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Leading Creative Teams: The Case of British Television

By

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## ABSTRACT

Leadership in creative industries has not had the research attention that traditional businesses have. Thus, it is common for those who lead creative teams to fall back on traditional command and control management techniques which may not be fit for purpose when leading highly skilled, creative individuals who must work together to make artistic content. Yet, as a creative industry, television is still a business that needs to produce revenue. How do leaders manage seemingly conflicting goals of inspiring teams to be at their creative best whilst bringing everything in on time and on budget? This has been studied in US television, but British television has its own culture, history and structure which influence how leaders lead their creative teams. To address this research gap, professionals in various creative roles in British television were interviewed to reveal the most important qualities and methods leaders use to successfully lead their creative teams in producing innovative content within strict time and budget constraints. These are encapsulated into seven concepts: Certainty, Collaboration, Communication, Common vision, Confidence, inClusion and Compassion, culminating in a new 7 Cs model for leading creative teams in British television. This can have far-reaching implications not just for other creative industries, but for the changing landscape of business itself that increasingly values creativity at all levels as a major competitive advantage.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

'Our industry is still like the Wild West in a lot of ways.'

- British Television Director

The study of leadership has typically focused on traditional businesses such as manufacturing or service industries. Progressive leadership education might even analyse tech companies. However, relatively little attention is paid to studying leadership in creative industries such as television which has unique and often conflicting demands of leading teams to be creative whilst producing a profit. Leaders in such industries tend to be artistic visionaries who are not trained in management, or conversely, business-oriented people who focus on the bottom line. The lack of guidance and time allowed to critically explore leadership methods creates ambiguity and tensions in this area which are often left for those put in leadership positions to develop informally and individually. Research that does exist primarily focuses on US television. However, UK television operates in a unique context formed by culture, structure and policy that warrants its own study of leadership. In an industry likened to the Wild West for the lack of attention given to leadership, what methods can leaders in British television use to best lead their creative teams?

The UK television industry is formed by broadcasting companies which air programming made by studios and independent production companies, or 'indies'. Major UK Broadcasters in this research are considered to include the BBC, ITV, Channel Four, Sky and Viacom (Channel Five) (Statista, 2018). Some broadcasters also have studios, whilst others only commission and air outside content including from the over one hundred indies across the UK which vary from small to large enterprises (UK Indies, 2020). UK television is a £17 billion industry employing roughly 80,000 people, 7% of whom, as the latest data available shows, left the industry between 2017 and 2018 (Statista, 2020) and 63% of whom have considered leaving (Wilkes et al., 2020). Leaders must therefore ensure they are leading in a way that enables a creative workforce to thrive.

This study was spurred by the researcher's own experience working in and leading creative teams in the television industry for over 15 years. However, great care was taken in the research design to avoid personal opinion from compromising results. In an industry with little acknowledged understanding of the specific needs of leading creative teams, where companies often revert to traditional management methods which may not be fit for purpose, this research aims to uncover the issues that influence television leadership in the UK and the methods that successfully lead creative teams to produce innovative content within time and budget restrictions. The goal is not only for leaders to know what methods to use, but for employees to know what to demand of their leaders and feel enabled to do so.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

The research question presented is how do leaders in British television lead their creative teams in successfully producing innovative content on time and on budget? What are the methods and qualities that leaders employ to manage this paradox of artistic endeavour and business ethic? Fundamentally, it is a difference between leadership and management. Whilst these two concepts are often interchanged, understanding their unique demands helps give insight into the context of British television, how it has evolved, and the resulting issues for both leaders and the people they lead.

Kotter (1990) suggests leadership is an ageless topic and serves to move people in way that is beneficial to them and to those who depend upon them. Leaders establish a vision, align people to that vision, and inspire them to realise that vision through their own creativity. He distinguishes management as a relatively recent phenomenon, which he and other management experts trace to the First Industrial Revolution (Kotter, 1990) (Birkinshaw, 2012) when workers went from skilled, self-employed craftspeople to working in factories under the command and control of a foreperson. As opposed to moving people in a beneficial direction, management provided order and consistency to increase efficiency and profitability. It is reasonable then to see how Kotter sees these as separate skills.

Birkinshaw (2012) however views leadership and management as two skillsets that should be practiced together. Management is the discipline of getting work done through others by coordinating them to accomplish desired goals, whereas leadership is the process of social influencing that causes others to follow in wanting to achieve those goals. In this sense, leadership and management go hand in hand. In terms of leading teams, the paradox then lies in how to inspire innovation and new ideas whilst maintaining order and discipline. How does one lead and manage creativity at the same time? This literature review traces the recent evolution of the British management structure to give context to current management issues as well as theories, models and issues of leadership applied to the television industry.

## 2.2 UK Television Management Structures and Their Effects on Creativity

### 2.2.1 Vertical Integration vs. Project-Based

'Television is an industry that is sustained by creative work' (Paterson, 2010). Amabile (2005) defines creativity as 'the production of novel, useful ideas or problem solutions' (p. 368). Yet, Paterson joins other researchers in concluding that the evolving management and organisation of television work in the UK is counter-productive to creativity and innovation (Davenport, 2006) (Daymon, 2000). This relates to the move from vertically integrated broadcaster-production companies to the project-based model where most programmes are commissioned by the five main broadcasting companies to a plethora of independent production companies.

This shift from the in-house model which employed more full-time employees to the project-based model which relies on a freelancer gig economy can be traced back to policy changes in the 1980s, culminating in the 1990 Broadcasting Act (Davenport, 2006) (Daymon, 2000). Before this time, television companies operated within a fairly stable environment where strategies were primarily led by creativity, and production and craft unions underpinned labour relations from the Second World War (Percival and Hesmondhalgh, 2014). Paterson (2010) contends that collective creativity leading to innovation was a product of the *certainty* of the full-time work model, *trust* garnered by collaborating with a 'melting pot' of full-time producers, directors and editors, and *time* given for exploration of ideas and exploitation (implementation) of those ideas. This began to change in the 1980s with deregulation, marketisation and opening national broadcasting systems to competition. Channel Four was created in 1982 as a publisher model, introducing the commissioning editor role which oversees productions made by independent production companies to air on their network. This was a large change from the BBC/ITV broadcasting-production model which had been responsible for producing all domestic-made programming as well as airing it (Tunstall, 1993).

The 1990 Broadcasting Act instituted by the Thatcher government sought to further increase competition by mandating 25% of all programming by a broadcaster come from independent production companies which were increasingly well-financed and commercially oriented. This caused broadcasters to shift employment from full-time in-house employees to independent companies for whom employing full-time crews made little sense due to the unpredictability of commissioned projects. Dex et al. (2000) found that the 1990 Broadcasting Act along with the implementation of Producer Choice in the BBC contributed to unwelcome uncertainty in a growing freelance workforce which now accounts for over a third of the UK television workforce (Ofcom, 2019a). Unionisation plummeted and conversely, long hours, unsafe conditions and the growing prevalence of exploitation via low or unpaid work increased (Percival and Hesmondhalgh, 2014). 'The changes which occurred in British television 1986-93 were



perhaps the most profound set of changes since those triggered by the launch of the advertising-funded ITV in 1955' (Tunstall, 1993).

It is reasonable to think that with greater competition might come higher quality and more creativity, however case studies show the opposite (Daymon, 2000) (Davenport, 2006) (Plunkett, 2006). The competition drove heightened attention to profit, primarily by cutting costs and outsourcing programming. In the case of one ITV station, even head-cleaning fluid was seen as too expensive, and consequently, broadcasting standards would slip due to sub-standard pictures being transmitted (Daymon, 2000). Producer Choice at the BBC eliminated 5000 staff jobs and saw the organisation become laboriously siloed. This caused quality to plummet from budget constrictions prohibiting internal collaboration due to new charges for internal services such as fact checkers for news programmes (Plunkett, 2006). Television management went from cultivating creativity to a culture of closely monitoring time and money, which not only decreased quality but dramatically lowered morale and engagement (Daymon, 2000).

It might also be reasonable to think that creativity in the industry simply shifted from the broadcasters to the independent production companies. However, Davenport (2006) showed that temporary freelance crews in the UK follow highly specialised, fragmented and hierarchical careers, and the informal, reputational networks which govern the hiring of crews act as a barrier to development rather than as an agent of innovation. The lack of trust in hiring new people is a constant issue in hiring in UK television (Wing-Fai et al., 2015) (Bechky, 2006) (Randle et al., 2015). Those hiring for future projects tend to be department heads on a crew such as the DOP (Director of Photography), Production Designer, or Gaffer (head of electrical department) and will hire the same people repetitively. Whilst this could be seen as placing great trust in the same people, it also shows a lack of trust in hiring anyone new and poses a major issue, not just for creativity and innovation on set (Davenport, 2006), but to people coming up in the industry and diversity behind the camera (Wing-Fai et al., 2015). The lack of time given on freelance sets for exploration prohibits creativity and promotes intolerance of time-wasting mistakes, often resulting in public humiliation (Percival and Hesmondhalgh, 2014). This is not to say that UK Television has become overall less creative, but that the current informal management and reputational structure of project-based production which relies on a freelance workforce appears to have negative effects on fostering creativity in programming and in the people who create it.

## 2.2.2 Role Based Structures vs. Hierarchies

Film and television are known for managing crews through strict hierarchy, a structure which according to Laloux (2014) derived from the military. Hierarchy can be defined as 'a system in which the people within a company or organisation are organised into levels according to the authority they have' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). Laloux labels highly hierarchical organisations such as militaries 'Red Organisations' which are based on fear and use command and control to manage employees. The metaphor of military and war is not uncommon in the world of television and film. Positions 'above the line', those leadership positions which are deemed most important and receive the highest pay, are likened to officers or generals leading an army (Luzi, 2011) (Edelman, 2019). These are typically executive producers, producers, directors and writers. Below the line, the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director has garnered comparisons to a drill sergeant (Edelman, 2019) for creating and often barking out the schedule to ensure the entire crew do what needs to be done to 'make the day', or complete the day's schedule. As with the military, the bigger a production or organisation gets, the more layered and strict the hierarchy. Yet unlike the military, film and television are creative endeavours, and it begs the questions why this structure is used to manage and if it is beneficial to fostering creativity in an industry that depends on it.

In her study of film productions in the US as temporary organisations, Bechky (2006) looks at roles versus hierarchy and draws a distinct line between them. She claims clearly defined roles are more important for organisation and coordination in temporary organisations such as film and television productions based on a freelance workforce. This is because any hierarchy is only temporary and will not necessarily determine future employment. Rather, future employment will rely on relationships. Coordination on set is sustained by the creation of generalised role structure and accomplished through negotiated role enactment, not a hierarchical command and control structure. If coordination is more successful when implemented through roles rather than hierarchy, one must again ask if strict hierarchies are fit for purpose in British television.

## 2.3 Television Leadership Models and Their Effects on Creativity

The evolution of the television production model from vertically integrated broadcaster-producer to project-based is one of organisation and management. However, the evolution of leadership could be viewed as the move from the studio as main creative force to the showrunner which is continuing to take shape. This is a model that has been imported from the US (Collins, 2013), and whilst it seems to have found success in popular award-winning shows such as the revival of *Doctor Who* (Russell T. Davies, showrunner) and *Killing Eve* (Phoebe Waller-Bridge, showrunner), it is still very much in its infancy in the UK, and questions still abound of its relevance

in British television (Royal Television Society, 2015). Many say this is a new golden age of television (The Scotsman Newsroom, 2013), but is that due to this new shift in leadership? What advantages and disadvantages does the showrunner model bring to fostering creativity and providing quality content that is on time and on budget?

### 2.3.1 Showrunner as Leader and Manager

'Showrunner' first appeared in print in *Variety* in 1992 (Hong, 2011). It has been defined as 'an industry term describing the person or persons responsible for overseeing all areas of writing and production on a television series and ensuring that each episode is delivered on time and on budget for both the studio that produces the show and the network that airs it' (Doyle, 2014, in 0:0:30). According to Collins (2013), originally television was a studio's medium, with studio executives making all major decisions. Writers gained more creative say in the 1970s, but the voice of the writer often did not survive translation on set where they were rarely welcomed. Concurrently, more and more executive producers were added to the credits from levels of management in production companies and networks, causing confusion to the crew as to who made the final decisions and thus be the point of accountability. As shows became more serialised and less episodic, story arcs mandated a unified creative voice, one that would lead the writing, then bring that creative vision to manage the business of production ensuring a consistent tone across the series from script to edit. That is how the showrunner was born, as both the head writer and executive producer (Collins, 2013). Yet, with this came an inherent paradox in the role.

With obtaining full creative leadership of a show came management responsibilities for which people in creative jobs generally are not trained or prepared. This happens in many industries where those who excel at the creative or technical are moved as a natural progression up the hierarchy into managerial positions with no actual management training (Ensher et al., 2002). Not only did showrunners now have to lead a team to follow their creative vision, they also had to manage them to get work done within time and budget restrictions. The showrunner embodies the paradox of visionary and executive, of creative and business person, of leader and manager. Yet, this can happen across leadership roles in television.

### 2.3.2 Showrunning in the UK

Though the showrunner has become the established model of creative leadership in US television, it is not considered the norm in the UK. The first UK show that brought the showrunner role to prominence is said to be the 2005 revival of *Doctor Who* with Russell T Davies its first showrunner (Collins, 2013). There are debates over where television creativity flourishes best, in

the US showrunner model, where one person oversees a writers' room as well as all aspects of production, or the traditional British single writer model, where one person writes the entire series but has no part in the production (Royal Television Society, 2015) (Birnbaum, 2014).

Some UK showrunners such as Michaela Coel (*Chewing Gum*) and Phoebe Waller-Bridge (*Fleabag*) mix the two models taking on even more responsibilities, writing all episodes, executive producing and starring in their series. This mixture of writing and producing, of leading and managing appears to have found success in the UK, as such shows have gained enormous popularity. However, is this too much work for one person to take on in what is meant to be a collaborative medium? Are they creative leaders or micro-managing autocrats? Do other creatives flourish in the environment of a single voice? When studying showrunners in the US, Murphy (2016) found, 'The leadership task is one of encouraging creativity from the team, as well as fulfilling the leader's own creative vision for the product' (p. 264). However, the showrunner model in the UK has not been so closely researched in the literature. Is showrunning as a leadership model practiced in the same way in the UK as in the US? How can one person be the visionary leader of the show as head writer and manager as executive producer and still bring everything together on time and on budget, leading a team who want to do their best creative work as well? Multiple theories on creative leadership have been explored to frame how to best lead creative teams in television, though they have primarily been applied to Hollywood. The study of UK television in this regard should be further explored and is part of the impetus of this research.

## 2.4 Creative Leadership in Television

The literature review highlights the showrunner as an emerging model of television leadership in the UK. The growing prominence of this model reveals many important aspects necessary for any television leader to lead their creative teams in producing innovative content whilst managing them to meet strict time and budget limitations. Several leadership theories have been applied to different aspects of leading and managing creative teams. Whilst some have been applied to Hollywood as well, creative leadership theory is less explored in British television. It nonetheless can be useful for understanding the qualities and methods of successful leaders in this industry in achieving specific creative goals.

## 2.4.1 Leading Creative Teams to Realise a Shared Vision

### ***Influencing Through Authenticity and Charisma, Not Hierarchy***

If we recall that leadership is social influencing that causes others to want to follow the leader in achieving desired goals (Birkinshaw, 2012), then how do leaders achieve that when leading skilled creative teams who may have their own disparate visions? *Authenticity* is thought to have positive implications for television leaders such as producers and showrunners (Murphy, 2016) who need to pull their teams in one direction. Authentic leaders are self-aware in understanding their own emotions, abilities, and inner conflicts (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). They are transparent with employees, presenting their authentic selves, openly sharing information, expressing their true thoughts and feelings, and reinforcing openness that provides employees with an opportunity to be free with their ideas, challenges, and opinions (Rego et al., 2014). Authentic leaders thus use their own inherent qualities to lead their teams to realise their vision rather than relying on an external hierarchical structure to demand alignment.

Similarly, Conger and Kanungo (1988) found *charismatic leaders* use their own inherent qualities of charm and persuasiveness to influence others, rather than hierarchical command and control. Murphy and Ensher (2008) found many cases of US television directors using charismatic leadership as a way to influence others in a highly transient role. Unlike many other television leaders, the television director is often a role that different people fill during a series. A new director can come in week to week, working with an established crew, and must find ways for people to follow their leadership having just met them. They share their vision with the crew and create alignment by gaining their respect, confidence and affinity. Charismatic leadership has similarly been shown to be highly present in the transient environment of British freelance television productions (Higgs and Hobbs, 2004).

### ***Empathy and Compassion Through Authenticity and Charisma***

Both authentic and charismatic leaders show empathy and compassion for their employees by considering the well-being and development of their teams. This in turn garners trust to follow their lead and encourages creativity to bring to the project. For instance, authentic leaders set high standards for ethical conduct and make decisions based upon those standards, objectively analysing data including dissenting or idiosyncratic opinions, resulting in increased employee trust and respect. This leads to employees experiencing greater psychological safety, providing the ability to take creative risks, propose new and innovative ideas and introduce conflicting opinions without fear (Avolio et al., 2004). As a result, authentic leadership promotes and predicts employee creativity, including when facing problems and opportunities (Rego et al., 2014). Those leaders

who were seen to be authentic and confident in their own abilities appeared to be most successful when they led highly trained individuals to be creative (Murphy, 2016).

Charismatic leaders likewise show sensitivity to members' needs (Murphy and Ensher, 2008). They use praise and inspiration to garner satisfaction in the people they lead whilst avoiding using blame, denial and creating hardship (Yukl, 1999). As leaders of creative teams, they understand that they cannot be subject matters in everything, but must encourage the development of their team to reach their full potential. As a result, Murphy and Ensher (2008) found that charismatic leadership, like authentic leadership, likely helps to facilitate creativity in television production.

## 2.4.2 Navigating the Paradox of Leadership and Management

### ***Addressing Conflicting Goals Through Paradoxical Leadership***

The previous sections show leading creative teams in British television to involve managing the paradox of leadership and management. The leader must be able to navigate conflicting goals such as being creative and nurturing creativity in others, collaborating with others and controlling the production, providing high quality and production value whilst maintaining a constrictive budget, and taking time for exploration within a limited time frame. Managing these paradoxes are a major task for the US television industry (Murphy, 2016). *Paradoxical leadership* then is the ability to hold two such conflicting ideas and change behaviours to address these issues directly rather than experience fear, anxiety or other overwhelming emotions (Murphy, 2016) (Smith and Lewis, 2011). Such a paradoxical perspective is critical in the context of creative industries where creativity is a fundamental ingredient of the final product (Lampel et al., 2000).

### ***Shared Leadership Distributes Paradoxical Responsibilities***

To help manage this paradox, *shared leadership* can also be used to spread responsibilities to appropriate team members. Murphy (2016) contends that good television leaders exercise shared leadership which, though it can manifest differently depending on context (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016), involves the distribution of complementary leadership influence across multiple team members and correlates positively with team performance (Zhou, 2013). When team members offer leadership, they bring more resources to the task, share more information, and experience higher commitment with the team. Collectively, these consequences should lead to higher levels of team performance (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Conversely, when leaders receive influence or are open to the influence of others, it can generate higher levels of team functioning in terms of respect and trust (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016). Thus, paradoxical and shared leadership can

likely aid in television leadership and management, encouraging creativity in oneself and one's team within time and budget parameters.

## 2.5 Diversity and Inclusion

Decades worth of studies show that a diverse workforce measurably improves decision making, problem solving, flexibility, creativity and innovation (Burrell, 2016). Amabile et al. (1996) and Hoever (2012) assess team creativity to be one of the beneficial outcomes of diverse groups. Whilst research in how diversity affects creativity specifically in film and television is limited, Aspey (2016) asserts that it enables the leader to draw from different skills, perspectives, experiences and voices to each production. In doing so, leaders bring together surprising groups of people to create surprising and hence, innovative content. Therefore, Aspey contends film and television leaders must 'nurture an environment where all voices are valued and matter deeply, because without them, there is no disruption and - most importantly of all - no innovation' (Aspey, 2016 para. 11).

More attention has been paid to monitoring diversity in the UK television workforce, primarily through Ofcom, the UK's communications regulator. Ofcom compiled a diversity report on the freelance workforce in UK television for the first time in 2019, entitled *Diversity in UK Television: Freelancers* (Ofcom, 2019b). The report measures across gender, race and disability. Notably absent are measures of sexual orientation, transgender identification, disability, religion and socio-economic background. According the main findings of the report, women and people from minority ethnic backgrounds continue to be underrepresented among freelance writers and directors. It also indicates that the latest available data published by Directors UK and the Writers' Guild in 2016 show that less than a quarter of television episodes were directed by women and only two percent were made by directors from an ethnic minority background. Ofcom also notes that broadcasters do not properly monitor their freelance workforce so there is a large gap in the data.

Ofcom's diversity in UK television freelance report shows the informal recruitment practices pose significant barriers for freelancers from underrepresented groups seeking an opportunity to breakthrough in the industry or progress in their careers (Ofcom, 2019b). However, Ofcom also published a diversity report on the major UK broadcasters in the same year entitled *Diversity and Equal Opportunities in Television* which shows the industry falls short of equal representation or even internal targets in full-time employment as well (Ofcom, 2019a). The Equity union stated that though marginal improvements have been made of senior BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) staff, the overall picture remains poor (Equity, 2019). This third annual report of full-time

employees measured across gender, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, and for the first time in 2019, socio-economic background.

Ofcom states that where the industry has chosen to drive change, there have been improvements. For example, after initiatives were introduced, the percentage of continuing drama directed by women increased from 14% in 2013 to 21% in 2016, and directors from ethnic backgrounds doubled in the same time (Ofcom, 2019b). This shows it takes more than acceptance of diversity, but inclusion initiatives as well to drive change.

Inclusion is about more than passively accepting a diverse workforce in an organisation. It involves taking an active approach to recruiting from diverse populations and making them feel welcome and valued (Edwards, 2020). That means first acknowledging unconscious and systemic bias (Burrell, 2016). Unconscious or implicit bias is prejudice by an individual in favour of or against one thing, person or group, of which they are not themselves aware (Oxford Reference, 2020b). Unconscious bias is both supported and caused by systemic or institutional bias which is prejudice, bigotry, or unfairness ingrained into institutions resulting in certain social groups being advantaged or favoured and others being disadvantaged or devalued (Oxford Reference, 2020a).

Whilst studies of socio-economic impact on working in UKFTV (UK Film and Television) are sparse, Randle et al. (2007) found that class and the perception of class are major barriers to entrance and advancement in the industry. In addition, those who do not look or sound the part of having an 'Oxbridge' background are seen as 'misfits', literally not fitting in to the mainly White, middle class, Southern culture. According to their studies, many misfits change aspects of their authentic selves to appear to fit in, such as a Northerner adopting an RP accent. Randle et al. associate this to what Bourdieu called *habitus*, where conformity is secured through routine and custom, not conscious acquisition. Here *habitus* refers to 'the construct via which UKFTV structures are embodied in individuals through socialization and reproducing processes' (Randle et al., 2015, p. 594) and the implicit assumptions and values that underlie the processes through which people are evaluated, marginalised and excluded. This area of data collection is still in its infancy and more needs to be collected consistently to get a broader picture.

Steps employers can take to be inclusive involve incorporating more diverse employees in decisions at all levels (Larson, 2017), creating a work environment that respects the needs of different employees including minorities, and sensitively promoting diversity in internal communications (Laasch and Conway, 2013). Given the decades of research on the positive correlations between diversity and creativity paired with the continued vast underrepresentation of women and minority groups in Ofcom reports, the literature shows the UK television industry has a lot more work to do in implementing effective inclusion initiatives if it is to benefit from the full



creative potential of a diverse workforce. But how can this tangibly be done in the UK television industry?

## 2.6 Summary and Research Gaps

The research question presented is how do leaders in British television lead their creative teams in producing innovative content on time and on budget? What are the methods and qualities that leaders employ to manage these seemingly conflicting goals of leadership and management?

The research literature has focused on three main areas. First, the evolution of management structures in British television were notably affected by the 1990 Broadcasting Act, creating a predominantly freelance creative workforce in an industry that previously had a more full-time, vertically integrated model. Studies have shown how creativity suffers from an uncertain freelance structure where long working hours, expectations of low pay and informal hiring practices create barriers to entering and excelling in the industry, particularly for those in underrepresented groups.

Second, aspects of leadership in television have been studied, but mostly in the US. As a model of television leadership, the showrunner model has completely revolutionised American television, but as it is still in its infancy in the UK, the question remains if it is more appropriate than the traditional British model. Whilst various leadership theories including paradoxical leadership, charismatic leadership, shared leadership and authentic leadership have been applied to television leadership, such research has been primarily applied in the US industry.

Third, the literature shows that a diverse workforce measurably improves creativity, problem solving and innovation. Though few studies have been done in television, some research suggests diversity can be beneficial to the film industry by drawing on different skills, perspectives, and voices to create innovative content. Ofcom released diversity reports of both the freelance and full-time television workforce in the UK which show women and minority groups vastly underrepresented. However, the literature does not cover how diversity affects creativity in the British television industry and what specific aspects of diversity are most crucial for leaders to consider.

The research gap then is what aspects of leadership and management help leaders in British television to meet their organisational goals? This study focuses specifically on the qualities and methods leaders use to lead their creative teams in producing innovative content within strict

time and budget restrictions. Given the unique history, culture and structures of the UK industry, what model can be formed for leading creative teams in British television?

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Objective

The objective of this study is to address the gap in research literature regarding leadership in British television as concluded in the previous chapter. Specifically, this study explores the methods and qualities best for leading creative teams to produce innovative programming within strict time and budget deadlines, considering the unique culture, history and structures in the British industry. The goal is to devise a straight-forward model for leaders to use and for employees to demand when working in British television.

### 3.2 Research Philosophy

#### 3.2.1 Ontology

The research philosophy of this study can be considered from ontological and epistemological aspects. The ontological aspect raises questions of the assumptions of the nature of reality. This research assumes the importance of subjectivism, that social phenomena are created from people's perceptions and consequent actions. In other words, reality is a product of social constructionism whereby people make sense of the world through their own interpretation of events and the meanings they draw from them. This is opposed to an objectivist stance that assumes social entities exist in reality external to social actors (Saunders et al., 2009).

#### 3.2.2 Epistemology

The epistemological aspect of a study determines how knowledge is developed. As opposed to a positivist approach which assumes that reality is consistent and external to social actors, typically using measurements and statistics, the interpretivist approach (Searle, 1999) (Klein and Myers, 1999) emphasises subjectivity when conducting research among people who interpret events and actions in particular ways (Saunders et al., 2009). Whether or not there is a truth beyond that interpretation is not as valuable as the interpretation itself, as that is what enables and determines action. Interpretivists therefore tend to be subjectivists whilst positivists tend to be objectivists (Dudau, 2015). As this research develops knowledge through investigative interviews based on participants' interpretations and perceptions, it takes an interpretivist approach. The researcher's own values regarding leadership and the television industry have an axiological impact on all stages of the research and cannot be completely separated as is consistent with interpretivism.

### 3.2.3 Phenomenology

Interviews used phenomenology, the study of experience from the perspective of the individual (Moustakas, 1994). Participants were asked to talk about experiences they had and relate them to leadership, the way in which they were being managed or how they were managing others. By relaying experiences, participants gave raw information, sometimes before having the chance to filter it through specific lenses such as industry or cultural norms. They were asked to contribute opinions on leadership qualities as well, but by relaying experiences, the interviewer was able to ask follow-up questions to uncover root causes, perhaps formerly unrealised by the participants.

## 3.3 Research Approach

### 3.3.1 Inductive vs Deductive

This research took an inductive approach rather than deductive. According to Saunders (2009), inductive is less structured and formalised than deductive. Rather than starting from a defined hypothesis and using data to test that hypothesis, data is collected that is relevant to the research topic, then relationships and patterns are found and theory emerges from the process of data collection and analysis. Since the goal of the research was to find the best leadership traits and methods of British television leaders, the inductive approach was used to formulate a model of leadership for leading creative teams in British television, considering the specific attributes and structure of the industry in the UK.

### 3.3.2 Qualitative vs Quantitative Data Collection

This research utilises qualitative data as opposed to quantitative. According to Saunders (2009), quantitative data is based on meanings derived from numbers, collecting numerical and standardised data and analysis conducted through the use of diagrams and statistics. Conversely, qualitative data is based on meanings expressed through words, collecting non-standardised data requiring classification into categories, and analysis conducted through conceptualisation. Bell et al. (2019) found that numerical data obtained from quantitative research are potentially less comprehensive and detailed compared to narrative results from qualitative research. This is because follow-up questions can be asked to expose assumptions, unlock preconceived causal relationships and find root causes to issues. Primary research therefore consisted of only interviews rather than surveys, as surveys would have required set options from which to choose, potentially encouraging certain results whilst prohibiting others. Interviews allowed participants to offer their own ideas. Since interviews go more in depth, a smaller pool was used, whereas a

survey could allow for more responses but only utilising ideas and concepts known to the researcher. By asking open ended, semi-structured questions, ideas could emerge that were previously unbeknownst to the researcher, enabling more authentic data and helping to limit bias.

## 3.4 Research Design

### 3.4.1 Interview Participants

#### ***Recruitment Method***

A mixture of networking and cold-calling was used to find a first round of participants. Networking primarily involved contacting colleagues and utilising online networking events. LinkedIn was used as a resource to find people in particular television roles. IMDB was also used to contact well-known creatives in British television through their managers or assistants. Companies, including large broadcasters and small to medium independent production companies, were contacted directly through publicly available email addresses and phone numbers.

Snowball sampling was then used to find further participants. Snowball sampling is a non-probability (non-random) sampling method where initial participants nominate others through their professional networks, then those nominated participants continue to nominate others, building the data source pool like a snowball (Dudovskiy, 2020). This is often used when data sources are hard to find. As the researcher is not from the UK and did not have many contacts in the British television industry, snowball sampling was a useful way to find participants, since networking is often more successful than cold calling. The disadvantage to snowball sampling is that since it is based on networks, it can lead to oversampling of particular characteristics which may be less representative of the diversity of the UK. The breakdown of the participant pool is in the following paragraph. For ethical purposes, the researcher asked participants to first ask permission of their networks before any contact was made.

#### ***Participant Characteristics***

The participant pool ranged from people with five to 35 years of experience. Professions varied from stunt performer to showrunner to commissioning editor and included both freelance and full-time positions. Locations of participants were Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and London. There was a fairly equal mix of those in leadership positions and those who are primarily managed by others. Most fell into both categories and so could speak to both sides of leadership and management. As every participant had a different primary profession or role in television, they

are each identified by that role. This is to give the reader more insight into their experience than if arbitrary code names were used.

As diversity and inclusion are explored as aspects of leadership in this research, each participant was asked to share factors of identity such as gender identification, sexual orientation, race and any other ways to identify that were of significance to them. It was made clear that participants should only share identifying factors with which they were comfortable and which would not compromise their identity. Six out of 14 are female and six are lesbian, gay or bisexual. Five out of 14 identified as having a working-class upbringing. Others identified as middle class, upper middle class or did not report socio-economic upbringing. Whilst one participant identified as BAME, all other participants identified as White. These statistics should be considered, particularly the imbalance of BAME participants. The table showing each participant by their current primary profession and various dimensions of how they identify is in [Appendix 9.1](#).

### 3.4.2 Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations clarify the boundaries, exceptions and reservations inherent in the research. Limitations identify potential weaknesses in the study, ways in which the researcher or study was limited or prohibited. Delimitations are self-imposed limits which aim to narrow the scope of the study (Creswell, 2012).

#### ***Limitations***

The major limitations of the research were due to the timing of primary and secondary data collection during COVID-19 lockdown. The time allotted for the dissertation was primarily mid-June through August 2020. Lockdown in Scotland began officially on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 and continued through the study. Though lockdown consisted of several phases, University and public libraries remain closed at the time of writing. The researcher's parcel service was also suspended, prohibiting access to secondary resources through home delivery. This limited literature to mainly what was available online.

Lockdown also forced non-essential business activities to halt or convert to working from home. This included television productions and companies, and at the time of writing, there are still no known productions taking place aside from news gathering or at-home smart phone recordings, nor is there in-person access to companies or broadcasters. The University of Edinburgh mandated that no matter how laws themselves might loosen or if companies re-opened, there must be no face-to-face contact with participants or companies, and any interviews must be done remotely. This prohibited any possibility of first hand observations.

Lockdown affected the availability of types of employees differently which thus influenced the make-up of the participant pool. As all productions came to a halt and productions now rely mostly on a freelance creative workforce as shown in the literature review, freelancers had more availability than they would have during a shoot. However, full-time senior executives had less time than they normally would have since they were too busy or too stressed managing the loss of money from sponsors pulling their advertising revenue and other losses from halted productions. This therefore shifted the participant pool to largely (10 out of 14) freelance crew members.

### ***Delimitations***

Since this study focuses on leading creative teams in British television, only people who work in creative roles in the UK television industry were interviewed, with the exception of one UK based independent filmmaker who was included for his experience with network commissioners and reasons for choosing to not work within the industry as they relate to leadership. Due to the unexpected limitations inflicted by COVID, other delimitations of the project had to be loosened to access a sufficient participant pool. Whereas originally, the study was to focus on leaders only, delimitations were loosened to include all creative roles on both sides of leadership. This gave great insight however, as those who are managed could share valuable experiences regarding leadership from their points of view. The study also had to open to all genres for the same reason. However, including many genres was useful in showing the universality of good creative leadership. Whilst subjects such as public policy and unions are mentioned in the literature review, they are present to give a context for how they affect the industry and issues in leadership. Analysis and recommendations focus on qualities and methods of leading creative teams, rather than what might need to change in public policy, union regulations or other areas such as digital transformation. However, these subjects would be suitable for future study as they do affect the structure and running of the industry.

#### **3.4.3 Interview and Data Collection Protocol**

Participants were sent a brief overview of the research topic including the fact that the study was part of an MBA capstone at The University of Edinburgh Business School. They were also sent a consent form to sign and return which outlined the uses of the interviews, the fact that they would be completely anonymous, and that participants could withdraw participation at any time. All forms were signed and returned. Please see [Appendix 9.2](#) for the model consent form. All interviews were conducted remotely over a video and audio collaboration platform and were recorded with the participants' consent. Interviews typically lasted approximately one hour. Participants were informed that all recordings would be destroyed once transcribed and not shared. The interview with the independent filmmaker was conducted over email at their request. Please see [Appendix 9.3](#) for a model list of questions. Interviews were then transcribed and sent to

each participant for review. All requested corrections were made and revised transcripts approved by participants. Upon request from the research advisor, a limit of one sample transcription has been provided in [Appendix 9.4](#). In addition to conducting interviews, data collection included public interviews from well-known creative leaders in British television, primarily showrunners. This is meant to supplement the primary data collection and illustrate arguments made from the analysis.

#### 3.4.4 Strategy and Analysis

Once interviews were transcribed, they were entered into NVivo 12 Pro qualitative data analysis desktop software. From there, *open coding* (Saunders et al., 2009) was used to group similar ideas regarding leadership in British television shared across transcripts into *in vivo* codes, labels coming from terms used by participants rather than existing theory, as recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008) when using a grounded strategy. Grounded theory involves specific analysis procedures to generate a central theory that emerges from the data, which was the approach taken in this research. Open coding formed primary nodes in NVivo which were then grouped again by their relationships using *axial coding* into higher level concepts of leading creative teams. These concepts form the outline of the Findings. Finally, *selective coding* uncovered a core issue that ran through all of the concepts, providing the basis for the recommendations.



## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to understand the methods British television leaders use to best lead their creative teams in producing innovative programming on time and on budget. The literature review showed that this involves a paradox of leadership to inspire creative teams to realise the leader's vision and management to meet strict deadlines. How do leaders manage this paradox? What methods and characteristics enable successful execution of innovative productions and what methods are prohibitive?

To understand leadership in British television requires understanding its unique history politically and culturally which contributes to distinct challenges. Public policies helped create a freelance culture which fosters tensions of uncertainty leaders must address. The cultural history of class divisions in the UK also creates specific issues of inclusion which serve to prohibit creativity. The showrunner model of television leadership can give insights into ways all television leaders can lead their creative teams, yet confusion of the role in the UK creates tensions regarding who the main creative force is on a production. Though theories of creative leadership applied to television in Hollywood may give insight into leading creative teams, understanding the unique challenges of British television is crucial to uncovering the best methods for leaders to meet organisational goals.

The findings of the primary research via interviews of creatives in various roles in UK television as well as published interviews are outlined into overarching concepts to aid creative leaders in developing positive leadership qualities and understanding relevant issues in the industry. Each section highlights a major theme in leading creative teams, including the positive outcomes of good leadership in that area as well as the negative, sometimes disastrous consequences when it is lacking. Sections culminate with coding diagrams showing the formation of open codes into thematic categories as well as representational quotes for coded themes. Though concepts are separated into sections for clarity, they are strongly connected. What follows then are, according to this research, the most important attributes of successful leadership in British television.

## 4.2 Leadership and Management Training to Keep Creativity at the Heart of British Television

The findings show that creativity is indeed at the heart of the UK television workforce. When asked why they wanted to get in to television in the first place, most participants in various roles spoke of wanting to create, whether it was creating films or another artform within the film frame such as production design or graphic design. Creating different worlds on screen and experimenting with different art forms within the medium ranked highly. Telling stories visually and innovatively is also important, both to those in scripted television and factual documentaries. Good creative leaders then were those who inspire creativity in their teams whilst leading them to realise their vision.

Participants feel at their happiest when they are at their most creative or helping others to be at their most creative. For instance, an assistant director whose job it is to keep the production on schedule does not necessarily feel creative in their job, but nonetheless finds satisfaction providing an environment where the director can be at their most creative. Participants spoke of the intrinsic value of various forms of creativity as the impetus for working in television rather than any extrinsic value such as making a lot of money or seeking fame. Thus, Paterson's (2010) contention that television is sustained by creative work is reinforced here.

Creativity may be why many enter into television, but how to manage creatives within financial and time restrictions is a constant issue. Ensher et al. (2002) highlight a problem common in creative industries in the US where the natural progression for creatives is to put them in managerial roles for which they have no training. Interviews showed this to be a major issue in British television as well.

I think there is an attitude amongst a few individuals...where they think that they can treat people how they want. And I think it's because they get these positions of power, you know, like being an AD [assistant director], without really much training in how to manage people. So they're very good at their jobs, but then they get a management role, which they've not been trained for – not necessarily their fault. It's just the way it works.

- Assistant Director [14:23:41

The consensus showed that the best leaders are those who can manage the paradox of being creative and fostering creativity in others whilst managing time and budgets. In other words, they practice leadership and management together as Birkinshaw (2012) contends. This is due to the efficiency and empathy of a leader who can understand at once the creative and technical

needs of their team working in a production whilst having the experience to know what an idea will cost, how long it will take and how to manage those parameters. Navigating this paradox draws parallels to paradox theory which Murphy (2016) applied to US television leaders who are able to manage conflicting goals such as creative output and budget limits successfully without experiencing negative emotions such as anxiety or fear. In addition, participants found leaders who understand the job of the person they are managing to be far more effective in being able to mentor and creatively problem solve to lead them in successfully completing those jobs. Conversely, having to constantly refer to a manager who has little concept of the creative end of the business for budget or time issues ironically wastes both time and money. It is often the case, however, that those promoted to management positions get removed from the creative process. This not only makes them less effective to lead creatively, but also removes the intrinsic value of why they entered into a creative industry in the first place, resulting in stress and/or apathy which trickles down to team members.

It is thus optimal for creative leaders to straddle the line of creativity and management. However, the fact that successful creatives are ushered into managerial roles as a natural progression without any management training is a fundamental issue for many participants and a source of many problems. Management training for creatives is a primary suggestion which arose from interviews, not just so leaders can know how to manage budgets and time, but primarily so they can understand how to lead and manage people.



Figure 4.2.1: Coding Diagram - Leadership and Management Training to Keep Creativity at the Heart of British Television

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Motivation for Working in TV</b>	
Love of Film and TV from Early Age	Well, I think I'd spent most of my life watching film and television, I think from about the age of 15 to about 30, I watched two movies a day as a regimen just to try and learn from them. So, I think when I was given an opportunity to retrain, I sort of went for what my passion was really. (Assistant Director, 14:02:38)
Creating Provides Happiness and Satisfaction	I am a filmmaker and writer. For decades now I have been driven by two things: the desire to innovate with form and the need to look globally, to escape Eurocentrism. These two things are, I feel, centrifugal. They are outwardly directed. I've never really believed the art world's central idea that creativity is self-expression. My work is usually about noticing and bearing witness, rather than externalising my rich inner world. It's the outer world that's rich. (Independent Filmmaker, Written Response)
Combines Different Arts	My sort of love of watching these stories on screen - I think I've always been really fascinated by all art. I love theatre and visual arts. But for me, kind of film combined, everything, all the arts. It's hard actually when - I've not really thought about this for so long. When I think <i>Lord of the Rings</i> came out, I watched all the behind the scenes, and it just looked so incredible and exciting - so much going on. And it was amazing, you know what they were kind of creating - these worlds on screen. I think that's actually when I decided I wanted to do art department rather than filmmaking. (Art Assistant, 11:38:19)
Passion for Specific Area	I have the passion of cinematography for all my life since I was a child. (Assistant Camera Operator, 16:04:06)
Provide Creative Environment for Others	It's my position to give them the right place to work. But I still feel that that has an input, and I still get pride from watching the finished artistic creation, which I know I've had input into. (Assistant Director, 14:14:24)

*continued next page*

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Teach Management and Leadership</b>	
Paradox of Being Creative within Time and Money Restrictions	I think of it as a paradox that people in this environment, where they need to be creative, not just in the film industry, but in any kind of industry, it might be marketing, it might be investment banking, and we function at our best when we're calm and creative, but then stress is everywhere and deadlines - things have to be done on time. If you're in an ideal world, you'd never have a deadline and you could just be calm and work in a flow state, but then that's not how businesses run, or that's not how movies are made. So, it must seem like a bit of a conundrum how to solve this. (Stunt Performer, 11:02:06)
Creatives Are Promoted To Management Without Management Training	<p>Somebody who is an artist, a creative person who is very good at their technical skill, but a lot of the time in the art department, you are a manager, I think, and you have to manage people and budgets, and I don't think - the thing is people a lot of the time, I don't feel like it comes naturally to them. And that's a different skill, it's a completely separate skill from your technical skills, from your drafting and your creative visualisation. And I think there needs to be a lot more training in management. And I, you know, I feel like I would need a lot of training to be a good manager. It's not as natural to me as it is for some people. (Art Assistant, 11:59:40)</p> <p>If there's anything generally that you would change about the television industry, what would it be? (Interviewer, 15:01:05)</p> <p>I mean, I would go back to that better management practice. I think better managers, better trained at handling personnel issues, which I'm sure is music to your ears. (Assistant Director, 15:01:30)</p>
Good Creative Leaders Are Creatives with People and Management Skills	<p>I do think you have to have an understanding about - I think you have to have some technical understanding about construction and - okay, I'll give you a very - I'm trying to think of examples. OK, so most sets are - well originally it was drawn in Imperial - in feet and inches, and most wood, for example, plywood comes in certain dimensions. So I think a lot of the time sets will be designed around the materials. So a plywood is like eight foot by twelve or something? I can't remember, but so you always have to think about the materials when you're ordering it in. So, yeah, you have to have the technical understanding as well as the management position, I think...when you're designing, I think you have to have a very good understanding of budgets and so you don't go off and design the moon when you've only got a flat in Edinburgh. You've got to have that kind of understanding. (Art Assistant, 12:11:36)</p> <p>I think good leaders - I mean, it's different, isn't it? Because, you know, you've got to think about - we're in an industry that is all about creativity. So you can have some people that are terrible, but because they know how to make shows and they know how to deliver brilliant ideas, they are allowed to get away with a lot of poor, sloppy human behaviour because actually they make great shows, you know what I mean, and actually they always deliver. So, I think there's a real sort of issue, and I suppose in the TV industry between these two concepts, you know, and I think creative industries in general really suffer from that. You can have someone who's absolutely brilliantly creative as a leader but has no ability to be able to develop and nurture new creative talent...So I think it's in creativity - and it's probably, that's probably very specific to creative industries. You know, because most other things you can learn in a way. (Commissioning Editor, 15:44:33)</p>
When Creatives Get Promoted, They Become Managers and Lose the Creative Side	I think in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], for example, the leadership tend to be subsumed into a world of leadership, if you like, whereby the minute you become a manager, ostensibly, you get removed from the creative process and your post ends up becoming more about management. It's about budgets. It's about staffing. It's about strategy...So actually, being a leader in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], sort of takes you away from being a creative force and you become far more about the sort of rigours of management. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 11:49:59)

Figure 4.2.2: Representative Quotes - Leadership and Management Training to Keep Creativity at the Heart of British Television

## 4.3 Managing Paradox Through the Certainty of Vertical Integration

The current management and structure of British television is built on a creative workforce that is primarily freelance rather than full-time. As 10 out of 14 participants in this research are employed on a freelance basis, issues that arise from this model were a central factor to understanding leadership and management. The imbalance of full-time and freelance workers in this study closely illustrates the shift from the vertically integrated model to the freelance project-based model which largely came about from the 1990 Broadcasting Act (Davenport, 2006) (Daymon, 2000). The uncertainty of freelance work was a major issue for most participants. Even those in full-time employment could recall early days of harrowing freelance work when they could never be certain of a steady pay check and long periods of unemployment created financial worries. This correlates with the research of Dex et al. (2000) which found that the 1990 Broadcasting Act and other initiatives that converted a largely full-time creative workforce to freelance contributed to unwelcome uncertainty.

One of the reasons television work can be so uncertain is the ad hoc, informal hiring procedures of freelance productions. It was common for participants of all levels in freelance work to be called on a Friday to work on the following Monday. This makes it difficult for workers to make plans or even take needed holidays, lest they miss a call and be effectively replaced in that position for future productions. The lack of time in hiring also encourages those in hiring positions such as heads of departments to simply call on the same people because there is no time or initiative to build trust in new people. This reinforces the research of Wing-Fai et al. (2015), Bechky (2006), and Randle et al. (2015) which found the lack of trust in hiring new people as a constant issue in UK television. One director compared the freelance culture to the Wild West because of the lack of formal structure or support. It also makes it difficult for newcomers to break in or to develop from working with different people and types of productions.

I feel the film industry is a bit broken and that's because individuals come together and just do the same thing over and over again, because that's what they know. And there's no kind of infrastructure, you know, permanent infrastructure. It's so temporary.

- Art Assistant [13:07:08]

This correlates to Davenport's (2006) research showing the informal, reputational networks which govern the hiring of crews in the temporary freelance model act as a barrier to development rather than as an agent of innovation. It also supports Paterson's (2010) contention that collective creativity leading to innovation was a product of the certainty of the full-time work model. If employees cannot be at their creative best, it necessarily affects the quality of the output.

The uncertainty of freelance work extends to the lack of support given to temporary workers as well. Percival and Hesmondhalgh (2014) reported the decline of unionisation resulting in inordinately long hours, unsafe conditions and growing exploitation via low and unpaid work. This is echoed by participants, many of whom report standard 16-hour work days and 6-day work weeks as taking a dramatic toll on their well-being. One assistant director also described feeling pressure to allow unsafe working conditions such as having a crew hold an inflatable tent over a camera during a storm with high winds in the Highlands that very likely could have injured or killed someone. Exploitation is also reported, especially when starting in entry level positions such as a runner. These positions are usually low or no pay and do little to train people in skills other than how to make tea and sandwiches. When asked about industry unions such as BECTU, participants reported that they offer little to no support or protection for freelancers.

[BECTU is] absolutely toothless. It really doesn't help anyone. You join it when you're angry and then you leave when you realise they can do nothing about it. I did that. Lot's of people do it. They don't help anybody under sort of about £3000, I think. So all the runners, the people who really get stiffed out of money, there's no cover for them. It really doesn't help very much.

- Assistant Director [14:28:44]

The uncertainty of the project-based freelance model not only affects freelancers, but broadcasters as well. A full-time commissioning editor maintains that the vertical integration model is more beneficial to broadcaster/studios because it gives them a catalogue of owned content they can continue to air themselves or sell to streamers, providing sustainable revenue. Thus, the vertically integrated model of more full-time employment provides certainty to both employees and employer broadcaster/studios. In providing certainty, this management model navigates the paradox of enabling creativity in teams whilst producing profit.

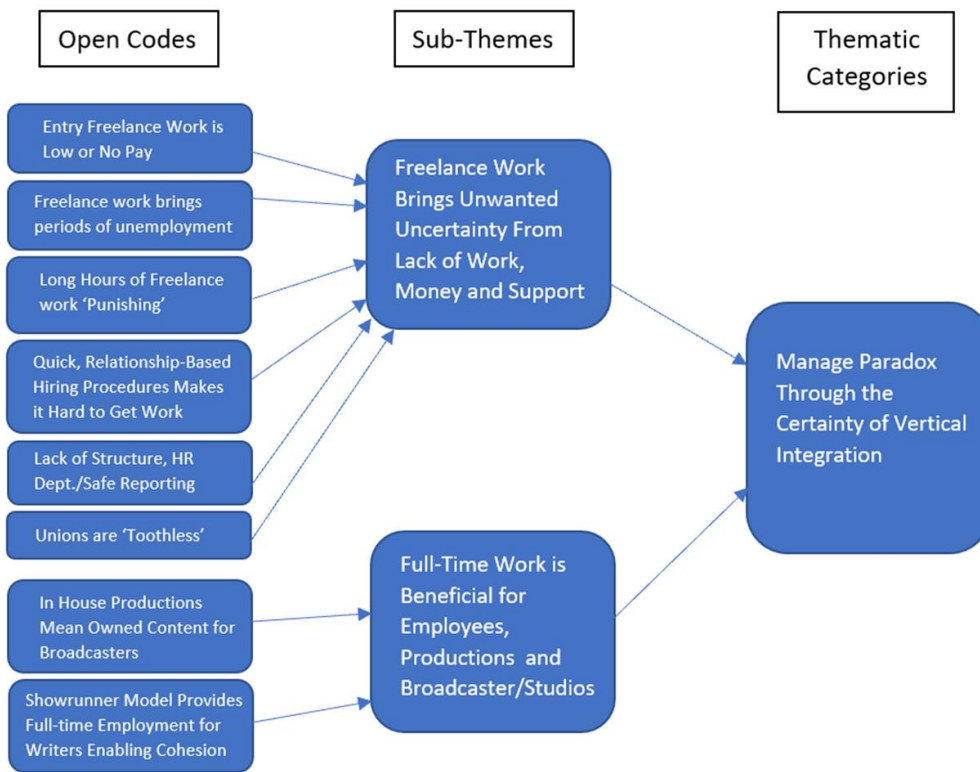


Figure 4.3.1: Coding Diagram - Managing Paradox Through the Certainty of Vertical Integration



Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Managing Paradox Through the Certainty of Vertical Integration</b>	
Freelance Work is Low or No Pay at First	There's a lot of exploitation with work experience...getting people to work for free but not really training them or getting people to work for free for long periods of time, and only people again from affluent backgrounds who have savings and can afford to live on their savings would be able to take part in this kind of work experience. Yes, I think more paid experience is really beneficial. (Art Assistant, 12:59:58)
Freelance Work Brings Periods of Unemployment	<p>Precarious employment gives me an awful lot of anxiety. I found like, for example, leaving a full-time paid job with a pension for a five-day gig at [Major UK Broadcaster 1] like, that was a real wrench for me to make the decision to do it. And then trying to survive thereafter and the – all the bits and bobs, the scraps that they would throw you from the table and while also maybe trying to balance, like temping what I was doing to make ends meet – I couldn't handle it. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 10:46:08)</p> <p>And gosh when I was a freelancer, I've had bouts when I hadn't worked for ages and it was just horrendous! You know, because that leads to money worries and money worries, as we well know, are a massive, massive, you know, factor in mental health issues. (Commissioning Editor, 16:06:56)</p>
Long Hours of Freelance Work is 'Punishing'	<p>If there was anything that you could change about the TV industry, what would it be? (Interviewer, 15:19:24)</p> <p>The working hours. I think they're punishing on everybody...when I'm filming - 14, 15-hour days? This is kind of typical. (Producer/Director, 15:19:34)</p>
Quick, Relationship-Based Hiring Makes it Hard to Get Work and Advance	<p>The television industry as a whole has got a big problem with structure and development and progression. It's done on a very ad hoc, informal way - personal acquaintances. There's no sort of formalised training or formalised almost like measurement of whether you've achieved enough at each level to progress. So, it's a fundamental issue with the whole industry from top to bottom, really. And, you know, that's the issue. (Commissioning Editor, 15:43:34)</p> <p>You can sometimes just get offered a job over the phone. You might never meet the person you're working with. Or a lot of telly jobs occur though having a coffee with somebody. And it's always very last minute. It's bonkers when you think about it, when you think people who have normal jobs maybe have like three interviews and know what they're walking into. (Executive Producer, 17:24:50)</p>
Lack of Structure, HR Department/Safe Reporting	<p>I think that there needs to be an HR department - someone who, a department you could go to if you have any problems and are very approachable and are looking out for the well-being of the team. For example, there is now a - what do they call that? There is now a new role created for somebody managing intimate scenes - sex scenes because of the Me Too movement. This is an entire role created, so why don't they create an HR department, someone who is managing the well-being of the entire crew? And I think that's kind of almost secondary to the production team who are busy organising logistics. So that's a major thing...and I think there's going to have to be new roles for like a COVID health and safety manager. So, you know, I don't see why they can't expand that to something a bit more, something broader for the health and well-being of the whole crew. (Art Assistant, 12:54:54)</p> <p>Well, let's go back to the original question about how people are managed and how creativity is balanced with deadlines. I would say the one thing that would probably help is giving people permission to talk to someone about their needs. And this is in all departments, not just in stunts. Hopefully, that will come on with the increase in more attention to mental health. And also, I don't know how it will happen, but some lessening of this political egocentric structure where if you say the wrong thing, you're going to get fired. If people could have permission to be vulnerable. (Stunt Performer, 12:10:19)</p>
Current Project-Based Structure Offers Little Security/Certainty	I think the commercial pressures on broadcasters mean that you don't get as many longer running series or things that come back, so companies can't build in that way and they can't then hold on to employees and provide security to them because they don't have security themselves. So, I think from that point of view, the churn of programmes don't help. There are also so many independent production companies now that actually the industry has become so thin, they can only hire people for two weeks at a time here, there and everywhere. And actually, you know, everybody wants to have their own company, but actually in truth, it's actually made the industry very fragmented and very difficult to sort of - even from an ideas perspective. You know, you have someone who has a great idea, but you're like, 'You're a one-man band now. I can't - how are you going to make this huge idea? There's no way!' The whole thing becomes really - has become really fragmented. (Commissioning Editor, 16:09:37)

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<p>In House Productions Mean Owned Content for Broadcasters</p>	<p>I guess the difference between [Major UK Broadcaster 2] and us is we are a production unit as well, because we have our own studios. [Major UK Broadcaster 2] doesn't have anything. We have - we own our own content, whereas [Major UK Broadcaster 2] own nothing. You know, [Major UK Broadcaster 3] have now separated. In fact, they've gone the wrong way and separated their studios out, which is almost the wrong way for them to do it. (Commissioning Editor, 16:13:02)</p> <p>[Major UK Broadcaster 1 content] was originally sold to Netflix, but now not...I think Netflix will come undone, because of [content producers taking back their content]. Because I think all the content houses or the content producers or original networks are now not licensing their stuff out. So, you know, they'll start taking stuff back. (Commissioning Editor, 16:39:28)</p>
<p>Showrunner Model Provides Full-Time Employment to Writers</p>	<p>We don't salary writers [in the UK]. We don't have the money to keep writers salaried for a year at a time. There is no production budget or channel that would sustain that economy. And the reason that [the US] can have a group of five or six or seven incredibly experienced writers with a showrunner who come every day and work a 12-hour day and leave their ego at the door is because they're salaried. -Victoria Fea, Commissioning Editor, (GEITF, 2014, in 21:00)</p> <p>I think that [lack of budget in the UK] is used too much [as an excuse for not paying salaries] because production companies spend enormous amounts of money firing writers and paying out their contracts and bringing in new writers and broadcasters, and production companies throw their production fees at the wall spending money to dig themselves out of trouble...All I'm arguing for is a little bit of flexibility of mind going forward...My company does pay writers to have producing roles and the reason I can do that is that I take it out of the budget of the show and I spend the money differently. -Bryan Elsely, showrunner, <i>Skins</i> (GEITF, 2014, in 22:00)</p> <p>That's the downside of not having salaried writers...you're freelance, you have to go where the next step is to pay your mortgage, so the loyalty [to the show] isn't there. -Victoria Fea, Commissioning Editor (GEITF, 2014, in 44:10)</p>
<p>Unpredictability of Bosses' Moods</p>	<p>It's unpredictability is the thing that I find hardest to deal with. I've had bosses where - no idea what they're going to say or think about anything, because their private mood becomes how they're reacting to whatever professional work they're doing. So you're just at the mercy of what kind of mood they're in that day as to whether they do a good job. And that's - I find that very stressful when that happens...bullies basically, people who push you around. (Graphic Designer, 11:08:47)</p>

Figure 4.3.2: Representative Quotes - Managing Paradox Through the Certainty of Vertical Integration

## 4.4 Decentralised Decision-Making Through Shared Leadership and Role-Based Structures

Television is commonly said to be a collaborative medium, and participants named collaboration as a top method leaders use to successfully lead creative teams. It takes different creatives in various departments from camera to costume, lighting to hair and make-up, to come together to share ideas and produce a product to which everyone can feel they contributed their creativity, skill and expertise. However, it does not always operate that way.

A common prohibitor of collaboration is adherence to strict, multi-layered hierarchy. According to Laloux (2015) and Turchin (2014), hierarchy emerged from military and war, a fact not lost on British crews. Whilst one producer interviewed found positives in the typical military-like

hierarchy of television productions, most participants saw hierarchy as a prohibitor to collaborative input and an enabler to mistreatment through abuses of power.

Television is very hierarchical...I think hierarchies thrive on power. So it's down to individual leaders as to how they choose to use that power. You can get people like the wonderful woman that I worked with when I came off of secondment who was inclusive and was about taking into account an awful lot of different people's thoughts and feelings and experiences on a subject before she would then make a decision about how we were all going to move forward as a team. But then you get other people who use power very much as a means to put weight on the people below them in order to get them to do what they want. So, you know, it's all down to how people use their power.

- Journalist/Sr Producer [12:22:22]

In this case, a successful manager used their hierarchical position to foster collaboration by seeking the input of the people she was leading to positive effect, rejecting a command and control approach. However, many see hierarchy as counter to the goals of television production. Even a first assistant director whose position brings a high degree of authority as the stereotypical 'sergeant' on set notes the antiquity of this structure may not be fit for purpose.

It's a tough industry to work in...we work in an industry which is basically based on a system that was made a hundred years ago, which is still trying to catch up on itself and was based on the Navy for some reason. So, a lot of the departments still have this real militaristic linkage...Our entire industry is 10 years behind the times. So, yes, absolutely I [think that is something that should be changed].

- Assistant Director [14:22:50]

Whilst many pointed to hierarchy as an inhibitor to creativity and enabler of abuses of power, they were also unsure how to replace it. One producer/director who is also ex-military touted hierarchy as an understandable structure where everyone knows the rules. However, she also notes the clear differences between the hierarchical military and filmmaking which is necessarily collaborative.

I wouldn't say the military is collaborative. I think filmmaking is more collaborative...[In the military], we have to go from A to B, and I need all your support in order to do that. But, you're going to have to do this, and you will do this, and you will do this, because I'm commanding you to do so. Whereas in television, I'm working collaboratively with my line producer in order to bring the show in to budget and on schedule. I'm working with each of my heads of department to make sure that they are feeding all their information to me and they're talking to each other in order to create the best quality content on screen as we possibly can and a creative vision that we can all agree with. So in that respect, it's hugely collaborative, and I find it immensely stimulating and rewarding, because ultimately my job is to get the best out of everybody and to make sure that they feel valued and they feel that they're doing their best.

- Producer/Director [14:15:08]

When highly specialised team members collaborate, they exercise shared leadership, the distribution of complementary leadership across team members which correlates positively with team performance (Zhou, 2013) and good television leaders in the US (Murphy, 2016).

This example supports Bechky's (2006) research that clearly understood roles based on specialised skill sets and inter-connected lines of communication between departments are what provide the understandable management structure needed for film and television, rather than a militaristic command and control hierarchy. A role-based organisation also draws similarities to what Laloux (2015) calls 'Teal Organisations'. As opposed to his notion of Red or Amber Organisations that are based on hierarchy and fear, Teal Organisations lie at the other end of the spectrum and are based on peer relationships where employees have high autonomy in their fields and are accountable for collaborating with others. Employees are empowered at all levels, rather than power amassing at the top. Leaders are mindful to tame egotistical impulses, reject fear and develop mutual trust which prevents dictatorial micromanaging and enables autonomy and creativity.

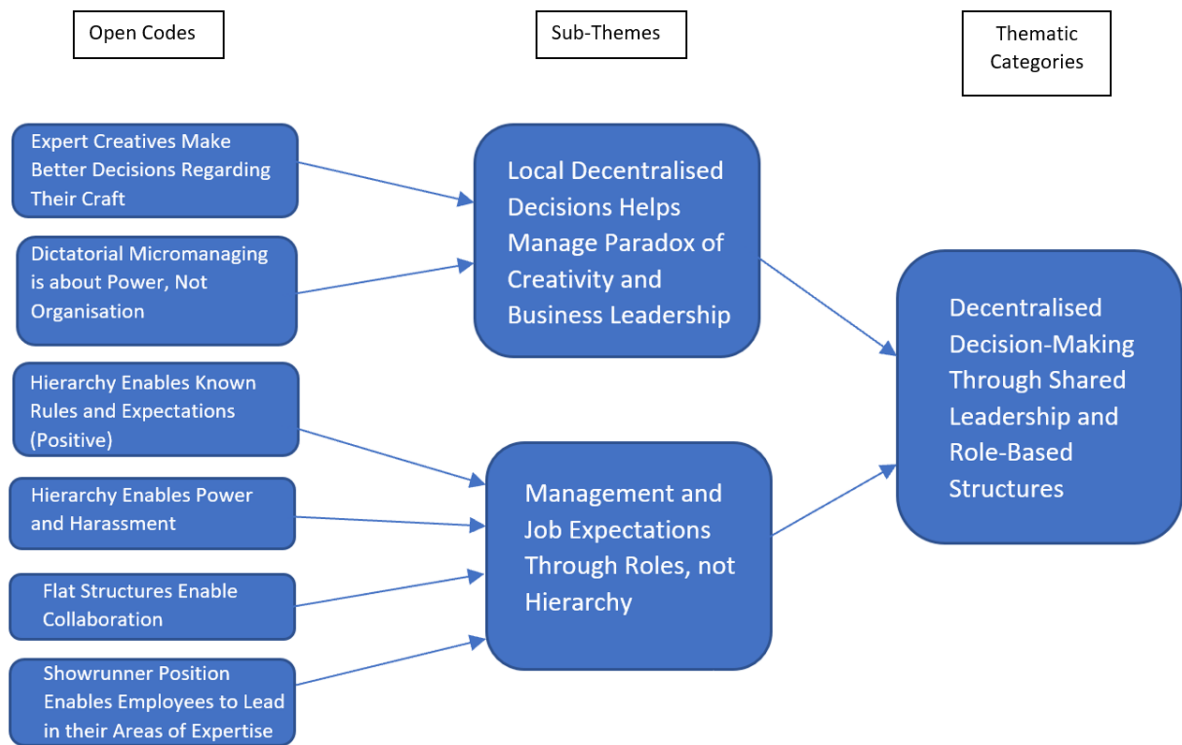


Figure 4.4.1: Coding Diagram - Decentralised Decision-Making Through Shared Leadership and Role-Based Structures

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Decentralised Decision-Making Through Shared Leadership and Role-Based Structures</b>	
Expert Creatives Make Better Decisions Regarding Their Craft	Where to put the focus is an artistic decision. So you can think one - thing of the scene and I can think another - I have another point of view and, OK. But, if you are telling me how to bring the camera or how to put the lenses on - no, that is my job. I am the technical person of that. And you are the director - you don't know the camera, you don't know how it works, really. So one is artistic, one is technical. And I really hate when they tell me how to do technically my job, because I'm doing it the right way for me and I'm the person who have the responsibility of the equipment...because you hired me for that. (Assistant Camera Operator, 16:58:48)
Dictatorial Micromanaging is About Power, Not Organisation	I found really, really, really annoying when a director or a DOP start to tell me what I have to do about my job and how to organise my job. For example, 'You don't have to put this here. You put it there.' But it changed nothing. 'Yes, but you have to.' And I think, 'Why?' I found that a lot of people in the power position - so director, DOP, because they are the bosses - they just want to say to you that 'I am the boss.' I am able to do my job very, very well. And you want to have power on me, not to organise the crew, but just to have power on the other person. That's, I think that that is the worst mistake - the worst thing that a boss can do for me. (Assistant Camera Operator, (16:57:20)
Hierarchy Enables Known Rules and Expectations	My experience in the Navy has modelled my - the way in which I lead now, and have led over the last 20 years in the projects that I've done...there's a way of doing things that I think, then allows space for the creative content to shine because everybody knows the rules. Just like in the Navy, people know the rules...I mean, there is a hierarchy, and necessarily so, you know, like I say, there's a method of working. So, you know, so your commanding officer who is kind of steering the whole ship, all departments having the big picture, I guess, is your producer or your executive producer or your showrunner, and, you know, you've got your director, who's your first lieutenant, who is in charge of all the story. (Series Producer, 14:21:45)
Hierarchy Enables Power and Harassment	If people were...given a second chance where second chances are due, then maybe that would create a greater ability to stay calm and creative, even within those deadlines. Because I believe that a lot of stress and pressure in the film world is self-inflicted from this hierarchical, political structure, and it needn't necessarily be there. (Stunt Performer, 12:10:19)

*continued next page*

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
Flat Structures in Companies Enable Collaboration and Communication	<p>It's kind of a reasonably flat structure that we have. I mean, [Company MD] and I sit together in normal, the normal world. And so we sit and speak a lot. And I think sometimes you can find it can be a kind of two sides - being an editorial and then financial, production management side, but we try and keep it as more of a kind of - you can't have one without the other kind of thing. So we try to have as much communication and as open a dialogue as possible. I think he and I work quite well together because we do sit and speak all the time and refer things. And it's very much a kind of open dialogue. I'm copied on emails to commissioners and it's a kind of a complementary skill set, I suppose. And then we try and make it to be as much as possible that we're approachable when we're in the office. It's not like we're in a separate office away from everybody, it's open plan. And I don't know if it all sounds very happy-clappy or whatever, but it's not - we try and make it as kind of laid back as possible a culture as we can. (Head of Production, 16:04:33)</p>
Strict Hierarchies Inhibit Collaboration and Communication	<p>I was looking at the playback screen, because I wanted to be informed and I wanted to be professional and understand fully what was going on and how this stunt was going to go about or perhaps how it was playing back, which I thought was right thing to do...For me it was being professional and being involved in the chain of flow so I could be informed about what to do. And I remember, and there were these two people I hadn't seen before in plush puffer jackets that were watching the screen as well, and the coordinator pulled me to one side, possibly physically, and just said, '[Stunt Performer], don't stand too close to the producers, you don't want to be seen as warming up to them too much'. (Stunt Performer, 11:50:32)</p>
Showrunner Position Enables Employees to Lead in their Areas	<p>But for me personally, in terms of leadership, I think what's really important is to... in terms of the creative vision, have the vision, be influenced by other people of course, inspire your team to follow that vision, but don't clip their wings of creativity, let them get their fingerprints on the show. I don't mind if, in fact I quite like the way that...if you watch shows like <i>The Mandalorian</i>, or <i>Better Call Saul</i>, or any of those of big dramas, I like the fact that you can see the director's fingerprints on it, that they're all directed by someone slightly different, that you can see that in the cinematography, some of it you can see a bit in the scripting or the humour. And I think that's very important too. I think there's a slight confusion that the showrunner forces people to deliver his or her direction, and I don't think it really is that. It's - with the sort of captain of the ship analogy, you've got your hand on the tiller, but you're meandering within a set of parameters, and just as long as everyone is working together there, that's when it works best. (Showrunner, 11:19:50)</p>

Figure 4.4.2: Representative Quotes - Decentralised Decision-Making Through Shared Leadership and Role-Based Structures

## 4.5 Enabling Transparency and Communication With Authentic Leadership

Communication in television is often misunderstood to be a leader telling their team what to do. However, this research shows successful leaders engage in two-way communication in order to share their vision, then collaborate with their skilled crew who come to the job with their own unique knowledge, background and expertise to realise a leader's idea perhaps more creatively than even the leader had envisioned. In this way, television leaders follow Kotter's (1990) method of leadership in pulling their team in a unified direction through developing their vision, aligning their team through communicating that vision and fostering cooperation to achieve it.

I think what works well is being clear about what you want in terms of the big picture. And then you break it down into different departments and how that translates to them and how they feel about it, because the costume designer will come up with some ideas, and you've got to give them that. That's what you hired them for. They will have a vision, and I want to see that vision - I'm not a costume designer. So it's about clarity. It's about communication for sure.

- Producer/Director [14:58:57.420]

Communication then is just as much listening as it is sharing ideas to foster collaboration. Good television leaders were found to engage in two-way communication to be transparent with crews, openly share information and provide psychological safety for team members to communicate their ideas, even if they challenged those of the leader. This correlates with the traits of authentic leadership which Murphy (2016) found to have positive implications for television leaders in Hollywood. Rego et al. (2014) found authentic leaders to communicate their authentic selves whilst Avolio and Gardner (2005) showed such leaders to be self-aware of their abilities. Likewise, a series producer leading a high-end drama exhibited authentic leadership when not being afraid to communicate when she was unsure of something, even as the highest ranked crew member on set.

I'm four years into my drama career, but 23 years into a television career. So, I'm experienced, but there's still some elements of drama that I may not understand. But, I'm not frightened to ask because I don't see that as weakness. I see it as a strength. So [I'll ask] 'What does that mean again?' And I'm quite open with folk, 'Listen, this is me. I might look long in the tooth, but I still have things to learn.'

- Producer/Director [14:16:36]

Being afraid to ask questions or to communicate problems is a common occurrence in British television. This is due in part to hierarchy acting as a barrier to open communication. It is also due to the highly pressurised environment where time is money and money is in short supply, as well as the informal hiring practices and perceived replaceability of crew members. If crew members have questions or are unsure of how to proceed with a certain task, there exists a legitimate fear that many leaders will perceive this as lack of skill and consequently not hire them back for their next job. They may even be replaced the next day or on the spot. When leaders do not listen, crews learn not to communicate. A stunt performer summed up what many participants voiced, noting the added dangers of poor communication in the stunt world.



There's a very strong reputation sense in, certainly the stunt world, but from what I've gathered in other departments in film as well, that you don't want to lose face and make yourself look bad, because you're replaceable...[They'll say], 'We won't get that guy, they were too much of a complainer or they asked too many questions'...So it's almost this fear that's instilled with a new worker. If I say that I don't understand or I don't get it, it's like, I'm not as good as everyone else, then I'm gonna lose my job. But then that creates a problem, because if there's something that's dangerous that you don't want to do or that you don't know how to do, and because you don't know how to do it, that makes it more dangerous, then someone could get hurt or killed.

- Stunt Performer [11:27:11]

The fear of asking questions or informing leaders of time delaying issues are problems that can adversely affect schedules and budgets. However, this fear extends to far more nefarious issues of bullying and harassment. The power that television hierarchies enable coupled with the stress of limited time and budget are notorious for producing leaders who shout at crew members, even as a matter of course. Most participants could easily recall instances of bullying and harassment. It is seen as something the industry accepts as just another part of working in television.

If harassment does happen, there is no effective way to communicate it that would not adversely affect a freelancer's ability to be hired again for another shoot. Since the same people to whom a freelancer might report issues of harassment are the same people who would hire crew for the next shoot, freelancers are often afraid to report any issues. It gets worse in smaller industries such as Scotland where the workforce is closely knit and news of a 'complainer' travels fast. Even those who want to help in some way can be restricted. An assistant director recalled an incident where he wanted to help a person who was being harassed, but could not.

If I was to report inappropriate behaviour, I have a funny feeling it would only affect my employability, because I'd become 'the complainer'. I had, in my role as 2<sup>nd</sup> AD, I had somebody complain about sexual harassment...and I said to them, 'What do you want me to do about this? I will do anything you ask. I will go to the producer right now and complain about this, and I will back you however you want.' And she thought about it for 24 hours and came back and said she didn't want to do anything because she was afraid that it would affect her employability, which is a horrible thing. And that, I mean, that sticks in my head.

- Assistant Director [14:31:50]

The uncertainty of freelance culture is exasperated by the fact that there is no dedicated person such as a human resources representative for reporting issues, someone who is there only to look out for the well-being of employees and who would not have any influence on their future employment. There is also not any universal protocol for reporting issues, nor a single point of accountability. Even producers who might be concerned and want to help might feel pressed for time to handle such a request with their other responsibilities. There is simply no time for anything that is not on the schedule. However, even for companies that have dedicated HR departments, they can be ineffectual if the harasser holds a lot of power in the hierarchy. A participant recalled taking a job as a series producer, only to find she had been lied to about her responsibilities. After numerous other problems arose from this, she tried to communicate with both her boss and the HR department of the production company, only to find her concerns did not want to be heard.

It was a huge company that I felt didn't value its staff. I did go in when I'd had the meeting with the boss and she'd said, 'If you don't do it, I'm just going to make you do it', and I felt threatened. I did go and meet with the HR of the company, but they were not at all interested in anybody saying this boss was not a good boss. So, you definitely felt as a freelancer, you had no say, you know, that you could be binned.

- Executive Producer [17:21:57]

Consequently, the producer walked off the job and the company likely wasted money on lost shooting days looking for another producer.

This research shows that open communication and transparency through authentic leadership saves time and money and improves creative decision making. More importantly, it is crucial for preventing disastrous accidents as well as reporting and thus preventing harassment. Campaigns such as MeToo have brought sexual harassment to light through people being brave

enough to speak up and make the industry listen. Unfortunately, the structure of British television, from the strict hierarchies, lack of support for freelancers, time pressures and lack of meaningful human resource departments serve to inhibit communication. Yet, highly regarded leaders made time to encourage open and honest communication without fear or repercussions, enabling authenticity not only in themselves, but in their employees.

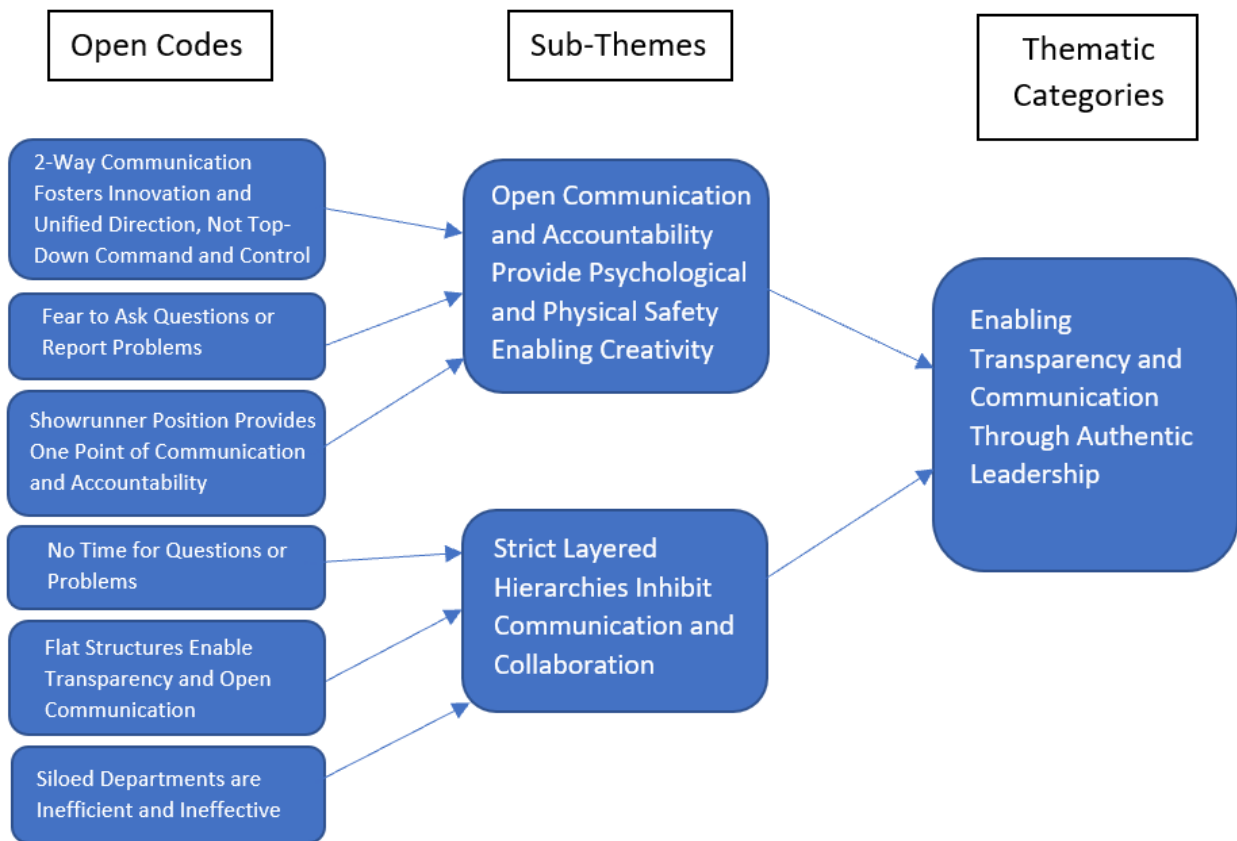


Figure 4.5.1: Coding Diagram - Enabling Transparency and Communication Through Authentic Leadership

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Enabling Transparency and Communication Through Authentic Leadership</b>	
2-Way Communication, Not Top-Down, Fosters Innovation and Unified Direction	<p>I think it's a two way thing. So, for instance, if you take costume, the costume designer will have ideas and will sketch and have photographs of the way a certain character's costume should look. And they'll invest time in coming up with a portfolio of drawings, photographs, even sample fabrics. But they can't just go off and just make all the costumes without kind of, really deferring to the producer and the director and go, 'What do you think? This is what I think', and they'll look and they'll go, 'Oh, I like that, but I'm not so sure about that'. And they'll go, 'Oh, yeah, OK'. Or they'll go, 'No, I think it should be this way for this reason'. And the producer and director will go, 'Oh, OK'. So there's this kind of, you know, push and pull going on. But people have that artistic freedom to come up with an idea, at least they do on the shows that I'm involved in. So they're not, I'm not overly prescriptive. I mean, I might say a couple of things upfront, but away you go. (Producer/Director, 14:41:23)</p>
Fear to Ask Questions or Report Problems	<p>It was considered bad practice to make yourself look bad in front of the coordinator. So a lot of early stuntmen wouldn't want to make a complaint or ask the coordinator something that they were unsure of. So they might turn to other stuntmen and people who are slightly more experienced and then they might just tell me, 'I don't know' or they might check with the coordinator who they have an existing relationship with. (Stunt Performer, 11:24:51)</p> <p>What goes into a bad day? That's easier, funny enough. Bad communication, definitely. So people not telling you, just from my department's point of view, that they have a problem or that they have an issue that it's going to cost time. So I'm never annoyed if something goes wrong because things go wrong all the time. I'm annoyed if people don't tell me that things are going wrong and try and hide it, which is just pointless. You know, we're there to make life better for you if something goes wrong. So a lack of communication in so many ways makes it bad. (Assistant Director, 14:20:30)</p> <p>I'm four years into my drama career, but twenty-three years into a television career. So I, you know, I'm experienced, but there's still some elements of drama that I may not understand. But I'm not frightened to ask because I don't see that as weakness. I see it as a strength. So [I'll ask] 'What does that mean again?' And I'm quite open with folk, 'Listen, this is me. I might look long in the tooth, but I still have things to learn.' (Producer/Director, 14:16:36)</p>
Showrunner Position Provides One Point of Communication and Accountability	<p>The showrunner is the point of maximum accountability...in terms of working out how that project can be realised to all its potential. -Bryan Elsley - Showrunner, <i>Skins</i> (GEITF, 2014, in 7:00)</p> <p>I think I free up so much head space for the network because I know what to talk to them about... I know when to talk to them about it, I know what I don't have to disturb them over, and I can keep them as informed or uninformed as they prefer. So I certainly think that the network - the project I'm on at the moment, I think the network's very glad to have me because I'm freeing - I'm taking their anxiety off their shoulders, I think, and that helps...I think me having one person and them having one person is definitely the way forward. Whereas [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s model was, I would deliver the show to one level of person, she would then take it to someone else, we would then get that feedback, we would change things, it would go to that person, they would be happy, and when they were happy, they went to that person, and particularly, that happened a bit in pre-production, but mostly it happened in post, and you would think that you had the show locked off - she liked it, I liked it - she liked it. Oh, great! But then this person has to see it - yeah, okay, he comes back with notes, so you address them, and you think, 'okay, now we're locked off', but no, then he has to see it, and that was so inefficient. (Showrunner, 11:50:01)</p>

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
Flat Structures Enable Transparency and Open Communication	<p>Yeah, a lot of the people who were at [SME Scottish TV Production Company] when I started are still there, and they definitely had that kind of open door policy, and you know if you - help support you if you do something wrong or if you've made a mistake, there's no kind of flipping of tables and people going crazy. If something's gone wrong, it's you know - and that flat structure, and as a culture I think that [Company MD] and I have been sort of trying to continue in Glasgow. But I think we've got a reasonably - the people who report to me, if you like, that sounds very grand, because we're not quite that sort of formal, I suppose. (Head of Production, 16:08:26)</p>
Siloed Departments are Ineffective	<p>But [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is not run any more efficiently, I would say than, you know, a local authority that I always say - my kind of - one of my more salty things that I say about work is that it's basically the broadcasting equivalent of working for Clackmannanshire Council. Em, you know, it's ridden with bureaucracy and inefficacy, and just not particularly well run, which I think if you asked anybody that worked in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], they would say the same. And it all comes down to the fact that it runs like silos. You know, like I said earlier, you've got these departments, various departments working in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1], for example, where I work, never the twain shall meet. And they're all kind of running their own budgets, running their own little silos of power, and as such, interpret [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s overarching employment rules and regulations in various ways to suit their own business needs. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 11:03:31)</p>
Lack of Clarity or Lying Wastes Time and Money From Lost Work	<p>The woman in charge had sort of lied to both of us about what we were doing. And it wasn't really a series producer job. She wanted us to direct the series between us and kind of series produce it between us and neither of us were expecting to direct. We'd both taken the job because we wanted the step up from directing. And so I'd kind of been sold a pup or whatever the phrase is. The person above us did not give us a clear - didn't say clearly, you're doing this part of the project and you're doing that part of the project. And we were trying to work out what our job was and kind of write our own job description as we were going. And that caused a lot of tension, and it just became increasingly stressful because it was like having a - sort of like being a conjoined twin... It was the lack of boundaries on the project. It had very unclear boundaries and what you know, and it just, I think, in the end, I left it. I just, I just walked off it. So, and I was really glad I did, but I cried a lot [laughs] before I did that. (Executive Producer, 17:18:02)</p>

Figure 4.5.2: Representative Quotes - Enabling Transparency and Communication Through Authentic Leadership

## 4.6 Fostering Shared Vision and Accountability Through a Primary Creative Force

Working in a collaborative medium where different creatives from different backgrounds come together requires leaders to communicate a shared vision of the project to pull everyone in the same direction so expectations can be met. Some of the worst experiences participants reported were times when creatives disagreed on set to the point of shouting matches, or they worked tirelessly to deliver a product, whether they be dailies or edits, that their leader did not like because they had a different vision. Not only did this lower morale and confidence, but it wasted time and money in reshoots and re-edits as well as firings and contract buy-outs.

The breakdown in communication is often due to a confusion of who the main creative force on a programme is. Participants gave varied answers from the executive producer to series

producer, commissioning editor, writer, director and presenter. Some said it varies from production to production. When working for a large broadcaster, it gets even more muddled as approval can pass through multiple layers of executives before anything can be signed off. By that time, the vision may have been lost from so many varied and sometimes conflicting changes. Therefore, there is no clear creative force or point of accountability in the traditional British model. A producer/director referred to the edit suite as a 'snake pit' because it is typically where the vision she had and shared with her team is demolished by executives and changed into something else which she does not like but must implement.

You might feel that you've got the best film in the can, but when you start to show it to your exec or your commissioning editor, they want a different version of that film. So, you're letting go of your baby and you're refashioning it into something that you may not fully agree with. Or you might have execs that send you round one big circle, give you notes - one cut - and then those notes contradict on the next cut and then contradict again on the next cut. And I've been in a situation several times when I've gone in a complete circle, been working late and then come back to the starting point. And that, I find, really disheartening... That would be, for me, the lower points.

- Producer/Director [14:54:35]

Whilst most participants said they had not worked with a showrunner, they did contend that a unified shared vision was crucial for a successful production. Even though the showrunner model does exist in the UK, it is still often misunderstood. Many think it is just another name for an executive producer. However, the executive producer in the UK is typically not a writer and not on set during production, let alone running it. The showrunner is the main creative force as head writer and executive producer, the person who sets the tone and runs production to ensure that tone is consistent throughout the production process and throughout the series.

It's that sort of American showrunner position where you don't just write a script, but you oversee it. You, I mean, you employ brilliant people, but I think so much drama goes wrong because you need to fix the tone, you need to establish what the drama is. And every person who reads the script has a different version of the script in their heads, and so it needs someone, which is the producer as well and the whole production team, but it needs streamlining. It needs to say, 'What is this drama? What is it about?' And the showrunner does that. I think the more you can get writers out of their attics and onto the sets and actually making stuff and having power in it, then I think the better a product gets. But, it's a hard thing to do.

- Russel T Davies, showrunner, *Doctor Who* (2005-2010)  
(BBC, 2009)

Scottish showrunner Bryan Elsely contends that the showrunner model is more necessary now because of the changing media landscape in the UK. Whereas an executive producer years ago may have focused on one show, they now have many shows to oversee which removes them further from the creative process and point of accountability.

I think [what] is happening is that there are big multi-media production companies, and the senior voices inside those production companies are further away from the editorial process than they were over time because of the sheer volume of drama that they are producing, and that creates a hole...where decision making gets muddled because those important people actually have six big shows that they're trying to juggle and there isn't that accountability inside the process.

- Bryan Elsely, showrunner, *Skins*  
(GEITF, 2014)

One showrunner who has worked both in the US and UK found major differences in how the role is understood. The level of trust and autonomy given in the US were not often echoed in the UK and he was not treated as the main creative force but as another producer who had to appease the CEO of the production company and the network commissioning editor, both of whom exercised a lot of editorial power throughout the process. This caused stress and frustration for the showrunner and confusion for the crew.

The difference between how people view [showrunning] in America versus the UK is significant. And in the current role that I have [in the UK], I don't think that the people who employed me really knew what showrunning meant when they gave me the gig...I had done a lot of series producing and execing, but showrunning [in the US] to me was really when you are in charge of a project and every buck stops with you, so that's from everything from obviously staffing and health and safety and all those logistical operations, but crucially, the editorial of the narrative. So, I would obviously liaise with the network, but it would very much be, 'This is what we're gonna deliver.' Not in the sense of 'if you like it or not', of course they had a role, and early on when we started different seasons, whatever project it was, they would be able to absolutely contribute, like if there was a direction that they thought would be good, we would hear all of that, but once we're sort of locked, we're going.

- Showrunner [11:02:38]

A common misconception of showrunners as both leaders and managers is that they must be overworked dictatorial micromanagers who just want everything their way. However, showrunners interviewed contend that it is about creating a vision, communicating that vision, collaborating with and inspiring a skilled creative team to plan the vision, and leading everyone in the same direction to achieve the vision. This is consistent with Murphy's (2016) findings that the task in US showrunning is encouraging creativity from the team whilst fulfilling their own vision.

Showrunners thus practice shared leadership via the distribution of complementary leadership influence across multiple team members who are experts in their fields, which not only correlates positively with team performance (Zhou, 2013) but also manages the paradox of leadership and management through delegation. Shared leadership prevents the showrunner from micromanaging, taking on too much responsibility and burning out. So, whilst they still oversee all departments, they trust team members to make appropriate decisions based on the showrunner's vision and ethos. This localised leadership improves decision making when compared to having to defer to an executive producer or commissioning editor who is not on set everyday seeing the production evolve. The showrunner as television leader then provides a creative working environment built on trust, shared vision and leadership which delivers a more cohesive product, saves time and money, and provides a single point of accountability throughout the process.



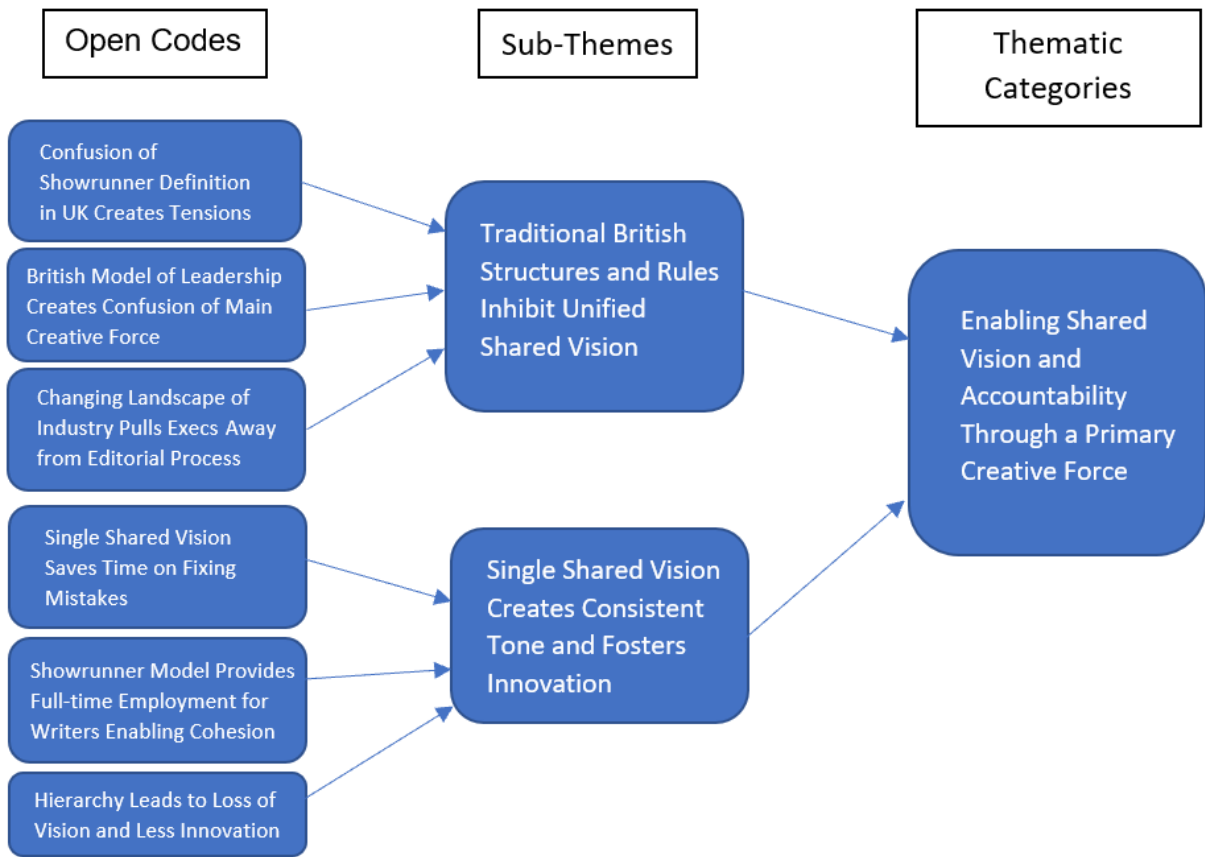


Figure 4.6.1: Coding Diagram - Fostering Shared Vision and Accountability Through a Primary Creative Force

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Enabling Shared Vision and Accountability Through a Primary Creative Force</b>	
<p>Confusion of Showrunner Definition in UK Creates Tensions</p>	<p>So you're generally dealing with executive producers. Do you ever deal with showrunners? (Interviewer, 15:59:40)</p> <p>They're the same. We call them executive producers, you call them showrunners. (Commissioning Editor, 15:59:45)</p> <p>When it doesn't go right, because you've taken a gig where their interpretation of showrunning and yours is different, that can be - so the show with the micro-manager CEO, that was difficult. (Showrunner, 11:34:29)</p> <p>Where it's not quite classic showrunning is that the two CEOs for that company have also got there from the creative arm and they are...it's interesting, they run the company in a really friendly, positive way, but it is ingrained into people that the buck stops with them, and so the hard thing that I find in this instance is I'm doing the job of showrunner, the network recognises that I'm doing the job of showrunner, but some of my team still find it hard to, 'Well [Showrunner]'s approved it and wants us to do this, but I just wanna check with those guys.' And that's getting better, but yeah, that's a new experience, again for me that this - when it's just so ingrained in everyone's DNA that we have to always get commission from them, it's a bit frustrating actually. (Showrunner, 11:13:46)</p>
<p>British Model of Leadership Brings Confusion of Main Creative Force</p>	<p>It really does vary from production to production who the commanding officer is, I suppose, whether it's a showrunner, a producer, an executive producer, a writer, even a director. People always say that film is a director's medium, whereas television is either a writer or a producer's medium, and it does vary according to the show. (Producer/Director, 14:21:45)</p> <p>Oh, well, now it depends on how big the programme is. So if on something like '[Factual TV Series 1]', it's absolutely massive and the team's massive. And so you couldn't really say that there's one individual who has the creative, who's driving it creatively. Even at the sort of top level, there's enough chiefs to make it not one person's series. (Executive Producer, 16:41:19)</p> <p>It's a very informal industry and often how people manage is very much based on personality rather than necessarily what the kind of fixed job role is, so there'll be some executive producers who want to be very hands on, and who really want to put their mark on something. Where, there'll be others who are thinking about the next project that's coming and thinking about what's being developed and want to just make sure their team can just get on and then refer to them when they need to. (Executive Producer, 16:45:49)</p> <p>I've been a producer and I've really crafted something and it's really been my baby and it's been my half hour as part of a half hour series. And then, you know, the commissioner says, 'Oh, well, you know, we just need to do it like this.' And just, your heart breaks because, you know, especially sometimes some things are a bit dumber, they're a bit dumbed down than you'd want them to be. (Executive Producer, 17:10:00)</p> <p>There are times maybe when there is exec pressure from on high. You know, maybe somebody - and it could be for all manner of reasons - but an exec sees something in the dailies that they don't like or there's an actor they don't like or something. There's something else going on that's taken their eye. And then there's a massive amount of top down involvement. And it just sends everybody into a spiral. There was a job I did where actually the atmosphere on set became quite toxic because of exec meddling...This exec just lost their nerve for the artistic and creative approach that we all agreed on weeks in advance and wanted me to rein in my thing, the thing I promised them I was going to do and I felt we were getting in the rushes. And they also went around to all the other heads of department and told them to start changing things. So then nobody really knew what they were making anymore. (Director, 14:20:53)</p>

*continued on next page*

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
Single Shared Vision Saves Time on Making Changes	Edit suite = cutting room = snake pit. Because, you might feel that you've got the best film in the can, but when you start to show it to your exec or your commissioning editor, they want a different version of that film. So you're letting go of your baby and you're refashioning it into something that you may not fully agree with. Or you might have execs that send you round one big circle, give you notes, one cut, and then those notes contradict on the next cut and then contradict again on the next cut. And I've been in a situation several times, when I've gone in a complete circle, been working late and then come back to the starting point. And that I find really disheartening. I like the notes from execs to try and go in one direction. Let's just make this better and better and better, not come around in a full circle so you're almost back to where you've started. And then to feel that you're at fault - very good at that. Lots of passive aggressive behaviour. That would be for me the lower points. (Producer/Director, 14:54:35)
Showrunner Model Provides Full-time Employment for Writers Enabling Cohesion	I was schooled in a way that (the writer) is always in on production meetings, we always sat in on the meetings, a tone meeting with the director before they did their episode, you went down to the set, you were involved...in each episode that you were writing...it was not only educational but it was also important that whoever wrote that script and understood the intention of that script and how it fit into the mosaic of what we were doing was there to answer questions and deal with problems. When an actor comes up and says 'Why am I saying this?' or 'I'd rather say that', that writer understands where it fits into the piece of what we're doing so it's a good touchstone to provide information to the crew as well as maintaining, 'Okay but here's what Ron (the showrunner) wants to do, here's why we're doing this' and keeping it focused, and as a result, if you keep doing that, your staff becomes really conversant with the show and they're able to keep the production in line with where you're trying to go. - Ron Moore, American showrunner, <i>Outlander</i> (GEITF, 2014, in 13:00)

Figure 4.6.2: Representative Quotes - Fostering Shared Vision and Accountability Through a Primary Creative Force

## 4.7 Confidence Through Charisma and Authenticity Promotes Mutual Trust and Innovation

Confidence is found to work in two mutually supporting ways in leading creative teams in British television. First there is the confidence one must have in themselves as a leader and creative. Then there is the confidence and trust they place in the creativity and skill of others to benefit the project. Trust is a major leadership factor that participants say leads to a successful working relationship and quality output.

Participants expressed greater faith in leaders who showed confidence in their own abilities. Such confidence does not mean being egotistical or overly prescriptive. In fact, it means the opposite. Having confidence means being open to the ideas of others and encouraging the creativity and progression of employees without getting insecure in oneself. Such leaders display charismatic leadership as Murphy and Ensher (2008) found in transient television directors who gain the confidence of crews to follow their lead. Lack of confidence or insecurity is the cause of many bouts of anger that can erupt in poor leaders during a television production.

Insecurity – that’s where all anger comes from...I’m insecure because I don’t know. The guy who put me in tears the first time didn’t know his job. It was the first time he was doing it, he was under pressure, so he took it out on me in front of everybody, with swear words and everything. And that was his insecurity. Now, he still acts like that on set, this person, and I would never work with him again. In fact, I left [Scottish Drama Series] halfway through because I knew he was coming to be my boss.

- Assistant Director [15:05:01]

Leaders who are less likely to submit to anger or harassment from insecurity show traits of authentic leadership in that they are confident in their abilities (Murphy, 2016), show their authentic selves (Rego et al., 2014), and set high ethical standards for the workplace, leading to feelings of greater psychological safety in staff (Avolio et al., 2004). Such leaders are comfortable taking and asking for help and advice if there is a situation in which they could be more knowledgeable. They draw upon the expertise of their crew or employees, rather than internalising the fear of being perceived as inexperienced, unknowledgeable or unskilled. This is seen a strength rather than a weakness. Getting angry at others is perceived as the weakness and counter-productive to garnering the trust and loyalty needed for employees to follow them. ‘As soon as you lose your temper, you’ve lost all moral high ground’ [Head of Production, 16:12:06].

Having confidence and trust in others is the other side of the coin. Leaders who place trust in their employees generate self-confidence in them, leading to higher quality output. This is particularly relevant in the showrunner model. As discussed, a main difference in the traditional British model and the showrunner model is that in the latter, greater trust is typically given to the main creative force on set. This is a trust in ability but also in creative vision. In the showrunner model, the main creative force is also the executive producer. The commissioner places full trust in their ability and vision and is there to help and support rather than meddle and interfere. A showrunner defined his experience with what he called classic showrunning as having that full level of trust from their manager to lead a production with little interference but full support.

It was always a very hands-off approach and conversations with them were much more sort of FYIs really – ‘this is how it’s going’. And then maybe flagging issues that you did have through the course of production, or if you have had some controversy in the story or you are worried about a legal ramification for it, then they were great, but, it was very much, they let me run with it.

- Showrunner [11:02:38]

Trust in television also means taking a chance on new talent and believing in their potential. Good leaders also allow room to make mistakes because failure is a necessary by-product of creative exploration. UK productions are so short on time, however, 'there is no room for error' [Art Assistant, 12:40:08]. The perception of some participants is that US television takes greater risks with new talent than does the UK. As one director who has experience with US and UK financiers put it, 'In the UK, they look at what you've done, in the US, they look at what you can do, and I really feel that's a difference' [Director, 14:53:05].

Many participants do feel as though the UK television industry is improving in this area; that the UK will 'get there', noting successful and innovative showrunners such as Michaela Coel (*Chewing Gum*) and Phoebe Waller-Bridge (*Fleabag*) who both wrote and executive produced their shows based on their one-woman plays. Coel did not executive produce until the second series or season, however, as she was told it just doesn't happen like that in British television (Edinburgh Television Festival, 2018). Consensus from this study is that British television is still somewhat old fashioned in beholding to perceived industry 'rules' rather than taking chances on innovative projects and the people entrusted to lead them. Trust given enables confidence, and where confidence is held, trust is given.

Trust is a really big part of it. For someone to say, 'I trust you, go', it gives you so much more creative confidence with someone who is managing you.

- Phoebe Waller-Bridge, showrunner, *Fleabag*, *Killing Eve*)  
(The Hollywood Reporter, 2017, in 18:40)

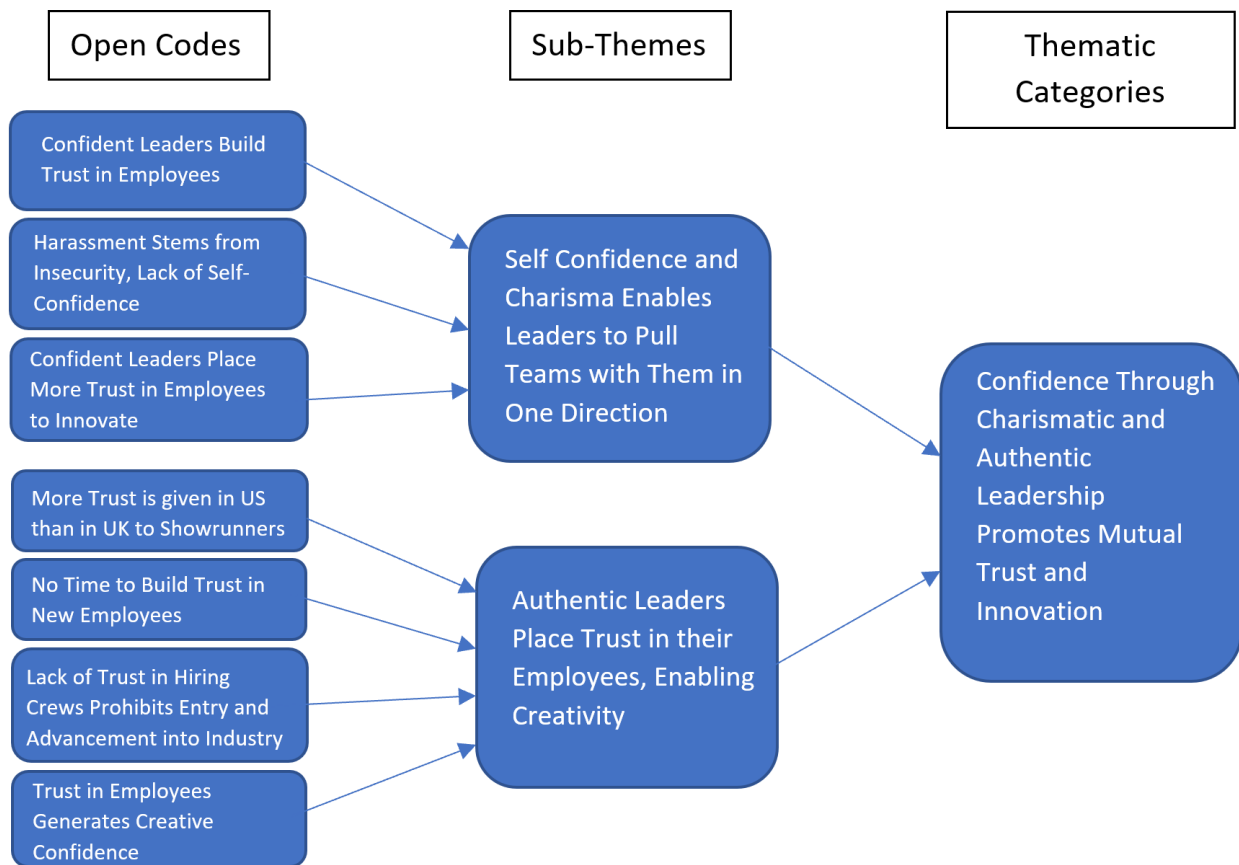


Figure 4.7.1: Coding Diagram - Confidence Through Charisma and Authenticity Promotes Mutual Trust and Innovation

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Confidence Through Charisma Promotes Mutual Trust and Innovation</b>	
Confident Leaders Build Trust in Crew	<p>Once confidence goes, either on the part of the director or the part of the HODs, you're in trouble, because it just seeps like poison through the cast. Everybody starts to feel just this weight. And yeah, I know I wasn't my best self for a few days on that job either. I got a bit touchy with people, because the stress is quite, you know, when you're a few years down the line, you don't even think about it. But, at the time it was hard. And you're always thinking, 'God, am I gonna get hired again?' (Director, 14:20:53)</p> <p>Nobody likes a director who's busking it. So, you know, if you can fulfil that, you understand what the scene's about, what the story's about, why you're here. Crews also like momentum. They don't like it when a director is doing fifteen takes on every angle because he or she doesn't know what they want. You've got to know what you want, that's what you get paid for. You know what you want, communicate it to them, and let's all get home on time so we can see our families. (Director, 14:18:14)</p>
More Trust is Given in US than UK to Showrunners	<p>Every CEO, when you're at the rough cut, for instance, if they want to watch and contribute, great, I would welcome that. But I wouldn't ever think it should be done as a matter of course. And I think that's – so for me, the key difference from my experience in the US and the UK is that it does boil down to that trust idea. And I think it will get there in the UK. I mean I certainly think - when I started here in 2016, and I had 'showrunner' in my email signature, everyone was like, 'What does that mean?' And so many people would say, 'I thought the showrunner was the bottom of the ladder who gets the coffees!' (Showrunner, 11:16:46)</p>
No Time to Build Trust in New Employees	<p>People come together and then disperse. And actually, what I also find is art directors, designers do tend to stick to the same crew. They do have the same assistants from job to job just because the pressures are so high, they need to be able to trust people. It's all coming down to trust. So if you're working, you find an art department assistant or an art director that you really like, you want to work with them again and again and again. That's great. You know, that's natural, but it makes it really hard for people coming into the industry. They can't get their foot in the door because people are using the same crew. And yes, it's all down to trust and knowing someone's strengths and weaknesses. (Art Assistant, 12:38:05)</p>
Trust Enables Confidence, Development and Autonomy	<p>It's about trust, isn't it? It's about a manager who gives you support and kind of mentors you, and knows your strengths and weaknesses, knows what you can and can't do and then trusts you to get on with it. They give you a brief. You discuss the brief. You get on with it, and then you go back to your manager and then they give you a bit more feedback. They kind of nudge you in the right direction. And then they give you some kind of responsibility, a bit more responsibility each time you do the job. (Art Assistant, 12:24:01)</p>

Figure 4.7.2: Representative Quotes - Confidence Through Charisma and Authenticity Promotes Mutual Trust and Innovation

## 4.8 Authenticity and Creativity Enabled Through Diversity and Inclusion

Several participants raised issues of inclusion as pertinent to good leadership and highlighted aspects of identity most important to them which they felt were pressing in the British television industry and the UK in general. Whilst various aspects of identity were mentioned, an overarching theme which emerged was lack of trust in the form of unconscious bias. Greater trust is generally placed in those perceived as similar, people already known, or those thought to be a cultural 'fit' in the industry. 'Misfits', those who do not fit the profile, are not given the same opportunities, and because it is often unconscious, leaders do not know when it is happening.

One journalist and senior producer recognises the need for many in marginalised groups to hide aspects of themselves that do not fit into the prescribed culture of the British television workforce, particularly one major UK broadcasting company that he describes as 'pale, male and stale' [Journalist/Producer, 11:07:37].

We're in a world whereby we're only starting to get to grips with the way unconscious bias affects institutions. We have unconscious bias that affects recruitment in the workplace – the way that people can pass or fly under the radar in order to get to where they get to... Through being a bit of a chameleon, camouflaging yourself and adapting and reacting to every situation you find yourself in, you're constantly having to hide a wee bit of yourself. But, if you work in corporations and you work in a hierarchical place, then you have to kind of temper being your fully authentic self and being your work self. It's just the reality of the world that we inhabit.

- Journalist/Sr Producer [12:20:10]

This reinforces how Randle et al. (2015) applied Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* to UKFTV where those who do not fit into the White, male, middle class culture habitually adapt their identities and hide their authentic selves in accordance with 'getting in, staying in and getting on' (Randle et al., 2007, p. 95). Authentic leadership becomes impossible when hiding aspects of one's identity so as not to be perceived a misfit in this highly prescribed culture. Even a Mancunian executive producer working in London felt like 'a fish out of water' [Executive Producer, 17:32:44].

As authenticity and authentic leadership have been shown to positively affect leading creative teams in television (Murphy, 2016), it is counter-productive to welcome people of diverse identities into a role if leadership pushes a prescribed culture where employees feel they cannot bring their unique attributes to their job. By not providing an inclusive workplace where every person can be their authentic selves, leaders potentially prohibit their creativity. Michaela Coel



spoke of how it can particularly affect writers when leaders do not trust them to tell their authentic stories and try to make them fit into the established culture.

In the quest for new writers, the *misfit* looking people are immediately sought after first. But instead of nurturing them to write for themselves, the last few years have seen an immediate coupling with writers before the process has begun; writers more experienced, who *fit* into this house more. Is it important that voices used to interruption get the experience of writing something without interference, at least once?

- Michaela Coel (showrunner, *Chewing Gum*, Series Two)  
(Edinburgh Television Festival, 2018, in 23:15)

This highlights the importance not just of diversity, but of inclusion, actively making diverse populations feel welcome and valued for their authentic selves (Edwards, 2020).

Participants noted various groups that are underrepresented in British television. Though the industry is perceived to be somewhat evenly split between men and women, men are still seen occupying most senior roles. Whilst BAME employees are generally underrepresented, there is the notion, particularly in Scotland, that 'that's just Scotland'. However, one journalist/senior producer witnessed high levels of engagement with the local community and schools when working for a diverse major UK broadcaster in Manchester, and no community engagement when working for the same company in Glasgow which lacked diversity. This lack of connection causes a fixed view of the community, justifying a homogenous workforce.

The same senior producer recalled how having a diverse team in Manchester improved the creativity and problem solving in their television programmes. For instance, when working on a children's news programme, his team had to figure out how to tell the story of refugees from various countries and backgrounds travelling across Europe and ending up in a refugee camp in Calais. Because of the diversity of the production team, some of whom had relatable stories of migration in their families, they formed innovative ways to tell the story that he said would not have emerged from a White, middle class team. This supports Aspey's (2016) contention that television leaders must nurture diverse voices in order to enable innovation, as well as Amabile et al. (1996), Burrell (2016), and Hoever (2012) who showed that diversity improves team creativity.

Participants were mixed as to how active they should be in creating a diverse workplace. Some saw inclusion as 'the only way forward for our business' [Producer/Director, 15:17:54] whilst others were in favour of a more diverse workforce, as long as they can do the job. The assumption that a person in an underrepresented group might lack ability can be hidden in the phrase, 'as long

as they can do the job', for it can be a sign of implicit bias as one commissioning editor of colour noted.

It's a negative association, isn't it? It's a basis of all prejudice that people of colour are a risk or not as capable just by that implication. It actually suggests that we are somehow less or not able. And that's really frustrating. You look at something like [Major UK Broadcaster 2] who gave their top job to a man that had never made a TV programme in his life. And he's a White, upper middle class man, and he had the right connections. But that is so wrong... That would never have happened to a person of colour – ever.

- Commissioning Editor [15:56:46]

This shows that not only is ability called into question with people in underrepresented groups, but preference is consistently shown to those who appear to come from typically Oxbridge backgrounds: White, middle-class with RP accents. They are seen as a better fit for the culture of British television and are thus more trusted and ushered into training schemes, jobs and promotions. Thus, the main divide participants saw in the industry in terms of diversity was not gender or even race or sexual orientation. It was class.

The barriers of entering into television are very clear from the beginning for those from a working-class background, since so much initial work is for no or low pay. Some call it work experience, others call it exploitation. Not only do training schemes tend to target White, middle-class people, they attract people whose parents can afford to support them whilst they train. Once training is over, the next step is typically to work as a freelance runner in precarious, uncertain employment. Most freelance work is shown to be uncertain and thus favours those who have financial support and bypasses people who cannot afford to live without a steady income. This is just one example of how systemic bias in the British television industry favours those from middle class backgrounds and inhibits those from working-class backgrounds.

The favouritism towards people with middle class backgrounds extends beyond just entry into the UK television industry or freelance work. Full-time work in production companies and broadcasters are known for informal hiring practices as well, ushering in and advancing people from an Oxbridge background at a quicker pace than those of equal experience who do not seem to fit the culture. This can hinder making programmes and deciding commissions that represent the diversity of the audience.

I think it has become a far more middle class industry, so therefore, it has become a far more informal – like, you get to the top when you're middle class, and you bypass all the usual sort of stuff, so actually, that's what's happened...I think, literally, the middle class is almost like a vine that's strangled the life out of television, because they're all at the top now.

- Commissioning Editor [16:09:37]

The informal hiring practices enable jobs and promotions to be given based on relationships and perceived cultural fit, not necessarily on merit, potential or who would help drive programming to be more relevant and creative. Projects that get commissioned are also often based on relationships. Thus, if the people commissioning are primarily from White, middle class backgrounds, they may be less likely to actively look for projects with diverse representation due to unconscious bias. This in turn may not reflect the diversity of their audience, causing ratings to suffer.

[Major UK Broadcaster 1] really struggles with appealing to women aged 16 to 34 who would perhaps fall in an audience demographic known as a C2, D, E audience demographic, which means people probably from a lower socio-economic background who perhaps don't read broadsheet newspapers, who get their news online, from magazines, things like that. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] usually struggles with them, and that's because there's none of these women who work there, so there's nobody to influence the decision making around content ideas. It's the same with [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1]. There are very few people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds in order to influence the kind of content we make that might appeal to those potential audiences out there.

- Journalist/Sr Producer [11:07:37]

Thus, even though the culture around the broadcasters and production companies might be evolving, the culture within these companies may not evolve with it because of systemic and unconscious bias ushering the same types of people to the senior decision-making positions.

Though class is seen as the main divider in British television, it may also be what ties together other aspects of diversity. As women and BAME populations are underrepresented in senior roles, it stands to reason they would be underrepresented in the middle and upper classes as well. Therefore, addressing class issues could aid with other issues of diversity. One White

Scottish director asserted that if regional UK accents are enough to classify and exclude people from senior roles, those from minority ethnic backgrounds will be even more excluded.

The lack of diversity, ethnic diversity, is quite tied to class, actually...Where I come from, people like me who talk the way I do when I'm talking to friends, we don't pop up in many meetings. And it's even less for Black people or for Pakistani people or whoever it ends up being. You know, it just feels like there's a lot of Oxbridge graduates that still run the show. And I think that if we deal with class, I think a lot of diversity elsewhere will start to take care of itself. But I think there should be a push to reflect UK culture and UK values, especially with [The Black Lives Matter Movement] that's been going on in the last month or so. It feels like now is the time.

- Director [14:55:31]

This research shows that diversity and inclusion are important to creatives in the British television industry because they improve creativity and make programming more relevant to an increasingly diverse audience. However, even those who favour diversity may still be unaware of their own implicit bias and the systemic bias of the industry. The most favoured and creative working environments were those where leaders actively recruited people from diverse backgrounds, removing barriers for entrance and creating a safe space for people to be their authentic selves. Whereas class is perceived as the main divider in UK television employment and advancement, actively addressing class barriers through inclusion initiatives such as forming ties to local communities and schools may aid in breaking down barriers for other underrepresented groups as well.



Figure 4.8.1: Coding Diagram - Authenticity and Creativity Enabled Through Diversity and Inclusion

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Authenticity and Creativity Enabled Through Diversity and Inclusion</b>	
<p>Informal Relationship-Based Hiring Not Inclusive to Diverse Employees</p>	<p>In the greater world, I hire runners and I have no reporting system or way of tracking that or positive, inclusivity system. I just ask for runners. I just put an e-mail out and say, 'Send me your CV', you know. I can't think - people are better at getting people who are disabled involved, I would say, than any other minority group for some reason, that seems to be a thing that you see more and more in our workplace. But there's no system in place. I would also say that obviously the BBC has systems and certain companies we work for or brought in by do have systems in place. But generally in the freelance production world, no - nothing. (Assistant Director, 14:58:40)</p> <p>What will happen is if somebody goes, 'Oh yeah, I know Bob's really good!' And then you have to say, 'Oh yeah, I know Bob's really good', but you have to try and find where the other diverse people are, so you have to dig deeper. (Executive Producer, 17:24:50)</p>
<p>Diversity in Industry Should Reflect UK Diversity</p>	<p>Yeah, hurry up! It needs to happen! Fifty-One percent of the population is female, straight away. I watch television with my wife and watch films with my wife, and as you watch them, you realise how male it all is. (Director, 14:55:31)</p> <p>And just, and more diverse stories, it's happening now, it is happening, but if I see any more period stuff, man, I just, I'm going to kill myself. Like, I just can't keep watching these people in corsets. It just does not relate to anything that's happening in the world right now. So that would be, I guess, that would be it - just more - just shake it up and just make different stories, tell different stories with different types of people. (Director, 15:04:45)</p> <p>For me, a big issue with [Major UK Broadcaster 1], that's probably really pertinent at the moment, is around diversity and the diversity of its workforce and the ways in which that affects the kind of content that you end up seeing on screen. Because [Major UK Broadcaster 1] at the moment suffers from being overwhelmingly pale, male and stale. Right? So it means, therefore, an awful lot of the content that you see that makes it to air speaks to that cohort, and it becomes a challenge therefore, to make [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s content appeal to audiences, which would appear to be diverse. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 11:07:37)</p> <p>Diversity is crucial. If we want to understand our world, to see its beauty and inequity in full, we need to see it from many perspectives. The miniaturisation of technology removed lots of the gatekeepers, who were after rich White men, but we need more change...class, and therefore poverty, is a key paradigm. (Independent Filmmaker, written response)</p>

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<p>Diversity Enables Creativity and Problem Solving</p>	<p>So, I would sit in ideas meetings in the morning with these emboldened production teams who were emboldened by people from all different walks of life and the ideas generation, it was just like, it was like something I'd never, ever heard before. People were talking about stuff that they could talk about by virtue of their own lived experience. And so, for example, when I worked there, it was at the time of the migrant crisis where we saw a huge wave of refugees and economic migrants all trying to get across Europe at the same time, and they were coming from countries like Sierra Leone and Afghanistan and Iraq. You know, these were people from vastly different walks of life, all attempting this big pilgrimage to attempt to try and get themselves better lives. And an awful lot of them ended up in a refugee camp that sprung up in Calais, which is right in the northern coast of France and is the main port to get across to the United Kingdom because it's where the Channel Tunnel is. It's where the shipping is into Dover. So this kind of became a natural sort of autozoetic point for an awful lot of these people. So we're sitting in the [Children's News Programme] production team trying to think of ways to tell this story to young children. And purely because of the diversity of the people who were on that production team, they were coming up with really innovative and interesting ways to tell that story. And I don't think that had it been a group of White people who had all been university educated, all from A, B, C1 middle class households, I don't think that we would have been able to tell that story as well for audiences. And so that was kind of a very clear indication to me about the importance of diversity when it comes to the people who are making the stuff that will end up making it on air. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 11:31:58)</p> <p>[Diversity] makes a massive difference because it ends what stories are getting told and through what lens they're getting told. So in my mind, writing, directing, art production, all these roles, you would get a massive difference whether a White man was telling you the story or a Pakistani lady, you know, so that could have a massive influence. (Assistant Director, 15:00:11)</p>
<p>Class is Main Divider</p>	<p>But there's also, I think class discrimination. I think the film industry seems to sometimes stay with people from more affluent backgrounds just because training is really expensive, or it can be expensive. I know when you have a - you study for a degree, the first time, you get a grant and a student loan. But still, I think people from poorer backgrounds are put off with the costs of funding. (Art Assistant, 12:57:28)</p> <p>I mean, I don't know what the population percentage is of people of colour in Scotland. It'll be less than it is in London or Manchester or Wolverhampton or wherever. But yeah, class is the big divide. (Director, 14:57:44)</p> <p>The thing I find as well in this country, it's again something America doesn't deal with, is the class issue in the UK. And actually, the lack of diversity, ethnic diversity, is quite tied to class, actually. And, you know, from where I come from, people like me who talk the way I do when I'm talking to friends, we don't pop up in many meetings. And it's even less for Black people or for Pakistani people or whoever it ends up being. You know, it just feels like there's a lot of Oxbridge graduates that still run the show. And I think that, I think if we deal with class, I think a lot of diversity elsewhere will start to take care of itself. But I think there should be a push to reflect UK culture and UK values, especially with everything that's been going on in the last month or so. It feels like now is the time. (Director, 14:55:31)</p>

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
Oxbridge Culture, Prohibiting Diversity	<p>They were very selective about their grad schemes - they were all very good looking, blonde haired, blue eyed from Oxford and Cambridge. (Commissioning Editor, 15:38:10)</p> <p>You only need to go to a few meetings in London before - it's just like this club, the Oxbridge club. And it's fine - everybody has the right to work in this industry, but it's just got to be opened up more. (Director, 14:57:44)</p>
Diverse Workforce Often Assumed to be Less Able	<p>And in the industry, there's quite a sort of push towards, you know, validating women within the industry and saying we're all brilliant, we're all equal all that sort of stuff - totally happy with all of that. I've got no problem with all of that. But also, I don't want to be given a job based on their merits in the job. You - are they good, are they good at their job? Don't give them the job because you want to tick a box. Give them the job because it's merit. And that's - and I also find it just gets a little bit - I'm not very good with angry sort of confrontation. So for me, I don't enjoy the collective of - let's all be women together in one place and moan about men, you know, or whatever it is. So I'm not very good at that sort of thing. And I don't particularly like it. So I'm just happy if we're all just happy and we all just get on really, really well. (Director of Operations, 09:20:33)</p>
Women Underrepresented in Senior Roles	<p>I once got turned down for a job because I wasn't a woman. And, you know, because they said I interviewed really well, but they said they wanted a female director for the second block. And you know, you're pissed off for like two or three minutes and then you remember, 'Oh, wait a minute, this is kind of how it's been for millennia the other way around.' So, OK I get it because, you know, to bring more people in, some people are going to have to make way. And if you're confident enough in your talent and your craft and you're not an asshole, you'll be alright. (Director, 14:59:17)</p> <p>I think what has been amazing from my point of view is how White-washed natural history TV is. It's got a really good diversity of men and women - slightly too many men in senior roles, but certainly the company I work at, there's slightly more women than men. But yes, it's the men who hold the more senior positions. (Showrunner, 11:52:24)</p> <p>Yeah, and I think in the art department, the gender balance isn't too bad, though, designers, I think most designers I've come across are male. I think the very top role, I think it's still very male dominated. I'm actually reading an art direction manual from 1941. There's no mention of women at all, they all assume that everyone's a man, a White man. So, yeah, I think diversity and inclusion is something that's not really thought about in the individual departments. Maybe the production office think about it a bit more, but I'm not entirely sure. (Art Assistant, 12:45:13)</p>
Scotland Seen as Too White for Organisational Diversity	<p>Scotland's a really hard place to get diversity, I think. I think we're a very small nation and a very - we're a very small company. And diversity is really hard. It's only when I remember, I mean diversity. Do you mean when you say diversity, do you mean everything? Everything and anything... Yeah. So all of the above. I think, I think in Scotland we're a little bit slow on it. So I think maybe, you know, just because we're wee, we're a weeer nation. I dunno. And maybe, I'm in my 40s, and I remember a time when it was really surprising to see a Black guy walking down the street. I mean, honestly, I was like, 'Oh, my God, who is that?' And it was a shock because in Scotland we didn't have Black people. And I know that sounds terrible, it sounds absolutely terrible. We just didn't. Now it's like, yeah, whatever, you know. No problem. But I sort of sometimes, I think Scotland, we're a little bit parochial and it's taken us a little while to just, you know, catch up with it all. (Director of Operations, 09:21:51)</p>

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
Scotland Seen as Too White for Organisational Diversity	<p>So, although you do sometimes see in other parts of the UK better diversity compared to Scotland, that could be because there is a larger, more diverse population to - for people to be employed from, so perhaps it just happens by default. But actually, when you look at the other similar industries who interact with places like [Major UK Broadcaster 1], you very often don't see that diversity is as widespread. It still very much feels like it's people from White middle class backgrounds who are taking up space. (Journalist/Sr Producer, 11:06:22)</p> <p>Scotland, and Edinburgh in particular, is very White and Scottish. Yeah. Yeah. I do know an art director who is of Indian background. Yeah, I'm struggling to think of - if I look at all the art directors on - you know Film Bang, the directory, there's a directory of personnel, they're all White male - there's an equal balance between male and female, actually. But, yeah, I think maybe it comes from the lack of opportunity at an entrance level, and maybe encouragement at school. It might be very - I think it's going to be very different in London and Manchester. I think it's going to be a lot more diverse, but there will be discrimination there, of course. Unfortunately. (Art Assistant, 12:52:52)</p>
Inclusion Takes Conscious Effort	<p>There's an obvious hunger for more [female voices and representation]. The fact that this show did well is not a coincidence. People were obviously waiting for a show like this....you see how underrepresented women of colour are on TV as well, that's a huge stumbling block that we really need to overcome, and it has to be addressed consciously, it can't be like, 'oh these things just happened'. <i>Derry Girls</i> having four female leads - that's not an accident that happened, that was a conscious choice, and these things have to be dealt with. We're definitely not there yet. -Nicola Coughlan, actor, <i>Derry Girls</i> (BUILD Series LDN, 2019, in 16:41)</p> <p>If the programme just went with the people who came to it, they'd have a very White, middle class audience. But what the team do is they reach out to schools in various areas and, you know, be much more proactive in getting out and reaching the audience to bring it back to them, to get involved. So, I'm not - yeah, I think sometimes it's when things are out of your control, when it's a particular story that comes up and there's no diversity in that naturally occurring story, is you then are trying to look at other ways you can bring diversity in, and that might be then if you've got - you're telling a story about somebody who's got a robotic arm and they're White, middle class. But then what you might try and do is find somebody who's an expert in electronics who comes from a diverse background...you're much more conscious of what it looks like than before. You kind of go, 'Well, I've got my great expert and I've got my great story', but you do actually stop and think, 'Hang on a second, this looks very White and middle class.' (Executive Producer, 17:40:27)</p>
Being 'Colour Blind' Rather Than Inclusive	<p>So that, I would say, is our filter of who cares really who they are? As long as we can do our job and they can do theirs. (Director of Operations, 09:18:34)</p> <p>We've never had to come across a point where we thought we would never employ you because you're - we wouldn't even think about it, to be honest. Gay, Black, pink, blue whatever, do you know we've never, ever had to have that conversation. Maybe because it's, either it's never presented itself or it's never been an issue. I don't think it's ever been a question, you know. (Director of Operations, 9:15:50)</p> <p>In the art department, I mean, I don't really think about - when I'm working with someone, I don't really think about, 'Oh, this person's Indian or this person's Black'. I just think about the job and can they do the job? (Art Assistant, 12:47:58)</p>
Offensive/ Dangerous Consequences of Lack of Inclusion	<p>Black people are saying, 'Oh, if you darken the skin of someone who is White, you should be using a Black person for that. And there's a bit of a grey area in stunts because there's skill level and then there's look. So someone could be the perfect shade of skin for an actor...and they're the perfect look and the perfect height. But then they don't have the skills to do that particular stunt. Maybe it's like standing on a motorbike that's driving. So, it will be better off to get someone to have their skin colour changed who has that level of skill because it's safer and they're less likely to die. But then there can be some people in the industry, particularly those who feel like they're victimised - and they might be Black and they might be White - who would say, 'No, you can't go and change the skin colour of someone because that's racist'...But at the end of the day, the safety is what trumps any kind of diversity. (Stunt Performer, 12:02:15)</p>

Figure 4.8.2: Representative Quotes - Authenticity and Creativity Enabled Through Diversity and Inclusion

## 4.9 Authentic Leadership Provides Psychological Safety and Compassion For Freelance Productions Where ‘The Show Must Go On’

In researching how to best lead creative teams in British television, compassion, empathy and kindness emerged as the most fundamental traits for good leaders to have. Almost every participant had stories of leaders who mistreated their employees or colleagues with bullying or harassment. But to be compassionate means more than not outwardly bullying people. It means seeing employees as whole persons, making the effort to understand their needs and feeling a sense of responsibility for them. This correlates with how authentic leaders show empathy and compassion for their employees through setting high standards for ethical conduct which provides psychological safety in employees, allowing them to take creative risks and propose new and innovative ideas (Avolio et al., 2004).

Leaders can fail to be compassionate because they are consumed with the stress placed upon them, and stress easily trickles down to employees. Whilst there are many causes for stress, the inciting factor is usually time, because time is money and money is always in short supply. ‘Whatever production you’re on and however big the budget, there is never enough money’ [Producer/Director, 14:41:23]. This is a particular problem in the freelance culture which as Percival and Hesmondhalgh (2014) showed, tolerates unsafe conditions, exploitation and long working hours with unregulated time off. One assistant director spoke of a colleague who fell asleep at the wheel after working long hours on a Scottish drama series.

A common phrase in the entertainment business is ‘The show must go on’. But must the show go on even at the expense of employee safety and well-being? Because time is money, television shoots stop for no one. One director spoke of how a shoot he was on scrambled to replace a standby props person on the spot when their suicide note was found. In fact, he had never heard of a shoot stopping for any personal emergency or tragedy.

Could you take time off? In film and television, time is the one thing you don’t have. I’m just thinking if it happened to me, if my mother or father died and we were midway through a shoot, I mean...touch wood – I don’t know what would happen, because they can’t shut down. What do you do? Stay healthy.

- Director [14:31:34]

It is little wonder why compassion and empathy were named as important leadership traits in the television industry when so often employees are made to feel less important than time and money, that they are replaceable, that they cannot take time off for tragedy.

According to writer and actor Michaela Coel, no one in British television will give employees time off for tragedy. It must be taken, demanded. This is what she found after experiencing her own traumatic event during production of her show, *Chewing Gum*. The night before a 7am script deadline, she was drugged and raped by a group of strangers. The lack of empathy and compassion shown by producers marked by their immediate concern over disrupting schedules prompted her to speak about it openly at The Edinburgh Television Festival in 2018.

How do we operate in this family of television when there is an emergency?  
 Overnight, I saw [the producers] morph into a team of employers and employees alike, teetering back and forth between the line of knowing what normal human empathy is and not knowing what empathy is at all. When there are police involved and footage of people carrying your writer into dangerous places; when cuts are found, when there is blood, what is your job?

- Michaela Coel, writer/actor, *Chewing Gum*  
 (Edinburgh Television Festival, 2018, in 45:30)

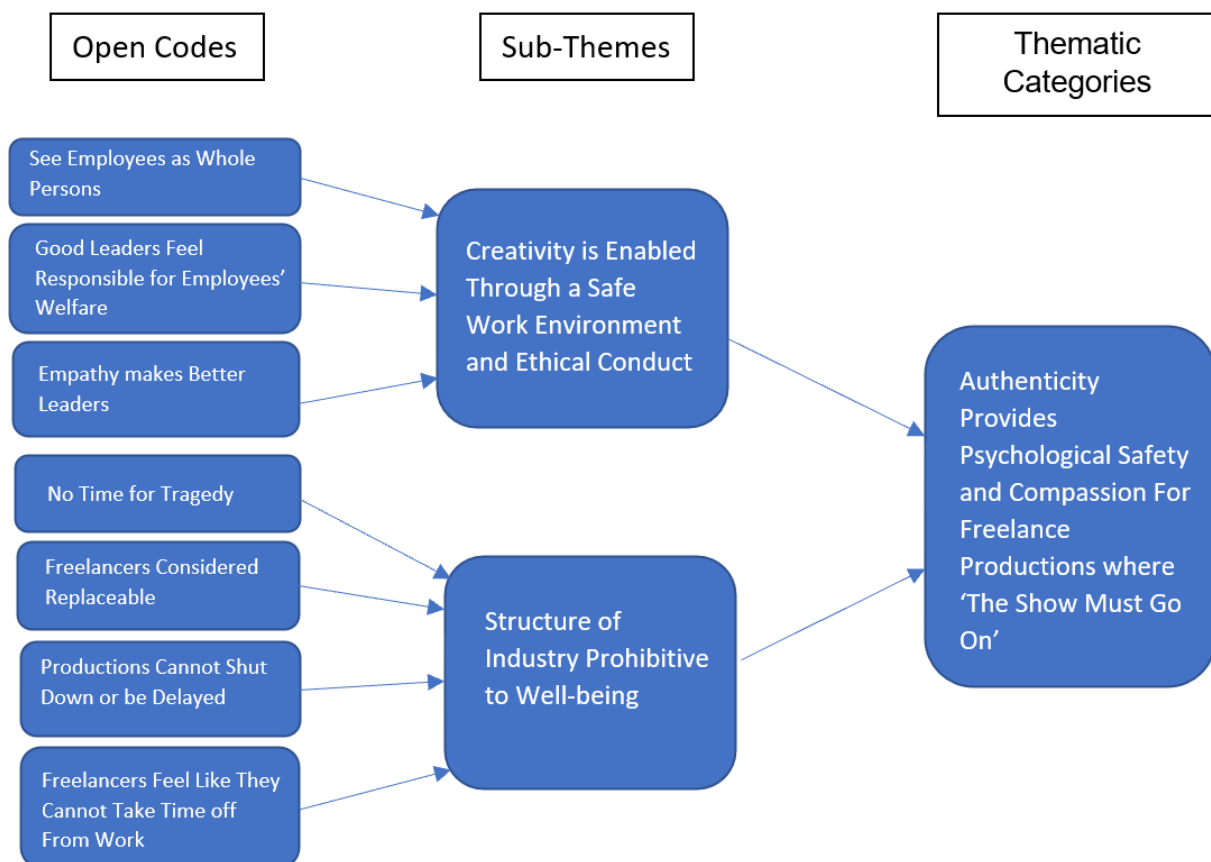


Figure 4.9.1: Coding Diagram - Authentic Leadership Provides Psychological Safety and Compassion For Freelance Productions Where 'The Show Must Go On'

Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
<b>Authenticity Provides Psychological Safety and Compassion For Freelance Productions Where ‘The Show Must Go On’</b>	
See Employees as Whole Persons	[When hiring], look through everyone individually and objectively and think, ‘Who hasn’t been hired in a while? Who’s got good skills? Who’s a nice person?’ And just treat people on the point of view of being a human being. (Stunt Performer, 12:02:15)
Take Responsibility for Employees and Their Welfare	<p>I had another crazy London boss who used to come up to Manchester once every fortnight and she came up and she just said, and there was no need for it on the project, but we were filming from September through to June on a quite big doc series, and she asked the whole team to work on Christmas Day. But she asked them like three weeks before Christmas. But she didn’t couch it with, ‘So I know that’s quite a big ask, and you’ve probably all got plans and...’ But she just couldn’t - all she could see was, ‘Oh, I want some filming to happen on Christmas Day’. But she couldn’t see what that meant for everybody, and why that was a significant thing to ask. People that had been working hard and working long hours and working weekends, you know. So I just - after she went, I just said to my team, ‘There’s no need for you to work Christmas Day and I’ll just say it wasn’t possible to do it’. And that’s what I did. (Executive Producer, 17:34:11)</p> <p>There have been times over the years where you don’t know - you see a cliff edge coming, you don’t know if there’s other work coming, so it’s quite pressurised, less so for me, but for - certainly for [Company MD] and the development team, to keep on coming up with new ideas and bringing in the work, is quite a stressful thing. You can’t help but feel responsible for people’s livelihoods when they’re working for us and you think, ‘Well, your contract ends next week and we haven’t got anything, so, goodbye.’ It’s not quite as rude as that, but you know, that’s the gist of it. You do start to feel a responsibility to try and look after people, but if we don’t have a commission, then we don’t have any income, so... (Head of Production, 16:21:38)</p>
Empathy Would Help People Be Better Leaders	<p>Ask someone questions about how they feel and get a greater understanding about what that means and the best approach to that, rather than telling them what you think is the right way or telling them what you think is the wrong way and telling them not to do it a certain way, comes against less resistance in most cases. And with that empathy shows trust and that trust builds a willingness to not only open up, if that’s the right thing, but also to calm down and to be in a better emotional state, because someone telling you, ‘Don’t be stressed, don’t be emotional’, creates a defensive mentality and a victim based mentality with that recipient, which is another negative emotion, so it’s not helping them feel any better. Whereas empathy and understanding is more of a positive approach. So, it helps diffuse and ease off some of that negative feeling. (Stunt Performer, 11:40:14)</p> <p>What could have helped her be a better boss, given those circumstances? (Interviewer, 17:32:37)</p> <p>Empathy, I think. Yeah... I was the Northerner in the kind of London scenario, you know. So, I was already a fish out of water...And I think it’s - you have to bring a team along with you, don’t you? And you have to accept people’s shortcomings, but also, you have to champion them as well. And I think just focusing on being very focused on the negatives rather than the positives. So I think just being kinder. I think she just lacked a warmth and a kindness. But who knows where that comes from? (Executive Producer, 17:32:44)</p>

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Thematic Categories and Open Codes	Representative Quotes
No Time Off for Tragedy	So, yes, you could say 'I need time away', but if you've got those kinds of fees to pay, that's pressure. And sometimes you can't turn the job down because you need the money or it's the right step up at the right moment for you to get to the next level. So it's tricky. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I think he'd already accepted the job when his mother died. But you think, could you take time off? In film and television, time is the one thing you don't have. (Director, 14:31:34)
Shoots Cannot Shut Down	So, to shut down for a couple of days, I'm early in my career, I can't think, even in my peer group, if anybody's been on a production that's been shut down, like for a couple of days to deal with a family bereavement or to deal with a serious medical emergency, I can't think of it...I don't know what would happen, because they can't shut down. What do you do? Stay healthy. (Director, 14:35:53)
Freelancers Feel They Cannot Take Time off	Because this is the other thing, the pressure with our industry is, if you say 'I can't work this job because of X, Y and Z', you're out of the picture, and they bring someone else in, if that person kills it, you're not getting a phone call. So that constant insecurity of 'if I turn this job down because of the pressures at home or whatever, am I going to get another job?' So, you know, people say yes when they should sometimes say no. (Director, 14:25:22)
The Show Must Go On	I did a job not long ago where we lost our standby props because he'd left a suicide note saying he was going to kill himself. So, you know, that's a different thing where - basically the whole art department ran off to try and find him. So we had to soak that pressure up, because the show has to go on, right? So, we basically had to draft in some people - so there was like a two hour period where we didn't have any art department - people were just chipping in and trying to get the continuity right on the monitors and whatever else, and the actors were all really understanding. And those are things that can't be helped. It's when you realise that you look through a viewfinder and everything's peachy, but actually these people have feelings and, you know, they have lives beyond this. (Director, 14:20:53)
No Time for Compassion	It would be a question of breaking down that stunt in a way that was simple enough and slow enough and segmented enough that it was easier to follow and then piecing that together, speeding it up. While at the same time, talking to someone as a human being and showing empathy and understanding and saying, 'I understand this might be quite upsetting for you or I understand this might be quite difficult for you, would you like to take some time out if that's possible?' and it just so happened at the time, it wasn't possible because we had like five minutes to shoot - which often actually happens in stunts is that you have five minutes to rehearse and prep and shoot, so you don't have time for things to go wrong. (Stunt Performer, 11:40:14)

Figure 4.9.2: Representative Quotes - Authentic Leadership Provides Psychological Safety and Compassion For Freelance Productions Where 'The Show Must Go On'

## 4.10 The Cause and Effects of Poor Leadership in British Television

The findings of this research have uncovered the core concepts of leadership that separate good leaders from poor leaders in leading creative teams in British television. The central theme that runs throughout all of them has emerged as time. Participants regularly spoke of the lack of time, because time is money. The British industry is always seen as strapped for time, so any departure from the modus operandi is perceived as a risk that may potentially waste time and ultimately cost money. Some might be direct investments of time such as actively recruiting for inclusion or giving time off for emergencies. Others might be indirect such as having confidence in

new or diverse talent which might be perceived as costing more time than hiring the same type of person. So much stress is caused by the 'punishing' work hours, and still, there never seems to be enough. Yet, good leaders make the time to practice the tenants of good leadership. So, where do they find the time?

Good leaders make the time for good leadership because they know that investment will save time in the end. Allowing people to take time off when needed produces a healthier and more focused workforce able to work more efficiently. Enabling one creative force such as a showrunner to develop and share a common vision minimizes production and edit changes from layers of management as well as contract buy-outs from firings. Building diverse teams and having confidence in them enables creativity not only in artistic terms but in creative problem solving. In summary, the concepts of good leadership outlined here address the research question in producing creative and higher quality programmes more efficiently, meeting time and budget restrictions.

Whilst the effects of good leadership may be creative programming produced more efficiently, the effects of poor leadership are more catastrophic than simply missing a deadline or lower quality programming. This research has shown that poor leadership can lead to major distress and even trauma. Several participants raised mental health as an issue in the industry that leaders need to understand and manage. Even those who did not mention the words 'mental health' raised issues of how the practices and norms of industry leadership can adversely affect well-being. However, little attention or even acknowledgment of mental health issues is given, particularly in freelance productions.

I think there needs to be a lot more awareness of mental health issues in managers. They need to go and take a lot of training in that, and they need to support people with that. Because the thing about the film industry, the major department they're lacking is the HR department. I don't really feel like I can go to anyone if I have any issues, any kind of personal issues. There is the production department, but they're so wrapped up with scheduling hotels and flights, there isn't a separate department that just deals with personnel, and I think a manager has to have a good understanding of personnel issues.

- Art Assistant [12:01:30]

Attention must be paid to mental health both for ethical and logistical reasons. After all, the industry needs a healthy, productive workforce that can be at their creative best to be sustainable. Many of the effects of poor leadership raised in this research are highlighted in a new report on

mental health in UKFTV commissioned by the Film and TV Charity. Released in February 2020, the first of its kind report is entitled *The Looking Glass* (Wilkes et al., 2020) and gives a sobering look at the state of mental health in the industry with contributing factors based on survey responses. Of the over 9000 participants, 87% had experienced a mental health problem at some point, over 20 percentage points higher than the national average 65%. Over half (55%) had contemplated taking their own life compared to 20%, and 10% had attempted to take their own life, compared to the 7% national average. Additionally, 24% had deliberately harmed themselves, compared to 7%. The report found factors such as working conditions, culture, harassment and the inability to safely report it, the uncertainty of freelance work and lack of support for those with mental health issues to be main contributors to these statistics, which echoes many of the issues raised in the current study.

At especially high risk are freelancers, women, ethnic minority workers, disabled workers, and lesbian, gay or bisexual workers (Wilkes et al., 2020) which reinforces the importance of inclusion. The report shows the estimated cost of mental health issues to UK businesses is £42-£45 billion, and though there are not figures specific to UKFTV, from the data, it is reasonable to think it is a disproportionately high figure. Thus, from both an ethical and financial perspective, it behoves the leaders of the British television industry to prioritise addressing the issues in this study.

As CEO of the Film and TV Charity Alex Pumfrey proclaimed, 'We ignore [ill mental health], we enable it and we legitimise it' (Cottrell, 2019). It is clear from the 2020 report and supporting research that British television leaders must not only provide support for employees with mental health issues but make the time for good leadership which can prevent them from developing in the first place.

## 4.11 Summary

The research question presented is how to best lead creative teams in British television. What are the methods used by good leaders and what qualities do they have that foster creativity to produce high quality programming on time and on budget? What are the unique aspects of making television in the UK that leaders must consider when leading others? From interviewing 13 people who work in British television and one independent filmmaker who has purposely stayed out of the industry, seven overarching concepts emerged as crucial to successful leadership in British television. Aspects of leadership theories applied to other creative industries including the US television industry such as paradoxical leadership, shared leadership, authentic leadership and charismatic leadership proved to be present in successfully leading creative teams in UK

television. Highly regarded leaders manage the paradoxes of being creative and inspiring creativity in others as well as leading their teams to realise a single shared vision whilst managing them to bring everything in on time and on budget. The findings of this research highlight the best ways to do this.

The central theme that emerged linking all of the concepts was how lack of time is the main factor that inhibits practicing good leadership, which in turn hinders innovative programming and ironically wastes time and money. It also causes widespread mental health problems in the workforce, causing many to want to leave the industry. Thus, in order to keep a valuable workforce and sustain itself, British television must make the time to practice the tenants of good leadership outlined in these findings. Whereas many in the industry might claim they cannot afford to make time for good leadership, this research shows they cannot afford not to.



## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research showed that the top methods for leaders in British television to lead their creative teams centred around seven thematic categories or concepts, each capturing primary methods and issues specific to the industry. These can each be encapsulated into an easily memorable word. Below is the mapping of thematic categories onto these words. What follows is a model for leading creative teams in British television, marking a shift from a traditional '2 Cs' Command and Control model of business leadership to the '7 Cs' model.

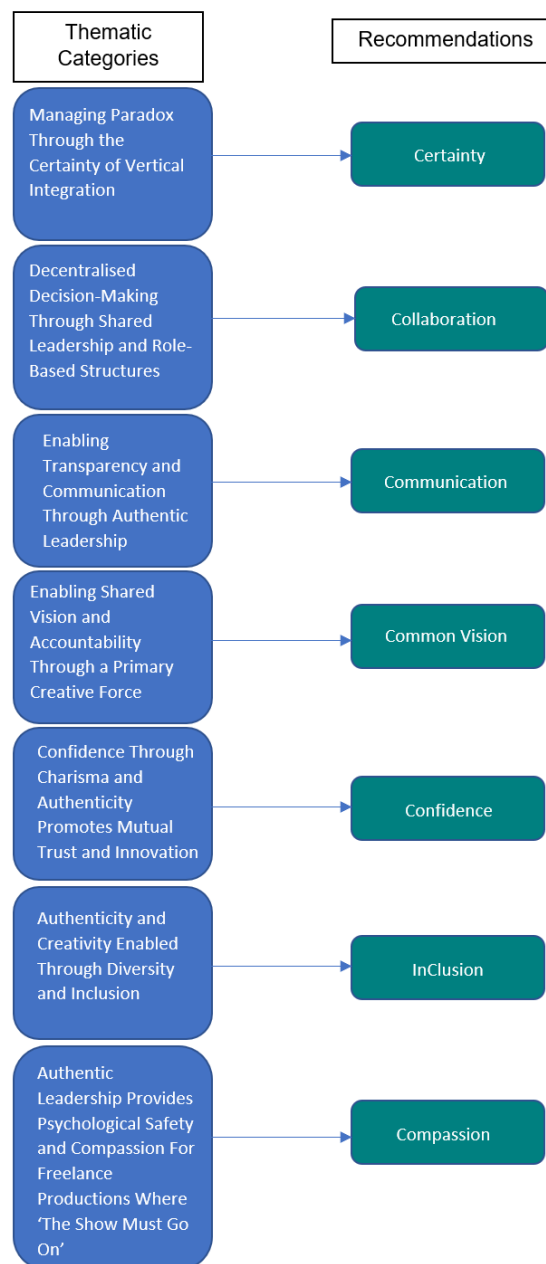


Figure 5.1: Mapping Thematic Categories to Recommendations



Figure 5.2: 7 Cs Model of Leading Creative Teams in British Television

The 7 Cs model shows overarching concepts and primary issues that fall under them. However, all concepts are closely linked and support one another. For instance, good collaboration takes clear and transparent communication. Sharing a common vision involves collaborating with team members so they can utilise their creativity to realise that vision. Many primary issues or first order open codes are shared amongst several higher concepts as well. For example, the accountability of the showrunner model as not only the creative force but the public face of the programme would provide greater transparency for reporting and preventing inappropriate behaviour. This is because such issues are easily ignored or hidden when there are multiple

leaders behind the curtain who can shift the blame. The showrunner model thus provides a single point of accountability, not just for their leaders, but for their employees. Likewise, a lack of any of these concepts in leadership can affect the others. For instance, a lack of confidence inhibits two-way communication and collaboration. Each concept and its elements are woven into the rest. Yet compartmentalising the seven higher order concepts provides a clear framework to which leaders can easily refer.

Note that time is listed under every concept. That is because time is the thread that runs throughout each aspect of leadership, enabling each one. The root of why most leaders fail to utilise these concepts is that due to heavy pressures, they feel they do not have the time and thus do not make the time. Whilst lack of time is systemic in British television, the great leaders described in interviews made the time. When there is no time for inclusion, great leaders make the time because diverse teams make more relatable programming and enable creative problem solving, saving time and creating revenue. When there is no time for compassion, great leaders make the time because this industry cannot sustain without a happy and healthy workforce. When there is no time, leaders must make the time.

## 6. WIDER IMPLICATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

This study revealed the most important aspects of leadership for leading creative teams in British television. However, the implications of this research can have much more far reaching effects. Creativity is arguably important in most any line of work. Processes can always be improved, products enhanced, working conditions more fit for purpose. This takes creativity. Though the 7 Cs came out of analysing the British television industry, the concepts are universal and can be applied to improve leadership in most any industry. Any good leader would need to communicate well, collaborate, and have confidence in themselves and the people they lead. It is a matter of adapting the elements or primary issues within each concept of the model to the specific challenges and needs of that industry.

The research participants of this study were very diverse in their positions with no two holding the same job. Participants were also diverse in terms of gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background. However, only one participant was a person of colour. Further research should be done to gather more perspectives from a more ethnically diverse pool. In addition, the recommendations of this research centre on making more time to implement good leadership. However, time is money. Further research should be done with leaders who fund projects and manage finances to see where money can be managed better, particularly regarding the long work hours. As participants said there is never enough money no matter the budget, it is most likely not a matter of how much money is spent, but how it is managed.

Research took place over a very dynamic time. The world saw a massive Black Lives Matter response to the killing of George Floyd by a White police officer in the US on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2020. Many people and companies began to change their views and policies on inclusion due to this. Further study into the after effects of this latest resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement would be warranted as inclusion policies are likely to evolve quickly. 2021 will also see the release of a new census which will give leaders insight into how the diversity of the UK has changed over the last decade. Research into how this affects policies and initiatives in the industry is also worth academic inquiry.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This study addresses the research gap of how leaders in British television lead their creative teams in successfully producing innovative content on time and on budget. It was shown to take a dual approach of both management, getting work done through others by coordinating them to accomplish desired goals, and leadership, the process of social influencing that inspires wanting to achieve those goals. The apparent paradox of leading by fostering creativity whilst managing to meet time and budget constraints was best addressed through seven concepts: Certainty, Collaboration, Communication, Common vision, Confidence, InClusion, and Compassion. These make the 7 Cs Model of Leading Creative Teams in British Television. Each concept contains methods targeting specific needs and issues within the British television industry, given its history, culture and current structure.

Whilst the 7 Cs model was formed from interviewing professionals in various roles in the British television industry, it has far reaching implications, not just for other creative industries, but for businesses in general, as enabling creativity at all levels is important for the changing landscape of business that must innovate to be sustainable. Therefore, the 7 Cs Model can be applied to most any organisation's leadership by adapting the primary methods and issues under each of the seven concepts to suit that industry.

From the 7 Cs emerged one central theme that connected them: time. The main reason leaders failed to practice these seven concepts was the perceived lack of time in the industry. However, research shows that practicing the 7 Cs saves both time and money overall. Failure to practice them has results far worse than poor quality content, missed deadlines or lost money. Poor leadership in British television causes mental health issues, leading to over half of employees contemplating suicide and more wanting to leave the industry. However, practicing good leadership by treating people as whole human beings results in a more creative team and higher quality content produced more efficiently. In short, treating people holistically and taking responsibility for their well-being is not just the right thing to do, but it is also good for business.

Good leaders are never complacent, but consistently think about ways they can be better, including ways to change the culture and open doors to more diverse people, to the misfits. The 7 Cs model can be used as a resource for leaders to frame this endeavour and for the creatives they lead to know what good leadership looks like and feel entitled to demand it. Thus, instead of having to navigate the 'Wild West', creative teams can be provided everything they need to be at their creative best.

During this study, the world went under lockdown as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, something unprecedented in recent times. This provides a good opportunity to learn from the actions taken by government, industry and society. Companies shut down for months and people stayed at home to save lives. Grocery store workers became essential staff. People clapped every Thursday for NHS workers on the front line. Meanwhile, television productions across the world came to a complete halt. Governments put measures in place to keep people safe and healthy, even though it was to the detriment of the GDP. People were placed above profit. What was thought impossible was made possible out of concern for human lives. Now there was time - time to be with family, to exercise, to learn a new skill, or to do nothing at all. British television is a highly stressful industry, primarily because leaders think there is never enough time. However, because of a worldwide human emergency, we made time. Perhaps this can provide the television industry perspective of what is most important.



I want to protect something, and it's the misfits...I think [the television industry] can be a bit thoughtless...We don't use a lot of energy to really think about the bigger picture and about people outside of ourselves...I think we could all pay a bit more attention. I think we should not coast, not just be settled and complacent in our jobs. I think that allows you to keep thinking. Are you checking up all the time? Am I being a good jobs person?...I am a Black woman from an immigrant family and I'm here talking about TV. I did the MacTaggart Lecture. I'm talking to new writers...I'm bringing them in. I get to let people in to opportunities. That's amazing. I think we need to know both of these things. We need to know things are changing and improving, and now, how much more can we improve them?...Talking, dialogue, not skewing over problems. And that's thinking; it's not being complacent. That's also for people like me. I get to a position like this and I can't go, 'Oh great, everything's great!' I have to keep doing my job and look around and go, 'Hold on, I still feel like I might be a bit of an anomaly.' I want to change that. So, I can't rest. I'm going to keep annoying people...

- Michaela Coel (Showrunner, *Chewing Gum*, Series Two)  
(Channel 4 News, 2019, in 14:25)



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## 9. APPENDICES

### 9.1 Participant Professions, Backgrounds and Diversity Dimensions

Participant by Primary Profession	Diversity Dimensions
'Director of Operations'* Full-Time Employment Scottish Independent Production Service Company Location: Edinburgh 20+ Years' Experience	Cis Female White British Heterosexual Pronouns: She/Her
Journalist/Sr Producer Full-Time Employment Major Scottish Broadcasting Company News/Factual Entertainment Location: Glasgow 13 Years' Experience	Cis Male White Scottish Gay Pronouns: He/Him
1 <sup>st</sup> Assistant Camera Operator/Focus Puller Freelance Scripted and Factual Entertainment Location: Edinburgh 11 Years' Experience	Cis Female White European Lesbian Working Class Upbringing Pronouns: She/Her
Executive Producer Freelance Factual Entertainment Location: Manchester 20+ Years' Experience	Cis Female White Northern Lesbian Working Class Upbringing Pronouns: She/Her
Graphics Designer Freelance Primarily Factual Entertainment Location: Edinburgh 25 Years' Experience	Cis Male White English Heterosexual Pronouns: He/Him
Stunt Performer Freelance Scripted and Factual Entertainment Location: London 10 Years' Experience	Cis Male White British/Australian Heterosexual Upper Middle Class Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him
Independent Filmmaker Freelance Factual/Documentary Location: Edinburgh 32 Years' Experience	Cis Male White Irish Bisexual Working Class Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him
1st Assistant Director Freelance Scripted Television Location: Edinburgh 13 Years' Experience	Cis Male White Scottish Heterosexual Middle Class Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him
Producer/Director Freelance Factual and Scripted Television Location: Glasgow 23 Years' Experience	Cis Female White British LGBT Working Class Upbringing Pronouns: She/Her

Art Assistant Freelance Scripted Television Location: Edinburgh Six Years' Experience	Cis Female White British Heterosexual Middle Class Upbringing Pronouns: She/Her
Head of Production Full-Time Scottish Independent Production Company Factual Entertainment Location: Glasgow 21 Years' Experience	Cis Female White Scottish Pronouns: She/Her
Showrunner (US/UK) Freelance Factual Entertainment Location: Manchester 20+ Years' Experience	Cis Male White British/Australian Heterosexual Middle Class Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him
Director Freelance Scripted Television Location: Scotland Five Years' Professional Experience	Cis Male White British Heterosexual Working Class Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him
Commissioning Editor Full-Time Factual Entertainment Major UK Broadcasting Company Location: London 15+ Years' Experience	Cis Male BAME** British Homosexual Middle Class Immigrant Upbringing Pronouns: He/Him

\* 'Director of Operations' is used here as a standardised title since the real title may compromise anonymity. The role is similar to a Director of Operations role. The title was chosen by the participant.

\*\*BAME is used as a general term purposefully to protect anonymity.

## 9.2 Interview Consent Form

### Interview Consent Form

**Research Project Title:** Leading Creative Teams: The Case of British Television

**Research Investigator:** [censored]\*, University of Edinburgh

**Faculty Supervisor:** [censored], University of Edinburgh

The interview will take about one hour unless otherwise agreed upon. We do not anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken from UK institutions require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation.

Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- the interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced (anonymised)
- you can be sent the transcript and given the opportunity to correct any factual errors
- the transcript of the interview will be analysed by [censored] as research investigator.
- access to the interview transcript will be limited to [research investigator] and academic colleagues and researchers with whom they might collaborate as part of the research process
- any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- the actual recording will be destroyed once transcribed
- any variation of the conditions above will only occur with your further explicit approval

**Quotation Agreement:** I also understand that my words may be quoted directly. With regards to being quoted, please initial next to any of the statements that you agree with:

- I wish to review the notes, transcripts, or other data collected during the research pertaining to my participation.  
Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

All or part of the content of your interview may be used;

- In academic papers, policy papers or news articles

By signing this form, I agree that;

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project.
2. I understand that I do not have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
3. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
4. I do not expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
5. I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality;
6. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Participant's Signature      Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Researcher's Signature      Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Contact Information

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Edinburgh University Research Ethics Board. If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact: [censored]

What if I have concerns about this research? If you are worried about this research, or if you are concerned about how it is being conducted, you can contact the Chair of the University of Edinburgh Business School Ethics Committee, University of Edinburgh, email at [Ethics@business-school.ed.ac.uk](mailto:Ethics@business-school.ed.ac.uk).

\*The word [censored] appears to protect the anonymity of the researcher for submission.

## 9.3 Model Interview Questions

This is an outline of questions that would typically be asked for semi-structured interviews. However, follow-up questions would be also be asked to dive deeper into opinions and experiences shared so the questions would necessarily adjust slightly to what is below.

- This interview will be anonymised and the recording destroyed after the study is completed.
- Only answer questions you are comfortable with. You may skip any answers you wish.
- How do you identify in terms of race, gender identification, sexual orientation, socio-economic upbringing and any other factors important to you?
- What pronouns do you use?
- Are you working right now during COVID lockdown?
- What made you want to get into film and television?
- How did you get into the television industry?
- Can you talk about how you went from that first job to where you are now?
- What types of programmes do you work on or have you worked on?
- What types of decisions do you make in your current role?
- What types of people do you work most closely with - what are their roles?
- Whom do you report to? (Their role)
- What is the hierarchy like in your work? Who is the main creative force on a production? Who is the main 'boss'? Are they the same?
- What is that relationship like with the person you report to? How would you characterise the way they manage you?
- Who works under you? What is that relationship like? How do you manage them?
- Is creativity important in your job? Is it important to you? Why?
- Can you talk about a time when you were at your creative best? In terms of leadership, what were the characteristics or methods that enabled you to be at your creative best?
- Can you talk about a time when you were frustrated in your job? Was creativity prohibited in some way? In terms of leadership, what prohibited that creativity or caused your frustration? What could have been done differently?
- What are the main tensions that can arise on a job? What causes them? How might they be alleviated?
- What characteristics do good leaders have in your industry? What type of leader do you like working with?



- What characteristics do bad leaders have in your industry? What type of leader don't you like working with?
- What do you think works well in how you are managed? Why? How is creativity affected?
- What do you think doesn't work well in how you are managed? Why? How is creativity affected?
- Have you ever worked as a freelancer? What is the difference between working full-time or freelance? What do you prefer in terms of the satisfaction you get from your job and the creativity you have?
- Have you ever worked with a showrunner? What do you think of that model? What are the pros and cons? Do you think it improves creativity and programming or is the traditional British model better?
- Do you think the showrunner model will be adopted more in the UK?
- How would you describe your quality of life working in the television industry? What impacts it?
- Do you think diversity and inclusion are important to consider in programming, in front of the lens and behind? Why or why not?
- Do you think diversity affects creativity and the quality of programming? How? Can you give an example?
- Are there any downsides to trying to create more balanced diversity?
- Are you aware of any diversity initiatives where you work or in the industry in general?
- Have you ever felt discriminated against as a member of a minority or marginalised group (if appropriate)?
- What are the hinderances to creating a more representative work force in UK television? How can they be addressed?
- If you could change anything about working in film and television in the UK what would it be?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me regarding leadership in British television?

## 9.4 Sample Interview Transcription

This interview took place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2020 at 10:30am. Note, all times of any quotes in the Findings section have been adjusted to the start time of 10:30am. JP1 stands for Journalist/Sr Producer.

[00:00:53.180] - Interviewer

OK, so just to get started, can you tell me how you identify and what pronouns you use?

[00:01:17.010] - JP1

Gay, male, he/him

[00:01:17.100] - Interviewer

How are you working during COVID right now? What is the policy?

[00:01:22.630] - JP1

Well, at the moment we're half and half. So half of the time I'm home and half of the time I tend to be in the office, because there's an awful lot of stuff that we just we can't, well we could technically, but there's an awful lot of tasks that we aren't able to perform as effectively at home as we would do in the office. Because I am in the newsroom, there's a whole lot of staff who are still kind of going out and about gathering stories, there's people who are still in the office putting programmes on air because obviously they've got to access the gallery and studio and stuff. And then there's staff like me who are producers who can do a wee bit of work at home in terms of setting up stories and research and phone bashing and all that kind of stuff. But if we're doing a story together and like I'm working with a reporter or correspondent then putting a story together, it does - it happens much quicker and more efficiently if we're all together in the office.

[00:02:40.250] - Interviewer

OK. So how did you get into this industry? What made you want to get into this industry?

[00:02:48.680] - JP1

A process of osmosis, I think? I'm not sure people particularly set out with a burning desire to make television or radio or whatever? It kind of for me it happened more organically than that. So I started off at university. I decided that I wanted to do like - I left school and decided I wanted to study philosophy because I thought that would get me a job [laughs].

[00:03:17.760] - Interviewer

Don't worry, I studied the same thing.

[00:03:20.940] - JP1

Right, there you go right, so you're a bit like 'I'm so pleased I made that choice in what to major'. So, but then it kind of became quite clear, I was a bit like, 'Oh, god this is actually really hard!' So I switched to do film and television studies, with English literature at university. And you would have thought, you were like, 'Oh, well, that's quite a significant indication of your career intentions', but film and TV studies at the University of Glasgow was a theory based course, it had very little practical element to it until you got into your senior year of doing your honours year - your third and fourth year. So other than that, it was all like academic theory and study and all that kind of stuff. And then when I left university, I was - you kind of get ejected into the big wide world and it's a bit like, 'Bye! See you later, thanks for your four years! Piss off now!' And you're a bit like 'Oh god, what do I do now?' So I ended up - I was, I just took my part time job full time, which was a retail job. And then I was a bit like, 'Oh, god, I don't know what to do with my life!' Then you have a bit of a kind of a crisis. And then friends of mine were doing like runner gigs, so I started finding, you know, like one or two days here and there that I could do alongside my full time job. And it kind of, it gives you an insight very early on into the privilege of people who can afford to work in the film and TV industry, because at that early stage in your career, you're taking work experience, free unpaid gigs or very short, short term casual work. So if you're trying to balance that with a full time job, it's nigh on impossible. But regardless, I managed to get enough experience under my belt that by the third application to [Major UK Broadcaster 1] to their runners pool, I managed to get in eventually and I actually started my career - one of the first gigs I did in terms of - I'll start again. The first kind of relatively long term contract that I got offered with [Major UK Broadcaster 1] was five days' work in the entertainment department as a runner on a comedy pilot. So I left my full time job, for a five day contract at [Major UK Broadcaster 1] and - yeah that was it. Incidentally, the post - that post was this pilot was pitched as a gay sketch show, right? That was its tagline, and I was like 'Oh, right interesting.' And basically what made the sketch show gay, was these parodic characters based on stereotypes of gay men. The cast were all straight and the writers were all straight. It was quite an interesting insight into - at that stage, that would have been 2006. At that stage what the opinion of gay people, gay men in particular was - I mean for a start, predicating a whole show on gay men specifically when you know, the queer spectrum has a heck of a lot of different identities, show at that stage in 2006 that we weren't particularly advanced in terms of awareness of diversity within the LGBT, you know, the LGBT+ acronym. And the jokes were just shit! [laughs] One of the - I remember one of the characters, the scene was a character having an altercation in a car garage - he was buying a car, and one of - the comedy was all in the reaction from the straight-acting car salesman to this gay character and his outlandish requests for this vehicle. And the punchline was that the vehicle didn't have a lip balm holder. And it was a bit like,

'Are you serious, that's the punchline to the joke? That's absolutely dreadful!' And I remember then as a young man standing thinking, 'This is absolute garbage! What the heck? This is [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s best offer for queer audiences?' Needless to say, it never got commissioned. Anyway, that was a long-winded answer as to how I got into television.

[00:08:23.980] - Interviewer

Were you out at that time when you worked on that show?

[00:08:26.850] - JP1

Yeah.

[00:08:28.780] - Interviewer

Did you being gay have anything to do with you getting the job or was it just a coincidence?

[00:08:34.180] - JP1

No, it was just a coincidence.

[00:08:37.060] - Interviewer

And did you go looking for that job or did they just say, 'This is the show that you're going to work on'?

[00:08:44.240] - JP1

Yes. So basically, the way I was employed at [Major UK Broadcaster 1], I was employed as part of a casual workforce that they could call upon to fill short term vacancy - short term crewing vacancies in entry level positions. So I suppose it was a very early example of how [Major UK Broadcaster 1] was making use of modes of employment that are now relatively commonplace in what has become known as 'the gig economy'. We would all just - there was about 10 of us, let's say, and we were all just like waiting by the phone for [Major UK Broadcaster 1] to ring so that we could then re-organise our lives and try and get these little nuggets of experience that we thought might build into a bigger career. And I don't know of any people who were part of that scheme who are still working.

[00:09:46.260] - Interviewer

Still working in television, you mean?

[00:09:49.050] - JP1

Oh right. Yeah, yeah.

[00:09:53.460] - Interviewer

So you were hired as a runner. Am I right in that it's just sort of like doing little jobs here and there – 'Go get this, go get that'?

[00:10:01.540] - JP1

Yeah. It was kind of like jobs that sort of were the true test of your mettle as to whether or not you could stick the distance. It's like, if you can survive standing at a door all day to make sure that people don't walk through the door, you know, then perhaps they might trust you to go on and have further responsibilities. Like I'll never forget, that was one job that I had to do very early on, like they were filming in a room beyond where I was, and I had to stand in this corridor and stop people walking through the door, and I thought, 'This is really counter-productive because that's what doors are for and I'm stopping people doing it - weird.' And it's like you just get given these absolute crap tasks. And basically, if you don't get completely bored out of your mind and at that stage decide TV isn't for you, then maybe you pass onto the second phase.

[00:10:59.880] - Interviewer

What would that second phase be?

[00:11:01.090] - JP1

The second phase from being runner, a casual runner like that, would be to get taken on as a sort of junior researcher character and the trials therein of that post would be to see if you can put up with being spoken to like an absolute piece of garbage by somebody who is a couple of posts above you, because television is very hierarchical, you know, everybody has their specific roles to fulfil and the higher up the ladder you go, with the very smaller incremental increases in your power that you have. And it's up to you and your judgment as to whether or not you use that power to good effect. So, like I at that stage worked with lots of really great, you know, senior staff and producers and directors who were really encouraging and really keen to try and help junior members of staff develop their careers. Then I also worked with some absolute bastards [laughs] who kind of - I don't know if they got kicks out of it, or maybe it was just their character type, who would be like really challenging to work with and almost treat their role as it was like their little silo of power, like, 'Oh no, this is all mine. You can't get any of it, because I've worked really hard to get here.' So, early on, you are kind of faced with really challenging situations which will test whether or not you want to - your ambitions to stay in the industry, you know, at a very early stage - situations and characters.

[00:13:06.090] - Interviewer

Do you think that's on purpose, like they're trying to weed people out or that's just the way it is?

[00:13:12.570] - JP1

No, I don't think it's on purpose. However, it is a construct, it is something that - it's something that's risen and perpetuates as a result of repetition. So it could be that those producers or assistant producers who speak to this new more junior staff like garbage -it could be that they've just learned that from other people who spoke to them like rubbish, you know, so - and there's very few safeguards for people to either call out inappropriate behaviour, or to stand up for themselves because you are employed in really precarious employment terms. An awful lot of that employment comes about as a result of providence - so based on a network of people. So those things can kind of make it very much - it can make it really difficult to call out inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

[00:14:27.720] - Interviewer

So basically, if you were to call somebody out, the fear is with this gig economy, you just won't be hired back.

[00:14:36.600] - JP1

Yeah. Absolutely. Especially somewhere like Glasgow where the TV industry, freelance TV industry is close knit and all the independent producers know one another, and all the independent, you know, there's independent production companies here and there's an awful lot of them, actually, but you - people do the rounds of them if you are working as a freelance person, which actually from very early on, I stopped doing. So at that stage in my career when I was doing the runner stuff and I was working at [Major UK Broadcaster 1], I was also picking up jobs at other independent producers as well. And I mean, I suppose I was slightly contrary to the typical experience of TV freelancers, which as I got - I moved into [Major UK Broadcaster 1] at a very early stage in my career and kind of stayed there, whereas an awful lot of my friends and colleagues are still doing that freelance gig, you know, jumping about all different indie producers and [Major UK Broadcaster 1] as well.

[00:16:00.450] - Interviewer

How did you get into a full-time position at [Major UK Broadcaster 1]? When did that happen?

[00:16:08.130] - JP1

I've been staff at [Major UK Broadcaster 1] now for like 13 years? What are we in 2020? Yeah, 13 years or so. I mean, it doesn't come around particularly easily. But I think I realised quite early on that I was one of these people that thrives on security and I don't really, and precarious employment gives me an awful lot of anxiety. I found like, for example, leaving a full-time paid job with a pension, for a five day gig at [Major UK Broadcaster 1] like, that was a real wrench for me to

make the decision to do it. And then trying to survive thereafter and the all the bits and bobs, the scraps that they would throw you from the table and while also maybe trying to balance, like temping what I was doing to make ends meet, I couldn't handle it. So I realised quite early on that if I wanted to make advances in [Major UK Broadcaster 1] and get longer gigs, I would have to start networking and chatting to people and having, you know, meetings and coffees, which are never just coffees. So I think that's how it started. And, you know, the people who would like phone you up who were like, these HR people would phone you up to like, check your availability, just make sure that I was as charming and nice as possible to them because some of the other runners on, you know, when we were out on jobs and I was a bit like, crikey, your personality could affect... So, yeah. But then that gets back to the kind of the providence thing that I was talking about and your network and [Major UK Broadcaster 1] as well as indies. It's all the same. It's about who you know and how well you can ingratiate yourself with them.

[00:18:30.330] - Interviewer

And so what was your first full time job with [Major UK Broadcaster 1]?

[00:18:34.560] - JP1

So my first long gig was actually I was working in drama in a soap called River City, which is still on air at the moment. And my job on a River City was in the first instance was as the office runner. So River City is based out in Dumbarton, which is west of Glasgow. It's about half hour, 45 minute drive out of Glasgow. So I would be like, you know, driving up the M8 in my wee Peugeot 106 death trap car to get there for like - soaps start really, really early, so you had to be there for like seven in the morning and be there till seven at night. And my job was photocopying scripts and sending them to the cast. And the cast, generally, it would change on a whim as to how they wanted to receive their scripts. I mean you couldn't e-mail PDFs or anything like that over, we were still a wee bit beyond that territory. People still wanted - people still existed in an analogue world and still wanted paper scripts, so I would laboriously photocopy them, bind them, phone the person in question, find out where they were going to be that week and have to send it to them. And then I must have proved my mettle in that regard, with being able to perform that insanely boring, laborious, dreadful task. And I was then taken on as the floor runner, which meant that I was working in the AD department with the third, second, first assistant directors, and I was basically their kind of assistant and I was working out on - out in the studio and in the backlot. So the way that it worked, they would do a week filming in studio and they would do a week filming in the backlot. And everything was obviously filmed out of sequence. And that floor runner post was really varied actually, but also horrible [laughs]. It made me realise quite early on that drama wasn't for me because I was still in that sort of career indecision phase like, 'Do I really want to work in telly? Oh, I don't know! Oh, maybe I'd like to be a DOP, mm okay.' So then you see a DOP in a drama situation and you're like, 'Oh god, I don't want to do that!' Because they're just basically being

shouted out by the first assistant director who is being shouted at by the director, who's probably being put under pressure by the executive producer. So the whole thing basically exists on this hierarchy of nerves. So if you're the floor runner, then you're being shouted at constantly. Like I remember, one particular anecdote was, we were filming out in the backlot and a rain shower came over. And we had to stop filming and wait for it to pass. The scene that we were filming was a sort of sunny scene. So the first A.D. was like, '[JP1! JP1!]' shouting my name and I'm kind of like having to drop what I'm doing, like buttering sandwiches or something like that - drop what I'm doing, going run and see what's happening. And he's like, ' We need to move this puddle!' And I'm a bit like, 'What? Move a puddle? How am I meant to do that? - MOVE THE FUCKING PUDDLE, [JP1]!' I'm a bit like, 'Oh, god! What is he talking about?!' And all the other crew are all kind of standing around, looking at you like you're an idiot, like, 'ugh.' And then this little squat little dumpling man just like appears out of nowhere. He's like, 'Oh I'll do it, I'll do it!' And he appears with this huge brush, starts brushing away the puddle from the street. And I was a bit like, 'Oh, right. Obviously, I was meant to like know by some kind of like, I don't know, I was just meant to know via my own intuition somehow that that's what you meant by 'Move a puddle!' And very early on I was like, 'No, this isn't for me.' There's also an incident where I crashed a car as well, which wasn't really particularly great.

[00:23:05.760] - Interviewer

Have you ever worked for a company other than [Major UK Broadcaster 1]?

[00:23:21.030] - JP1

I've been at [Major UK Broadcaster 1] for 13 years now so, I mean, that was me working for them - I was working for them at that stage, and that was bloody ages ago. So, no not in the last 13 years, no. I've worked with a heck of an awful lot of companies because we, [Major UK Broadcaster 1] very often works in partnership with others. And these can be for reasons - for various reasons, either for the kudos of being associated with whoever it is they're working in partnership with. It can be for financial reasons. They may be working in a co-production - it could be for all kinds of reasons. And also, the way [Major UK Broadcaster 1] works is that the department - different production departments within it all sort of operate as their own independent sort of business operating within the wider business, if that makes sense. For example, the newsroom that I work in now, you know, it has absolutely no dealings with any of the other departments in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1]. And it was like that when I worked like in the Arts Documentary Unit - it had absolutely no dealings whatsoever with some of the other in-house production divisions like drama or the entertainment and events department, things like that.



[00:25:02.190] - Interviewer

So can you take me through the - you were just mentioning some different departments that you've worked with. What different departments? So you started out in soaps and where did you go after that?

[00:25:12.090] - JP1

Yes, so. I mean, I worked - what was quite good about that runner position was that you could end up being placed in any of them, because you were just basically filling a hole to like, I don't know do some bloody awful tasks that they needed done. But it usually involved an awful lot of photocopying. But yeah, I worked in all of them. I worked in the entertainment department. I worked in drama. I worked in radio. I worked in - because they change all the time, you know, as the business changes, they kind of rename departments and all the rest of it. The only one I didn't work in very early on at that stage was in news. The reason my career worked out was after the - working in drama, I got a phone call from the lady who arranged the runners pool. She was like, 'Oh, [Arts and Cultural Programme 1] are looking for an office runner. It's a really good contract, it's like, it will be a good few months! Would you be interested in going to meet the production manager?' And I was like, 'Yeah, absolutely!' Because arts was sort of what I really wanted to - is where my natural affinities lead. So I thought, 'Well, maybe if I try this out, there might be - I might quite like it.' So [Arts and Cultural Programme 1] was like an arts and culture weekly magazine programme on [Major UK Channel 2]. And it was a network program as well. It wasn't just a [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] production. You know, it was for the - it was a production that aired on [Major UK Channel 2] and all of the U.K. so I was like, 'Well, that's a bit of kudos as well.' And it was a program that I watched so, I kind of - one week I was working in drama, and then the next week I was working in the production office for an arts magazine program. So and that's actually where I stayed for years, I stayed in that department. And that was the department that I eventually got made staff in. But notwithstanding, you know, it was a very difficult task to get there. And I was employed on a series of fixed term contracts for years and years and years until I eventually got made permanent staff. And the process for doing so was relatively traumatic.

[00:27:51.430] - Interviewer

Really. Why is that?

[00:27:56.110] - JP1

Well, [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has got these rules about like, if you work there for four years running without a break, then you would be entitled to be made permanent staff. So, I remember I had worked on - I think I'd done like two or three seasons of [Arts and Cultural Programme 1], and I'd moved up from being an office runner to being a researcher. So I was earning a little bit more money and - excuse me - it was coming up to the time that the program was going off air. So

usually what would happen would be - they would try and find you other work on other productions that were going on in the department, and the department made an awful lot of kind of, single documentaries and short documentary series like, three part series for [Minor UK TV Channel 1] on like Tudor monasteries or something like that. All this really like esoteric stuff - a bit like the kind of like PBS sort of stuff that would air on that like worthy arts and culture documentary stuff. And so depending on what else was up and running on the departmental slate, which at times could be lots of things and other times may not be very much, they would find you work. And I got pegged onto a documentary about Noël Coward, right? And I was a bit like, 'Oh, that will suit me.' But then something happened. I think it never got properly commissioned and the commission went away. And then they were a bit like, 'Oh, shit, sorry, [JP1], we've not got anything to - there's no work. Work's all dried up. Sorry!' And so I think by that stage I'd had like three and a half years' continuous service, and they were a bit like, 'Sorry! You gotta go. Bye!' And literally, like, one day I had work, the next day I was walking out of the office with my box of stuff and I was a bit like, 'Oh, this sucks!' I was, you know, I wasn't earning particularly good money, I didn't have very good savings. I was living in rented accommodation. And so then you're kind of way back at square one that I was at that stage I was at where I was like, giving up full time work for five day gigs. You know, you're a bit like, 'God how am I going to make ends meet, now?' So then I was out of work for like, I think, I was out of work like five days and then a colleague of mine who had worked in the children's department, phoned me up and was like, 'Are you available? We need a researcher to start tomorrow on like this like children's educational series. And I was like, 'Yes!' So, I actually only had a career break from [Major UK Broadcaster 1] for like, five days, and the terms of [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s own rules and regulations, that's not enough to constitute a significant break in your service.

[00:31:35.440] - Interviewer

OK, that's good.

[00:31:36.990] - JP1

So then, you know, six months elapsed. I was over my four years and I was then able to go to the HR person - quasi HR person and make a case for being made permanent staff. And it was almost like they were surprised, like you'd have thought that there would have been a big ringing bell when somebody was coming up to their four year service to try, you know, to try and get them out the door, because [Major UK Broadcaster 1], with the way it was working at that stage, it was desperate to avoid expensive, costly staffing overheads when it didn't need to have them because the weight of productions was so erratic because it was all based on what they could get commissioned. So there's no point in having five research, staff researchers on the books and only a couple of things on the go to be able to assign them to do, because then you're paying, for staff to essentially sit and do nothing. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] called it 'down time'. So they were

always desperate to avoid having to make people permanent staff in that department. So, I mean, my suspicions are that they knew I was coming up to my four years so they, when [Arts and Cultural Programme 1] finished they attached my name to this to programme that they knew was never - never actually going to get greenlit. And when it went away, it was an excuse for them to kind of not have any egg on their face, and for them just to be able to say, 'Oh, we're really sorry we tried our best for you, but there's no work, bye.' You know in order to try and break my service. But they failed! [laughs]

[00:33:18.990] - Interviewer

I'm not getting a great sense of [Major UK Broadcaster 1] from you, like, if they're really going out of their way to sort of get people to not meet their four year marks so they don't have to hire them.

[00:33:31.090] - JP1

Yeah, I mean, they're, [Major UK Broadcaster 1] would have you think they're this great British institution, which is a brand - [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is. But [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is not run any more efficiently, I would say than, you know, a local authority that I always say - my kind of - one of my more salty things that I say about work is that it's basically the broadcasting equivalent of working for Clackmannanshire Council. Em, you know, it's ridden with bureaucracy and inefficacy, and just not particularly well run, which I think if you asked anybody that worked in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], they would say the same. And it all comes down to the fact that it runs like silos. You know, like I said earlier, you've got these departments, various departments working in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1], for example, where I work, never the twain shall meet. And they're all kind of running their own budgets, running their own little silos of power, and as such, interpret [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s overarching employment rules and regulations in various ways to suit their own business needs. So that's why you get some departments that operate like that, that are trying not to hire people and get them made permanent because then it creates more problems for them because they've got because - I mean, it's fair enough - it's like the TV industry kind of moved on a pace in the 90s when all these independent producers all popped up and they were all really lithe and nimble and they could kind of expand and contract depending on how many people we had on the books. And they treated freelancers like proper freelancers, like everybody knew that that was the gig, you know, would you get hired and then your contract ends and you go on and move onto something else. Whereas [Major UK Broadcaster 1], because it has this kind of legacy, civil service structure in terms of the staffing hierarchy, you're hired as a freelancer, but they treat you like a member of staff, because you got these rules and regulations to follow, you've got training to do, you've got all these public service obligations that [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has to do. You know, you're treated very much like a member of staff. But then they also try and half-heartedly operate like an indie, in terms of the individual department I worked in. So they want to have all the benefits of being an indie in terms of being able to hire and fire people

whenever they like. But then they can't necessarily cope with the challenges of being an indie which are...

[00:36:30.950] - Interviewer

Sorry, what does the term you keep using?

[00:36:33.250] - JP1

What?

[00:36:33.490] - Interviewer

You kept on saying they like to act as a....

[00:36:39.990] - JP1

I beg your pardon. An independent production company.

[00:36:43.020] - Interviewer

OK.

[00:36:45.570] - JP1

And you know, they like to act like an indie. But, they don't necessarily - they can't necessarily cope with the expanding and contracting in volume of work that an indie has, because [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is ostensibly - has a legacy of when it was part of the civil service in World War Two. You know, it's never really moved on from operating its staffing in that regard. So it's a very peculiar, just dysfunctional place to work.

[00:37:19.840] - Interviewer

So if you, let's say that you were the chief exec at [Major UK Broadcaster 1], what do you think can be done? Like, what would you want to see be done to make it less bureaucratic? People treated better. Whatever you think needs to be done. What do you think?

[00:37:37.300] - JP1

Well, what the Director Generals do is - [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is constantly making people redundant. Right. Constantly. There's always some wave of redundancies going on. And what's so odd about [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is they brand each redundancy process, like it gets given a name. Like they got given, like when I've been there, there's been umpteen. And they get given names like, 'Delivering Quality First!' Or 'Delivering Creative Futures!' Or 'Producer Choice!' All this rubbish which is ostensibly is just like 'We're sacking people, we're having to restructure again in

order to try and save money.' Because [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is at the whim of whoever the government is at that time as to the level of the licence fee gets set at. So, for example, for years the licence fee was frozen, which meant that [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s income didn't increase in line with inflation. Because all [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s costs did. So it meant that - what's the most expensive thing you can get rid of? Staff. But if I was in charge, I mean, crikey - they've put so many different Director Generals or divisional leaders are aware of the issues that [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has, they try and put measures in place to mitigate them, but because of the way [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is structured in terms of what I said before, like they've got all these individual departments and individual silos of power. They all kind of just resisted and do their own thing anyway. Really bizarre. There's so many issues going on. It's kind of like local government. Like if you look at your local council, I assume at Edinburgh, I dare say you've probably got all manners of things to say about them from council tax, to the way the bins are collected to the way the council managed to waste billions of pounds of money on a failed tram scheme to all manners of things. [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s exactly the same. So there's so many singular issues going on at any one time that it's very difficult to try and tackle. For me, a big issue with [Major UK Broadcaster 1], that's probably really pertinent at the moment, is around diversity, and the diversity of its workforce and the ways in which that affects the kind of content that you end up seeing on screen. Because [Major UK Broadcaster 1] at the moment suffers from being overwhelmingly pale, male and stale. Right? So it means, therefore, an awful lot of the content that you see that makes it to air speaks to that cohort, and it becomes a challenge therefore, to make the [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s content appeal to audiences, which would appear to be diverse. So with that sort of older White, middle class and male demographic. So, for example, [Major UK Broadcaster 1] really struggles with appealing to women aged 16 to 34 who would perhaps fall in an audience demographic as is a C2, D, E audience demographic, which means people probably from a lower socio-economic background who perhaps don't read broadsheet newspapers, who get their news online, from magazines, things like that. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] usually struggles with them. And that's because there's none of these women who work there, so there's nobody to influence the decision making around content ideas. It's the same with, and this is specific to [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1], there are very few people from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds in order to influence the kind of content we make that might appeal to those potential audiences out there. So [Major UK Broadcaster 1] is in a situation at the moment where it's got an ageing audience cohort, and isn't attracting any new people, so it really imperils the future of the licence fee because why should a 20 year old single mum living in Castlemilk pay for the licence fee when she doesn't experience anything really that looks like her or sounds like her across [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s content? So I would really try and make great waves in that regard to try and improve the ethnic diversity, try and improve the socio-economic diversity of [Major UK Broadcaster 1] and to try - and from an LGBT point of view, actually, gay men and women specifically, are one - the most over-represented minority groups at [Major UK Broadcaster 1]. But

there's still a great deal of issues around trans visibility, around bi visibility, around people who perhaps don't conform to gender binaries around their visibility or even getting themselves taken seriously in [Major UK Broadcaster 1]. So, from a queer perspective, there's an awful lot of work to be done in that regard to. So I think that's what I would try and do. I would try and influence the way that the staffing is to better represent the diversity of the population who are out there so that we can make better content.

[00:43:51.400] - Interviewer

How do you think that could be done in a tangible way? I mean, does it take - well, I don't want to say. How would you say, 'These are the steps that we should take in order to attract and hire more diverse people?'

[00:44:09.820] - JP1

I think it comes down to the way [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s - [Major UK Broadcaster 1] hires people. So we still - it's still a very traditional recruitment process whereby there's a job advert, you apply for it, you get sifted, and if you get sifted, you get taken through a competency based interview, which [Major UK Broadcaster 1] still calls 'boards', which is a legacy of when [Major UK Broadcaster 1] was part of the civil service emerging out of World War Two in the United Kingdom. It's absolutely mental that this kind of vernacular still exists, but there you go. And if you're successful at that board, then you will be hired. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has attempted to get to grips with different forms of recruitment. So, a big innovation for [Major UK Broadcaster 1], was that - a part of the job application process was to be able to submit a video alongside the written application, so that - I'm not really too sure what that was made to test - I think it was meant to test your spontaneity and your ability to be able to just talk off the cuff without being given the opportunity to write down a rehearsed answer. And also, you can gain a great deal of somebody's energy and all the rest of it. As far as I'm concerned, all it does is it permits unconscious biases to influence recruitment decisions, because we're still dealing with a situation whereby the people who were sitting on that interview panel overwhelmingly won't be from diverse backgrounds. They could be making all kinds of assumptions if an Asian 20 year old single mum from Castlemilk suddenly appears on a video talking in an accent that they're not particularly used to and talking about experiences that they're not particularly used to. So I think if you're going to get round this issue of - you have to, I think we in [Major UK Broadcaster 1] have to be doing more around sort of affirmative action recruitment processes whereby we realize that our staff base has to reflect the diversity of the country that's out there. So therefore, we have to be in schools, colleges and in areas where these people live in order to target our recruitment. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has really good apprenticeships schemes in all different elements, and that's something that we do really well, actually. But those apprenticeship schemes, as far as I can see, still aren't targeting people from specific areas and specific backgrounds. They're still very much open to more

traditional recruitment processes whereby these young people still have to apply and all the rest of it. For example, at [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] in Glasgow is based in Govan, which parts of Govan appear on the Scottish index of multiple deprivation. [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] has absolutely no links with the local community whatsoever. Nobody goes into schools. Nobody goes into local colleges to kind of like, 'Oh, we're from [Major UK Broadcaster 1]! These are the kind of things we do. If you're interested in being a journalist, for example, then stay in touch with me and you can come in to the building and you can come and see how we do, you can come and do a week's work experience, you know, building bridges in these communities to let them know what opportunities that are and making it easier for them to apply. Acknowledging the barriers that a lot of people have in coming from these communities that would stop them from coming to a place like [Major UK Broadcaster 1]. An awful lot of lip service is paid to it, but you don't really see very much stuff done on the ground in order to try and do something about it. Sorry, that was a long-winded answer to what you asked.

[00:48:52.590] - Interviewer

No, it wasn't, it was perfect. So something like - I'm gonna guess - some places do blind CVs, but are you kind of saying, 'Well, no, that's not going to work either, because we really have to target different types of people in order to represent the people that we're serving?'

[00:49:12.430] - JP1

Yeah. So like a CV, for example, relies on that person having employ - relevant employment experience to talk about upon it. So yeah, you can blank out the name which could be something like - like your name, for example, which has connotations of being from a non - atypical, White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant background. And for somebody with unconscious bias, could be some kind of flag or trigger in their brain that would cause them to put that CV to the side. We know that the same exists for people with names from Southeast Asia or South Asia have specific connotations whereby recruiters kind of, through their own unconscious bias, make a selection on the CV based on name. So, that's just one thing. But people have to have the relevant employment experience to be able to talk about on the CV in the first place. So if you are from a secondary school and Govan Hill in Glasgow, for example, which is one of the most ethnically diverse in areas in Scotland, then you could be coming from a family background where men are expected to perform specific roles in society and women are perhaps are similarly expected to perform specific roles. A young woman who goes to secondary school in that area might not know that a career in journalism would be open to her, but she may actually have the core competencies and skills to be able to develop in order to progress into a career in that industry. So as such it's not enough just to be doing blank CVs. We have to be giving these young people the opportunities to come in and do work experience in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] so that we can identify what competencies they need to be developing earlier on in their career so that they can go and do that. But also, they've

got the work experience to be able to put on their CV in the first place, that might then give them the edge. I do an awful lot of recruitment in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], and time and time again, we see young kids from middle class backgrounds who have done really well at university. But when they come in front of us in an interview panel, all they have to talk about is university. Whereas somebody who's kind of been out there and has got a couple of employment experiences under their belt, all of a sudden, they've got huge advantage over these very academically gifted people because they've got relevant experience to talk about in the real world. And that's what I'm talking about. It's those kinds of experiences we need to give these young people who perhaps aren't going to go on to university. And we do have the ability to do that, but there's no kind of top level aspiration to be making connections within these communities.

[00:52:34.610] - Interviewer

You were talking before about how the silos and the silos of power. Do you think that that's something that's in all of the UK? I mean, maybe you can't say, but you did say that you have some experience working with other companies. Do you think that's particular to [Major UK Broadcaster 1] or is it across the industry in the UK do you think?

[00:53:03.120] - JP1

I think it's very specific to the public sector in the United Kingdom. In the wider, and maybe actually if we look at things in the context of how Scotland compares to other parts of the UK, for example, then that may be more purposeful. Like I've worked in other parts of [Major UK Broadcaster 1], I've worked for [Major UK Broadcaster 1] in Salford, where there's a big [Major UK Broadcaster 1] base there, and I worked with [Major UK Broadcaster 1] in London, all of which visually, as soon as you walk in the door, have much better diversity. And perhaps that's just by virtue of the fact that there are bigger ethnic - let's talk about ethnic minorities for talking's sake - populations in those, you know, in Salford, in London, and so therefore, automatically the chances by default will be higher that that will be reflected in the staffing community at [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s base there. But, like when I worked in the arts department, for example, we would often work alongside places like the National Gallery in London, the National Portrait Gallery, The Tate, the Royal Academy - all these really big arts institutions in London - and I was always shocked by the fact that everyone I met was a 'Cordelia' or something like that - really erudite men, White men and women from clearly highly educated backgrounds. We deal with an awful lot of PR agencies, and some of the really big agencies like Colman Getty or whoever, down in London, they would always be really erudite, White, middle class young people working for them, too. So in terms of like [Major UK Broadcaster 1], and it's got these kind of other industries that sort of interact with the press and PR publicity, to big media institutions like galleries and things like that, these are all people from like-minded backgrounds who are talking to one another, and from my experience, it's like anything that falls



outwith those very atypical identities would be termed 'community outreach'. And I think purely by the virtue of calling it something like that, it keeps people at arm's reach.

[00:56:20.590] - Interviewer

It sounds like charity?

[00:56:22.420] - JP1

Yes. Absolutely, it sounds like charity. And like, and literally and as such, we're only doing it to tick a box to say that they do these things so that when they come to be audited, they have got these things to be able to talk about. So, although you do sometimes see in other parts of the UK better diversity compared to Scotland, that could be because there is a larger, more diverse population to - for people to be employed from, so perhaps it just happens by default. But actually, when you look at the other similar industries who interact with places like [Major UK Broadcaster 1], you very often don't see that diversity is as widespread. It still very much feels like it's people from White middle class backgrounds who are taking up space.

[00:57:33.130] - Interviewer

Do you think that increasing diversity would help with these things, like having a better working environment? You were talking about, you know, these hierarchies of power and people yelling at each other all day. And that just seems to be, from what I gather, the norm. I mean, is it, first of all, is it still like that in your in your job? Is it - it doesn't sound like it's only directed at runners, it just sounds like it's everyone. So, is that still happening and do you think diversity would help that or not necessarily?

[00:58:18.090] - JP1

So where I've ended up working now in the newsroom...yes! [laughs] Yes, it is still quite a frenetic and challenging place to work with in terms of the personalities that you can encounter day to day. There are people who - overwhelmingly people know that we're all there trying to do the same job, get content on air accurately, efficiently and in time. But you still encounter an awful lot of challenging personalities that can kind of make that process more difficult. Whether or not greater diversity would stop people acting in an unprofessional way? That remains to be seen. However, we're talking there about behaviour and how people interact with their colleagues round about them. If we, however, look at diversity from the point of view of how it would improve the generation of ideas, and we look at that as a singular issue, I think that is actually - it would be something that would be a real benefit. Because, for example, I went from [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1], which I mean, literally you could count the ethnic minority people who work there on one hand, there's been between seven and eight hundred people that work at [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1]. So I went from that to Salford, which was a part of [Major UK Broadcaster 1] that

grew ostensibly out of nowhere because [Major UK Broadcaster 1] realised it needed to decentralise out of London. So, it built a huge base in the North where it then moved an awful lot of departments to wholesale like, you know, like [Major UK Broadcaster 1 Radio Show] moved wholesale from London up to Salford. They moved the children's department of [Major UK Broadcaster 1] wholesale up to Salford. And we're seeing the same now with [Major UK Broadcaster 2] moving up to Leeds. It's all about London decentralisation, which if you look back in the annals of history, central government, for example, has been decentralising out of London for years and flinging up out into the Northern territories. And then it kind of - it changes again and people go back and, anyway. So at the moment we've got this place in the North, which sort of sprung up out of nowhere and because an awful lot of people wouldn't move from London to go up and live in the North, there was a heck of a lot of staffing opportunities that needed to be filled. And we're seeing that with [Major UK Broadcaster 2] in Leeds at the moment. If you look at LinkedIn there's constantly job vacancies for [Major UK Broadcaster 2] in Leeds.

[01:01:55.720] - Interviewer

Good to know. [laughs]

[01:01:58.020] - JP1

Well, yes exactly! I mean, I keep an eye on the job market and [Major UK Broadcaster 2] was like Fort Knox, you know, there was never job opportunities at [Major UK Broadcaster 2]. But now where we have this decentralisation, there was tons of openings. So anyway, so in this [Major UK Broadcaster 1] department where they all of a sudden had to recruit people - this [Major UK Broadcaster 1] beast - sorry, not department - they all of a sudden had to recruit people very, very quickly. So they forged links with local schools, local colleges. Salford Uni, for example, has a big campus at MediaCityUK. Salford University does very well in terms of its diversity. So purely by virtue of having that connection, there's a good feeder of diverse, well able bodied candidates into roles when they come up with [Major UK Broadcaster 1]. When I worked there, we used - and that was in the children's department, a programme called '[Children's News Programme]', which is one of [Major UK Broadcaster 1]'s oldest running news brands. It's a news service specifically for young children aged six to twelve, I think was the target audience. And we used to do like stepping out programmes where we would go into schools in the local area and just go and talk to them about careers in journalism and I think purely by [Major UK Broadcaster 1] in Salford, having those connections really helped with having a more diverse workforce at this time where they needed to hire all these new people. So I would sit in ideas meetings in the morning with these emboldened production teams who were emboldened by people from all different walks of life and the ideas generation, it was just like it was like something I'd never, ever heard before. People were talking about stuff that they could talk about by virtue of their own lived experience. And so, for example, when I worked there, it was at the time of the migrant crisis where we saw a huge wave of

refugees and economic migrants all trying to get across Europe at the same time and they were coming from countries like Sierra Leone and Afghanistan and Iraq. You know, these were people from vastly different walks of life, all attempting this big pilgrimage to attempt to try and get themselves better lives. And an awful lot of them ended up in a refugee camp that sprung up in Calais, which is right in the northern coast of France and is the main port to get across to the United Kingdom because it's where the Channel Tunnel is. It's where the shipping is into Dover. So this kind of became a natural sort of autozoetic point for an awful lot of these people. So we're sitting in the '[Children's News Programme]' production team trying to think of ways to tell this story to young children. And purely because of the diversity of the people who were on that production team, they were coming up with really innovative and interesting ways to tell that story. And I don't think that had it been a group of White people who had all been university educated, all from A, B, C1, middle class households, I don't think that we would have been able to tell that story as well for audiences. And so that was kind of a very clear indication to me about the importance of diversity when it comes to the people who are making the stuff that will end up making it on air.

[01:06:27.970] - Interviewer

So that's interesting. So that diversity helped - enabled creativity. Is that fair to say?

[01:06:34.990] - JP1

A hundred percent - without a shadow of a doubt because I mean, automatically me being from West Coast of Scotland, all my family or Scottish since time immemorial when you look back. So you're asking me to be a producer on a story about a whole range of people who are - who could be fleeing war, persecution and violence in countries that I never visited. And automatically, therefore, I don't have as an informed an experience to be able to make judgements on how to tell that story. And maybe you could argue that that could have its benefits, because therefore, I am totally impartial. However, I think you can learn impartiality. You can learn how to tell a story without bias as much you can. However, in terms of the way that that story will then trickle down to the audience who might have limited experience of that journey, you know, an awful lot of people, for example, from the subcontinent came to the United Kingdom as a result of Partition, which as we knew was a really, really traumatic event in the Indian subcontinent, which led to an awful lot of bloody repercussions for the people who lived there. Their children, or grandchildren are the people I'm working alongside in these production teams. So therefore, they automatically knew purely by virtue of their own upbringing how a story about Partition will shake down with minority ethnic audiences who are already living in the United Kingdom. And that's what I experienced when I worked there. So, yeah, I think there's absolutely no doubt about it. And I mean, we've talked about things specifically kind of from an ethnic minority background. I think the same can be said of LGBT+ people. [Major UK Broadcaster 1] has quite an active Pride movement, for example, within it. And the Pride team consistently try and lobby for more prominence in [Major UK

Broadcaster 1] in terms of positioning Pride as a resource in order to better inform how content themed around LGBT+ people can be made. For example, because of the Gender Recognition Act reforms that are currently under review, we're seeing an awful lot of live debate over trans inclusion for example, and debate around how people who claim to be coming from a feminist perspective say that trans rights then diminish women's rights. So you'll have heard it on the radio. There's loads of live [Radio Station] about these things. And quite often they are done pretty poorly. They're done in a way that infers as though - it 'others' trans people. And then on the flip side, it demonises people who are trying to pay attention to come at things from a feminist perspective. And I think that the way that these live discussions are done don't end up particularly purposeful for either side. So, you know, the Pride team attempt to position themselves as a resource to be able to advise on, like if a radio programme is wanting to do a live discussion, you know, who the sort of a more informed voices are on either sides of those debates in order to try and come up with a piece of content whereby people might learn something rather than positioning things as a binary, which isn't particularly purposeful. So that's one example of how diversity from an LGBT point of view is trying to influence the kind of content that we end up seeing making it to air.

[01:11:31.490] - Interviewer

Can I ask what is the Gender Recognition Act reform and what is currently being under review?

[01:11:38.850] - JP1

So, the Gender Recognition Act as the process which allows trans people to self-determine their chosen gender.

[01:11:52.390] - Interviewer

This is something in the UK government?

[01:11:57.210] - JP1

Yes. So, look at it from the - it's currently under review - there's a Gender Recognition Act - Scotland, which is something that is legislated within the Scottish Parliament. There is also the UK Gender Recognition Act, which is legislated in Westminster. The UK Act I'm pretty sure only covers England and Wales and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Act is how the legislation is interpreted in Scotland. And this gets us into the territories of the devolved nations in the United Kingdom and how some nations have the authority to legislate over specific areas that are devolved. And so in Scotland we can come up - we already have a gender recognition act and we can therefore review it and come up with other reforms so that the Gender Recognition Act can better reflect the situation for trans people in 2020 compared to when it was first instituted in the early part of the 21st century. Does that make sense?

[01:13:22.610] - Interviewer

So Scotland already has a gender recognition act and is it that Westminster is still working on one?

[01:13:29.040] - JP1

No, no. There's a UK Gender Recognition Act and there is a Scottish Gender Recognition Act. Both of which - you must forgive me - I'm not sure how the two differ. And I only really have knowledge of the Gender Recognition Act as it is now and how they are looking to reform it in Scotland. A good resource, I mean, if you're interested in looking into it, a good resource would be the Equality Network. There's a chap who runs it called Tim Hopkins and he is one of the third sector people who is involved in informing the Scottish Parliament on how these gender recognition forms should shake down. So he would have knowledge in terms of the bigger picture, in terms of which home nations in the United Kingdom have their own versions of it and what the differences are between them. I only really knew about it from the point of view of it in Scotland, because it's something that we report on quite often. So, for example, as it stands at the moment, the Gender Recognition Act in Scotland - if I was born male and I decided that I, you know, through gender dysphoria, I was actually female, you need to have a medical certificate. And the only way you can get that is through a process which trans people see as sort of dehumanising, sort of theologised, medical process whereby you have to go through a panel of people who will decide whether or not you have gender dysphoria and as to whether or not you can make changes to your birth certificate, for example, and to your chosen gender. So the Gender Recognition Act reforms now, we seek to meet that process much, much easier for trans people whereby you can self-determine and you don't need to go through this medical process in order to determine your own gender identity. You can choose it and it makes it a heck of a lot easier. And that is an area of concern for some people who think that it would open up opportunities for it to be exploited by people for the purposes of ill-gotten gain.

[01:16:24.170] - Interviewer

I'm not sure - do you have an example of what type of exploitation like that would be?

[01:16:30.440] - JP1

So there are some groups who identify as women's groups who say that if you give someone the ability to be able to say that they are female, even though they are born male, that it would then give them the opportunity to be able to use spaces that are designated women's only spaces and exploit them for the purposes of sexual gratification or something like that. This seems to be one of the main bugbears that comes up an awful lot, that if you reform the Gender Recognition Act to make it easier for trans people to choose their gender, that gendered spaces then could become compromised because people will be able to gain access to them just purely by virtue of the fact that saying that they are the gender that that space designates and it creates problems around

public safety. And in terms of the way the debate goes on, that is seen to be those reasons to restrict trans people's rights, are seen as being kind of like the extreme end of that - of the debate that goes on - the debate sort of operates on a spectrum where there are also really extreme views on the sort of trans end of the spectrum as well. So it's a really difficult nuanced debate to get into. I'm not sure if even I've done it justice here - talking about it sort of it more of a brief and glib way than the seriousness of it warrants. But it's just one example of the things that come up that [Major UK Broadcaster 1] could report on better and it would report on them better if it had more representation of trans people, for example, in within the people who are making programming, making decisions that inform content.

[01:19:02.110] - Interviewer

That was great. Thank you. I'm conscious of the time I don't want to keep you too long. I do sort of want to get back to issues of leadership in general and what encourages - what types of leadership encourage creativity and what types don't. So can you talk a little bit about, first of all, the hierarchies that you see perhaps currently and even in other roles that you've had, like when you were working for drama, perhaps, and how those might differ? Who is the main creative force on a particular program, let's say?

[01:19:59.570] - JP1

I think in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], for example, the leadership tend to be subsumed into a world of leadership, if you like, whereby the minute you become a manager, ostensibly, you get removed from the creative process and your post ends up becoming more about management. It's about budgets. It's about staffing. It's about strategy. And so, therefore, you sort of rely on the people you've hired in order to continue coming up with creative solutions to - for storytelling purposes. And so actually, being a leader in [Major UK Broadcaster 1], sort of takes you away from being a creative force and you become far more about the sort of rigors of management. And so in terms of the main creative force on a program or piece of news content across TV or radio or online, it is very much with the individual members of the production team. And news sort of operates very differently from a documentary team, for example, or a game show team or anything else of that nature. The way that the teams operates is very different. So, if we talk about things from a news point of view, for example, say I'm tasked with coming up with a piece covering how the coronavirus is being transmitted in care homes. We can't get into film in any of these care homes. And so therefore, you've got to come up with sort of creative solutions to get around those issues with your storytelling. So that decision making is very much down to me and the correspondent I could be working with that given day to come up with a sort of visual metaphor or really clever way of scripting something in order to impart complex pieces of information. When I worked in documentary teams, that's a wee bit more hierarchical in terms of you could be a researcher or an assistant producer working with a producer/director and depending on the power and influence of

the presenter, they could also have a stake in the storytelling mechanisms that you use in the course of making the documentary in order to impart difficult concepts or really sort of difficult to understand pieces of information. So in those sorts of circumstances in documentaries, it's very much those members of the production team, and then you're kind of there to sort of facilitate their vision. And I mean, then your ability to do that relies upon the extent to which these people have clearly defined communication skills, which some people do, some people don't. But then, like, say if I was working on a game show, which I have done in my time, albeit not in a particularly senior capacity, it feels that creative decision making is something that actually happened relatively early on in the process, in the development process, for example, because game shows operate on a clearly defined format, a format which tends to be what gets these shows commissioned, so something really smart. Let let's look at a game show that's ran and ran for years and years would be like...

[01:25:08.830] - Interviewer

Countdown?

[01:25:10.070] - JP1

Yeah. Or The Weakest Link or something that ran for a long time. And then was sold internationally and made the people who held the IP an awful lot of money. And that was commissioned on a very simple format of the more right questions you answer, the longer you remain in the game. You answer a question wrong, and you're chucked out, ergo, you are the weak link in the chain of people. So the creative decision making is kind of locked down pretty early on in the process in a game show format.

[01:25:50.770] - Interviewer

So who does that then?

[01:25:51.500] - JP1

That would be the people who developed the idea in the first place. And so the development producers, many of whom insist on getting credits on these programs, like, for example, *Big Brother* is probably quite a good example. The concept of *Big Brother*, it was a company called Endemol who were a production company, an independent production company based in the Netherlands who came up with the concept of *Big Brother*. And they were able to then sell that format around the world and then set up bases all over the world, and then they expanded their business and were able to buy an awful lot of smaller independent production companies. Like, for example, there used to be an independent producer in Glasgow who was then - I can't remember the name of - you'll have to forgive me - who was then bought by Endemol and that then meant that they then became the Scottish arm of sort of the Endemol Network of companies. But anyway,

so *Big Brother*, for example, if you look at that, I think the guy who came up with *Big Brother* gets a credit wherever the *Big Brother* format is sold to across the world. So that kind of goes to show you that, you come up with a really good format idea and you can show you have the intellectual property over it, that you can make lots of money, but the creative decisions as to how that format plays out are made really early on in. That's maybe three different examples.

[01:27:39.020] - Interviewer

The doc teams that you were talking about - would you say it's sort of - the creative force is kind of equally spread between the producer/director and presenter if they're well known and have a lot of power? How is that? Yeah. How does that play out?

[01:27:55.540] - JP1

No [laughs]. On a documentary, some presenters generally are hired either for their expertise on a specific subject or for their ability to be able to demonstrate an arc in the story through their acquisition of new knowledge. So, like a programme with a really eminent story and somebody like Simon Schama. He's hired because of his huge in depth knowledge of a subject. And he is able to illustrate that subject in really interesting ways. So a chap like him will very much lead the way in which a documentary is told. And whether or not that documentary comes off well, is based on his relationship with the producer/director, who is the person who has to then kind of interpret the way Simon is telling the story and think of visual ways in which to do it. The same could be said of an arts documentary. Somebody like Andrew Graham-Dixon, for example, who is an art historian and knows a great deal about art movements and specific artists and the way they intersect with others. So whether a documentary is a success or not is very much based on the strength of his relationship with the producer/director. So if you're a particularly challenging character type to work with, then that can put that relationship in jeopardy. Some presenters are easier to work with than others. But then on the flip side, there are some documentary types which are very much about putting a presenter into an unknown situation. So like maybe a good example would be that *Marigold Hotel* documentary series that's just finished at the moment. And that's kind of like a group - that's like an ensemble cast, if you like, of British stalwarts of stage and screen being put into situations completely atypical for them. So, for example, we saw, like the singer Barbara Dickson like living in Mumbai in India. And the power and the creativity comes in how the producer or director visually represents that juxtaposition, the cultural juxtaposition, and also the story arc of Barbara Dickson being this kind of grand singer with a reputation for being a diva, how that then transposes to her like being put in a situation where she has to drink the blessed water from the Ganges, for example. You know, that kind of shows a particular story arc, how do you represent the drama in that and the emotional turmoil that your character's in, so therefore, the presenter kind of becomes a character in the narrative and creativity is very much down to the producer/director as they often are.



[01:31:47.410] - Interviewer

And so the producer/director is one person?

[01:31:51.840] - JP1

Yeah, I mean in olden times, it used to be that you would have a producer and a director on a programme, but now you know - budgets. And also, I dare say, people just love the glory of having the combined title. There's probably a little of that going on as well.

[01:32:14.570] - Interviewer

And what about - have you ever heard of the term showrunner?

[01:32:22.090] - JP1

Yeah, that's something that you tend to get more in drama, like friends of mine who work in drama or film, for example, they will work with showrunners. Like there is a series is big in North America - *The Royals* with Liz Hurley in it and Joan Collins - it's like a pastiche of the British royal family. It has a showrunner, for example, who's this sort of mercurial figure who kind of seems to have an influence on absolutely everything from writing to the way in which a particular character is developed to the way in which the set will be built around this specific development of that character. So that's not really something I know particularly very much about because I suppose we don't really tend to have them in areas of television that I've worked in. They tend to operate more in a scripted...I can actually put you in touch with a friend of mine who, she used to work at [Major UK Broadcaster 1], and then she has kind of made the jump into working in films, feature films. So she's worked with [famous film director], for example, she did that [famous animated film] film, she worked with him. And I suppose that's feature films. But then she's also worked on dramas, which have showrunners, she could tell you more about that.

[01:34:03.990] - Interviewer

That would be fantastic, if you don't mind doing that. I would love that.

[01:34:11.850] - JP1

I'll ask her if she's around. She's not working at the moment because of Coronavirus, so she's got loads of time.

[01:34:16.260] - Interviewer

Yeah, that's what I'm hoping. I mean, it has been difficult finding people because either they say, 'Oh, you know, I'm just under the gun right now because I'm trying to hold everything together' or, you know. Yeah. I thought more people would be, would have more time on their hands. But it

doesn't seem like that. But that would be fantastic. Yeah. Just to wrap things up, and this could be a big question, but if you were to talk about maybe a time when you were sort of at your creative best and what enabled that to happen, especially in terms of leadership, maybe that you were working under somebody who was very helpful in some way, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but a time that you were at your creative best, what was that like in terms of if you can think about it in terms of leadership and then a time that was the opposite. What was the difference there?

[01:35:20.410] - JP1

So I come back to [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] after a period of like two years working away from [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] on secondment. I had been in London and Salford. And then I came back. I'd got a job working on a live magazine show. And in terms of me being at my creative best? Because I'd worked in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] for a long time, and then I'd taken a secondment and then I'd come back. I feel very much renewed with a sense of accomplishment, and when I came back, I kind of felt as though I could do anything. And I attributed that to all the different experiences that I had had working with some really, really diverse people, working - getting opportunities to do things that I'd never been able to do, you know, from working in [Major Scottish Broadcaster 1] before. And all of those things kind of combined to really boost my self-esteem and boost my confidence in my editorial decision making, and editorial judgment. And that also combined with working with a really, really great leader. My manager at the time, because it was a new production that we were working on - it was starting up from scratch. We were very much in the realms of like, 'Ok, well we've been commissioned to do this weekly topical magazine program. How the hell are we going to do it?' So her approach was very collegiate in terms of trying to get everybody involved in having their creative input into how we might do this programme. And also, she was about giving people opportunities to be able to develop areas of their specific career that they wanted. So, for example, prior to that point, I'd never done any on-air reporting, and it was something that I really wanted to try. So she made it happen for me. And that was because she trusted my editorial decision making, I demonstrated enthusiasm for the project. And that was all because I felt at that time I was working at my creative best, so I was able to then instil trust in my boss, who was able to then give me the opportunities that I wanted to develop. So and then a time when it was the opposite was probably prior to me going off on my secondment. Because I'd kind of got a bit stuck in a rut. I felt as though my character type, I'd become quite negative. Like, I'd become the kind of person whereby if you'd asked me, 'Oh, [JP1] how's your day going?' I'd be like, 'Shit.' Or 'Not very good, oh, moan, moan, moan.' I kind of realised that that's what I was doing and I was conscious, I was bit like 'Oh, god, I don't want to be characterised in this sort of negative vain.' But it's because I hadn't had very much variety in my role up until that point. I'd been a researcher for a very long time. I kind of felt as though I wasn't being given opportunities to develop my career and move up. And I was kind of being stifled and kind of kept at

a very specific position, because I was very good at it. But by the time it came to the end of my tenure as being a researcher, I was good at the bare bones of doing the job, but I wasn't perhaps particularly enthusiastic about it. But now, with hindsight, I attribute the reason I wasn't being given opportunities is because I wasn't working at my creative best, because I wasn't able to demonstrate to my leaders' enthusiasm and passion for the job. My leaders were kind of very aware that I was frustrated in my role and as such, I was kind of displaying certain negative character traits. So then I decided that what I had to do in order to shake myself down, dust myself off, was to throw myself into a new experience. So, I'd been applying and applying and applying and applying for roles in the post up from the one I was in. And eventually I got one. It was [Major UK Broadcaster 1] in Salford and I went off and did it. And I approached that opportunity as a sort of fresh start, a blank slate, and the success of it would be very much down to me and how I managed myself.

[01:40:41.840] - Interviewer

What was the difference between the role you had been doing and this new role in Salford?

[01:40:46.720] - JP1

It was one step up in the hierarchy. So I had been a researcher for a very long time and this was the next role up from that as an assistant producer. I mean essentially, depending on where you work, they're more or less the same job. But it's paid a bit better. But this role - and it was very specific to the production I was working on - the assistant producer job - I was out filming all day, every day. I was editing my work, my own work when I came back. And it was very much the kind of - the way I work is, and I've come about to work as a result of these experiences as - I'm a bit of a control freak, so I really like to be involved in the end to end process. Coming up with an idea, going out and filming it myself, either with contributors or with a presenter. And then I come back and I edit it, and I put it out on air. You know, and I do all the writing. So this was an opportunity to do that. And I absolutely loved it.

[01:41:51.620] - Interviewer

So do you feel that having that kind of ownership over a product, so you write it, you go out and help film it. You edit it. Is that, does that help more in the creative process on your end? Is that more fulfilling to you?

[01:42:07.420] - JP1

I think so, yeah, because you're not having to, but it relies very much upon you having the technical skills in order to be able to do that. Like I went out and got the training to be able to self-shoot. I spent the time learning how to edit. And I had also spent an awful lot of time developing my writing abilities. So therefore I'd spent the time investing in acquiring the technical skills so that I

could work in that way. There's an awful lot of people who work very well in terms of being part of the chain you know, so they just perform one specific part of that process. But I think more and more because of the way TV production is going, you have to be able to demonstrate a great degree of flexibility and be in possession of a wider spectrum of skills that maybe 20 years ago you wouldn't have had to do. Which is sad, because it's a bit like I suppose it means that there are specific roles that are disappearing, like on a documentary, you would never work with a sound man anymore because the DOP that you'll be working with has to, you know, generally does all that kind of stuff. On a high end like a [Major UK Television Channel] documentary, you will still work with sound men. But the kind of [Minor UK Television Channel], lower budget art stuff I was working on, we never went out with sound guys. And it's the same in news. You know like, I mean there are editors there to work with because we've got a load of staff who don't know how to edit, but I just cut all my own stuff. That's the way I enjoy working.

[01:43:56.090] - Interviewer

It's interesting. So you said reflecting back on the bad times before you went on secondment, you were feeling very negative, but you were also feeling like, 'well, maybe that's...' Because you weren't moving up or and you were kind of stuck in a rut. But it was also - it's like the chicken and the egg. What do you think it was? Was it your environment that caused you to be negative or your negative [attitude], that caused you to not move up? And what did your leaders have to do with it?

[01:44:30.890] - JP1

A bit of both. I think the kind of human condition - it's only because I've spent so long in therapy that I know this - the human condition, we will generally, for whatever reason, when conflict emerges we will tend to focus on the negative rather than try to pinpoint the positives and focus on that. So I think I was always kind of naturally inclined to kind of be a little bit melancholic. And then also the environment I was working in, I was finding it very hard to kind of leave work at work. I would kind of come home and think and focus on the conflicts that I might have had that day or things I could have done better. Or I would focus on language that I might have used that I kind of really regretted using in hindsight because it would kind of characterise me in a specific light. So yeah, but at the end of the day, the onus is on you as an individual to be self-aware enough to be able to identify things that you maybe need to do a little bit of self-work on in order to get where you need to be. You know, I'm a really great believer in that, that it has to be a two way street. Like, we've spoken an awful lot about some of the institutional issues in [Major UK Broadcaster 1]. And they are longstanding and they are there and there's widespread acknowledgement that they're there. But then I think also, in order to be in a position where you are able to contribute to be able to solve that problem, you have to be able to be working on your soft skills, on your emotional skills, on your interpersonal skills, on your self-awareness in order to be the best you can be. And that's a spectrum, because naturally, depending on the complexities of the project or

the challenging personalities that you could be working with, you can slide back into that melancholia. However, you have to then equip yourself with the abilities to get to lift yourself back up again and I feel quite confident that that's the place I'm in in my career.

[01:46:49.100] - Interviewer

Was there anything about the leadership at that time that influenced that condition?

[01:46:54.360] - JP1

I think it's about having enough experience under your belt of different people, different character types to know how to modulate yourself when you're in their presence. And I think that's very much on schooling yourself, on picking up on you know, behavioural signals, communication signals that are coming from a particular leader in order to know how to modulate yourself and adapt in order to have success with the projects that they give you. Or just very much in the interpersonal level, if you end up talking to somebody on the lift who is a specific leader. So a little bit kind of like circles of influence, I suppose. You'll have your sort of like your - you're in the middle of the circle whereby you've got your supporters and you've got your people around you that you know that you can rely upon in order to succeed at specific tasks. Then you've also got people who are outside of your circles of influence who potentially could have leverage in order to get you places you need to go. And it's them that you really need to focus on bringing into your inner circle in order to have success at moving on in specific things or that could open up new opportunities and things like that for you. So I think all of that awareness only comes with experience and having done it for 13 years now I think I kind of know enough to be able to sort of like navigate that sort of mine field.

[01:48:36.890] - Interviewer

You almost talk about these leaders that you sort of have to kind of navigate as a matter of course. Like you're just going to come up with people that are just not great and you just have to know how to work with them. It sounds a bit sad to me that you have to, that it's just a matter of fact that you're going to have a lot of leaders that are just crap and you just have to know how to deal with them. Is that what you're saying? Basically?

[01:49:10.340] - JP1

Yeah. 100%. But, I think it's like that everywhere, in every single walk of life. Because we're in a world whereby we're only starting to get to grips with the way unconscious bias affect institutions. We have unconscious bias that affects recruitment in the workplace - the way that people can pass or fly under the radar in order to get to where they get to. And I think that affects absolutely everywhere. Like, if you look at the world of politics, I mean, I'm sure we can pinpoint specific politicians that we think to ourselves, 'How in the heck did you manage to get where you are now, into these positions of high office?' And it is all as a result of the things that we've just talked about.

And so I think it serves you in great stead sometimes to be able to be a little bit - it's difficult, I suppose, because through being a bit Machiavellian and through being a bit of a chameleon, camouflaging yourself and adapting and reacting to every situation you find yourself in, you're constantly having to hide a wee bit of yourself. But, if you work in corporations and you work in a hierarchical place, then you have to kind of temper being your fully authentic self and being your work self. It's just the reality of the world that we inhabit.

[01:51:07.970] - Interviewer

Do you think that could change?

[01:51:13.810] - JP1

I mean that would be great if it could. But I think we exist in a world whereby people still feel threatened by folk who are different to them. So therefore, it helps to be able to all speak in a sort of language that everyone can understand. Maybe it's a little bit like Esperanto. And, you know, I don't think it will change any time soon. I think we will still very much operate in that sort of hierarchical structure that companies work in for some time. It'll take time for it to bed down and change, but who knows?

[01:52:08.500] - Interviewer

Do you think it's the hierarchical structure that demands this kind of sort of negative attitude? Do you think it's possible to have a strict hierarchy and not have, and still have good leaders?

[01:52:22.120] - JP1

I think hierarchies thrive on power. So it's down to individual leaders as to how they choose to use that power. You can get people like the wonderful woman that I worked with when I came off of secondment who was inclusive and was about taking into account an awful lot of different people's thoughts and feelings and experiences on a subject before she would then make a decision about how we were all going to move forward as a team. But then you get other people who use power very much as a means to put weight on the people below them in order to get them to do what they want. So, you know, it's all down to how people use their power.

[01:53:05.370] - Interviewer

Have you ever led? Have you ever been a leader? I'm not sure - it sounds like you kind of work a lot like by yourself. But do you lead other people or have you ever led other people in your work?

[01:53:19.200] - JP1

Yes. So if I am out on a news gathering assignment, for example, with like a camera operator and a reporter and all the rest of it. Because there are times when I do go out with camera operators,

like then you're working with very small units and you as the producer have to be the leader. And there was a time when I was seconded to go and work as an output producer on one of our news programmes. So that's very much an office-based role, and you're in charge of putting together a running order and putting the program on air. So therefore, you're kind of in charge of knowing where all the reporters are and what kind of stories you're getting in, the latest angle on a story and blah,blah, blah. So yeah, it happened in those positions.

[01:54:06.900] - Interviewer

And how would you describe your leadership? I mean, most people think they're good leaders. So if you were to say, like, I do these things well, I think it works well. What would those things be?

[01:54:20.480] - JP1

Well, I think because I've worked with so many crap ones, I kind of understand what it takes in order to keep the train on the tracks. So I think good leaders make quick decisions and kind of stand by those decisions, even whether they prove to be right or wrong. I think good leaders use inclusive language and respectful language. I think a good leader tries to bring in other members of the team. Perhaps if you feel - identifying people who might not be contributing, and that could be down to, you know, personal issues or whatever legacy issues. So I don't know, I mean, I dare say I would have been an inexperienced leader, so it could mean that those decisions that I made weren't always the right ones. But I think in terms of my interpersonal skills was where I was most successful.

[01:55:20.790] - Interviewer

Can you just give me one example of that, how you used your interpersonal skills to, and how that enhanced creativity, perhaps?

[01:55:31.540] - JP1

I'd have to think. Actually I need to go to the toilet, so maybe we can reconvene in like five minutes?

[01:55:38.300] - Interviewer

Or you know what, if you want to just think about it and maybe email me what you what you think. That's totally fine.

[01:55:45.190] - JP1

Alright, I can do that.

[01:55:46.590] - Interviewer

So, OK, that's terrific. I mean, we've been going for a while now, so I don't want to keep you any longer. The only thing I would say is I'll e-mail you the question just so you don't forget what it is. And then perhaps, and I'll also ask you again to maybe reach out to your friend who worked in drama. Yes. That would be great.

[01:56:10.380] - JP1

And see the Gender Recognition Act stuff like, it's a while since I reported on it, so it could have been maybe some of my facts around the specifics of it are a wee bit out of date, so maybe just do a bit of fact checking.

[01:56:25.700] - Interviewer

That's terrific. OK, [JP1], thank you so much. This has been fantastic. And I'll send you that e-mail in a bit. OK. Enjoy the rest of your day.

[01:56:37.820] - JP1

Thank you!

[01:56:38.450] - Interviewer

Thanks, bye!