques and processes used in examining how relationships are developed in organizational settings between coworkers and how well these coworkers maintain relationships. The philosophical position the researcher employs is that of a pragmatic mixed methods approach. This chapter provides a working definition of the mixed methods approach, details and explanations for using this approach, and rationale and reasoning for combining qualitative and quantitative methods for this particular study. This chapter also presents planned procedures for which data will be gathered, sampling strategies and methods for qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis procedures, and validating procedures for qualitative and quantitative data.

Research Design

This study uses a mixed methods research design in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

RQ$_1$: Does length of relationship influence strength of coworker relationships?

RQ$_2$: Does length of relationship influence types of communication between coworkers?

RQ$_3$: Does gender influence strength of coworker relationships?

RQ$_4$: How do narratives reveal the manner in which coworker relationships are developed?

RQ$_5$: How do narratives reveal the manner in which coworker relationships are maintained?

Methodological foundations for this study are grounded in surveys and questionnaires used in previous studies. The study uses the mixed methods approach that consists of surveys or questionnaires and interviews. Each participant completed a survey questionnaire that assessed their work relationships. Following the survey questionnaire method, a portion of participants were randomly selected to complete the interview process where more information was collected

that shows types of relationships developed in organizational settings, how these relationships are maintained, and if these interpersonal relationships are effective or not.

This mixed methods research design is an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that involves compilation or analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study where data is collected either concurrently or sequentially. This method attempts to consider various viewpoints, positions, perspectives, and standpoints, and it involves incorporation of the data at one or more phases in the research process (Tashakkori, "Handbook" 212; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner 113). Brewer and Hunter emphasize that the social science discipline has developed immensely since the fifties, and due to this expanded growth there are "no major problem- areas that is studied exclusively within one method" (22).

Overview of Research Method

Mixed methods evolved when researchers believed qualitative and quantitative methods were conjointly useful in addressing research questions. Initially, sociologist and cultural anthropologists were dominant users of this pragmatic method. Tashakkoir and Teddlie argue that there has been an evolution in the social and behavioral science discipline from the initial use of monomethods to what is presently known as mixed methods studies. Within this evolution are three points to consider: (1) acceptance of mixed methods, (2) application of emerging distinctions between quantitative and qualitative research, (3) and the rapid occurring use of mixed methods in the last thirty years ("Mixed Methodology" 46). Presently, mixed methods research is known as a new research movement that has been birthed in response to quantitative and qualitative research that continues to spur ideas and synthesis from theses and research studies (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner 113).

The use of multiple methods is also known as triangulation, broadly defined as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (Denzin 291). This use of triangulation can be traced back to Campbell and Fisk who argue that in order to examine discriminant strength and validity and to approximate contributions of trait and method variance, "more than one trait as well as more than one method must be employed in the validation process" (Campbell and Fisk 81). Bouchard further argues that the convergence or agreement between two or more methods "enhances our beliefs that the results are valid and not a methodological artifact" (Bouchard 268). In other words, since both methods serve as a structure or composition for mixed methods designs, the researcher will further be able to prove or disprove their premise, claim, or answer research questions that accompany the study. Furthermore, the rationale for employing a pragmatic mixed methods research approach can be summarized from Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick's compiled underlying principle derived from various authors. They formed the assertion that combining qualitative and quantitative methods will complement each other and additionally allow for a more vigorous analysis—each will take advantage of the strength of the other (Ivankova, Cresewell, and Stick 3). Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner explain Sieber's outlined list of reasons for how combining qualitative and quantitative methods can be effective at the research design, data collection, and data analysis stages of the research process. Quantitative data can assist the qualitative component by categorizing or identifying sample members and remote, deviant cases, while at the design stage, qualitative data can assist the quantitative component of a study by helping with conceptual and instrument development. During the data analysis stage, quantitative data can facilitate the generalization of the qualitative data and illuminate qualitative findings (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie,

& Turner 115). Despite popularity and the rapid use and dispersion of mixed methods research, this method is not effortless or easy to implement.

Mixed methods research has evolved in the last sixty years and is becoming increasingly popular among social scientists and scholars. This chapter details the method for how this study will be completed. This study will employ a mixed method strategy. Using both quantitative and qualitative instruments, this study will attempt to find how length of relationship influences strength of relationship how relationships are developed and maintained between relational coworkers. Both instruments were distributed to all participants separately and individually. Participants for this study will be adult employees who have maintained the same job for at least eighteen months or a total of seventy two weeks over a six year period. This chapter also explains the method for which data will be collected and analyzed. Using Fritz's "Items Used to Measure Relational Strength" questionnaire and narrative analysis, this study will combine results from both methods and look for common themes and connections between relationship strength and relationship maintenance. This chapter also notes specific steps for how data was analyzed once all information, figures, and transcriptions have been discussed.

The rationale for using both methods and instruments is that neither method is independently sufficient or adequate for analyzing and understanding development and maintenance strategies in coworker relationships. Using both methods provides for further understanding of relationship strength and how relationships are developed and maintained between both partners. Rather than utilizing a sole method, either qualitative or quantitative, combining them provides a stronger, more justified study. As relationships develop, the stronger they become, and the more relational partners will desire to maintain them. Also, using both instruments will attempt to show length of relationship influences relationship strength and how

relationships are developed and maintained. These instruments further assess relational strength and relational development and maintenance strategies and components. The theoretical preference also plays a major role in collected data.

The mixed methods design approach encompasses both advantageous and disadvantageous consequences of utilizing such a design. Advantages include openness, straightforwardness, and opportunities for investigation and exploration of quantitative results in more detail. This design also establishes provability of effectiveness when unforeseen results occur from a quantitative study. Disadvantages of this design stem from the presumed known challenging, tedious and lengthy process, and potential time constraints of collecting and analyzing data from both qualitative and quantitative methods (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick 4). Researchers who choose to utilize this method must also become familiar with quantitative and qualitative methods, requirements, and formatting. The next section of this chapter focuses on each study's mixed method procedures, planning, and implementation of procedures for completion of this study.

Procedure

This section of the chapter explains procedures for how this study was implemented and completed, provides explanations and justifications for using particular qualitative and quantitative instruments, and includes sampling strategies for qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher employed a mixing procedural design, which included a quantitative and qualitative research design, and a theoretical perspective that assisted in determining whether relationships are developed and maintained through notion message construction and how these messages alter based on situation or circumstance. Methods for completion of this study occurred in two phases using two different instruments—collecting and combining quantitative

and qualitative data consecutively. The qualitative component of this study was narrative analysis, and the quantitative component was an assessment questionnaire that measured relational strength. Narrative analysis served as the dominant qualitative instrument, however, the quantitative questionnaire instrument, which measured relational strength, preceded the qualitative instrument and served as the secondary instrument.

With this approach, information collected from the survey instrument additionally related to information collected in the narrative analysis portion of the study. In this case, reported measurements of relationship strength between coworkers assisted in determining how these relationships are maintained.

<div align="center">Study 1</div>

Participants

Participants were 51 working adults from a variety of organizations (n= 15, 29.4% male) and (n=36, 70.6 % female). Participants for this study included adult employees between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five years as this included a range in age of participants to show a more broad variety and assortment of results responses, to determine whether relational length influence relationship strength, and to find whether the notion of relationship development and maintenance importance differed between ages. In an effort to expand knowledge on adult coworker relationship development and maintenance in the workplace, male and females participated in this study. Both gender groups are included to provide a varied selection of the relationship partner participants chose to reference during the data collection phase—this includes gender mutual and gender different relationships.

Participant Selection Procedure

Participants were chosen using the snowball method. According to Noy, the snowball sampling procedure is when the researcher accesses informants through contact that is provided from other informants. This process is described as repetitive in that informants refer the researcher to other informants who are later contacted by the researcher—they then referred to the researcher other informants (330). Using the snowball method, thirty (30) people were asked to refer to the researcher four (4) prospective participants who have maintained consistent employment in one organization with at least five (5) people for a minimum of eighteen (18) months and who had constant contact with at least five (5) other people in the same organizational work environment. If criterion for participation were met, initial snowball participants were asked to complete the survey.

The researcher contacted each initial snowball participants via email, telephone, or face-to-face for participation to explain the nature of the study, inform them of their proposed role, and invite them to participate. Snowball participants were people with whom the researcher had either a personal or profession relationship. These participants were asked to voluntarily participate, and they consented to disclosing information regarding relationship development and maintenance with a coworker as this also provided a varied collection of responses. Each participant was informed about the nature of the study, confidentiality, risk, and criterion for participation. Criterion for voluntary participation in this study included: (1) work experience and a developed relationship with at least five other employees within the company or organization in the same building or department, and (2) maintained steady employment at one location for at least eighteen consistent months or have been employed with one organization

having continued work history with at least five employees for at least twelve consistent weeks out of the year for at least six years.

Participants received the survey information and questionnaire either through mail (included a self addressed, stamped envelope for return), email, or hand delivery (dependent upon locale of participant in relation to the research). Once received, participants were asked to complete and return the survey through the method of receipt—mail, email, or hand delivery. Each participant was then given instructions on referring to the researcher four (4) prospective participants who meet specified criterion for participation to continue the snowball method procedure. Participants' careers, employment locations, and lengths of employment varied as all participants were not employment with the same organization.

Research Instrument

The quantitative data instrument used for this study was Fritz's "Items Used to Measure Relational Strength" questionnaire, which measured relational strength between participants and coworkers (Fritz 46). This assessment helped determine if tightly formed relationships had solid, foundational maintenance strategies commonly implemented in the organizational coworker relationships. The quantitative assessment measured relationship strength between coworkers. Results from the quantitative measurement of relational strength showed a trend in relational partners. This instrument addressed questions that represented how participants value coworkers and how these values are measured as they pertain to coworker relational partners. Each participant answered each question on the "Items Used to Measure Relational Strength" questionnaire prior to the narrative analysis interview phase of the study. Instructions for how to complete the study were given before participants proceeded to begin the questionnaire.

Respondents were instructed to select one coworker they considered to be a friend (someone whom they could confide in, can trust, and one in which they were comfortable around—excluding past or present relationship partners). This person must be someone they met on the job and as a result, their relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This was the relationship respondents referenced for the remainder of the questionnaire. They were instructed not to choose someone with whom they had a relationship prior to their work experience in the organization. However, respondents were also allowed to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from a previous or current job.

Participants were instructed to answer questions from the questionnaire assessing one coworker friendship relationship from their chosen organization.

Fritz's "Items Used to Measure Relational Strength" is an 18-item Likert scale type survey that assessed organizational relationship roles, honesty, self-disclosure, mutual dependence, and communication (Fritz 46). The questionnaire responses range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Relationship strength items were intended to measure intimacy, irreplaceability, mutual dependence, and the role of peer relations. Questions that measured nonroleboundedness (question one), honesty (question two), and self-disclosure (question three) were combined to frame and represent a measurement of intimacy. In other words, questions one through three measured intimacy. A three-item question composite was used to measured irreplaceability and mutual dependence, while a four-item question composite measured the role of peer relations.

A five-item question composition was used to measure communication in the workplace. More specifically, these question items attempted to determine measures for coworkers' communication patterns specific to organizational work roles—task, role, interpersonal, cultural,

and identity—as they pertain to coworker friendship relationships. Simple *t*-tests were also conducted to analyze and respond to the questions for each category of relationship length and gender.

This questionnaire was attached to a cover page that explained the nature of the study, provided detailed instructions, included a confidentiality statement and agreement, and requested contact information that subsequently allowed for ease of access to participants who were randomly selected to participate in the qualitative narrative analysis portion of the study. Two questions from the original questionnaire were excluded due to the nature of this study.

Data Collection

The first part of the questionnaire included demographic information. The next questions included organization and friendship information: identification of respondent and target's type of organizational employment, respondent and target's position, age at time of employment at organization, length of employment at organization, length of friendship, identification of type of friendship: just coworkers, acquaintances, friend, close friend, best friend, and life-long friend, and personal definition of friendship.

For one target friendship relationship only, respondents completed a battery of relational closeness measure: intimacy, irreplaceability, and mutual dependence. Additional items included: provides information about the organization, gives me emotional support, makes me a better person, involves me in outside-of-work activities, makes work interesting for me, and gives me help on tasks at work. These items were developed in a previous exploratory investigative study of functions of peer relations. Each item was answered using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

Participants' reported task communication interaction with specific peers was measured by items constructed on a 5-point Likert scale for each domain: task, role, identity, interpersonal, and cultural. Answers ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." See appendix A through E for participant consent forms and questionnaire used.

Data Analysis

Data collected from Fritz's "Items Used to Measure Relational Strength" questionnaire was used to draw conclusions on how long-term and short-term relationships differ on these constructs. The demographic questions were used as a means to separate participants into two relationship groups—short-term and long-term relationships. Short-term relationships consisted on those relationships ranging between less than one year and 2 years, while the long-term relationships consisted of those relationships ranging between 3 years and greater. Only those questionnaires that were fully completed (i.e. no unanswered items) and meet specified criteria were used when analyzing the data, resulting in a usable sample of 58 resulting in a 50.4% return rate. Of the 58 returned questionnaires, 4 could not be used due to reference of a friendship relationship that was developed prior to having worked in the organization, and 3 were returned after statistical analyses were complete. Hence, there were 51 usable surveys. Of the 51 participants, 36 were female and 15 were male. The questionnaire was comprised of a variety of questions that attempted to measure strength of coworker relationships. The questions were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Behavioral Sciences (SPSS).

The next section of this chapter focuses on methods and processes of collecting data. Through the continuous process of participant referrals, the researcher received enough participants to complete the quantitative portion of the study. Since this study was not an attempt to reveal statistical significance or represent the population at large, a 51participant

sample size was enough to gather and quantify information regarding coworker relationship strength. 51 participants was also a sizeable amount for the nature of this study.

Study 2

Participants

From the participants who answered the questionnaire, 10 participants were randomly selected to participate in the qualitative portion of the study as this sample size suffices for detailed, comprehensive data collection. Participants provided narrative responses to a series of questions that pertained to relational development and maintenance with a coworker friend in which they were expected

Data Collection

The second method is a qualitative instrument, narrative analysis, which will assess the relational development and maintenance between the participant and a chosen coworker relationship confidant, partner, or friend. The researcher, using a qualitative method, collected stories and information using narrative analysis on how relationships are first developed and steps each relational partner typically takes to maintain their relationship. According to Berger, a narrative is a story, and stories give account of previous experiences of people. Furthermore, stories contain a sequence of events, which means that narratives happen over a period of time (4). Richardson affirms people can "apprehend" the world in narrative form, and people can "tell" about the world in narratives also (118).

Narratives record human experience through creation and restoration of personal stories, and narratives are appropriate for addressing issues of culture, complexity, and human centeredness due to the ability to document and retell events that are most influential to us (Riessman 1). Riessman also explains that people make sense of their lives in accordance with

narratives that are available to them. These stories are continuously recreated "because stories

do not exist in a vacuum but are shaped by lifelong personal and community narratives" (2).

Narratives help illustrate experiences and understanding of people and events (Riessman 2).

Narratives or stories participants told provided detailed information on developmental tactics

used during the initial stages of relationship formation, and these stories provided comprehensive

examples coworker relational partners use to maintain relationships in the workplace and outside

the workplace.

Participants were instructed to choose one coworker they consider to be a friend or

whomever they are closest to. Once participants had chosen their coworker, participants were

asked to answer a series of questions that in turn warranted narrative story responses for how

their coworker relationship was developed and how the relationship is or was maintained. Each

participant was asked the same questions in an effort to collect data that uses coherent and easy

to compress and analyze. Rather than having participants write out narrative responses,

questions were asked either over the telephone or face-to-face in an environment that is

comfortable and relaxing for them—away from the work environment and coworkers—as this

allowed for more honest and detailed questions. Since participants were in a comfortable

environment, they were more to likely provide adequate information explaining the initial stages

of relationship development and interactions between coworkers that eventually expanded into

well-maintained relationships or affiliations. Each participant's narrative responses was audio

recorded using a handheld recording device as this decreased the possibility of human error in

transcribing unclear information, and it served as a source for more accurate data. The

qualitative methods was beneficial in discovering relational maintenance strategies

Using the narrative analysis instrument approach, participants revealed whether messages are used between relational coworkers in an effort to demonstrate the Narrative Paradigm Theory. The next section details how data was assessed and analyzed.

Research Instrument

Interview questions used for this study were generated from a pre-test research study. The pre-test study used a qualitative research design in an attempt to find whether shared narratives explained how female coworker relationships were developed in organizational settings and if personal narratives illustrated how female relationships were maintained in organizational settings. For this study, five female graduate students and university employees served as participants for this study. The researcher created a coworker relationship questionnaire to assess how participants developed and attempted to maintain the relationship with their coworker friend.

Participants, in the pre-test, were required to be currently or formerly employed at one organization for a total of 18 months either consistently or over a period of 6 years for 12 consecutive weeks. Each participant was instructed to choose one current or former coworker they considered to be a friend on their job—to be defined and referred to as a coworker friend. This relationship should have initiated in the work environment, but escalated to a friendship relationship outside of the work environment. Coworker friends must have been employed at the same organization with participants for at least 18 months.

In the pre-test, participants were asked questions pertaining to coworker relationship development and maintenance which they had to answer in narrative form. The friendship questionnaire was divided into three sections: demographic information, general relationship

questions, and specific/detailed questions pertaining to relationship formation and maintenance that elicited narratives.

Questions for the current study were taken from the pre-test study as this allowed the researcher to use the most pertinent questions that elicited usable narratives for this study.

Data Analysis

Once all data was collected, the researcher re-listened to each participants' narrative analysis interviews at least once. The researcher also wrote detailed notes from each participant's recorded stories to gather information that pertains to relationship development and maintenance. Once interviews had been listened to and analyzed, the researcher identified common themes that occurred within participants' responses or stories. Statements that illustrated relationship development and maintenance were extracted from the transcribed narrative and used to support research questions.

Chapter Four – Results and Discussion

Study 1

The variables examined in the current study were gathered through the process and

distribution of surveys to individuals who had been employed at one organization for at least 18

consistent months and had frequent contact with at least five other people in the same

organizational work environment. Data was calculated through traditional paper-and-pencil and

email survey administrations. Using the snowball method, 115 surveys were distributed to

qualified participants. For this study, a total of 58 individuals participated, generating a sample

of 51 usable, completed survey questionnaires. Statistical data were analyzed in reference to the

two research questions guiding this portion of the phenomenological study. It is important to

note that statistical significance for the current study is less than .05. In this section of the

chapter, the findings are discussed in light of the research questions that guided the study.

Background Information

Prior to reporting findings for this study, basic information pertaining to study directives

given to participants and basic demographic information was necessary for a comprehensive

understanding of the study. Participants were asked to select one coworker they considered to be

a friend—someone whom they confide in, can trust, and one in which they are comfortable

around. This coworker friend was someone they met on the job and, as a result, their

relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This was the relationship and

the coworker participants referenced during the survey questionnaire. Participants were

instructed to not choose someone they had a relationship with prior to their work experience in

the organization. Participants were offered a choice to evaluate a coworker friendship

relationship from either a previous or current job. Preceding the survey process, participants

were asked to provide demographic background information relating to themselves and their coworker friend.

The sample included fifty-one individuals of Caucasian, African American, Chinese, Samoan, and Mexican cultures. Participants' overall length of friendship ranged from 1 to 46 years, and age ranged from 23 to 64 years. They reported working for a variety of organizations including, education 39.2%, business 11.8%, medical 17.4%, industry 11.8%, administrative 13.7%, and technical 6.8%; 66.7% reported that they were currently employed at the same organization with their coworker friends and 31.4% reported that they were not. Participants reported their friends' job title, and 51% were reported having a different job title from their friend. Thirty-five participants referenced a coworker friendship relationship from a current job, while 16 participants referenced a coworker friendship relationship from a previous job. Participants identified their friendship relationship as one of five types, including just a coworker 2%, friend 41.2%, close friend 31.4%, best friend 9.8 %, and life-long friend 13.7%. Participants also reported their educational background which included, high school 3.9%, vocational degree 3.9%, some college 11.8%, bachelors degree 39.2%, masters 23.5%, doctoral 5.9% , and professional 2.0%. Friendship length ranged from 16 months to 35 years. Length of friendship was later divided into two categories, less than one year and 3 plus years.

Friendship Defined

To understand the nature of participants' coworker friendship relationships, participants were asked an open-ended question for how they personally defined friendship. Rather than have a definition imposed on them, participants were allowed to provide a personal definition of friendship as this allowed for a more clear understanding of the nature of participant's coworker friendship relationship. Each participant provided a personal definition for friendship. As an

alternative to reporting all participants' friendship definition, 5 of the most unique friendship

definitions were chosen as most definitions varied only slightly. Each definition focused on

intimacy, trust, dependence, and closeness, which further explains why these particular

definitions were selected to include in this portion of the results—they relate to the categories on

the "Items Used to Measure Relationship Strength" survey (Fritz 46).   Definitions are listed in

the following table:

Table 1
Friendship Definitions (Survey Participants)

"One with whom you have shared interests and/or experiences to provide common language, and with whom you have a reciprocal level of trust and confidentiality."
"Friendship is having someone you can laugh with and cry with. It's someone who understands and accepts you for who and what you are. Friends are people who confide in each other. They want what is best for each other."
"Unspoken, devoted relatedness"
"A mutual relationship that is enjoyable and rewarding for both parties in which both benefit from each other's company."
"A close relationship where two people are there for each other to help in a time of need and to have fun together."

Length and Strength of Relationship

Results for length and strength of relationship are supported by various researchers.

Ledbetter, Griffin, and Sparks found that friendship strength is associated with friends' ability to

communicate efficiently (350). Other researchers have found that close or strong friendship

relationships offer companionship, protection against loneliness, enjoyment, practical assistance,

and benefits to one's health (Baumgarte and Nelson 911). For this study, length of friendship

was divided in two categorizes or sections: short-term friendships and long-term friendships.

Short-term friendship relationships consist of a relationship between a 1 year to 2 year range,

while long-term friendship relationships consist of a relationship between a 3 year and longer

range. The first research question asked whether relationship length influenced strength of

coworker relationships. To answer this question, the data collected from the relational strength questionnaire were examined. The difference between the two groups was tested with an independent sample *t*-test. Analysis will be presented for four sections, intimacy, irreplaceability, mutual dependence, and the role of peer relations.

Intimacy

Intimacy has been described as openness and closeness to another individual in sharing and describing ideas, thoughts, feelings, and opinions (Bauminger, et al. 409). Additionally, several researchers assert that intimacy integrates several abilities, which include to seek support, provide support, negotiate, and feel comfortable as and with an autonomous self (Cassidy 121-146). Results for this study yielded no significant difference between short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships and relationship strength for the intimacy question set. Short-term friendship relationships produced a mean score of 4.07 (SD=1.033), where ($t(49)$=-.352, $p=ns$), and long-term friendship relationships produced a mean score of 4.17 (SD=.878). Thus, these results demonstrate that participants' coworker relationship boundaries extend beyond the organizational work environment.

Results showed that short-term and long-term relationships did not differ in regards to honesty. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 1.33 (SD=.488), where ($t(49)$=-.593, $p=ns$), and long-term relationships produced a mean score of 1.44 (SD=.652). Both groups accede that they have an open and honest relationship with coworker friends.

Results illustrated a slightly different mean score in self-disclosure between short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships. Short-term friendship produced a mean score of 1.60 (SD=.632), where ($t(49)$=-.658, $p=ns$) and long-term relationships produced a mean score of 1.78 (SD=.959). Both groups had a self-disclosing relationship with their coworker friend. In

short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships no difference in measurements of intimacy were found. Participants reported possessing open and honest relationships along with abilities to disclose and divulge information to each other. However, they reported no role-boundaries with regards to intimacy. The findings are illustrated in table 2. For significance table see appendix J.

Table 2
Relationship Length and Intimacy Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Nonroleboundedness	**Short-term**	15	4.07	1.033	.267
	Long-term	36	4.17	.878	.146
Honesty	**Short-term**	15	1.33	.488	.126
	Long-term	36	1.44	.652	.109
Self-disclosure	**Short-term**	15	1.60	.632	.163
	Long-term	36	1.78	.959	.160

Irreplaceability

Results yielded no significant difference between short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships for the irreplaceability question set. Results demonstrated that short-term and long-term friendship relationships displayed no discrepancy in whether their coworker friend could be replaced if they were to leave the organization or if they were not around as short term relationships produced a mean score of 3.73 (SD=1.163) and long term relationships produced a mean score of 4.06 (SD=.826). However, it was found, based on mean score, that short-term friendships were more likely to miss their coworker friend than those in long-term friendships. Short-term friendship relationships produced a mean score of 1.40 (SD=.507), where ($t(49)=-.976$, *p=ns*) and long-term friendship relationships produced a mean score of 1.69 (SD=1.117).

On the other hand, there was small mean score variation between short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships with regards to whether their coworker friend could meet

friendship needs no one else could. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.60

(SD=.828) and long-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.31 (SD=1.157), where

($t(48)=.864$, $p=ns$).

The following table shows that long-term friendship relationships agreed more with the

statement that referenced meeting coworker needs no one else could than short-term friendship

relationships. Short-term friendship relationships were approaching a mean score of neutral—

meaning they were indifferent to this statement. No differences in measures of irreplaceability

were found for short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships. The findings are

illustrated in table 3. For significance table see appendix K.

Table 3
Relationship Length and Irreplaceability Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
If this person were to leave this organization, I could easily find someone to take his/her place.	Short-term	15	3.73	1.163	.300
	Long-term	36	4.06	.826	.138
I would miss this person if he/she were not around.	Short-term	15	1.40	.507	.131
	Long-term	36	1.69	1.117	.186
This person does things for me no one else could do.	Short-term	15	2.60	.828	.214
	Long-term	36	2.31	1.157	.196

Mutual Dependence

Results generated no overall significant difference between short-term and long-term

coworker friendship relationships for the mutual dependence question set. Data explicated an

insignificant variance in how much short-term and long-term coworker friends depend on each

other. Short-term friendship relationships produce a mean score of 2.60 (SD=1.183), and long-

term friendship relationships produced a mean score of 2.06 (SD=1.120), where ($t(49)=1.521$,

(*p=ns*). Short-term relationships were found as approaching a mean score of neutral in the

measure of how much participants depended on their coworker friend, while long-term

relationships were found to agree that there was extensive dependence on coworker friends.

There was little discrepancy in how much short-term and long-term friends expressed the

need for their coworker friend. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.87

(SD=1.246), where (*t*(49)=.562, (*p=ns*) and long-term relationships produced a mean score of

2.67 (SD=1.121). However, the level of mutual relationship dependence showed an insignificant

difference in short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships.

There was a little variance in responses relating to the importance of the relationship.

Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.07 (SD=.961), and long-term relationships

produced a mean score of 1.86 (SD=.833), where (*t*(25.007)=1.521(*p=.481*).   These results

demonstrated that long-term coworker friends are measured to have a mutual level of

relationship importance. The findings are illustrated in table 4. For significance table see

appendix L.

Table 4
Relationship Length and Mutual Dependence Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
This person and I depend on each other a great deal.	Short-term	15	2.60	1.183	.306
	Long-term	36	2.06	1.120	.187
This person and I really need each other.	Short-term	15	2.87	1.246	.322
	Long-term	36	2.67	1.121	.187
This relationship is very important to both of us.	Short-term	15	2.07	.961	.248
	Long-term	36	1.86	.833	.139

Role of Peer Relations

Results yielded a significant difference between short-term and long-term coworker

friendship relationships for the role of peer relations question set. Data revealed a significant

variance between short and long term coworker friendship relationships in the measure with

consideration for sharing information about the organization between coworkers. Short-term

relationships produced a mean score of 2.00 (SD=1.069), while long-term relationships produced

a mean score of 1.72 (SD=.615), where (t(17.986)=.943 (p=.049). These results reveal the

notion that long-term coworker friends were more likely to share information with each other

about the organization. However, there was no statistical variance in how much emotional

support coworker friends provided each other and whether they engaged in outside-of-work

activities together as short term relationships produced a mean score of 2.00 (SD=1.069) and

long term relationships produced a mean score of 1.89 (SD=1.036), where (t(49)=.346, (p=ns).

Results show a slight but insignificant difference in whether coworker friends made each other a

better person. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.13 (SD=.990), while long-

term relationships produced a mean score of 1.86 (SD=1.018). Long-term coworker friends were

also found to more likely involve the other in outside-of-work activities. Short-term relationship

produced a mean score of 2.33 (SD=1.175) while short term-relationship produced a mean score

of 1.92 (SD=.996), where (t(49)=.943, (p=ns) . This shows that short and long-term coworker

friendship relationships were likely to engage others in activities. The findings are illustrated in

table 5. For significance table see appendix M.

Table 5
Relationship Length and Role of Peer Relations Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
This person provides me with information about the organization.	Short-term	15	2.00	1.069	.276
	Long-term	36	1.72	.615	.102
This person gives me emotional support.	Short-term	15	2.00	1.069	.276
	Long-term	36	1.89	1.036	.173
This person makes me a better person.	Short-term	15	2.13	.990	.256
	Long-term	36	1.86	1.018	.170

This person involves me in outside-of-work activities.	Short-term	15	2.33	1.175	.303
	Long-term	36	1.92	.996	.166

Findings show that there was significant difference in whether short and long term coworker friends share information regarding the organization with the other. It was also found that long-term coworker friends were emotionally supportive, more likely to make the other a better person, and to likely involve the other in activities outside the work environment than short-term coworker friends. Overall, there was slight significance in the measure of the role of peer relations for short and long term coworker relationships.

Results show that relationship length does not influence strength of coworker relationships. Despite variations in responses between short and long-term friendship relationships, it was found there was no overall significance for length and strength of coworker friendship relationships. Results revealed that short and long-term coworker friendships have an intimate relationship where there are no boundaries to their relationship— limited to workplace issues. Also, coworkers are open and honest with their friends enough to comfortably disclose and share information with them. Both relationship groups reported that even if their coworker friend left the organization their friendship relationship could not be replaced, and they would miss their friend if they were not around. It was also found that both short and long-term relationship groups depend on their coworker friend a great deal; they need each other, and they think their friendship relationship is important.

Length and Measures of Communication

Length of friendship was divided in two categories as previously noted: short-term friendships and long-term friendships. The second research question focused on whether relationship length influenced types of communication. To answer this question, the data

collected from the measures of communication section of the relational strength questionnaire were examined. The difference between the two groups was tested with an independent samples *t*-test. Analysis will be presented for one section, divided into five parts: task, role, interpersonal, cultural, and identity.

Communication Types

Task Communication

Results yielded a small but insignificant difference between short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships for the task communication measure. Results show short-term coworker friends frequently discussed their job tasks more frequently than long-term coworker friends. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 1.53 (SD=.516), where (t(49)=-1.151 (p=.065), while long-term relationships produced a mean score of 1.86 (SD=1.046). The measure of task communication is approaching significance, but there is slight variation in response.

Role Identity

Results generated an insignificant difference between short and long term coworker relationships for the measure of role identity. Short-term relationship received a mean score of 1.87 (SD=.915), and long-term relationships received a mean score of 1.94 (SD=.893). It was found that both groups highly assented to talking with their coworker friend about the nature of their role identity within the organization. There was little to no variation in response.

Interpersonal

Short-term and long-term coworker friendship relationships showed no significance for the measure of interpersonal communication. Both groups were found to talk with their coworker about how the other responded and behaved toward them in work situations. Short-

term relationships generated a mean score of 2.27 (SD=1.100), and long-term relationships

generated a mean score of 2.25 (SD=1.105). There was little to no variation in response.

Cultural

There was a slight but insignificant variance between short and long term coworker

friendship relationships with regards to cultural communication. Results demonstrated that long-

term coworker friendships were more likely to communicate methods in which the organization

handles employee mistakes. Short-term friendship relationship yielded a mean score of 2.20

(SD=1.082), while long-term friendship relationships yielded a mean score of 1.78 (SD=1.045).

Identity

Results yielded no significance for identity communication between short and long term

coworker friendship relationships. It was found that both groups communicated with their

coworker friend about how others viewed their identity and the extent to which they belonged

with the organization. Short-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.67 (SD=1.345) and

long-term relationships produced a mean score of 2.53 (SD=1.298). There was no significance

in response.

The findings are illustrated in table 6. For significance table see appendix N.

Table 6
Relationship Length and Measures of Communication Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Task	Short-term	15	1.53	.516	.133
	Long-term	36	1.86	1.046	.174
Role	Short-term	15	1.87	.915	.236
	Long-term	36	1.94	.893	.149
Interpersonal	Short-term	15	2.27	1.100	.284
	Long-term	36	2.25	1.105	.184
Cultural	Short-term	15	2.20	1.082	.279
	Long-term	36	1.78	1.045	.174

Identity	Short-term	15	2.67	1.345	.347
	Long-term	36	2.53	1.298	.216

Results show that length of relationship does not influence types of communication among coworkers. Despite variation in mean score, results revealed no significant difference in communication types for short and long-term coworker friendship relationships. It was found that both short and long-term relationship groups talk with their coworker friend about job concerns, their role in the organization, how people act toward them in the workplace, and how the organization deals with mistakes.

Gender and Strength of Relationship

The third research question that guided the study asked whether gender influenced strength of coworker relationships. To answer this question, the data collected from the relational strength questionnaire were examined. The difference between gender groups was tested with an independent samples *t*-test. Analysis will be presented for four sections, intimacy, irreplaceability, mutual dependence, and the role of peer relations.

Intimacy

Results yielded no statistical significance between gender groups and the intimacy question set. Men produced a mean score of 4.33 (SD=.617) and females produced a mean score of 4.06 (SD= 1.013), where ($t(49)$=.985, $p=ns$) for the nonroleboundedness question. For the honesty question, men produced a mean score of 1.47 (SD=.516) while women produced a mean score of 1.39 (SD=.645), where ($t(49)$=.414, $p=ns$). Men produced a mean score of 1.93 (SD=.961) for the self-disclosure question while women produced a mean score of 1.64 (SD=.833), where ($t(49)$=.277, $p=ns$). For the entire intimacy question set, results show no significance for nonroleboundedness, honesty, and self-disclosure. This means there was no

difference in gender for the measure of intimacy within coworker friendship relationships.

However, it was found that since women were found to agree more with the honesty question,

this illustrates that women were a little more open and honest with their coworker friend, and

they felt they could open up more with their coworker friend than men. Based on mean scores, it

is suspected that males limit their relationship to work issues with coworker friends more than

women do. The findings are illustrated in table 7. For significance table see appendix O.

Table 7
Gender and Intimacy Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Nonroleboundedness	Male	15	4.33	.617	.159
	Female	36	4.06	1.013	.169
Honesty	Male	15	1.47	.516	.133
	Female	36	1.39	.645	.107
Self-disclosure	Male	15	1.93	.961	.248
	Female	36	1.64	.833	.139

Irreplaceability

No significant differences in gender was found for the questions relating irreplaceability.

Results show that males produced a mean score of 3.80 (SD=.862) and women produced a mean

score of 4.03 (SD=.971), where $(t(49)=-.788$ ($p=ns$)) for the question that relates to finding

someone to take their place if they were to leave the organization. For the question relating to

whether one would miss this person if they were not around, men produced a mean score of 1.80

(SD=1.014) and women produced a mean score of 1.53 (SD=.971), where $(t(49)=.901$ ($p=$ns)).

and does things no one else could do (t(48)=.864 ($p=ns$)).   In short, no significance was found for

irreplaceability. Results show that women were least likely to find someone to replace their

coworker friend if the friend were to leave the organization. There was also a slight variation

between men and women in whether they would miss their coworker friend if they were not

around. Women were found to miss their coworker friend slightly more than men. Overall, both

men and women were found to assert that their coworker friend was irreplaceable. The findings

are illustrated in table 8. For significance table see appendix P.

Table 8
Gender and Irreplaceability Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
If this person were to leave this organization, I could easily find someone to take his/her place.	Male	15	3.80	.862	.223
	Female	36	4.03	.971	.162
I would miss this person if he/she were not around.	Male	15	1.80	1.014	.262
	Female	36	1.53	.971	.162
This person does things for me no one else could do.	Male	15	2.60	1.056	.273
	Female	36	2.31	1.078	.182

Mutual Dependence

There was an insignificant difference found in the mutual dependence question set.

Results show a marginal difference between men and women in how much they depended on

their coworker friend. Males produced a mean score of 2.20 (SD=1.014), where (t(49)=-.062

($p=ns$), and women produced a mean score of 2.22 (SD=1.222), where (t(49)=-.067($p=ns$). This

shows that men were more likely to depend on their coworker friend than women. There was an

insignificant difference in whether males and females expressed a need for their coworker friend.

Women, however, were found to express the credence that they and their coworker friend needed

each other. Results revealed that women produced a mean score of 2.61 (SD=1.202), where

(t(49)=1.102 ($p=ns$) and men produced a mean score of 3.00 (SD=1.000). There was also a

marginal difference in how males and females expressed the mutual importance of the

relationship. Women, who received a mean score of 1.83 (SD=.910), where (t(49)=1.127 ($p=ns$),

were found to accede more to this statement than men, who are received a mean score of 2.13

(SD=1.202). In general, women were found to have a greater level of dependence on their

coworker friends than males. The findings are illustrated in table 9. For significance table see

appendix Q.

Table 9
Gender and Mutual Dependence Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
This person and I depend on each other a great deal.	Male	15	2.20	1.014	.262
	Female	36	2.22	1.222	.204
This person and I really need each other.	Male	15	3.00	1.000	.258
	Female	36	2.61	1.202	.200
This relationship is very important to both of us.	Male	15	2.13	.743	.192
	Female	36	1.83	.910	.152

Role of Peer Relations

Results yielded no statistically significant difference between gender groups and the role

of peer relations question set. It was found that the question items pertaining to whether

coworker friends provided each other with information about the organization was approaching

significance but was not significant as women produced a mean score of 1.81 (SD=.856) while

men produced a mean score of 1.80 (SD=.561), where (t(49)=-.023 (*p=ns*). There was slight to

no variance between men and women's responses. The question relating to whether coworker

friends provided each other with emotional support revealed a significant difference between

men and women, where (t(49)=.346 (*p*=.054). Women produced a mean score of 1.89

(SD=.756) and men produced a mean score of 2.00 (SD=1.141). Women were found to be more

emotionally supportive to their coworker friend than men.

The question item relating to if coworker friends made each other a better person was

found to be approaching significance between men and women as (t(49)=-.036 (*p=ns*). There

was slight to no variance in men and women's responses—both strongly agreed their coworker

friend made them a better person. No significance was found for the item that relates to outside-of-work activities. However, there was a insignificant variance between men and women.

Women produced a mean score of 1.94 (SD=1.013), and men produced a mean score of 2.27 (SD=1.163). This revealed that women were more likely to involve their coworker friend in outside-of-work activities, while men were not. The findings are illustrated in table 10. For significance table see appendix R.

Table 10
Gender and Role of Peer Relations Measurement Scores

	Length	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
This person provides me with information about the organization.	Male	15	1.80	.561	.145
	Female	36	1.81	.856	.143
This person gives me emotional support.	Male	15	2.00	.756	.195
	Female	36	1.89	1.141	.190
This person makes me a better person.	Male	15	1.93	.704	.182
	Female	36	1.94	1.120	.187
This person involves me in outside-of-work activities.	Male	15	2.27	1.163	.300
	Female	36	1.94	1.013	.169

Results revealed that gender does not influence strength of coworker relationships. There were no significant differences between males and females in regards to relational strength. It was found that both male and female coworker friends have intimate friendship relationships where their relationships are not limited to work issues. They are open and honest with each other, and they frequently disclose and share information. Both groups reported that they felt their coworker friend could not be replaced, would genuinely miss their coworker friend if they were not around, believed that their coworker friend could do things for them no one else could do. Males and females reported that they have a mutually dependent relationship. They felt they needed their coworker friend and believed their coworker friendship relationship is important. Results also reveal that there was no significant difference in how men and women view their

relationship roles—whether they provide information about the organization, if the other makes

them a better person, and if they involve each other in outside of work activities. However,

despite the lack of significance for roles of the relationship question-set, finding shows that there

was a significant difference in areas of emotional support as women were found to be more

emotionally supportive than men.

<div align="center">Study 2</div>

The data utilized in this study was gathered through the process of conducting interviews

with individuals who had been employed at one organization for at least 18 consecutive months

and who had frequent contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work

environment. Ten qualitative interview participants were randomly selected from the original 51

participants from study one. Transcriptions and notes were analyzed in reference to the two

research questions guiding this portion of the study. In this section of the chapter, the findings

are discussed in light of the research questions that guided the study.

Background Information

Prior to reporting findings in this study, basic information pertaining to study directives

given to participants and basic demographic information are necessary for a comprehensive

understanding of the study. Participants were asked to select one coworker they considered to be

a friend—someone whom they confide in, can trust, and one in which they are comfortable

around. This coworker friend was someone they met on the job and as a result, their relationship

developed inside and outside the work environment. This was the relationship and the coworker

participants referenced during the interview questionnaire. Participants were instructed to not

choose someone they had a relationship with prior to their work experience in the organization.

Participants were permitted to choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either

a previous or current job. They were asked questions pertaining to relationship development and relationship maintenance with this person. Preceding the interview process, participants were asked to provide general background information relating to themselves and their coworker friend.

The sample included ten individuals composed of Caucasian, African American, and Samoan cultures. Participants ranged between the ages of 22 and 50 years, and their overall tenure ranged from 2 to 10 years. There was a fifty-fifty split in reference to employment at a previous job and employment at a current job. Five participants referenced a coworker friendship from a previous job while five participants referenced a friendship relationship from a current job. Participants reported working for a variety of organizations including, education, health and medicine, industry, and administrative and technical professions. Friendship length ranged from 2 years to 10 years. Eight participants identified their coworker friendship relationship as either a close relationship or a life-long relationship, while two participants identified their relationship as friends.

Friendship Defined

Because coworkers' views vary regarding what defines coworker friendships, participants were asked to respond to an open-ended question about their personal definitions for friendships. These definitions assisted in further understanding how participants characterized their relationships with friends, more specifically coworker friends. Friendship definitions varied from simple and impersonal to complex and intimate. With the exception of one definition, which was excluded because it was incomplete, all participants' definitions are listed in the following table. Participant's names were changed to ensure anonymity.

Table 11
Friendship Definitions (Interview Participants)

Gracie	"A reciprocal relationship that encompasses honesty, empathy, and trust, and focuses on the needs of the other person."
Christian	"People with like minds who are able to keep communication lines open no matter the distance. One you can rely on for advice that can benefit you whether it will hurt your feelings or not. There are different levels of friendship depending on how much you trust the other person."
Landon	"Having somebody to help and watch out for you, and easy to talk to."
Lillian	"A companionship/understanding between two people that allow for trust and deeper or more meaningful communication & involvement."
Micah	"Someone to confide in and won't judge you. Someone that dares and will help in the time of need."
Olivia	"Sharing a desire to spend time together, both giving and receiving positive emotions from the exchanges. Not all aspects of friendship are positive, but the positive should outweigh the negative."
Niara	"A close relationship with an individual with whom you can share hopes and dreams, sorrows, and feelings of any nature."
Dorenda	"Someone who has great spiritual love for you without judging and listens when you need advice or a shoulder to cry on."
Nia	"Friendship is a mutual level of comfort and confidence shared with and among others of like feelings."

The next segment of this study is comprised of interview question responses that relate specifically to relationship development and maintenance. The interviews served as a method for collecting stories on how coworker friendship relationships are developed and how these coworker friends attempt to maintain the relationship with a coworker friend. All interview responses were given in story or narrative form.

Relational Development

The purpose of the first research question was to determine coworkers' use of narratives to reveal how coworker friendship relationships are maintained. The developmental phase of relationships is one of the most critical phases as individuals are struggling to connect and relate to other individuals. During this phase coworkers are attempting to identify and define the relationship, vigorously weighing whether the relationship is worthy of increased time and commitment, and developing a mutual style and pattern of interaction. Participants seemed to exhibit the ability to explicitly specify how their relationship formed and clearly particularized

active events that contributed to the relationship development. Findings of this study appear to stress the significance of happenstance, workplace interaction, commonality and shared interest, time spent together inside and outside the organization, and proximity. This section of the results reveal events participants saw as most causative to the formation and development of relationships.

Happenstance

Friendship relationships that form by chance are presumably the most exhilarating relationships because there is an instant connection between two individuals. These relationships initiate with zeal for the relationship and for each other. There is undoubtedly a heightened sense of compassion for emergence of relationship interaction, communication, and shared experiences. Participants had little difficulty articulating how such relationships initiated and subsequently escalated during a short time period as most participants revealed that their relationship began to develop within months of having worked together. Participants described their initial interaction as an interconnecting event. Gracie expressed, "We just meshed. We were able to click with one another—like finishing each other's sentences or you're on the same wavelength. Her humor was your humor. You kinda find the same things funny. . . . within the first three months of the relationship, we just knew just by our interactions together."

Such serendipitous interaction was also reported as being an emotional happening—one where sensitive emotions coupled instantaneous connections combine and subsequently links one friend to the other, thus developing a friendship relationship. This relational development was elucidated as instantaneous without an understanding or specific explanations. It was clear through participants' narrations that their relationship escalated due to immediate sparks as a result of brief and unspecific communication and workplace interaction. Olivia states, "I don't

remember a specific conversation that we had I just remember that emotional connection. That

feeling of this is probably something worth investing in for the long term." Despite having an

instant connection with a coworker friendship, participants also expressed additional ways their

coworker friendship relationship initiated and developed.

Workplace Interaction

Many participants voiced how their coworker friendship relationship developed. It is

evident that individuals must endure workplace training that accompanies specific jobs or

positions in the organization. Participants shared how their relationship began primarily as a

mentor relationship—one in which one coworker friend trained or taught the other friend

necessary skills and essential information to complete a job or task. Given that an expert or a

veteran is more knowledgeable about particular areas within the organization, it was found that

participants likely developed an intimate and cohesive relationship with their workplace mentor

or trainer. Kram and Isabella found that mentoring and peer relationships have common

attributes. For example, both have potential to support developmental successive career stages.

The mentor-mentee relationship was found as a pivotal link for ways in which coworker

relationships were initiated and developed (Kram and Isabella 110-132). Because training and

instruction are necessary and required for organizational job positions, mentor-mentee

relationships frequently develop. Christian explained how his coworker friendship relationship

began as mentor-boss relationship. He says, "It started out as a boss-mentee relationship. In

fact, I remember when I first introduced her. I go, 'This is my boss, Misty.' And she goes, 'I'm

your friend.' And I go 'OK. This is my friend, Misty.' That's when I knew we would be really

good friends."

Both male and female participants asserted and emphasized how their relationship began

during the training stages on the job. It was during this learning process that participants explained that their relationship began to intensify partially due to the nature of their relationship at the time. This stage of the relationship allowed individuals to connect and share experiences—work experiences that likely contributed to relationship development. Participants further explained how this particular relationship allowed them to gather knowledge and information from the other in areas that were critical to the job position, the job, and eventually their relationship. Participants expressed their ability to go to their mentor or trainer for help or assistance with job tasks, learn about the organization, ask for work advice, and provide assistance with basic instructional job chores. Landon vividly recounts the mentor-mentee relationship with his coworker friend. As Landon references his job as an industrial painter, he states, "We came to be pretty good friends when they put us together inside the paint booth. We helped one another pertaining to the job. We became attached to each other, helping each other. We helped each other—when I didn't know what to do and he didn't know what to do."

Respondents clearly articulated how their coworker friend was able to teach, instruct, and provide them with necessary resources during on-the-job training. This interaction allowed their relationship to intensify creating a deeper bond, developing an intense level of trust and commitment for each other, and extending initial relationship boundaries. Participants explained how during the initial stages of the relationship, their coworker friend was there to assist them in facilitating tasks—they provided each other with help. Such relationships soon expanded, matured, and progressed to a heightened or more intimate friendship relationship—one where commonality was amplified and talking about shared interests helped in peaking or advancing their friendship relationship.

Commonality & Shared Interest

Commonality was identified as one of the leading causes for coworker relationship development. Commonality is when relationship partners share similar interests, goals, ideals, opinions, and beliefs.   It is inevitable that relationships formed based on how common or alike individuals are. It seems that individuals are naturally drawn to people who appear to hold similar interest as they do. Bridge and Baxter found that commonality shows individuals' perception for how working together allowed friendships to develop based on similarities and commonalities (216). It is part of the friendship nature to connect with others who have comparable conversation styles, personalities, interest in activities, morals, attitudes, and principles, and as noted with this sample, similar job careers or occupations. Participants noted that shared interest created the spark for how and if the relationship should continue. Lillian states, "[W]e had a lot in common, and we were together a lot, so that was just the initial spark where I realized, 'Oh she likes some of the same stuff I do.' So we can talk and have good conversations." Once participants realized they and their coworker friend shared mutual characteristics and relational features, they knew the relationship would intensify and a closer bond would soon develop.

Other participants shared how commonality coupled with humor contributed to relationship formation. Niara says, "We had a lot in common. She just made me laugh. It was just that little touch of kindness that meant something to me. That was really when we started to be friends . . . we just really hit it off." As noted, it was common for participants to reference specific commonalities within their coworker friendship. In work relationships, participants were seeking someone to make them feel at ease on and off the job. They connected through humorous events, conversations, and kindnesses. Dislike for other employees resulted in a

developing relationship. Participants shared how aversion for another coworker also played a role in their friendship development. Occasionally, individuals have a need and desire to vent about workplace place issues that include tasks, supervisors or managers, coworkers, or the entire institution or establishment. Being able to open up with others about ones feelings, as they pertain to the job, allowed coworkers to be more at ease and comfortable in their work environment. Aja shared a similar situation. She states,

> "I work in an office with Fred and another person, and, at that time, the third person was very annoying. I mean, she was just like the wicked witch of the institution. Everyone respected her, I guess, but they didn't really like being around her. So, being in an office with her was really difficult. And if it wasn't for my friend, Fred, then it'd been really depressing. I think that what made us so close was we both had to suffer through being in this office with her."

As found, family life plays an immense role in relationship formation. Childhood and young adult background interests and activities, marriage life, and children's age, gender, and choice in activity are all contributing relationship formation. Results reveal that respondents were likely to develop a relationship with a coworker friend if there were numerous chances of encounters—inside and outside the work environment. Gracie described how she and her coworker friend became further acquainted because of some of the activities or interests they shared. She noted how their relationship developed as a result of three different types of interactions, which are events and/or experiences that helped heighten the relationship. Gracie vividly recounts how her coworker friendship was enhanced as a result of commonality and shared activities. Gracie states,

> "Then there were three enforcers—we had public activities, we were in the same work

environment together, and then they attended our church. It was easy for our friendship to develop because we had large opportunities to spend time together. We had a lot of contact without trying to make it happen. It would just be an event together without having to plan activities to meet up and things and it worked well with our schedule. I think that boosted the friendship a lot."

It was determined that such relationships develop based on previously listed commonalities and because of similar conversation topics. In this way, communication can be understood as the prime motivator and contributor of interaction and relational growth. Participants reported conversing and disclosing information with the other during the initial stages of relationship development. It can be noted that participants frequently talked with their coworker friend about personal family issues, past experiences, humorous events, religious subjects and beliefs, favorite activities. Participants also reported handling crises, seeking and providing advice, and work task, environment, situations, and interactions as contributors in their initial disclosure of information to coworker friends. Micah specifically summarized that his friendship began to solidify around similar church views, humor, and smoking desires. Micah recounts his experience of mutual behavior and interest with his coworker friend. He explained that he and his friend were smokers and how they would take "smoke breaks" where they would "have a cigarette and just connect" together. Smoking together led to engaging in humorous conversations surrounding their families and shared Christian faiths.

Religion was also identified by participants as inspiring the development of a coworker friendship relationship. Most participants noted the importance of their abilities to discuss Christianity with their friends. The fact that their coworker friends shared the same religion, were as spiritually mature and grounded as they were, and sought Christian and Biblical advice

from each other enhanced their personal, work, and spiritual relationships. Respondents were not coy in stressing how significant shared religious beliefs were to their relationship formation. It appeared as though most participants were adamant in their decision to find a workplace friend with common religious beliefs as they asserted that religion conversations were the catalyst for an enhanced relationship during the developmental phase.

Christian voiced that he and his coworker friendship developed because his coworker friend was a "good Christian lady", and they were able to discuss likeminded Christian principles—ideals and morals. He further notes, "We were able to not only work just in the workplace, but we were able to talk with each other about Godly things also. Like, where we were in our lives as far as our maturity and our Christian walk." Additionally, some participants referenced how attending the same church, personal Bible studies, and church/religious functions and events led to an increased development of their relationship. Olivia testified how she and her friend established a small Bible study. Because each friend had a burning, spiritual desire to want to connect to the other through religious beliefs, the nature of their friendship was significantly affected. This desire acted as an encourager for friendship development—it stimulated the friendship to extend deeper than intended. Olivia proclaims, "Actually sitting down and doing a ladies Bible study for an hour every week takes your conversation a lot deeper than normal conversations. Because of that spiritual aspect, our friendship really grew."

Seeking spiritual advice was also found as a contributor to friendship formulation. Landon maintains how his coworker friendship developed partially because his friend came to him for biblical advice. This type relationship development is significant in that coworker friends sought to establish a trusting, Godly relationship. When one seeks biblical advice from another, it is apparent that there is an intense level of trust and confidence in the each other—

including their personal and spiritual relationship. Such happenings were found to impact the relationship and shift the relationship from casual to close or intimate. Landon states, "I would talk to him, give some advice, and tell him some things about what's right to do and how to go about doing things the right way. He took heed into what God had to tell him, and what the Word of God says. He just took interest in it."

Additionally, proximity was also found to be a factor in how the relationship developed. Most participants noted that the relationship formation happened partially due to closeness or convenience of their workspace. Because participants worked in the same department or office, it was easy for them to become acquainted with each other. There were numerous and frequent opportunities for participants to initiate conversations, share ideas, and, complete tasks. Respondents reported that sharing a workspace allowed them to see each other and regularly talk, which subsequently led to a more personal relationship, a coworker friendship relationship. They noted that being in the same work environment allowed them to see various sides of their friends. They became better acquainted with each other on personal and work levels further increasing conversation and interaction.

Results reveal that through narratives, coworker friendship relationships implement a variety of strategies to develop their friendship relationship. It was found that coworker friendship relationships develop within months of having worked together, and there is often an instantaneous connection—the friendship just happened with little effort. Results also show that mentor relationships contributed to relational development as it was during the learning phase where coworkers connected, shared experiences, learned about the job and their task. They also asked for, sought advice, and provided assistance to each other. Commonality was found as a relational development strategy. Coworker friends reported sharing similar interest, goals,

ideals, opinions, and beliefs, connected through humorous events, and disclosed information about past experiences and spiritual advice. Proximity was also found as a relational development strategy common amongst coworker friends.

Relational Maintenance

The purpose of the fifth research question was to determine coworkers' use of narratives to reveal how coworker friendship relationships are maintained. The maintenance phase of the relationship can be described as the stability or stable phase. At this phase, the relationship has reached a plateau and individuals are actively seeking and attempting to preserve an existing friendship relationship. It is in this phase where individuals enact strategies, behaviors, perform mutual task; and engage in interactions as an effort to continue a relationship. Relational maintenance can often be overlooked or categorize as a component of the developmental stage of relationships. Maintenance, nevertheless, has been found as an independent subset of relational development—meaning relational maintenance occurs after the developmental stage of relationships, and though it occurs as a result of relational development, it operates independently of relational development. Individuals seeking to maintain a relationship have previously initiated a relationship and are taking steps to ensure its continuation. Results of this study directly correlate with Canary et al.'s findings in that their findings of relational maintenance strategies encompass openness, assurance, joint activities, positivity, cards/letters/calls, shared tasks, social networks, and humor (11-13).

Respondents involved at this stage clearly articulated their ambition and desire to sustain their developed or developing coworker friendship relationship through narratives. Findings of this study stress the significance of several categories: spending time together, sharing memories and secrets, communication, offering and seeking advice, special occasions, gift exchange,

illness, and humorous events. This section of the results recounts narratives participants

disclosed as contributing to their coworker relationship maintenance. This section is further

categorized based on these findings.

Spending Time Together

One noticeable strategy for maintaining friendship relationship is the act of spending time

together. Mather and Berndt found that engaging in activities with friends provides a sense of

enjoyment, satisfaction, and fun while affording additional opportunities to learn new skills (379-

385). Spending time with another allows individuals to become further acquainted, develop a

sense of understanding for the relationship, assist in helping individuals establish their roles

within their friendship relationship. Spending time together can be found to accompany

numerous relational maintenance strategies, such as having lunch together, visiting and

interacting with the other's family, attending outings together, traveling, and hanging out.   In

fact, most participants recounted stories of having lunch with their coworker friend quite

frequently. It was found that having lunch with coworker friends was a normal routine—almost

a daily activity. Micah reported that having lunch with his coworker friend was so frequent that

it was understood that when the lunch hour arrived, they would spend the hour together. He

explained how spending time together during lunch helped nourish their relationship. He states,

"We used to meet a lot of time for lunch and we would go out to certain sub place that was just

outside the fort. We would play a little pool and play the jukebox and just hangout. That is

actually where we got to know each other and just kind of chilling out just down town in the

middle of the day." This shows that spending time together during lunch allowed coworkers to

get to know each other, which further contributed to their strategy as an attempt to maintain their

relationship.

Visiting and spending time with coworker friend's family was also found as a relational maintenance strategy. Most participants reported that they often attempted to maintain their friendship relationship by either inviting the coworker friend to visit with their family or visiting with the coworker friend's family. Olivia recounts an instance when she knew their relationship began the maintenance stage. She states, "when they [coworker friend and spouse] first invited us over for a meal as family. They invited our whole entire family over and, of course the two of us got along well and our husbands got along well . . ." It was found that spending time with families was a way to demonstrate the significance of the relationship—it illustrated to the coworker friend how much their friendship relationship was valued. Christian proclaimed, "I would always come visit Misty and her family if they needed help with stuff—I would help around the house. If their kids wanted to do something, I would always do something with the kids, and she would always visit my family every once in a while. Like, if they just wanted to come up and hang out." This demonstrates how coworker friendships relationships extend beyond the workplace and into each other's personal lives, more specifically, into their families' lives.

Coworker friends were also found to engage in outings together—attending sporting events or playing sports together. Participating in sports was found to be just as common as attending sporting events. Most participants were found to report that playing sports together allowed them develop a deeper, more intimate relationship bond. In a sense, playing sports together assisted in helping to relieve anxiety or tension that may have been attributed to work. Landon describes an instance when he and his coworker friend played basketball together. He stays, "Sometimes we'd leave work on a Wednesday, the shortest day that we had, and go to the gym. After work, we'd leave, go down to the gym and get together some more guys and play

ball—basketball. We played on the same team. That's what we did together in sports—play

basketball." Other participants engaged in sporting activities that were not as physical, but

nonetheless, contributed to the bonding stages of the relationship. Dorenda explained how she

and her coworker friend committed to walking every day.   She voiced, "There is not a day goes

by that we don't go." This level of commitment reveals how coworkers fervently work to

maintain their relationship. Participants also reported attending athletic events together, such as

attending football games, basketball, or soccer.

In regards to spending time together, traveling was also found to be a prime relational

maintenance strategy. Participants noted traveling as an opportunity to experience another side

of their coworker friend. It was also found that traveling allowed coworkers more opportunities

to express their views and concerns as it pertained to work, and it allowed them to improve and

cultivate their relationship. Lillian provides an account that details a travelling experience with

her coworker friend. She explains,

> "[W]e went down to Florida, and we drove all the way there. I started driving first and
>
> then we got to Charlotte, NC and I was just freaking out and my friend just ended up
>
> taking over the wheel. We decided that she would be driving and I would be providing
>
> back up so that she would stay awake. . . . We both got really bored driving back so we
>
> stopped at this little strip outlet mall and got one of the cheap 25 cent romance books and
>
> I read it back to her, as we were driving. We just kinda play off of each other."

The final relational maintenance strategy found to relate to spending time is hanging out.

This occurs when coworkers revealed random instances of time spent with their coworker friend.

It was found that coworkers were more likely to engage in spontaneous time together rather than

planned time together. Participants reported their hangout activities varied and included

gambling, social drinking, attending retreats, going to the movies, cooking together, attending church activities, and having dinner together. Results show that hanging out afforded coworkers opportunities to connect on a more personal level and learn to accept the other for the person he/she is.

Sharing: Memories and Secrets

Friendship relationships that mutually share memories and divulge personal information are typically interested in taking steps to maintain their coworker friendship relationship. Results showed that sharing memories and secrets vary from light and subtle humor to life-changing and serious issues. Some participants revealed lighthearted information regarding memories and secrets, whereas others revealed serious or tragic memories and secrets. Results revealed that when individuals were willing to disclose information regarding their pasts or share personal or family secrets there was a heightened sense of established trust and confidence within the relationship. This demonstrates that both parties are actively striving to sustain their friendship relationship. It was found that coworkers who were willing to recount their experiences, personal histories, and impart information typically undisclosed were more likely to express concern and care for their coworker friend. Niara shared an account that revealed personal information regarding her family. As she recalled how she and her coworker friend can "share anything with each other," she uncovered the situation. Niara told how when her son was in serious trouble all the neighbors, friends, and parents became distant and standoffish. They no longer visited her house, talked with her, or spent time with her as they did prior to the situation. In reaction to others' behavior, Niara expressed,

> "This lady, in fact, I bought her a card that said "[A] true friend is someone who walks in when the rest of the world walks out." She stuck with me during that time. There were so

many times when I could not speak. I could not verbalize what I was feeling. She didn't

care, she just sat there, whether I cried or I laughed, and helped me get through that for

once. It wasn't a chore. It was like walking through this with a sister. I've told her

before it doesn't matter what happens for the rest of my life, it's something about that

sticking, a friend sticking closer than a brother. I'll never forget that and there's nothing

she could ever do that will not make me be her friend."

This narrative revealed the significance of the coworker friendship relationship and the degree to

which each party's interactions, behaviors, communication, and expression extensively affects

the maintenance process of the relationship.

Additional accounts found to utilize shared memories and secrets as a strategy for which

relationships are maintained also focused on personal, family situations. Most information

reported as sharing memories or secrets was found to relate to the disclosure of information

regarding ones family life. Micah shared an account concerning his marriage, which included

issues and mistakes that likely ended the marital relationship. He explained how after sharing

and talking with his coworker friend about his mistakes, he learned that his friend was guilty of

similar errors. Micah expresses, "that was a really a bonding time."   He also recounts how his

friend was able to give him advice—advice that helped him "learn from his mistakes, and of

course, apply it to my life." Micah continues by stating, "[t]hat is probably the solidifying point

because at that point we had opened up to each other very deeply." These accounts reveal the

magnitude of relational maintenance as related to sharing memories and secrets. It is obvious

that coworker friends were willing to divulge personal information to each other as part of the

relational maintenance process. As noticed from the previous accounts, sharing and disclosing

personal information was a reciprocal process, which means both parties were willing to disclose

information concerning their personal lives. This reciprocal exchange of private information

reveals a strong sense of relational maintenance.

Offering and Seeking Advice

Like the majority of friendship relationships, offering and seeking advice come with the

territory—it is inescapable. Whether associated with work life or personal life, coworkers are

known to offer and seek advice from peers. This study shows how such relationships are

maintained due to advice giving and receiving. Coworkers are more apt to provide accounts of

how advice giving and receiving affected relational maintenance as it relates to their relationship

inside and outside the workplace—meaning most participants provided account examples of

advice within workplace settings or context.

It was found that coworkers provide and receive advice as it relates to biblical knowledge

and experience, personal information, which can likely includes family issues, and situational

matters pertaining to finances or health. Participants reported the ability to ask their coworker

friend about anything. Aja explains how she is able to ask her coworker friend "advice about

anything." From money to relationships to spiritual matters, their relationship seems in a stable

state of relational maintenance. She states, "I ask him advice about money, about relationships,

and about spiritual matters. He's just, he's very knowledgeable. I do consider him more of a

brother than a friend because I don't feel like I have to pretend or anything I'm just me. I'm not

concerned with impressing him at all. It is just how we are."

Nia provided information revelatory to offering and receiving advice in the work

environment. She vividly illustrates how advice and opinion acceptance contributed to their

relationship maintenance process. Nia explains her role as an educator and how her coworker

friend valued her opinion concerning a specific student. Nia says she knew their relationship

was in the maintenance phase

> [W]hen she listened to my opinion about a student who received special services through
>
> her department . . . I expressed my concerns about removing this student from the special
>
> services department, and she took the matter into consideration, contacted the mother of
>
> the child, completed the IEP paperwork, conducted the exit interviews, and successfully
>
> transitioned that student into regular services. She valued my opinion.

This account reveals the significance of offering and receiving advice as a friendship relational

maintenance strategy. Results reveal coworkers are open to receiving and providing advice from

coworker friends. It seems that during the maintenance stage of friendship relationships

coworkers are extremely trusting and supportive.

Special Occurrences and Occasions

Celebrations are some of the most interesting and exciting moments in friendship

relationships. It is during these moments that friends are able to share commemorative events

such as birthdays, marriage anniversaries, or departures from a current organization. It was

found that celebrating special occurrences and occasions was generally viewed as a coworker

friendship relational maintenance strategy. Participants were likely to engage in celebratory

events with coworker friends to express concern, enjoyment, and affection for the other. Often

times celebrating memorable occasions made coworker friends feel special and appreciated.

Participants expressed how acknowledging special or memorable events in their lives is a

meaningful and life-changing gesture. Participants noted how they knew their relationship

reached a pivotal height of maintenance when the other was willing to sacrifice personal time to

make them happy. Aja stated how she made her coworker friend a giant chocolate chip cookie

for his birthday. She says, "He really enjoyed getting the cookie for his birthday. He was so shocked. He couldn't stop talking about it." Other participants mentioned they would celebrate birthdays by taking each other to dinner, having a small office party, or gathering with close friends and relatives.

Aside from celebrating birthdays, it was also found that participants were likely to have a departing or going away party for coworker friends who were leaving the organization. Olivia provides a narrative that examples a similar occasion or event. She says,

"When my husband and I decided to move she and another friend put a small group of ladies together and threw me a goodbye party, which was really sweet. There were maybe 8 girls all together at a friend's house they gave me gift, we all brought food we just sat and chatted. I think someone created a crazy game. It was just really close and intimate, and the fact that she would take time out to honor me by giving me a goodbye celebration was really special."

Niara recounted a similar situation. She expressed,

"When I knew I was going to move. She organized a little going away party at school. She gave me this little casserole dish and made it into a gift box and put an address book where she had written in everybody's address . . . It made me feel special because she went out of her way to get something she knew would be meaningful to me and she hugged me and cried. I just thought that's something that really reassured me that to her I was special."

Results revealed that through narratives, coworker friendship relationships employ a variety of strategies to maintain their friendship relationship. It was found that coworker friends spend significant amounts of time together as this is when they become further acquainted and

develop a sense of understanding for the relationship when they establish roles in the relationship. In attempting to maintain their friendship relationship, coworker friends have lunch together, visit and interact with the others' family, attend outings together, travel, and hangout. Participants also reported sharing memories as a maintenance strategy. Sharing memories shows that coworker friends are willing to recount their experiences, personal histories, and express concern for their friend as this is when there is a heightened sense of trust within the relationship. Results also showed that offering and seeking advice is a critical maintenance strategy as participants reported providing and receiving advice as it relates to biblical knowledge and experience as well as personal information, such as family life. Celebrating or commemorating special occurrences and occasions was found as a maintenance strategy as participants revealed that birthdays, anniversaries, and departing the organization were noteworthy celebratory moments during the maintenance stages of the relationship.

Chapter Five – Conclusion

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study examined how coworkers developed and maintained relationships. Moreover, this study employed the snowball method and random sampling as an attempt to acquire participants. Though the snowball method has been found to be a credible and noteworthy research method, it hinders the data collection process as potential participant are dependent on references from other participants. Rather than employing this research method, future researchers can employ a sample of convenience strategy as this will make participant data collection less problematic. Future researchers could also select one organization and use employees and/or employers as participants. Utilizing a sole organization will allow researchers to focus on how one particular organization develops and maintains relationships, and it will show how relationship length affects relationship strength. Also, rather than using random selection, prospective researchers can interview participants who meet specific criteria, such as length of friendship, gender, age, or organization job title to job type.

It might be interesting to explore coworker friendship relationships from a specific organization—focusing on organization size or type. Since organizations vary in size, future researchers could examine friendship relationships from either a small or large organization as organization size possibly will affect relational intimacy and closeness.

Additionally, it would be interesting to explore generational coworker friendship relationships as age can significantly affect relationship closeness and relational development and maintenance strategies. The current study focused on a wide age range of friendship relationships to provide a general view of how coworker relationships. Future researchers might investigate coworker friendship relationships of varying age groups as this would provide in-

depth analysis of how length and strength affects generations and how different generations develop and maintain coworker friendship relationships.

Although the snowball method was employed, sampling of participants did not consider the possibility of gender specific, cross gender, or culture criterion. Friendship relationships likely vary across same-sex and cross-sex coworker friendships, therefore future research could explore how cross gender friendship relationships influence the processes of relational development and relational maintenance strategies as men and women have been noted to use differing strategies in the relational process. Research interest into the exploration of how cross gender coworker relationships are measured as pertaining to relational length and strength may lead researchers to new and uncharted areas of relationship research. Because cultural groups interact differently, possess different values, beliefs, and opinions, it would be interesting to examine intercultural coworker friendship relationships. Future research can investigate ways in which culture and gender affect relational development, maintenance, and length and strength of relationships.

Future researchers can also examine gender specific coworker relationship development and maintenance. For example, how males and females develop and maintain coworker relationships or how male and female same-sex and/or heterosexual coworker relationships are developed and maintained. Prospective researchers might potentially concentrate on ethnicity and its affect on friendship formation and maintenance. Examining friendships that amalgamate different ethnicities, such as African-American and Hispanic friendship or Hispanics and Caucasian friendships, might demonstrate and expose how ethnicity and cultural backgrounds affect coworker relationship development and maintenance.

Future research could also explore culturally diverse coworker relationships and their development and maintenance of those relationships which would provide varied results that can greatly benefit the interpersonal field of communication.

Most participants in this study were either college graduates or held professional type positions which did not warrant sufficient opportunities to sample participants from different academic, social, or economic backgrounds. Since the majority participants were college graduates, career choice or job types were limited to mainly professional careers. Furthermore, this study failed to provide sufficient information for how coworkers who have technical or trade related jobs develop and maintain relationships, and it failed to demonstrate if relationship strength affects relationship length for such relationships.

Because surveys were not electronically distributed through popular sites, such as Survey Monkey, limits on possible diverse populations were realized, which could also affect sample size and convenience of survey distribution. A larger sample size would greatly affect statistical significance for length and strength of relationships. This study utilized a small sample size, therefore deficiencies in the creation, sustentation, and intimacy of coworker friendship relationship. More study participants could provide an overall representation for the population at large, which would further allow significantly varied results to all reported data in this study.

This study also employed a pre-test for only the qualitative portion of the study rather than both qualitative and quantitative studies. Future researchers might take interest in employing a pre-test for both studies as this will assist in determining whether items should be excluded from the survey or included in the survey. Baseline data with regards to the quantitative study were not collected; therefore collected data poses threats to the reliability of survey items. Because only the researcher analyzed data, data bias could also impede the

interpretation and discussion of study results. Participants were asked specific questions about coworker relationships instead of being allowed to share narratives without topic boundaries or parameters.

While noteworthy information was gathered from one coworker friend, it might be beneficial to gather data and responses from both coworker friends in the friendship relationship as this may provide more information for length and strength of relationships. Interviewing both coworker friends will also provide additional, more in-depth information regarding how coworker relationships are developed and maintained. Future researchers could compare and evaluate individual coworker responses and partner coworker responses. This will also allow for more reliable and consistent data regarding the nature of coworker friendship relationships.

Although significant information was gathered through personal narratives for analysis with regard to the questions of this study, there are several additional areas researchers could examine, such as communication theories and implementations. In order to further develop this study on coworker relationship development and maintenance, future researchers could implement another theory. Rather than employing Narrative Paradigm Theory as theoretical grounding for this study, Baxter's Relational Dialectics Theory or Knapp and Vangelisti's Relational Development Model could be utilized as these theoretical positions assess stages and processes of interpersonal relationships—further focusing on development and maintenance. Employing another theory would also eliminate the use of narrative analysis, which what was method of choice of data collection for the current study. Rather than collecting stories for how coworker relationships are developed and maintained, future research could conduct traditional interviews that warrant exact ways in which relationships are created and sustained.

Personality types and how they affect relationship development and maintenance might also be further explored. Potential researchers might employ the Myers-Briggs' personality framework or the Five Factor Model of Personality (The Big Five) as these models provide extensive information on individual personality characteristics. Individual personalities are noted to vary and influence relationship interactions.

This current study examined how coworkers developed and maintained relationships and how relationship length influenced relationship strength. This section noted limitations or restraints to this study and it examined areas of potential or future research. Despite stated areas of future researcher and limitations of the study, this thesis found interesting findings for coworker friendship relationships, which are briefly stated in the next section. The final section of this study concludes the research study.

Conclusion

Friendship relationships are an indispensable component in individuals' lives. Such relationships have been noted as critical aspects of daily life as these relationships significantly affect how one views self, others, and, in some cases, personal behaviors and experiences. Most importantly, friendship relationships aid individuals share and express their ideals, values, and opinions. More specifically, workplace friendship relationships have been illustrated, as in this study, to provide emotional support—within and outside the work environment. Workplace friendships help increase levels of trust, and these friendship relationships assist in further expanding one's desire and aspiration to provide assistance to others. Friendship relationships have been known to alleviate stress, reduce discomfort, and provide a sense of comfort and affection. As noted in this study, coworker friendship relationships play significant roles in

friends' lives—personal, social, and organizational. These friends are briefly described as life-changing companions.

Since relationships are a pervasive part of human interaction, this study attempted to unveil measurements of relationship length and strength and the process in which relationships are formed and sustained. More specifically, this study assessed strength and length of coworker friendship relationships, and it examined coworker friendship relational development and maintenance. The mixed methods research design was employed to discover the nature of coworker friendship relationships—how they are measured, developed, and maintained. Both a quantitative and qualitative research method was employed to complete this study. A total of 51 surveys were statistically analyzed to answer three research questions for the quantitative portion of the study, and 10 interview participant narrative responses were analyzed to answer two additional research questions for the qualitative portion of the study. Much of the reviewed literature adequately explains friendship and coworker relationships, length and strength of coworker relationships, relationship maintenance, and relationship development. Each section of the literature review analyzes similar studies relating to friendship and coworker relationships, which serve as foundation for research of the current thesis topic. This study also reviewed Fisher's Narrative Paradigm Theory as this theory was the guiding force for which this study was implemented.

This study employed two separate, unrelated methods in an attempt to grasp a more thorough understanding of all aspects of coworker friendship relationships. Using both methods provided for a more in-depth and extensive understanding of relationship length and measurement of strength as it pertains to coworker friendship relationships. Rather than utilizing a sole method, either qualitative or quantitative, combining methods provided a

stronger, more justified study. Additionally utilizing both methods allowed for a more

exhaustive study for understanding the nature and features of coworker friendship relationships.

Since there are deficiencies in the study of coworker friendship relationships, employing both

methods inclusively examined three essential aspects of coworker friendship relationships—

relational closeness, development, and maintenance.

Results of this study reveal that coworker friendship relationships were shown to

encompass a heightened sense of intimacy, which includes trust, self expression,

interdependence, loyalty to the relationship, honesty, self-disclosure, and affection. It is evident

that such relationships are similarly characterized to normal or voluntary friendship relationships

as findings from this study reveal similarities with typical friendships. Another important

finding was that although there was no significant difference between short and long term

coworker friendship relationships in regards to intimacy, irreplaceability, mutual dependence,

and role of peer relationships, female coworker fiends were found to be slightly more open and

honest with their coworker friends than males. Results also show that coworker friends were

open and expressive in self-disclosure as most participants were willing to disclose personal

issues regarding families and/or private past instances or histories with their coworker friend.

Such disclosure demonstrates that coworker friendships, short-term and long-term, achieve high

levels of intimacy in their relationships. Coworker friends were also found to be truthful and

honest with each other as most participants reported trusting the other with confidential

information regarding their private lives.

Coworker friendship relationship partners were found behaviorally expressive in seeking

and providing intimacy, support, irreplaceability, and mutual dependence from their each other

as most stories revealed how participants shared memories and secrets with each other.

Participants' responses were highly focused on incidences in which they were struggling with family issues, financial difficulties, or crises as related to marriage. In addition to such high degrees of intimacy and disclosure, these studies also revealed coworker relational development and maintenance practices.

Furthermore, results reveal that coworker friendship relationships are developed and maintained in unique, yet typical ways. Participants' narratives revealed coworker friendship relationships are developed by chance—they just happened. Interactions occurred in the work environment as a result of commonalities or similar interest, religious beliefs, morals, attitudes, and behaviors, and because of time spent together. It was found that participants were not coy in disclosing through narratives or stories how their coworker friendship relationship developed. In addition to relational development processes, participant narratives also revealed coworker friendship maintenance strategies. It was found that coworker friends maintain their relationship by spending time together either eating lunch, travelling together, or visiting with their coworker friend's family. They reported sharing past histories and experiences, disclosing private information about themselves or their family members, offering and seeking advice, and by sharing and commemorating special events and occasions. These results can arguably contribute to the field of communication.

Friendship relationships are a commonly researched subject in the field of communication as these relationships have been found to significantly affect one's health, social life, interaction, behavior, experience, values, and opinions. In short, friendship relations are critical to everyday life. In spite of such a concentrated area of study, there are other areas of communication study that are arguable as important and noteworthy. One such relationship is coworker friendship relationships. Coworker friendship relationships have been found to

significantly affect one's organizational career satisfaction and success. Such interpersonal relationships can also be duly noted within the field of communication as these relationships deal with individual behaviors, encounters with people, customers and employees, and understanding and examining behaviors and interactions. In conjunction with the practicality of coworker friendship relationships, this study, undoubtedly, lends significant contributions to the field of communication.

This study thoroughly examined the nature of coworker friendship relationships and revealed how interpersonal relationships enhance workplace interactions, improves message exchanges—verbal and nonverbal—showed the manner in which friendship relationships transcend typical functions, and can be expanded to improve various areas within the organization. This study contributes to the field of communication by examining and revealing how and if length of friendship influences strength or closeness of coworker relationships. Since very few studies have been found to examine length and strength of friendship relationships, this study allows communication scholars to further examine how relationship longevity influence the closeness or intimacy of coworker friendship relationships. Given that few studies have examined how coworker friendship relationships are developed and maintained, this study directly categorizes and organizes methods and practices individuals utilize to create a relationship and the behaviors, procedures, and practices individuals implement to sustain their coworker friendship relationship. This study further examples how communication, specifically communication in the form of stories or narratives, assist in the documentation and understanding of relationship formation and development, which inevitably contributes to the field of communication studies.

Works Cited

Alemán, Ana M. Martínez. "College Women's Female Friendships: A Longitudinal View." *Journal of Higher Education* 81.5 (2010): 553-582. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Andrew, Alison, and Jane Montague. "Women's Friendship at Work." *Women's Studies International Forum* 21.4 (1998): 355. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Oct. 2010.

Aukett, Richard, Jane Ritchie, and Kathryn Mill. "Gender Differences in Friendship Patterns." *Sex Roles* 19.(1988): 57-66. *Women's Studies International*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Oct. 2010.

Avtgis, Theodore A., Daniel V. West, and Traci L. Anderson. "Relationship Stages: An Inductive Analysis Identifying Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Dimensions of Knapp's Relational Stages Model." *Communication Research Reports* 15.3 (1998): 280-287. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 22 Jan. 2011.

Ayres, Joe. "Strategies to Maintain Relationships: Their Identification and Perceived Usage." *Communication Quarterly* 31.1 (1983): 62-67. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 19 Feb. 2011.

Baboş, Alexandru. "Organizational Determinants of Educational Personnel Job Satisfaction." *Revista Academiei Fortelor Terestre* 14.4 (2009): 52-56. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Bailey, Roger C., Robert J. Diglacomo, and Otto Zinser. "Length of Male and Female Friendship and Perceived Intelligence in Self and Friend." *Journal of Personality Assessment* 40.6 (1976): 635. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Barbara, Gawda. "Gender Differences in the Verbal Expression of Love Schema." *Sex Roles* 58.11/12 (2008): 814-821. *Academic Search Alumni Edition*. EBSCO. Web. 4 Oct. 2010.

Barker, Randolph. "Strategic Application of Storytelling in Organizations." *Journal of Business Communication* 47.3 (2010): 295-312. *E-Journals*. EBSCO. Web. 28 Sept. 2010.

Baumgarte, Roger, and Donna Webster Nelson. "Preference for Same- Versus Cross-Sex Friendships." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 39.4 (2009): 901-917. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 13 Jan. 2011.

Bauminger, Nirit, et al. "Intimacy in Adolescent Friendship: The Roles of Attachment, Coherence, and Self-disclosure." *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships* 25.3 (2008): 409-428. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Jan. 2011.

Bell, Diana Calhoun, Holly Arnold, and Rebecca Haddock. "Linguistic Politeness and Peer Tutoring." *Learning Assistance Review (TLAR)* 14.1 (2009): 37-54. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Narratives in Popular Culture, Media, and Everyday Life*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997.

Bridge, Kennan, and Leslie Baxter. "Blended Relationships: Friends as Work Associates." *Western Journal of Communication* 56.3 (1992): 200-225. *E-Journals*. EBSCO. Web. 19 Sept. 2010.

Bippus, Amy M., and Emma Rollin. "Attachment Style Differences in Relational Maintenance and Conflict Behaviors: Friend's Perceptions." *Communication Reports* 16.2 (2003): 113. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Boje, David M. "The Storytelling Organization: A Study of Story Performance in an Office-Supply Firm." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 36.1 (1991): 106-126. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 27 Sept. 2010.

Bouchard, Thomas J., and Jr. "Unobtrusive Measures: An Inventory of Uses." *Sociological Methods & Research* 4.3 (1976): 267. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Apr. 2010.

Brewer, John, and Albert Hunter. *Multimethod Research A Synthesis of Styles*. Sage Library of Social Research, 175. Newbury Park [u.a.]: Sage, 1990.

Bridge, Kennan, and Leslie A. Baxter. "Blended Relationships: Friends as Work Associates." *Western Journal of Communication* 56.3 (1992): 200-225. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Bushman, Briahna Bigelow, and Julianne Holt-Lunstad. "Understanding Social Relationship Maintenance Among Friends: Why We Don't End Those Frustrating Friendships." *Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology* 28.6 (2009): 749-778. *Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Carbery, Julie, and Duane Buhrmester. "Friendship and Need Fulfillment during Three Phases of Young Adulthood." *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships* 15.3 (1998): 393. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Campbell, Donald T., and Donald W. Fiske. "Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix." *Psychological Bulletin* 56.2 (1959): 81-105. *PsycARTICLES*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Apr. 2010.

Canary, Daniel J, and Marianne Dainton. *Maintaining Relationships Through Communication: Relational, Contextual, and Cultural Variations*. Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003. Print.

Canary, Daniel J., and Laura Stafford. "Relational Maintenance Strategies and Equity In Marriage." *Communication Monographs* 59.3 (1992): 243. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 10 Mar. 2010.

Canary, Daniel J., et al. "An Inductive Analysis of Relational Maintenance Strategies: Comparisons Among Lovers, Relatives, Friends, and Others." *Communication Research Reports* 10.1 (1993): 5-14. *PsycINFO*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Cassidy, Jude. "Truth, Lies, and Intimacy: An Attachment Perspective." *Attachment & Human Development* 3.2 (2001): 121-155. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Cheshire, Jenny. "The Telling or The Tale? Narratives and Gender in Adolescent Friendship Networks." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4.2 (2000): 234-262. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Chiok Foong Loke, J. "Leadership Behaviours: Effects on Job Satisfaction, Productivity and Organizational Commitment." *Journal of Nursing Management* 9.4 (2001): 191-204. *PsycINFO*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Clark, M. Carolyn. "Narrative Learning: Its Contours and Its Possibilities." *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education* 126 (2010): 3-11. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Sept. 2010.

Comer, Debra R. "Organizational Newcomers' Acquisition of Information from Peers."

    Management Communication Quarterly 5.1 (1991): 64-89. *ERIC*. EBSCO. Web. 10 Mar.

    2010.

Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

    Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2009.

Derlega, Valerian J., and Alan L. Chaikin. "Privacy and Self-Disclosure in Social Relationships."

    Journal of Social Issues 33.3 (1977): 102-115. *SocINDEX with Full Text*. EBSCO. Web.

    4 Oct. 2010.

Dindia, Kathryn. "Definitions and Perspectives on Relational Maintenance Communication."

    Maintaining Relationships Through Communication. 1-28. 2003. *Communication*

    Abstracts. EBSCO. Web. 12 Feb. 2011.

---. "Relational Maintenance." *Close Relationships: A Sourcebook*. Ed. Hendrick, Clyde and

    Susan Hendrick. Thousands Oak, Calif: Sage Publications, 2000. 287-299. Print.

Denzin, Norman K. *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*. New

    York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

Dreher, Jochen. "Phenomenology of Friendship: Construction and Constitution of an Existential

    Social Relationship." *Human Studies* 32.4 (2009): 401-417. *Academic Search Complete*.

    EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Duck, Steve. *Meaningful Relationships: Talking, Sense, and Relating*. Thousand Oaks, Calif:

    Sage Publications, 1994. Print.

Elmuti, Dean. "The Perceived Impact of Team-Based Management Systems on Organizational

    Effectiveness." *International Journal of Manpower* 17.8 (1996): 4. *Business Source*

    Complete. EBSCO. Web. 7 Mar. 2010.

Feeney, Brooke C. "The Dependency Paradox in Close Relationships: Accepting Dependence

      Promotes Independence." *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology* 92.2 (2007):

      268-285. *MEDLINE*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Ferris, Gerald R., et al. "Relationships at Work: Toward a Multidimensional Conceptualization

      of Dyadic Work Relationships." *Journal of Management* 35.6 (2009): 1379-1403.

      Business Source Complete. EBSCO. Web. 12 Mar. 2010.

Fisher, Walter R. 1984. "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public

      Moral Argument." *Communication Monographs* 51, no. 1: 1. *Communication & Mass

      Media Complete*, EBSCO*host* (accessed September 15, 2010).

---. "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration." *Communication Monographs* 52.4 (1985): 347.

      Communication & Mass Media Complete. EBSCO. Web. 15 Sept. 2010.

Fritz, Janie Harden. "Men's and Women's Organizational Peer Relationships: A Comparison."

      Journal of Business Communication 34.1 (1997): 27-46. *Business Source Complete*.

      EBSCO. Web. 5 Apr. 2011.

Gadamer, Hans-Georg. "Friendship and Solidarity (1999)." *Research in Phenomenology* 39.1

      (2009): 3. *MasterFILE Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 13 Jan. 2011.

Goffman, Erving. *Interaction Ritual; Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior*. Chicago: Aldine Pub.

      Co, 1967.

Hall, Jeffrey, and Kiley Larson. "Friendship Maintenance Expectations: Who I Am, Who You

      Are, and What We Do Together." *Conference Papers -- National Communication

      Association* (2009): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Feb.

      2011.

Heskett, James L., et al. "Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work." *Harvard Business Review* 86.7/8 (2008): 118-129. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 7 Mar. 2010.

Hess, Jon A. "Maintaining Nonvoluntary Relationships With Disliked Partners: An Investigation Into the Use of Distancing Behaviors." *Human Communication Research* 26.3 (2000): 458. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Hodson, Randy. "The Ethnographic Contribution to Understanding Coworker Relations." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 46.1 (2008): 169-192. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Hosman, Lawrence, and Charles Tardy. "Self-Disclosure and Reciprocity In Short-And Long-Term Relationships: An Experimental Study Of Evaluational and Attributional Consequences." *Communication Quarterly* 28.1 (1980): 20-30. *E-Journals*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Ivankova, Nataliya V., John W. Creswell, and Sheldon L. Stick. "Using Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design: From Theory to Practice." Sage Publications Inc., n.d. *SocINDEX with Full Text*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Apr. 2010.

Johnson, R. Burke, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner. "Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research." *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1 (2007): 112- 133.

Katz, Dian. "Are Friends Really Forever?." *Lesbian News* Jan. 2008: 45. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Kellas, Jody Koenig. "Narrative Theories." *Engaging Theories in Interpersonal Communication: Multiple Perspectives*. 241-254. Thousand Oaks, CA US: Sage Publications, Inc, 2008. *PsycINFO*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Sept. 2010.

Kelley, Harold H., et al. *Close Relationships*. New York: W.H. Freeman, 1983. Print.

Knapp, Mark L. *Social Intercourse: From Greeting to Goodbye*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1978. Print.

Knapp, Mark L, and Anita L. Vangelisti. *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2005. Print.

Kram, Kathy E., and Lynn A. Isabella. "Mentoring Alternatives: The Role of Peer Relationships In Career Development." *Academy of Management Journal* 28.1 (1985): 110-132. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Lambert, Nathaniel. "Benefits of Expressing Gratitude: Expressing Gratitude to a Partner Changes One's View of the Relationship." *Psychological Science* 21.4 (2010): 574-580. *E-Journals*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Ledbetter, Andrew M, Em Griffin, and Glenn G. Sparks. "Forecasting "Friends Forever": A Longitudinal Investigation of Sustained Closeness Between Best Friends." *Personal Relationships* 14.2 (2007): 343-350. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Lin, Chieh-Peng, Chou-Kang Chiu, and Sheng-Wuu Joe. "Modeling Perceived Job Productivity and Its Antecedents Considering Gender as a Moderator." *Social Science Journal* 46.1 (2009): 192-200. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Locke, Terry, and Nicola Daly. "Towards Congeniality: The Place of Politeness in Asynchronous Online Discussion." *International Journal of Learning* 13.12 (2007): 121-134. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Madlock, Paul, and Melanie Booth-Butterfield. "The Effects of Coworker Relational Maintenance Strategies on Employee Outcomes." *Conference Papers -- International*

Communication Association (2008): 1-35. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*.

    EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Mathur, Ravisha, and Thomas J. Berndt. "Relations of Friends' Activities to Friendship Quality."

    Journal of Early Adolescence 26.3 (2006): 365-388. *Academic Search Complete*.

    EBSCO. Web. 14 Jan. 2011.

Morris, Michael W., Joel Podolny, and Bilian Ni Sullivan. "Culture and Coworker Relations:

    Interpersonal Patterns in American, Chinese, German, and Spanish Divisions of a Global

Morrison, Rachel. "Are Women Tending and Befriending in the Workplace? Gender Differences

    in the Relationship Between Workplace Friendships and Organizational Outcomes." *Sex*

    Roles 60.1/2 (2009): 1. *MasterFILE Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Noy, Chaim. "Sampling Knowledge: The Hermeneutics of Snowball Sampling in Qualitative

    Research." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11.4 (2008): 327-344.

    Academic Search Complete. EBSCO. Web. 5 Apr. 2011.

Miller, Laura, Veronica Hefner, and Allison Scott. "Turning Points in Dyadic Friendship

    Development and Termination." *Conference Papers -- International Communication*

    Association (2007): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 25 Jan.

    2011.

Mikulincer, Mario, and Orna Nachshon. "Attachment Styles and Patterns of Self-Disclosure."

    Journal of Personality & Social Psychology 61.2 (1991): 321-331. *Academic Search*

    Complete. EBSCO. Web. 15 Jan. 2011.

Mullis, Eric. "Confucius and Aristotle on the Goods of Friendship." *Dao* 9.4 (2010): 391-405. *E-*

    Journals. EBSCO. Web. 31 Mar. 2011.

Myers, Scott A., and Aaron D. Johnson. "Perceived Solidarity, Self-Disclosure, and Trust in

Organizational Peer Relationships." *Communication Research Reports* 21.1 (2004): 75-

83. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Oswald, Debra L., Eddie M. Clark, and Cheryl M. Kelly. "Friendship Maintenance: An Analysis

of Individual and Dyad Behaviors." *Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology* 23.3 (2004):

413-441. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 19 Feb. 2011.

Page, Janis. "Towards a Theory of Visual Narrative Analysis: What We See on HGTV."

Conference Papers -- International Communication Association (2006): 1-26.

Communication & Mass Media Complete. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Rath, Tom, and James K. Harter. "Your Friends and Your Social Wellbeing." *Gallup

Management Journal Online* (2010): 1. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr.

2011.

Rawlins, William K. *Friendship Matters: Communication, Dialectics, and the Life Course*.

Communication and social order. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1992. Print.

Retail Bank." *Organization Science* 19.4 (2008): 517-532. *Education Research Complete*.

EBSCO. Web. 19 Sept. 2010.

Richardson, Laurel. "Narrative and Sociology." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 19.1

(1990): 116. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Apr. 2010.

Riessman, Catherine Kohler. *Narrative Analysis*. Qualitative Research Methods, v. 30. Newbury

Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993.

Roy, Rosanne, Joyce F. Benenson, and Frank Lilly. "Beyond Intimacy: Conceptualizing Sex

Differences in Same-Sex Friendships." *Journal of Psychology* 134.1 (2000): 93.

Academic Search Complete. EBSCO. Web. 3 Oct. 2010.

Sarason, B.R., Sarason, I.G., and Gurung, R. "Close Personal Relationships and Health

      Outcomes: A Key to the Role of Social Support." *Handbook of Personal*

      *Relationships:Theory, Research, and Interventions, e*d. S. W. Duck., 547-573.

      Chichester [England: Wiley, 1988. Print.

Shelton, J. Nicole, Jennifer A. Richeson, and Hilary B. Bergsieker. "Interracial Friendship

      Development and Attributional Biases." *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships*

      26.2/3 (2009): 179-193. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 20 Jan. 2011.

Sias, Patricia M., and Daniel J. Cahill. "From Coworkers to Friends: The Development of Peer

      Friendships in The Workplace." *Western Journal of Communication* 62.3 (1998): 273-

      299. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Sias, Patricia M., Kathleen J. Krone, and Fedric M. Jablin. "An Ecological Systems Perspective

      on Workplace Relationships." *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*. Ed. Mark L.

      Knapp and John A. Daly.Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications, 1985. Print.

Sieber, Sam D. "The Integration of Fieldwork and Survey Methods." *American Journal of*

      Sociology 78.6 (1973): 1335-1359. *SocINDEX with Full Text*. EBSCO. Web. 14 Apr.

      2010.

Strohmetz, David Brian. "Politeness Theory: Beyond Please and Thank You." *Dissertation*

      Abstracts International 53. (1993). *PsycINFO*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Stutts, Nancy B., and Randolph T. Barker. "The Use of Narrative Paradigm Theory in Assessing

      Audience Value Conflict in Image Advertising." *Management Communication Quarterly*

      13.2 (1999): 209. *Business Source Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 3 Apr. 2011.

Tardy, Charles H., and Lawrence A. Hosman. "Self-Monitoring and Self-Disclosure Flexibility: A Research Note." *Western Journal of Speech Communication: WJSC* 46.1 (1982): 92-97. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 10 Mar. 2010.

Tashakkori, Abbas, and Charles Teddlie. *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, 2003.

---. *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Applied Social Research Methods Series, v. 46. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage, 1998.

Thibaut, John W., and Harold H. Kelley. *The Social Psychology of Groups*. New York: Wiley, 1959.

"The Value of Friendship." *Challenge Newsline* Mar. 2006: 4. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 10 Jan. 2011.

Trail, Thomas E., et al. "Superordinate Identity and Intergroup Roommate Friendship Development." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45.6 (2009): 1266-1272. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 25 Jan. 2011.

Vernant, Jean-Pierre. "Weaving Friendship." *Salmagundi* 130/131 (2001): 75-87. *Humanities International Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 13 Jan. 2011.

Waldron, V.R. "Achieving Communication Goals in Superior-Subordinate Relationships: The Multi-Functionality of Upward Maintenance Tactics." *Communication Monographs* 58.3 (1991): 289. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 9 Mar. 2010.

White, Colene, et al. "Intercultural Friendship Development." *Communication Reports* 21.1 (2008): 1-13. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 25 Jan. 2011.

Whitman, Daniel S., David L. Van Rooy, and Chockalingam Viswesvaran. "Satisfaction, Citizenship Behaviors, And Performance in Work Units: A Meta-Analysis of Collective

Construct Relations." *Personnel Psychology* 63.1 (2010): 41-81. *Education Research Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 11 Mar. 2010.

Williams, Bernard. "Life As Narrative." *European Journal of Philosophy* 17.2 (2009): 305-314. *Philosopher's Index*. EBSCO. Web. 15 Sept. 2010.

Zorn, Theodore E., and Kimberly Weller Gregory. "Learning the Ropes Together: Assimilation and Friendship Development Among First-Year Male Medical Students." *Health Communication* 17.3 (2005): 211-231. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 22 Jan. 2011.

Appendix A

Ebonee Johnikin
99 Pines Village Drive
Apt. 18
Lynchburg, VA 24502
December 16, 2010

Dear Participant:

Thank you for your agreement to participation in the coworker relationship study. The included documents contains a rationale and instructions for completion this study, request of background information, general employment information, contact information, and a signature. Please sign your name above the line that reads Signature as this is required for voluntary participation in this study. Agreement of participation in the survey portion of the study does not include agreement of participation in a follow-up interview; however, participation in both the survey and interview is appreciated.

Please answer each question as accurately and honestly as possible. All responses will remain confidential and will only be used for completion of this particular study. A self addressed and stamped envelope is included. Mail back the survey once completed. Your timely response is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me via email or telephone.

Your participation is greatly valued.

Thank you,

Ebonee Johnikin
Liberty University, Graduate Student
ebonee_johnikin@hotmail.com
601-319-3888

Enclosures

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM
Masters Thesis Study
Ebonee Johnikin
Liberty University
Department of Communication Studies

You are invited to be in a research study of coworker relationship development and maintenance. You were selected as a possible participant because you have maintained consecutive employment at one organization for at least 18 months, you have regular contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and you are willing to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Ebonee Johnikin, Liberty University, Department of Communication Studies

Background Information
The purpose of this study is: to examine interpersonal relationships between coworkers—specifically spotlighting how relationships are maintained in organizations and if organizational relationships are successful.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Survey Instrument (Quantitative)
Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around—excluding romantic partners and relationships). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the questionnaire. Do not choose someone which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job.

Read each sentence and indicate the answer choice that best represent your relationship with your chosen coworker friend by placing an **X** in the box that best describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember to mark one box for each sentence.

Information collected will be used to complete this study. All information and responses will remain confidential. No information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job, employer, or coworker relationship.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
The study has minimal risks:

Please note you will be asked questions that require frequent recollection, reference to personal relationships, potential conflict between referenced parties. You are at liberty choose any relationship you wish to reference during this study. The researcher will verbally explain to you that stopping at any

point during the interview process is permissible. You may choose to not answer or omit responses to questions that are personal.

Injury or Illness
Liberty University will not provide medical treatment or financial compensation if you are injured or become ill as a result of participating in this research project. This does not waive any of your legal rights nor release any claim you might have based on negligence.

The benefits to participation are: There are no benefits for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Your name and contact information will not be discussed or disclosed to any other persons. You will be identified by number. All information—surveys, contact information, audio recorded interview responses, transcriptions—will be kept in a locked storage container at the researcher's current residence for at least five years succeeding completion of the research study. After a five year period, only information that links you to responses—participation consent forms and contact—will be removed from each questionnaire and destroyed using a paper shredder, and all emails will be permanently deleted. Audio recorded interviews will be permanently reserved by the researcher in a locked storage container to be kept at the researcher's current residence. Actual data gathered from your interview and survey may be used for further study only by the researcher.

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

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is: Ebonee Johnikin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at 99 Pines Village Dr. Apt 18 Lynchburg, VA 24502, (601) 319-3888, ebonee_johnikin@hotmail.com, or Dr. Faith Mullen, Department of Communication Studies, Liberty University, 434-592-7602, fmullen@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

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

Signature:_____Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM
Masters Thesis Study
Ebonee Johnikin
Liberty University
Department of Communication Studies

You are invited to be in a research study of coworker relationship development and maintenance. You were selected as a possible participant because you have maintained consecutive employment at one organization for at least 18 months, you have regular contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and you are willing to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Ebonee Johnikin, Liberty University, Department of Communication Studies

Background Information
The purpose of this study is: to examine interpersonal relationships between coworkers—specifically spotlighting how relationships are maintained in organizations and if organizational relationships are successful.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Survey Instrument (Quantitative)
Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around—excluding romantic partners and relationships). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the questionnaire. Do not choose someone which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job.

Read each sentence and indicate the answer choice that best represent your relationship with your chosen coworker friend by placing an **X** in the box that best describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember to mark one box for each sentence.

Information collected will be used to complete this study. All information and responses will remain confidential. No information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job, employer, or coworker relationship.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
The study has minimal risks:

Please note you will be asked questions that require frequent recollection, reference to personal relationships, potential conflict between referenced parties. You are at liberty choose any relationship you wish to reference during this study. The researcher will verbally explain to you that stopping at any

point during the interview process is permissible. You may choose to not answer or omit responses to questions that are personal.

Injury or Illness
Liberty University will not provide medical treatment or financial compensation if you are injured or become ill as a result of participating in this research project. This does not waive any of your legal rights nor release any claim you might have based on negligence.

The benefits to participation are: There are no benefits for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Your name and contact information will not be discussed or disclosed to any other persons. You will be identified by number. All information—surveys, contact information, audio recorded interview responses, transcriptions—will be kept in a locked storage container at the researcher's current residence for at least five years succeeding completion of the research study. After a five year period, only information that links you to responses—participation consent forms and contact—will be removed from each questionnaire and destroyed using a paper shredder, and all emails will be permanently deleted. Audio recorded interviews will be permanently reserved by the researcher in a locked storage container to be kept at the researcher's current residence. Actual data gathered from your interview and survey may be used for further study only by the researcher.

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

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is: Ebonee Johnikin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at 99 Pines Village Dr. Apt 18 Lynchburg, VA 24502, (601) 319-3888, ebonee_johnikin@hotmail.com, or Dr. Faith Mullen, Department of Communication Studies, Liberty University, 434-592-7602, fmullen@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

Keep this copy for your records.

Statement of Consent:

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

Signature:_____Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

COWORKER

RELATIONSHIPS   ITEMS USED TO MEASURE RELATIONSHIP STRENGTH

This survey instrument serves as a tool for gathering information for a graduate level master's thesis on how coworker relationships are developed and maintained. More specifically, this tool examines relationship strength between coworkers. Criterion for participation in this study include: consistent employment at one organization for at least 18 months, constant contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and willingness to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date.

Instructions
Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the questionnaire. Do not choose someone in which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job.

Read each sentence and indicate the answer choice that best represent your relationship with your chosen coworker friend by placing an **X** in the box that best describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember to mark one box for each sentence.

Information collected will be used to complete this study. All information and responses will remain confidential. No information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job or coworker relationship.

Are you interested in completing an interview at a later date? Check one. | YES | | NO |

Participation Consent
I agree to participation in both portions of this study—survey and interview. I understand that my coworker relationship references should be directed toward one individual whom I have been employed with in an organizational environment for at least eighteen (18) consistent months. I understand that my relationship with this coworker friend should have initiated in the work environment. I realize I should evaluate my relationship with my coworker friend, and provide the best possible response. I understand my responses will be used in a graduate master thesis, and that no information linking me to my responses will be disclosed.

X _____
 (Signature)

Please answer each question as accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers.

Demographic Information

1. What is your ethnicity? _____
2. What is your gender? _____
3. What is your current age? _____
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

_____ High school or equivalent   _____ Master's degree
_____ Vocation/technical school (2 years) _____ Doctoral degree
_____ Some college   _____ Professional degree (MD, JD, etc.)
_____ Bachelor's degree   _____ Other

General Questions

1. Identify the <u>type</u> of organization you will reference during this interview. Do not provide the name of your organization.

2. Are you currently employed at this organization?

3. How long have/had you been employed at this organization? (Must be at least 18 months)

4. What is/was your age at the time of employment at this organization? _____

5. What is/was your job title at this organization?

6. What is/was your friend's job title at this organization?

7. How long have you and this coworker been friends?

8. How do you define friendship?

9. Identify the type of relationship you and your co-worker have:

__Just coworker __Acquaintance __Friend __Close Friend __Best friend __Life-long friend

- -

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address:_____

_____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Appendix E

Please provide the most honest and appropriate answer for each question. There are no right or wrong answers.

Instructions: Place an X in the answer choice box that best represents your coworker friendship relationship.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Example: My coworker and I value the time we spend together.	X				
1. My relationship with this person is limited to work issues.					
2. I am open and honest with this person.					
3. I can really open up to this person.					
4. If this person were to leave this organization, I could easily find someone to take his/her place.					
5. I would miss this person if he/she were not around.					
6. This person does things for me no one else could do.					
7. This person and I depend on each other a great deal.					
8. This person and I really need other.					
9. This relationship is very important to both of us.					
10. This person provides me with information about the organization.					
11. This person gives me emotional support.					
12. This person makes me a better person.					
13. This person involves me in outside-of-work activities.					

Please provide the most honest and appropriate answer for each question. There are no right or wrong answers.

Instructions: Place an X in the answer choice box that best represents your coworker friendship relationship.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Example: My coworker and I value the time we spend together.	X				
14. I frequently talk with this person about concerns or questions regarding my job.					
15. I talk with this person about understanding what the organization expects of me.					
16. I talk with this person about understanding how other people act toward me in typical work situations.					
17. I talk with this person about how this company deals with mistakes its employees make.					
18. I talk with this person about the extent to which people think I belong here.					

Appendix F

CONSENT FORM
Masters Thesis Study
Ebonee Johnikin
Liberty University
Department of Communication Studies

You are invited to be in a research study of coworker relationship development and maintenance. You were selected as a possible participant because you have maintained consecutive employment at one organization for at least 18 months, you have regular contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and you are willing to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Ebonee Johnikin, Liberty University, Department of Communication Studies

Background Information
The purpose of this study is: to examine interpersonal relationships between coworkers—specifically spotlighting how relationships are maintained in organizations and if organizational relationships are successful.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Interview Instrument (Qualitative)
Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around—excluding romantic partners and relationships). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the interview. Do not choose someone in which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job. You will be asked questions pertaining to relationship development and relationship maintenance with this person.

This interview will serve as a method for collecting stories on how you developed and attempted/are attempting to maintain a relationship with this coworker friend. Please note that most responses should be given in story or narrative form.

All responses will be audio recorded and may be used to complete this study. Information and responses will remain confidential—no information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job or coworker relationship.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
The study has minimal risks:

Please note you will be asked questions that require frequent recollection, reference to personal relationships, potential conflict between referenced parties. You are at liberty choose any relationship you wish to reference during this study. The researcher will verbally explain to you that stopping at any

point during the interview process is permissible. You may choose to not answer or omit responses to questions that are personal.

Injury or Illness
Liberty University will not provide medical treatment or financial compensation if you are injured or become ill as a result of participating in this research project. This does not waive any of your legal rights nor release any claim you might have based on negligence.

The benefits to participation are: There are no benefits for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Your name and contact information will not be discussed or disclosed to any other persons. You will be identified by number. All information—surveys, contact information, audio recorded interview responses, transcriptions—will be kept in a locked storage container at the researcher's current residence for at least five years succeeding completion of the research study. After a five year period, only information that links you to responses—participation consent forms and contact—will be removed from each questionnaire and destroyed using a paper shredder, and all emails will be permanently deleted. Audio recorded interviews will be permanently reserved by the researcher in a locked storage container to be kept at the researcher's current residence. Actual data gathered from your interview and survey may be used for further study only by the researcher.

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

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is: Ebonee Johnikin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at 99 Pines Village Dr. Apt 18 Lynchburg, VA 24502, (601) 319-3888, ebonee_johnikin@hotmail.com, or Dr. Faith Mullen, Department of Communication Studies, Liberty University, 434-592-7602, fmullen@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

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

Signature:_____Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Appendix G

CONSENT FORM
Masters Thesis Study
Ebonee Johnikin
Liberty University
Department of Communication Studies

You are invited to be in a research study of coworker relationship development and maintenance. You were selected as a possible participant because you have maintained consecutive employment at one organization for at least 18 months, you have regular contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and you are willing to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Ebonee Johnikin, Liberty University, Department of Communication Studies

Background Information
The purpose of this study is: to examine interpersonal relationships between coworkers—specifically spotlighting how relationships are maintained in organizations and if organizational relationships are successful.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Interview Instrument (Qualitative)
Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around—excluding romantic partners and relationships). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the interview. Do not choose someone in which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job. You will be asked questions pertaining to relationship development and relationship maintenance with this person.

This interview will serve as a method for collecting stories on how you developed and attempted/are attempting to maintain a relationship with this coworker friend. Please note that most responses should be given in story or narrative form.

All responses will be audio recorded and may be used to complete this study. Information and responses will remain confidential—no information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job or coworker relationship.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study
The study has minimal risks:
Please note you will be asked questions that require frequent recollection, reference to personal relationships, potential conflict between referenced parties. You are at liberty choose any relationship you wish to reference during this study. The researcher will verbally explain to you that stopping at any

point during the interview process is permissible. You may choose to not answer or omit responses to questions that are personal.

Injury or Illness
Liberty University will not provide medical treatment or financial compensation if you are injured or become ill as a result of participating in this research project. This does not waive any of your legal rights nor release any claim you might have based on negligence.

The benefits to participation are: There are no benefits for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Your name and contact information will not be discussed or disclosed to any other persons. You will be identified by number. All information—surveys, contact information, audio recorded interview responses, transcriptions—will be kept in a locked storage container at the researcher's current residence for at least five years succeeding completion of the research study. After a five year period, only information that links you to responses—participation consent forms and contact—will be removed from each questionnaire and destroyed using a paper shredder, and all emails will be permanently deleted. Audio recorded interviews will be permanently reserved by the researcher in a locked storage container to be kept at the researcher's current residence. Actual data gathered from your interview and survey may be used for further study only by the researcher.

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

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is: Ebonee Johnikin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at 99 Pines Village Dr. Apt 18 Lynchburg, VA 24502, (601) 319-3888, ebonee_johnikin@hotmail.com, or Dr. Faith Mullen, Department of Communication Studies, Liberty University, 434-592-7602, fmullen@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

Keep this copy for your records.
Statement of Consent:

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

Signature:_____Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

Appendix H

COWORKER

RELATIONSHIPS

ORAL INSTRUCTIONS:
This interview instrument serves as a tool for gathering information for a graduate level master's thesis on how coworker relationships are developed and maintained. More specifically, this tool examines relationship strength between coworkers. Criterion for participation this in study include: consistent employment at one organization for at least 18 months, constant contact with at least five other people in the same organizational work environment, and willingness to participate in an interview to be scheduled at a later date.

Please select one coworker you consider to be a friend (someone whom you confide in, can trust, and one in which you are comfortable around). This person must be someone you met on the job and as a result, your relationship developed inside and outside the work environment. This is the relationship and the coworker you will reference for the remainder of the questionnaire. Do not choose someone in which you had a relationship with prior to your work experience in the organization. You may choose to evaluate a coworker friendship relationship from either a previous or current job. You will be asked questions pertaining to relationship development and relationship maintenance with this person.

This interview will serve as a method for collecting stories on how you developed and attempted/are attempting to maintain a relationship with this coworker friend. Please note that most responses should be given in story or narrative form.

All responses will be audio recorded and will possibly be used to complete this study. Information and responses will remain confidential—no information will be disclosed that links you directly to a particular job or coworker relationship.
Do you have any questions?

Please answer each question as accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers.

Demographic Information

1. What is your ethnicity? _____
2. What is your gender? _____
3. What is your current age? _____
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

_____ High school or equivalent	_____ Master's degree
_____ Vocation/technical school (2 years)	_____ Doctoral degree
_____ Some college	_____ Professional degree (MD, JD, etc.)
_____ Bachelor's degree	_____ Other

General Questions

1. Identify the type of organization you will reference during this interview. Do not provide the name of your organization.

2. Are you currently employed at this organization?

3. How long have/had you been employed at this organization? (Must be at least 18 months)

4. What is/was your age at the time of employment at this organization? _____

5. What is/was your job title at this organization?

6. What is/was your friend's job title at this organization?

7. Identify the type of relationship you and your co-worker have:

__Just coworker __Acquaintance __Friend __Close Friend __Best friend __Life-long friend

8. How long have you and this coworker been friends?

9. How do you define friendship?

Appendix I

ORAL INSTRUCTIONS:
This section of the interview will ask questions that require response to be given in story or narrative form. Please answer each question in the form of a story. You are welcome to use phrases such as: I remember when . . .; One time . . .; or There was a time . . .

Please do not feel rushed to answer each question. You may pause and think about the question before you provide a response. If any question seems unclear, you may ask for it to be repeated at any point during this interview.

Do you have any questions?

Let's begin.

1. Provide an account that tells about the relationship between you and your coworker friend.

2. Give a story of how you and your coworker became friends.

    a. Provide an account that explains why you consider this person a friend.

    b. Tell me a story that explains when you knew the relationship with your coworker friend would be special or unique.

3. Tell me how you and your coworker friend spend time together.

4. Tell me how you attempt/attempted to maintain the relationship with your coworker friend.

5. Give a story about what you do/did to continue the relationship with your coworker friend.

    a. Provide an account of how your coworker friend made you feel special or like a friend.

    b. Provide an account of how you made your coworker friend feel special.

    c. Tell me a story about a favorite memory you have with your coworker friend.

6. Provide any additional stories or examples you feel are important or should be added.

Appendix J

Length and Strength: Measurement of Intimacy

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
My relationship with this person is limited to work issues	1 2	.009	.923	-.352 -.329	49 22.878	.727 .745	-.100 -.100	.284 .304		-.671 -.729	.471 .529
I am open and honest with this person.	1 2	1.092	.301	-.593 -.688	49 34.873	.556 .509	-.111 -.111	.187 .166		-.488 -.499	.266 .227
I can really open up to this person.	1 2	2.170	.147	-.658 -.788	49 39.278	.513 .441	-.178 -.178	.270 .229		-.720 -.640	.365 .284

1=Equal variances assumed   2=Equal variances not assumed

Appendix K

Length and Strength: Measurement of Irreplaceability

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
If this person were to leave this organization, I could easily find someone to take his/her place.	1 2	2.657	.110	-.1.122	49 20.151	.268 .341	-.322 -.322	.287 .330		-.900 -1.011	.255 .367
I would miss this person if he/she were not around.	1 2	2.807	.100	-.976 -1.294	49 48.511	.334 .202	-.294 -.294	.302 .228		-.901 -.752	.321 .163
This person does things for me no one else could do.	1 2	1.997	.164	.864 .986	48 36.670	.392 .331	.286 .286	.331 .290		-.379 -.302	.951 .873

1=Equal variances assumed   2=Equal variances not assumed

Appendix L

Length and Strength: Measurement of Mutual Dependence

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
This person and I depend on each other a great deal.	1 2	.667	.418	1.556 1.521	49 25.007	.126 .141	.544 .544	.350 .358		-.159 -.193	1.247 1.282
This person and I really need other.	1 2	.499	.483	.562 .538	49 23.951	.577 .596	.200 .200	.356 .372		-.515 -.568	.915 .968
This relationship is very important to both of us.	1 2	.031	.862	.767 .723	49 23.232	.447 .477	.206 .206	.268 .284		-.333 -.382	.744 .794

1=Equal variances assumed   2=Equal variances not assumed

Appendix M

Length and Strength: Measurement of Role of Peer Relations

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
This person provides me with information about the organization.	1	4.092	.049	1.170	49	.247	.278	.237	-.199	.755
	2			.943	17.986	.358	.278	.294	-.341	.896
This person gives me emotional support.	1	.105	.747	.346	49	.731	.111	.321	-.535	.757
	2			.341	25.533	.736	.111	.326	-.559	.781
This person makes me a better person.	1	.033	.857	.877	49	.385	.272	.311	-.352	.896
	2			.887	26.961	.383	.272	.307	-.358	.902
This person involves me in outside-of-work activities.	1	1.697	.199	1.291	49	.203	.417	.323	-.232	1.065
	2			1.205	22.825	.241	.417	.346	-.299	1.133

1=Equal variances assumed   2=Equal variances not assumed

Appendix N

Length and Strength: Measurement of Communication

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
I frequently talk with this person about concerns or questions regarding my job. (Task)	1 2	3.559	.065	-1.151 -1.493	49 47.390	.255 .142	-.328 -.328	.285 .219	-.900 -.769	.244 .114
I talk with this person about understanding what the organization expects of me. (Role)	1 2	.116	.735	-.281 -.278	49 25.677	.780 .783	-.078 -.078	.276 .279	-.633 -.652	.478 .497
I talk with this person about understanding how other people act toward me in typical work situations. (Interpersonal)	1 2	.054	.817	.049 .049	49 26.391	.961 .961	.017 .017	.339 .338	-.665 -.679	.698 .712
I talk with this person about how this company deals with mistakes its employees make. (Cultural)	1 2	.055	.816	1.301 1.282	49 25.452	.199 .211	.422 .422	.324 .329	-.230 -.255	1.074 1.100
I talk with this person about the extent to which people think I belong here. (Identity)	1 2	.026	.872	.345 .339	49 25.439	.732 .737	.139 .139	.403 .409	-.671 -.703	.949 .981

1=Equal variances assumed   2=Equal variances not assumed

Appendix O

Gender and Strength: Measurement of Intimacy

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
My relationship with this person is limited to work issues	Male Female	.212	.647	.985	49 41.921	.329 .238	.278 .278	.282 .232		-.289 -.191	.844 .746
I am open and honest with this person.	Male Female	.046	.832	.414	49 .454	.680 32.600	.078 .653	.188 .078		-.300 -.271	.455 .426
I can really open up to this person.	Male Female	.217	.644	1.099	49 23.232	.277 .311	.294 .294	.268 .284		-.244 -.294	.833 .882

Appendix P

Length and Strength: Measurement of Irreplaceability

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
If this person were to leave this organization, I could easily find someone to take his/her place.	Male Female	.008	.928	-.788 -.828	49 29.419	.435 .414	-.228 -.228	.289 .275		-.809 -.790	.353 335
I would miss this person if he/she were not around.	Male Female	.120	.731	.901 .884	49 25.253	.372 .385	.272 .272	.302 .308		-.335 -.361	.879 .906
This person does things for me no one else could do.	Male Female	.124	.727	.864 .871	48 27.094	.392 .391	.286 .286	.331 .328		-.379 -.387	.951 .958

Appendix Q

Length and Strength: Measurement of Mutual Dependence

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
This person and I depend on each other a great deal.	Male Female	1.639	.206	-.062 -.067	49 31.444	.951 .947	-.022 -.022	.358 .332		-.742 -.698	.698 .654
This person and I really need other.	Male Female	2.953	.092	1.102 1.190	49 31.377	.276 .243	.389 .389	.353 .327		-.320 -.277	1.098 1.055
This relationship is very important to both of us.	Male Female	2.608	.113	1.127 1.226	49 31.973	.265 .229	.300 .300	.2666 .245		-.235 -.198	.835 .798

Appendix R

Length and Strength: Measurement of Role of Peer Relations

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
This person provides me with information about the organization.	Male Female	2.801	.101	-.023 -.027	49 39.496	.982 .978	-.006 -.006	.241 .203	-.489 -.416	.478 .405
This person gives me emotional support.	Male Female	3.887	.054	.346 .408	49 39.098	.731 .686	.111 .111	.321 .272	-.535 -.440	.757 .662
This person makes me a better person.	Male Female	2.788	.101	-.036 -.043	49 40.910	.972 .966	-.011 -.011	.313 .260	-.640 -.537	.618 .515
This person involves me in outside-of-work activities.	Male Female	.525	.472	.991 .935	49 23.312	.326 .359	.322 .322	.325 .344	-.331 -.390	.975 1.034

It matters not what you go through to get there.

What matters is that you get there.