CORPORATE CHAPLAINS:

CLERGY ROLE ENACTMENT IN THE FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

By

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the phenomenon of spiritually-oriented organizational support; particularly how corporate chaplains manage the role negotiation and enactment that occurs in their simultaneous roles as clergy in the community and their roles as corporate chaplains. Findings demonstrated that role negotiation and enactment was trumped by chaplains' ubiquitous identification with their religious vocation, as the particular jobs as clergy (i.e. minister) and corporate chaplain seemed to fall under the wider umbrella of vocation. Thus any context (job) may be integrated as long as it allows the individuals to pursue their vocations. Second, the findings acknowledged how strategic ambiguity positively supported the situational emergence of the chaplain's role and the individualization of those roles. Corporate chaplaincy programs may be a highly effective way to promote an "environment of caring" (Mumby & Putnam, 1992); however, additional research is needed to substantiate these claims. Researchers should continue to examine chaplaincy programs as well as other Employee Assistance Programs to find additional avenues for supportive communication in the workplace.

CHAPTER ONE

In the last five years, a growing number of for-profit organizations have implemented programs to provide onsite, spiritually-based employee support. In these programs of corporate chaplaincy, individual chaplains must negotiate two very different roles: member of the clergy and representative of a for-profit organization. This study seeks to explore the role creation and enactment of corporate chaplains in a context where formerly separate entities of religion and work intersect.

Organizational motivations for providing employee support

Many organizations have, over the past 30 years, provided a variety of types of programs to support employee health or wellness. Their motives have been both financial and humane in response to the costs, to organizations and their members, of stress, illness, workplace problems, and family problems. The financial health of an organization may be threatened when employees are physically or psychologically distressed (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Organizations are facing astounding costs from a distressed workforce. Job stress alone is estimated to cost the U.S. $300 billion annually (Frost, 2003), and of the 550 million work days lost each year in U.S. organizations to absenteeism, an estimated 54% are attributed to stress (Elkin & Rosch, 1990). In addition, indirect costs (i.e. replacement workers, overtime premiums and productivity losses) may multiply this expense (Goetzel, Guindon, Turshen, & Ozminkowski, 2001).

To moderate stress costs both to the organization and to the employee, employers have attempted to provide support through employee health and well being programs (Terborg, 1986; Warner 1987). Although the success of these programs may provide intangible benefits and may be difficult to measure in dollars, the results of these programs have been positive overall for both the organization and the employee (Danna & Griffin, 1999). Documented benefits of Wellness and Employee Assistance Programs have included: improved employee fitness and health, decreased medical and liability costs, reduced turnover and absenteeism, improved morale and job satisfaction, increased production, and an enhanced organizational image (Conrad, 1988b).

Organizationally sponsored social support and instrumental support provided to employees systematically as a means to promote their health and well-being is a relatively new organizational phenomenon. This systematic implementation of support began in the 1970s as for-profit organizations provided worksite health and safety programs with the primary goal of protecting employees from accidents on the job (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhard & Wright, 1997). Now, many for-profit organizations have realized the interconnectedness both of employee health and psychological well-being and of its relation to the performance of employees and thus to the bottom line (DeGroot & Kiker, 2003).

Organizational Spiritual Support: Corporate chaplains

Although traditionally in the United States, for-profit organizations have maintained a formal exclusion of religion, much like the constitutional separation between church and state, today some organizations are concerned with not only the physical health and well being of their employees but also their spiritual health. Corporate chaplaincy programs are evidence of this organizational shift.

A growing number of for-profit organizations have attempted to adopt a model from the U.S. military and the healthcare industry with the goal of providing personal, religion-based support to on-site employees through corporate chaplains (Associated Press, 2005). The Associated Press (2005) reported that there are at least 5,000 persons in the U.S. who classify themselves as corporate chaplains. They are employed by a diverse group of corporations, and the number of companies is growing. Organizations employing corporate chaplains include the United Automobile Workers union, Summit Electric in Albuquerque, NM., snack food maker Herr Foods in Nottingham, PA., Texas-based poultry processor Pilgrim's Pride, and smaller organizations such as Hall Graphics, a Dallas printing shop with seven employees (Feder, 1996; Newsome, 2005). In addition, two large companies outsource chaplains to organizations in the U.S.: Marketplace Ministries and Corporate Chaplains of America.

The organizations that hire chaplains tend to classify these programs as an onsite employee assistance program or as one part of a larger employee assistance

program (Feder, 1996; Coolidge, 2002). Chaplains are hired as onsite, walk-around, supportive communicators who may or may not include religious support, depending upon the request of the employee. According to Coolidge (2002) "The goal of corporate chaplains is simple: to support workers,". This broad job description may radically challenge the role(s) of clergy, especially if the clergy member represents an evangelical religious affiliation due to the focus upon the religious conversion of others. Evangelicalism reflects, among other tenets, the need for religious conversion to Christianity and activism in telling others about the Christian message of salvation (Bebbington, 1989).

Coca Cola's vice president of corporate affairs, Lauren Steele, stated their purpose behind hiring chaplains, "We recognized that we needed to try to deal with our employees as whole employees--bodies, mind, and soul"(Newsome, 2005). This may reflect that spirituality in the workplace is on the rise. A popular press newspaper article explains the shift in employee support practices stating, "As people spend more and more time working, it's only natural that they seek a connection between the professional and the spiritual aspects of their lives" (Sutcliffe, 2005).

The overlap of work and religion reflects a number of social forces. First is the increasing time demand of work life as many individuals are connected to their workplaces, physically or electronically, almost around the clock. Second, Jurkiewicz and Giacalone (2004) suggest that the increased presence of religion in

organizations and in public discourse may be in part a response to social and business turmoil that has alienated employees. Third, this trend may be linked to employee anxiety created from job insecurity, workplace violence, and terrorism, which may contribute to employee stress and anxiety (Randle, 2003). Even government leadership may be influential; President George W. Bush may also be credited with fueling the trend since he is "very forward in the practice of his faith in the workplace," which may have influenced organizations to follow suit (Randle, 2003). And finally, there is the growing presence of religion in the public discourse, including news coverage, political focus on faith-based issues and the growing political and social power of the religious right (Domke, 2004).

Claimed Benefits of Corporate Chaplains

In many popular press articles, for-profit organizations are claiming to reap cost saving benefits such as enhanced morale, enhanced coping, enhanced retention, and enhanced productivity from chaplaincy programs (Feder, 1996; Grensing-Pophal, 2000; Lampman, 2005). These articles recount powerful narratives of employees receiving the support that they feel they need and employers, in turn, receiving a more productive workforce (Lampman, 2005; Feder, 1996; Newsome, 2005). For example, Coca-Cola Bottling Consolidated of Charlotte, North Carolina, piloted chaplaincy programs and claims gains in productivity, safety, quality, profitability, and employee morale (Lampman, 2005).

Role(s) Creation and Enactment

Roles may be defined "as behavioral expectations for what a person 'should' do when occupying a position (status) in a specific social setting" (Zurcher, 1983, p.223). Through the symbolic interactionist lens, roles are socially constructed and become "emergent and negotiated understandings between individuals" (Ashforth, 2001). Therefore, roles consist not only of functional requirements but also of expectations of the social system in which the roles are created (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Roles are important to consider because people in social systems often enact behaviors that are consistent with their role(s) (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

Communication is an integral part of the process of role creation, maintenance, and change (Apker, 2001). Through communicative interactions with others people learn multiple roles; some are explicitly stated while others are ad hoc and emergent, depending upon the context of the situation (Zurcher, 1983). Communication makes it possible for people to perform various role identities and allows others to define and respond to these role behaviors (Apker, 2001).

At this point in the development of the corporate chaplain position, the organizational position is new to the individuals taking on this role, to the organizations who employ them and to organizational members who may interact with them. One of the chaplains' challenges is to develop their role of corporate chaplain in their situated contexts. They must manage the creation and

negotiation of the intersecting role of a clergy member of a particular

faith/denomination, a role that requires an alignment of beliefs, and the role of an

advocate of an organization whose primary mission is making a profit. Examining

the development and enactment of this new and potentially internally

contradictory role provides insight into individual role development and

especially the management of multiple stakeholders. In addition, it informs our

understanding of the communicative process and outcomes of integration of

religion into some for-profit organizations. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine

role development and negotiation in light of this new context. This process

begins with examination of the literature regarding support in the workplace,

specifically social support and spiritual support.

Literature Review

Employee support in the workplace

Many organizations today offer services to assist employees and their

covered dependents in accessing support for health problems (i.e. health

insurance, disability insurance, and even onsite medical facilities), to manage

workplace problems (i.e. diversity training), and make solid financial plans (401K

matching options and retirement packages). These services generally are offered

through Human Resource departments and are commonly referred to as employee

benefits.

Organizations offer support to employees for a multitude of reasons: to increase productivity, to reduce problematic behaviors, to increase goodwill, and to reduce the costs of health insurance. Employees struggling with emotional, family, or legal problems or health problems may be less productive, contribute less to the organization (Danna & Griffin, 1999; Price & Hooijberg, 1992) and may be absent more often (Boyd, 1997). In addition, they may pose a threat to other workers or to themselves (Noe et. al, 1997).

For-profit organizations also have the additional motivation of maximizing profits and since most organizations shoulder a large portion of the costs of employee health insurance, it is to their financial benefit to reduce these expenses (DeGroot & Kiker, 2003; Greenwald, 2004; Rocket, 2004). These costs are considerable. Health care costs represent nearly one-seventh of the United States' GDP, and the rate of growth for these costs is faster than other sectors of the economy (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2002). Organizations provide health insurance coverage to nearly two-thirds of the U.S. population under the age of 65 (Stanton, 2004). One way to effectively reduce these financial and productivity costs is to provide support to employees that addresses both physical health and psychological well-being (Danna & Griffin, 1999).

One common delivery mechanism for supportive services is Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). Numerous organizations utilize EAPs (Greenwald, 2004). EAPs were initiated to address personal issues that employees brought

with them to work. In general, these programs provide outsourced employee

support services such as psychological counseling or legal help. They were

established with outsourced firms to provide specialty services and to heighten

confidentiality and neutrality for employees, in hopes of making employees more

comfortable in using them. EAPs also were established to control medical

expenses and performance related costs (i.e. absenteeism), and as a preventive to

serious problems (Rockett, 2004). The organizations that hire chaplains tend to

classify their programs as an onsite employee assistance program or as one part of

a larger employee assistance program (Feder, 1996; Coolidge, 2002). One

complaint, however, is that offsite social support services often fall short because

they provide only a partial solution or fail to recognize the wider contextual-

structural behavioral issues within organizations (Reynolds & Briner, 1994). One

frequently-mentioned issue affecting employee use of EAPs is the degree to

which the employees trust the providers to honor confidentiality (Blune, Milen &

Roman, 1994).

Trust

To provide support to employees with sensitive issues, employees must

trust that chaplains will keep their concerns confidential. Mayer, Davis, and

Schoorman (1995) define trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to

the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a

particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or

control that other party" (p 712). In fact, trust plays a critical role in supportive communication in the workplace. Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998) found that interpersonal trust, the idea that another person will act benevolently, and will allow for vulnerability and dependency, plays a significant role in organizational outcomes such as problem solving (Zand, 1972) and cooperation (Axelrod, 1984). In addition, trust increases the amount of information communicated (Kirmeyer & Lin, 1987).

Individuals' experience, cultural background, and personality will affect their propensity to trust (Hofstede, 1980). Thus organizational employees will have differing tendencies to trust other organizational members. Additionally, the three major traits of a trustee that appear most often in literature are ability, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer et. al., 1995). A chaplain may need to demonstrate these three traits before an employee may allow a chaplain to offer his/her supportive services.

The context of a situation is another area in which trust issues are explored. While some individuals may trust a clergy member inside the walls of a religious organization, changing the context to the for- profit organization raises the stakes due to the potential negative ramifications of having sensitive information exposed or even being fired. In spite of the level of trust (as determined by ability, benevolence, integrity and propensity to trust), "the consequences of trust will be determined by contextual factors such as the stakes

involved, the balance of power in the relationship, the perception of the level of risk, and the alternatives available to the trustor (Mayer et al., 1995, p.726-727). Trust is obviously complex, but without trust, corporate chaplains will not have access to information necessary to provide support. Thus, trust is an essential component in the role of a corporate chaplain.

Correlates of social support for employees and organizations

Receiving support at work may help sustain employees' physical health and psychological well-being (Kirmeyer & Lin, 1987). Social support and corresponding concepts like organizational trust, climate and openness in the workplace have been studied since the 1970s and have been linked to organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational performance (Kirmeyer & Lin, 1987).

"Social support refers to verbal and nonverbal communication between recipients and providers, that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience" (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987, p. 19). Those who provide support may ease uncertainty and assist in the co-creation of meaning through their messages (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987). Social support in the context of the workplace may be described as the belief that a person is respected and valued as a part of a reciprocal communication network (Kirmeyer & Lin, 1987).

Cutrona and Suhr (1992) identify five different types of social support: informational support, tangible support, network support, esteem support and emotional support. Emotional support entails assisting others by listening, empathizing, legitimizing and exploring their feelings (Burleson, 1984). Emotional support also includes expressions of encouragement, appreciation, reassurance and respect (Rook & Underwood, 2000). This type of support is one of the most, if not the most, desired type of social support in personal relationships (Cutrona & Russell, 1987).

Spiritual Support

Corporate chaplains may be adding a new dimension of social support to for-profit organizations. Spiritual support is defined as "perceived support from God." Spiritual support has been studied in religious organizations and results indicate that it may decrease depression and increase positive esteem especially when utilized in high stress situations (Maton, 1989). Nevertheless, for-profit organizations are a new context for this type of support. Recently, several for-profit employers who have implemented spiritual techniques or made the presence of religion part of the organization's culture claim to have increases in productivity, improved morale, and a reduction of employee turnover (Spognardi & Ketay, 2000). Research indicates that religious people who are actively involved in religious communities tend to receive more social support and to positively evaluate this support more than do non-religious people (Bradley,

1995; Ellison & George, 1994; Krause, Ellison & Wulff, 1998). In addition, studies also show that people are more inclined to use positive religious coping methods (i.e. prayer or meditation) when receiving spiritual support (Krause et. al, 2001). Adding the element of spirituality in the world of profit may alter the nature of support.

Sources of workplace support

Support in the workplace can come from a variety of sources: the organization, a supervisor, or a peer. Kirmeyer and Lin (1987) identified three important features of communicated social support in the workplace: 1) who initiates the interaction, with self initiation (the receiver of the support) rated more favorably (Lawler, Porter, & Tennenbaum, 1968), 2) the source of the interaction (peer or supervisor), with supervisory support providing a reduction in stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985) and 3) the content of the interaction, with non-task related interactions found to possibly enhance social support (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Kirmeyer and Lin (1987) found that communication not centered on work was found supportive only when peers initiated the interactions and the interactions were of a longer length.

In the last ten years, organizations have been expanding programs geared to support employees. Corporate chaplains are one example of new type of benefit/service in the for-profit sector. Although in non- profit organizations such as the healthcare industry and the military, chaplains have an established role of

support, chaplains are a new phenomenon in for-profit organizations. Individuals in any new position must work through processes of understanding their roles and relationships. For corporate chaplains, there is a set of particular challenges since they must reconcile for themselves and for others how to negotiate the dual roles of member of the clergy and representative of a for-profit organization.

Role(s) of a Corporate Chaplain

Through the symbolic interactionist lens, roles are socially constructed and become "emergent and negotiated understandings between individuals" (Ashforth, 2001). Roles consist not only of functional requirements but also of expectations of the social system in which the roles are created (Katz & Kahn, 1978). When the requirements, expectations, and the social system are altered, then it is necessary to examine how the roles are renegotiated and created to meet the new/changed requirements and expectations within the new social system.

Roles may be defined "as behavioral expectations for what a person 'should' do when occupying a position (status) in a specific social setting (Zurcher, 1983, p.223). People learn multiple roles, some explicitly stated but others ad hoc and emergent, depending upon the context (Zurcher, 1983). Roles are created through interactions with others (Zurcher, 1983) and thus communication is a vital part of role creation, maintenance and change (Apker, 2001). "It is not possible to analyze or understand role enactment adequately unless the social structure of the setting, the inclinations of the individual, the

interactions of the participants, and the emergent aspects of the specific social setting are considered" (Zurcher, 1983, p. 230). Thus, roles are embedded in social systems (Biddle, 1979) and role interactions with others may vary based upon the roles of others (Zurcher, 1983). For example, how a manager might interact with a supervisor may be different than how a manager interacts with a subordinate (Ashforth, 2001). The various roles enacted connect to a focal role (i.e. chaplain) which is referred to as a role set (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Merton, 1958a). In the case of corporate chaplains, the shift in social system from religious congregation to for-profit organization leads chaplains to create and enact new roles.

In the past, supervisors have had to deal with the concerns or problems of employees and may have lacked the necessary socialization skills to appropriately handle emotional issues at work (Miller, 2002). Chaplains may take on this role of onsite social support and often are trained in supportive communication strategies. However, some roles are more deeply ingrained than others and may serve as a primary or dominant guide for behavior (Zurcher, 1983). The role of a minister may be more deeply ingrained than the newer role of a for-profit chaplain. This can create role conflict, especially if the chaplain is from an evangelical background that privileges conversion over other pastoral activities.

Roles and Identity

Religious beliefs can be one of the most powerful influences in life (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982). They may affect an individual's attitudes towards almost all experiences, including their relationships with others (Oberholster, Taylor & Cruise, 2000). Clergy in a community often occupy a distinctive role in that they have to continually maintain at least part of their role identity as clergy in most parts of their life. If one is a priest, he is a priest during mass, a priest when seen at the grocery store, and even a priest at a baseball game. With this dominant identity role come expectations about behaviors and norms that the clergy member "should" display in the community. Other occupations such as police and doctors may also have dominant roles that due to duty (to protect, to save lives) permeate multiple contexts. This may be described as role integration which indicates "a single, all-purpose mentality, one way of being, on amorphous self" (Nippert-Eng, 1996a, p. 568). Complete role integration is rare but one example might be a member of a religious order living in a monastery or convent (Bruder, 1998).

Identity theory, which emerged from symbolic interactionism, claims that an individual's sense of self is fundamentally grounded in the perceptions of others (Mead, 1934). Individuals are then able to see themselves through the eyes of others (Burke, 1991; Stryker, 1980). This allows for the construction of a

fairly stable sense of self through social interactions and through internalizing

collective meanings, values and standards (Burke, 1991; Stryker, 1980).

Roles may cue a certain type of person with particular goals, values,

beliefs, norms, interaction styles and time horizons—when this occurs it becomes

role identity (Ashforth, 2001). For example, the role of minister in a community

cues expected values of spirituality, honesty, and integrity. Identities are

structured in a hierarchy of salience (Stryker, 1980). Because roles are situated

and grounded (Zurcher, 1983) roles may change or alter depending on the context.

With a dominant role (clergy) now put in multiple contexts (religious organization

and non-profit organization), it is appropriate to ask which role will become more

salient in which situations.

Corporate chaplains may have high role identification if they decide to

define themselves in terms of the role identity of clergy. However, when the

context changes (tasks, relationships or roles change) the organizational role

(corporate chaplain) may conflict with the professional role (minister) especially

if these roles conflict (Russo,1998). Employees who have high identification with

their profession (clergy) as opposed to their organization (food processing plant)

may be more likely to choose actions based on professional rather than the

specific organization's decision making principles (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985).

This could be a potential legal landmine in for-profit organizations with

chaplaincy programs when religious concerns trump the bottom line. In addition,

the corporate chaplains may have to negotiate role conflicts regarding inconsistent goals or priorities. These conflicts might lead to psychological or physical withdrawal from the organization (Reichers, 1985).

Corporate Chaplaincy Support Programs

Two industries have historically used and praised the use of chaplains in the workplace: the United States military and the healthcare industry. Workplace or corporate chaplaincy is modeled after the military and health care industry use, and an increasing percentage of chaplains also have credentials in career counseling, mental health, and change management (Coolidge, 2002). However, what chaplains actually do seems to vary based upon the context of the situation. Therefore the job descriptions of chaplains in the military and healthcare industry tend to be ambiguous. For example, on the United States Navy website, the job overview for a chaplain states: "members of the Chaplain Corps are the spiritual and emotional guides for a large and diverse group of Sailors, Marines, Coastguardsmen, and their families" (http://www.navy.com/careers/officer/clergy/). The United States Army website states that Army chaplains "have the responsibility of caring for the spiritual well-being of Soldiers and their families (http://www.goarmy.com/JobDetail.do?id=317).

The role of a hospital chaplain is equally ambiguous. According to the Healthcare Chaplains Ministry Association, a chaplain makes "daily rounds and is

available 24-hours a day to provide pastoral care for patients/residents, family and staff" (http://www.hcmachaplains.org/whatis.html). In addition, this site states that "The Chaplain is available to provide objective crisis intervention and spiritual support." In spite of the ambiguity of job descriptions, many benefits are attributed to hospital chaplains. The Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (1998), which addressed use of chaplains in hospitals, issued a white paper that claims chaplains provide not only benefits to patients such as longer life, reduced depression, higher quality of life, enhanced coping processes, and decreased stress but also provide hospital employees with support services. This white paper also claims that hospital employees receive enhanced morale and reduced burnout from the support of chaplains, thus reducing organizational costs.

Traditionally clergy have occupied roles of social support in the community (e.g. providing social support to a family after the death of a loved one), often on behalf of a non-profit religious organization. However, the frame has shifted in the role of corporate chaplain, where the objective is to provide employee support in the context of for-profit organizations. To better understand the phenomenon of religiously-oriented organizational social support and specifically how corporate chaplains manage the potential dual demands of this role, this study seeks to explore the communicative creation, negotiation, and enactment that occur in the role of the corporate chaplain.

To achieve this, the following research questions are posed:

RQ1: How do corporate chaplains describe the tasks they do in for-profit organizations?

RQ2: How do corporate chaplains frame their organizational work? That is, how do they describe themselves inside the organization? How do they describe themselves outside the organization?

RQ3: How do corporate chaplains describe employee responses to them in their chaplain role?

RQ4: What challenges do corporate chaplains report in developing and enacting their roles?

CHAPTER TWO

Methods

Lindlof (1995) states "if we want to know how something is done and what it means, we have to know how it is talked about" (p. 234). This study seeks to increase understanding of role creation and negotiation in multiple contexts by discovering how corporate chaplains' describe their own role creation and negotiation. The researcher conducted fourteen in-depth interviews with individuals employed as part-time corporate chaplains by a large U.S.-based food processing company. The interviews were conducted to identify the central themes regarding role creation and enactment of chaplains.

The fourteen participants were employed as part-time corporate chaplains during November 2006 through February 2007 for a large North American food processing plant that employed 120 chaplains in 2006. This organization was selected because the chaplaincy program is well established, beginning in April 2000, because it employs a large number of chaplains, and because it granted access to the researcher. Each plant in the large food processing organization has the option to participate in the chaplaincy program or to not participate. In 2006, approximately 120 chaplains served plants in Canada, Mexico and the U.S. Typically the plants that participate in the chaplaincy program employ two to three part-time chaplains. There are over 300 plants/facilities in the organization, so less than 20 percent of plants employ chaplains.

The sample was a convenience sample of corporate chaplains from this organization who willing volunteered to participate in this study. Participants were initially contacted via email from a list of current chaplains employed at the organization. Follow up phone calls took place to set up the phone interviews.

As for demographic information of the participants, 13 of the chaplains were ordained and in good standing with their religious organizations. The one chaplain not ordained is a Licensed Professional Counselor. Nine chaplains and one nun had full time positions in a religious congregation in addition to the part time chaplaincy job. The chaplains were from the states of Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and from Alberta, Canada. Three of the chaplains were female, and the other 11 were male. The average age of the participants was 50 years. Denominations included: Baptist, Roman Catholic, Church of God in Christ, Lutheran, Southern Baptist, United Methodist, and several chaplains from nondenominational churches.

The interviews followed a semi-structured format (Appendix A) addressing the demographics of the chaplains, their tasks in a nonprofit organization, how they frame their organizational experience, how they describe employee responses, and what challenges they experience. The interview protocol was used as a guide and not as a constraint during the interview process, thereby allowing for the clarification of comments. These interviews were conducted over

the phone and took between 45 to 90 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Informed consent was sought prior to the interviews, and participants were asked to permit the researcher to use their own words, although they were assured they would not be identified by name or in any way that reveals their identity. The interviews generated approximately 130 pages of single-spaced text. In addition, the researcher analyzed the website of the organization and the organization's written Chaplain System Operating Procedures which provided information regarding the specific organizational expectations and direction of the role of corporate chaplains.

The researcher identified relevant issues and experiences in each of the participants' comments and then systematically grouped these into themes. A theme was identified when Owen's (1984) three criteria were met: 1) reoccurrence, 2) repetition, and 3) forcefulness. Reoccurrence was noted when the same thread of meaning was repeated throughout a single chaplain's interview and also appeared in other chaplains' interviews.

The following information is an example of how method was utilized by the researcher in this study. For example, chaplains consistently identified their role in this organization through a theme of friendship with employees. Chaplain #8 describes his role using the friend theme five times in his interview.

I think the best way to describe it is I'm there to be a friend to all the employees.

And I mean when I am in the orientation I say that as a chaplain I'm here to be a pastor or a counselor but I think it's more than that- people are looking for friendship and connection- especially in times of trauma. Like I said, I really see us as chaplains- our responsibility and our chore is to be friends to the employees

There's one fellow whose daughter was murdered so I went to his home a few times and I keep that contact up probably weekly with him and just- just connect with him and find out how he's doing and some weeks he wants to sit down and talk for half an hour and other weeks he says I'm doing great- things are going good and so my role- I see it more as a role of a friend than anything else...

It's a picture of what I'm there to do- is to encourage and I don't want to stand with the company against strikers or with strikers against the company but at that time that was the people that were ready to receive what I had to give and so just to be a friend and to encourage people...

Additionally, other chaplains use the theme of friend.

Chaplain #4 said his role was to "just *listen* to them and *be a friend* to them"

Chaplain #7 said: The biggest thing I think is *a friend*- and when I say that- they have someone who does not- that's neutral- I don't have to

worry about any one particular interest, any one particular idea- I can be a *mouthpiece* for those who can't speak for themselves.

Chaplain #13: I am trying to be a *friend*- someone that the (employees) feel they can *confide* in. Again, someone that is very *approachable,* I think that's really my main goal is that they know I'm there for them. I tell the orientation classes that I do when I get to do that, that I'm a southern Baptist pastor but my role is not to make them *Baptist*, my role is *to be there for them* and I want them to know that. So again they know I come from a Christian background but they also realize that I'm just there to be a friend and someone that they can talk to.

Alternative meanings from the interviews are also present such as the mention of the neutrality of the role by Chaplain #7. However, this is only a brief mention and did not reoccur in the Chaplain #7's interview. The theme of friend also meets the second criterion of repetition of words, phrases or meanings. The word *friend* used to describe his role was repeated five different instances in the Chaplin #7 interview. Owen (1984) claims that repetition is an "extension of criterion one in that it is an explicit repeated use of the same wording, while criterion one involves an implicit reoccurrence of meaning using different discourse" (p. 275). Other key words in this interview reflecting friendship ideas were "relationship" and "connect" or "connection."

For example:

And the rest is just meeting with different people and building the

relationship and connection and filling in where there's a need and so it's

going on the floor, going into the cafeteria, going into the offices of the

different supervisors, going to the hospital, connecting with the-

counseling people in their homes, and things along that line.

Throughout the interview with Chaplain #7 the discourse demonstrated a focus

upon building relationships and making connections, both reflecting the theme of

being a friend.

Forcefulness, the final criterion, "refers to vocal inflection, volume, or

dramatic pauses which serve to stress and subordinate some utterances from other

locutions in the oral reports" (Owens, 1984, p. 275). Forcefulness is denoted in

italics indicating when the participant has used vocal emphasis. Owens (1984)

argues that participants use their discourse for sensemaking. In this particular

case, the discourse of the participants may be used to make sense of their roles.

An example of this is when Chaplain #9 emphatically expresses her admiration of

the hourly workers and her role of providing friendship.

Chaplain #9: I think the thing that strikes me the most is how hard

the people here have to work. I guess I think of the strength of the human

spirit that they can get up at *4:30 in the morning* and whether it is snowing

or raining or bitter cold or whatever- *in the dark*- that one shift will come

in and that they will be here and work all day as hard as they work for-

and they do get just and good wages here but I just think it- it shows

something of the *strength* of the human spirit and I *admire* the people so

much for their hard work that I think it makes me say I'm coming in here

to bring them a little joy, a little consolation and to be *their friend*.

Next, the researcher returned to the transcripts, rechecking the consistency

of the analysis, the relationship between themes and the salient issues that did not

fit into the themes (Keyton, 2005). Subsequently, the researcher selected relevant

quotations to exemplify the predominant themes.

CHAPTER THREE

Results

This study explored how corporate chaplains manage communicative role

creation, negotiation, and enactment in a for- profit context. The following

sections report results pertaining to: (a) How corporate chaplains describe the

tasks they do in for-profit organizations (RQ1); (b) How corporate chaplains

frame their organizational work (RQ2); (c) How corporate chaplains describe

employee responses to them in their chaplain role (RQ3); and (d) The challenges

corporate chaplains report in developing and enacting their roles (RQ4). To

preserve anonymity, chaplains were assigned random identification numbers.

The Tasks of a Corporate Chaplain

Focusing on the nature of their tasks, chaplains were asked to describe

what activities they did at their processing plant. They were asked to describe

their role and to estimate how many employees they interact with on a typical day

and how many employees seek out their help per week. They also were asked to

describe the role of spirituality and/or religion in the services they offer. Four

relational related themes emerged that met Owen's (1984) thematic analysis

criteria regarding the chaplain's roles: Being a Friend, Caring, Going Above and

Beyond, and Listening. All of these elements fall under the umbrella of supportive

communication, more specifically emotional support. This indicates that the

primary task roles of a chaplain are to provide (different types of) social support.

Chaplain #8 sums this up well, "Our role is to be there to support (employees) in whatever situation in life that they find themselves in and to- just to help them through the situations." The four task themes overlap and are woven together discursively in chaplains' narratives, examples, and responses.

Being a Friend

Taken as a whole, chaplains saw their role as one of friendship toward employees. Friendship was expressed as "being there," as encouragement and as inspiration. Interviewees also articulated that the employees needed their friendship, especially in times of tragedy. Chaplain # 8 explains the need for a friend," So often the people that you're working with have so many issues outside of work also that are causing them to be depressed and downhearted."

Chaplain #8: I think the best way to describe it is I'm there to be a friend to all the employees.

Chaplain #9: And I think you're a *friend* and they know that you're a friend who is *going to bat* for them and so I think that is security for the people here and I think in a marked way for the Hispanics because they say I don't have to be afraid to go in there because if there's something I don't understand or I need translated or I need help with- there's somebody there who knows my language and can help me.

Chaplain #13: I am trying to be a friend- someone that the (employees) feel they can confide in. Again, someone that is very

approachable, I think that's really my main goal is that they know I'm

there for them.... but they also realize that I'm just there to be a friend and

someone that they can talk to.

Caring

Chaplains also describe their role in terms of caring about employees. For

example, Chaplain #12 says explicitly, "I can honestly say I love these people, I

care about them." Another example of caring is from a narrative from Chaplain

#2.

> ***Chaplain #2***: One time I attended to a person who attempted to
>
> commit suicide three times, I went through the process of- that was a
>
> struggle for his part- but empowering him and letting this person know
>
> that *somebody cares*, that *somebody's listening, somebody's willing to be*
>
> *with him*. Most times people who are planning to commit suicide think
>
> that they're the only ones left- they are there by themselves- *they're alone*.
>
> And it was a struggle just to connect with that person. I offered my cell
>
> phone, I told the person call me *anytime*, sometimes he calls me *at 2*
>
> *o'clock* in the morning, every time he feels down- I always make- assure
>
> him- call me anytime- just call me. He told me later on that that *really*
>
> *helped him*- knowing that if he needs somebody he can go to somebody or

he can call somebody who would *be willing and able to listen to him*.

That's just one of the cases I have.

Chaplain #1 spoke about caring in a diverse organization with a broad range of religious beliefs and how his role is to simply care about the employees.

> ***Chaplain #1***: In our plant we have 39 countries represented there and 18 different languages and we have a lot of Wicca... and there's Muslims, Sheiks, there's the whole variety of Christianity, then there's atheists, then there's Satanists, you know you got everybody. So I go at it from the spiritual belief that I believe in you regardless- it's like I like to sign my emails "I love you and there's nothing you can do about it". That's just the way it is- I care.

Chaplain #12 stated another reason caring is so important is that employees often lack support networks. Many do not have close family, a religious organization or even friends to assist them in times of crisis. Chaplains 6, 8, 7, 10 and 12 mentioned the lack of support networks in employees' lives.

> ***Chaplain #12***: My responsibility is to *love* these people- to care about them. So that's what I really do- I really do. There are a growing amount of people that don't have a supportive group around them, even in the Midwest where you think- one thing they are much more accepting of the idea of a chaplain but I'm still shocked at how many people here have no support around them- whether it's family or a church community- I'd

say a majority of people don't have a church community first of all but then there's so many people that don't have the family support so there is no support network around them. They're appreciative of somebody who will even listen to them, you know?

Going Above and Beyond: Extra Role Behaviors

The chaplains for this organization are part time workers who often do this job in addition to other jobs and responsibilities. On average they work 10 to 25 hours a week as chaplain. That said, one of the requirements for the job is 24-hour a day, 7-days-a- week availability. Chaplains must carry pagers and be accessible if any crisis arises or if an employee is in need. Every chaplain recounted touching narratives of things they did for employees in their plants. Chaplain #4 went with an employee who was giving birth to serve as a translator in the delivery room because she was having a baby and spoke no English. Chaplain #6 connected an employee with social service agencies to get her some financial assistance due to an illness. Chaplain #7 went on the line and pulled chicken gizzards and hung live chickens to build rapport with employees. Chaplain #14 described his experience as an advocate who ended up saving a child's life in the following narrative.

> ***Chaplain #14:*** (An employee) whose grandbaby was born with a
> heart defect and the mother, or the daughter to our (organization), was a
> drug addict and was incarcerated at the time that she delivered the baby.

They had given the baby two weeks to live and the baby was three and a half hours away from us at a children's hospital and basically they had given her two days to two weeks to live. And so the company gave me permission to go and visit with both the (employee) and her daughter. Long story short because it's quite a long story- the hospital had said she was not medically viable to receive a heart transplant then she lived past the two weeks and through my help with questioning her medical viability they then said she could be medically viable but that she was not- Medicaid would not pay for the heart transplant. I did some research through our Governor's office into Medicaid here in Nebraska and they assured me that the heart transplant was covered by Medicaid. We took that back to the hospital and they changed their story yet again and said that she wasn't socially viable- in asking what that meant because with the child's last name being Munoz I wanted to clear that that had nothing to do with it and I kind of knew that it didn't but I wanted them to verify what it meant to be socially viable. And they finally came out to say that they didn't feel that the mother would be able to provide the adequate care being incarcerated and being an ex drug user. The question then arose if the grandmother could take custody of the baby and give this baby a chance. And after a long fight and then threatening to go to the media with this... she ended up getting a heart transplant and we just celebrated

her second birthday last September. And she's very healthy, very active. It's one of the more memorable- it was a long battle and I'd become very close friends with the family. But that all came through the chaplaincy and what some of our miracle stories- if you will- of what a chaplaincy can do in the lives of a family.

Chaplain # 9 explained her role through the support she provides in the Hispanic community.

Chaplain #9: I feel like I work for the department of transportation of Missouri because they'll (employees) ask for a driver's manual in Spanish- they do not provide driver's manuals in the state of Missouri in Spanish- they don't give them out anymore because of budget cuts so I just took it off the internet and then I had the secretary at our church run copies- that's like 81 pages the driver's manual. So I always have some driver manuals and then a copy of a sample driving test and the road signal test- so there's always somebody- I have a list of who needs- who asked me to bring them a driver's manual and where to take the test- what to do. Because that's one of the- because I am bilingual and I speak fluent Spanish with the (employees)- a lot of it is bring in documents for them. Somebody else will say "sister, I need- my sister needs a work permit can you take a copy off the internet for me and help me and translate it for me so I can know what to fill out for her. So a lot of it is

work permits, driver manuals, driving tests, and so I go around to the tables with my list distributing all my documents that people need at the different breaks. Sometimes I feel- I say "you know I'm a chaplain but a lot of my work with the Hispanics besides being- well with all the (employees) but especially with the Hispanics besides being spiritual is taking care of basic needs- translating for them- making- I make a lot of doctor's appointments for them."

Listening

The chaplains identified one of the most important roles they have as the role of listener to both management and hourly employees. When asked about what they did in a typical day, every chaplain mentioned the role of listening in their daily work.

> ***Chaplain #10***: A lot of our major work is just being there in presence *listening* and *hearing what a person wants to say or what's on their mind* then through that conversation sometimes they might have other issues of marriage or issues of addiction or issues of family problems- children or even some physical issues, from financial to different things that have happened in their lives that they start to share and then we can see if we can help counsel them or show them- we know some of the things around the community so we can sometime refer them to community, churches or humanitarian groups that have different things

that are- that nonprofit organizations would help people with different needs. And then we also do- if there's any deaths in the family or then we go to the hospital- or if someone is hospitalized if they request it we can go there and be there- be a presence there and help them go through the grieving process and the recovery from there- that takes some time to go through the grieving.

Chaplain #2: The biggest difference between my role before as a pastor and my role now as a chaplain is that before I had this expectation that people *should listen to me*. Now *I listen more*. I listen *more* simply because I now understand that the *best way* for me to minister to a person is *to listen to the problem* of that person.

Chaplain #4: One of the areas that I feel like I've been able to help out is when someone is having a fairly intense thing going on in their life where it's obvious to the people that work around them- maybe their supervisor. Maybe they're crying, maybe they're distracted, maybe they've verbalized something like that and we find an empty office- *we take them off the line*- and I go and sit down with them and just let them *tell me about* it. And this may take an hour or two hours sometimes and they just kind of give you a little bit of their life story and what lead up to then. Normally in our workplace there's nobody else that has that kind of time- there's too much demand- a person's got too much work

responsibilities and I'm probably one of the few people that has the time to sit down and not be rushed and to *hear them out*.

Chaplain #1: My chaplaincy is trying to be the best listener I can be. It's important because *very few people are listened to* and most of the time *if you just let them talk,* they'll come up with their own answer and they'll think *I'm brilliant* (Laughter).

Chaplain #12: The purpose is always *just listening*- and really being *careful* and *listen*.

Chaplain #11: But (the interaction with the employee) is significant from the standpoint that somebody has told me about a health problem or something that they're concerned about and I've been able to *listen* and *then communicate* my *prayers* and *my support* for them.

Sometimes, chaplains expressed that the employees did not wish to be counseled but just wanted to be heard.

Chaplain #4: .Sometimes just having someone *listen* that they feel like *cares* for them- it's something that they don't get a lot in their life.

Chaplain #13: "I think that they- just having someone to talk to and was very- in talking with the fellow this past week he just said I don't have anybody to talk to but you. You are the *only one* I've been able to talk to about this. And I think for a lot of (employees) that's what they see

in me is someone that they can talk to and really it's someone that cares about them."

How Corporate Chaplains Frame their Work

Chaplains were asked to describe how their work fit into the organization by recounting an event that captured the essence of their role, what their organization says the role of a chaplain is, the general role expectations of a corporate chaplain, how the role is different than their role as a practicing minister/cleric/nun, why they took this part-time job and if they thought employees viewed them as independent or as a representative of the organization. Three themes emerged that met Owen's (1984) thematic analysis criteria regarding how the chaplains framed their roles: the role framed as a calling, the role framed as not proselytizing, and the role framed through traumatic events.

The Calling

All but one of the chaplains framed their work in terms of a life calling. The calling they have is often in service to their communities and may cross multiple contexts such as a church community, social service organizations and, in this case, a for-profit organization. This is a job a few of them even said they would like to continue to do even if they were volunteers instead of paid employees. Most chaplains mentioned that this work was part of the greater work they did of ministering to those in need.

Chaplain #2: I'm doing this- this is my profession- this is my vocation- this is a job for me in the sense that I go there everyday and report my hours but in another sense this is more than a job for me because I'm attuned or I'm connected to the calling that I have- I know that I'm there not just to be available to them, I'm there to deliver to them God's love. And that is the basis of my spirituality. My spirituality is based on my faith.

Chaplain #7: So we approach it different. So if we are there longer than the hours might require of us we don't look for (the organization) to compensate us because now the people have become like our family- they are extended ministry- it's service more than a job. ...even if I wasn't getting paid, I would still want the opportunity...

There also exists a feeling of independence among the chaplains. The assumption is that religious/spiritual people are not "bought" by the organization but instead are dedicated to a higher calling. Whether the chaplain is a priest, a nun, a cleric, or a minister, there is an underlying assumption that money is not the key driver. This perceived distance from the for-profit organization may increase their credibility.

Chaplain #9: I think the role of spirituality here is I think that they see someone who is devoted- who has dedicated their life to God and who is here in the marketplace, you might say of the world and so I think they

feel very honored that someone who has dedicated their life to God would come in to a chicken plant and spend time with them.

> *Chaplain #12*: They don't own me (the organization) and that to me is important- the money is not the issue to me- it's more the ministry and this provides a fantastic ministry opportunity for me.

Chaplains were also asked if their role was different from the role of a professional counselor. Thirteen out of 14 said their role was different. Their answers reflected three things: first, the calling as mentioned previously, second their willingness to do extra-role behaviors, and third, their mention of spiritual support. Although all the chaplains said that counseling was part of their job, they stressed their willingness to do extra role behaviors for those they have come into contact with, even, for example, helping if the person in need were no longer employed at the organization. Furthermore, they stressed the importance of spiritual support.

> *Chaplain #4:* "when I run into people say at Walmart and I'm not on the clock and if I were a professional counselor I would say well come by the office or call and make an appointment -that's what they tend to do. What I do is I stand there and listen to them. Let's say they don't work there at the company any more- I still minister to them as if they were- and these are things that I don't necessarily turn in on my time but it comes

from having a calling I think from God and not just a paycheck. Maybe all chaplains don't have that same viewpoint but I think in general a chaplain might be more willing to help outside more than a work situation. You (as a chaplain) are used to giving of yourself wherever the need is- like when this lady that was going to get her wedding dress was killed in a car wreck- just trying to minister to the family there. The thing is- when that's happened a few times people see you in different roles than a counselor. Until you've been on the seeing end of it you may not see a big difference.

Chaplain #9: If they were professional counselors, I think some people would think that it's like going to a shrink and they would get confused but as we stand as symbols- we're church people- we're dedicated to the faith and so I think it gives a different perception. And I think that some of them- because of the social class that we're working with in a way- and I don't mean that in a demeaning way- but I mean they are laborers- they're workers that they have had- some of them have had bad experiences with social workers who are not concerned about them or who do very sloppy jobs with their cases and so I think that a professional counselor would fall into the same category for them- they are in it for themselves...

Chaplain #11: I think also a lot of the issues people struggle with-

there's a lot of people with that either religion can be barrier to people

finding freedom and yet the chaplain is there to remove those barriers.

Like sometimes people talk to me about things and I'll be able to explain

spiritually a broader understanding of scripture- now I'm talking from

Christian tradition obviously that's where I'm coming from but or I can

link up with a Muslim Imam or Jewish Rabbi but whereas- maybe it's a

marital issue and they're questioning I don't know about divorce or

whatever I could give them a broader perspective on things that might be a

barrier for them – I could say it's not a barrier this is my understanding of

scripture- this is another way to look at it. That's something that a

professional counselor isn't necessarily trained to do. I'm thinking

particularly in instances where there's maybe been abuse in the home and

at that point religion can be a barrier if people only have a very narrow

view of things but none of the scriptures support abuse in the home. So by

my being a chaplain I can speak to that whereas a professional counselor

wouldn't necessarily be able to speak to that so in a sense I can do it all. I

can give that professional counseling as well as the spiritual support

whereas a professional counselor might not necessarily be able to do that.

Chaplain #13: It's been able to talk about the basketball game

from last night's super bowl- who's going to win? Those little things-

baby pictures of the new child and yes certainly a professional counselor

could do that but you know a pastor is someone who has a heart and a love

for people and so I see that as getting to the heart of things and certainly

having access to counselors is what's in my arsenal that allows me to refer

people out when I get into some areas that are a little above what I can do

and so I think that the pastoral care side of this ministry is what is

important and probably more important than the professional counseling

end.

No Proselytizing

The organization in which these chaplains work has a very clear policy in

its Standard Operating Procedures manual that proselytizing is not the role of the

chaplain. In fact, 13 of the 14 chaplains interviewed explicitly stressed that the

difference in their role from that of a minister/priest/nun/cleric is that they will not

proselytize to employees. When asked about the difference between the role of

chaplain and the role of minister/cleric/priest/nun in the community, chaplains

mentioned that their communicative interactions with others changed when they

functioned as chaplains, but who they were did not change.

> *Chaplain #1*: …And I've said "You know, I'm not here to make
>
> you a sunbeam for Jesus, I'm here to see if I can help you in anyway"

> *Chaplain #13:* "As a minister for my church what I'm doing as
>
> I'm talking to people it's as a representative of my church- the focus is

inviting them to come to services, the focus is to lead them to Christianity and in my role as a chaplain- that's *not* what I'm doing. The focus is for me to *be there* as just a *friend*. Of course I'm presenting *Christ* in my very- just because He's in my life but again it is just more of a different role and a different outcome of what I'm trying to do- just meet their need of *pastoral care*.

Chaplain #2: Every week there's a lot of people coming in- in fact we have a program where I get to visit with each new hire. And sit down with them and explain to them that I'm a minister, I belong to a Baptist church but I'm not here to talk about my Baptist faith- I'm here to support and empower your spirituality.

Chaplain #6: I want to minister to the needs of anyone who needs help. I want to serve the employees of the company. I'm not here to try and convert anyone to my own particular faith and I will tell you upfront that I consider myself to be a born again Christian but we have Jewish (employees), we have Muslim (employees), we have Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and our role as chaplains is to help any of them deal with the issues and problems that they face in life and not try to convert them to our own faith or our own religion so that's the way I approach it. All over the world it seems that people of a lot of different religions are trying to

convert people to their way of thinking at the end of a gun. I think the

example of Christ is that that's not the way to do it.

Not only do chaplains stress that their role is not to proselytize, they may also try

to promote understanding across faith traditions in very diverse workplaces.

Chaplain #6: And one thing I have been doing is trying to help

individual employees understand the faith traditions of other employees-

you know if they have questions. I post a lot of things on the bulletin

board about a variety of different faith traditions to help people understand

one another because some people will ask why is so and so off on today or

what's different about the holiday that I celebrate as opposed to a holiday

that they celebrate and I post things like that on a pretty regular basis.

Information from different backgrounds whether it be Christian, Jewish,

Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, whatever it might be. If I were here trying to

convert people to my own religion I think it would be different- but I'm

not. I think that's part of what makes the difference.

Dealing with Catastrophic Events

Another reoccurring theme within the chaplain's discourse was how

catastrophic events defined the importance of their role as chaplains. Having

relationships pre-established in the organization has allowed the chaplains to be in

a place to comfort the hurting in times of tragedy. The death of employees or the

immediate family members of employees was mentioned by every chaplain as a

time where they were able to serve. All participants had played a part in a funeral service, with many chaplains actually officiated a funeral service for an employee or an employee's family member.

Chaplain #7: I think the biggest time came when we actually lost two (employees). We had one – one actually got sick at (the organization) and actually died the next day at the hospital- and I think that embodied it... and we lost another (employee) who was going to get up and come to work that morning and actually passed prior to coming so I think at those moments right there- you know being a chaplain became critical- now not only was I able to be with the (employee's) family but I was also there for (the organization's employees) also and that epitomized the role that we have. I think if you ask anybody particularly in times that involve sickness and death, our role of the chaplains become very vital.

Chaplain #8: I say that as a chaplain I'm here to be a pastor or a counselor but I think it's more than that- people are looking for friendship and connection- especially in times of trauma.

Chaplain #9: there was an accident out on 60 (highway 60) and a young Hispanic wife and her sister and she was pregnant and her little two year old daughter were killed in a car- in a- they ran into a truck or truck broadsided them- (The HR manager) called me at home and he said "sister, the women on the line are just falling apart on the line- it was

about seven o'clock in the morning when he called me- the accident had

happened that night and so- the evening before and he said "can you come

in and talk to them?" And so I came in and I gathered her entire- the

entire line of women and men in the conference room and I talked to them

a little bit about you know the death and missing Maria (the deceased

employee) and what a terrible tragedy it was for all of us but that we had

to have faith and that it was only in prayer that we could find consolation

for our loss so we prayed together and then they went back out on the line

after we hugged and cried and everything together and then I said to (the

HR Manager), we're going to have a memorial service aren't we?" And he

said "yeah, we can have a memorial service." And I said, "and we'll stop

the lines won't we so that everybody can come." He said, "well I'll

check" and then I said "what do you do for memorial services here?" And

he said, "I don't- we just kind of pray and read from the scriptures or

whatever the chaplain would want to do. And I said, "okay" so I said

"well you know it's a Hispanic custom that- and it's also a monastic

custom- that when somebody dies, at the place where they always ate-

their place at table- you put a candle and you put some flowers in memory

of that person who is now absent. So he said "okay". So I went to the

office and got a picture of her from her badge and I went to Walmart and

got a candle and some flowers and put them on the table where (deceased)

sat. And then so then we planned the memorial service, (the other

chaplain) and I, for a couple of days later when the funeral was going to

happen. And so I said "well, what am I going to do, how can I not offend

anyone and we have so many religions here, so I bought three dozen roses,

pink for the child, red for Maria and then white for her sister and then we

invited the family to come in and so I just had two vases on a table with

candles and then I had some background music, Gregorian chant, and so

(the other chaplain) and I did scripture readings and for the people and

(the other chaplain) prayed out loud and I prayed out loud and then I said

"anybody who wishes I would invite you to come forward and in memory

of Maria take the flower from the one vase and move into the other vase

representing -you're honoring her and her passage to eternity and so they

all lined up and they came and we did this rose ceremony. Well ever since

then whenever we have an accident, you know (the other chaplain) and I

always say "what would you like?" And the employees say we want the

rose ceremony and so it's become part of what they like to do and it's

something that everybody can take part in and new- I know new

(employees) say "sister, what's the significance of the two vases" and I

say "well, it's just simply the flowers moving from one vase to another is

a person passing on to God's light or to eternity- however your belief is.

And so, but that's when I felt most like- hey I'm a chaplain here I'm feeding them spiritually.

Chaplain #4: When you have a murder that happens in a workplace that can be devastating for years and fortunately that's a rare occasion but I felt like all the money that they've ever paid me over the years was probably worth it in one or two instances like that. And that's really not a lot of what we do- that's very rare but it's those rare emergencies like that that -I guess it's cheap insurance.

How Corporate Chaplains Describe Employee Response

Chaplains also were asked to describe how employees responded to them in their chaplain role. Specifically, they were asked to describe a typical interaction with an employee, the topics areas in which they spoke with employees, how and where employees interacted with the chaplains, times they helped or supported an employee, if they were trusted by employees, how management and hourly employees responded to their role, and the outcomes of the services they provided and the benefits of their service to the organization. Five themes emerged that met Owen's (1984) thematic analysis criterion regarding how the chaplains described employee response: Teaching the role of a chaplain; establishing trust; perceived reactions from employees; serving as first-responders to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs); and providing organizational benefits.

Teaching the Role of a Chaplain

Chaplains said that part of their job is teaching employees the role of a chaplain. Most participate in orientation classes for new employees to let them know their role. Additionally, they stressed that it took about a year for employees to really begin to utilize their services after trust was established. After that, word-of-mouth of their services would spread through the plant and they would see an increase in contacts.

Chaplain #5: At first (the employees) thought we were management spies or something. But once they got to really talk with us- visit with us - they realize hey we're not- we're there to help them.

Chaplain #9: So I explain to them what the chaplain can do for them, why we're here to begin with- and I have to- because they look at me sometimes like *what!* A nun is here to talk to us and we're working for (the organization) so... let me explain what a chaplain does- and I say- or who a chaplain is- because a term may not be one you know. And I said for example, in the military there are chaplains that go through the same training that the soldiers do- they go out to battle with the- they do debriefing after particularly traumatic events- they give the last blessing and pray over those who have died or are dying. And I said, policemen have chaplains- the police departments.

Chaplain #2: We have different programs- we have bulletin boards and we post different articles there explaining our program, we are going to start a newsletter that we will publish quarterly for everybody. And I told the other chaplains that the greatest way that we can explain or share to them our ministry is to do quality pastoral care to each (employee) because by word of mouth it will spread. And in fact, that's even more effective than putting notes on the bulletin board where not everybody is concerned about reading. I focus on our individual ministry to (employees) because if we do provide quality pastoral care that will go out.

Chaplain #4: Sometimes (the most challenging part of being a chaplain) it's the stereotypes that people bring of what a chaplain is supposed to do or not do. I think most people know me because I've been there for awhile- they don't see me typically as part of the clergy because I don't pastor a church- although they do see me as a religious person- a spiritual counselor. There's probably a mixture- different things to different people.

Chaplain #10: So you have to be sensitive to the different cultural backgrounds from just the different countries but as well as the different religious backgrounds too but then once they know you're here- that you're here for everybody- then they start to reach out to you too.

Chaplain #11: I think everybody now that I'm known and it's not a new thing anymore everybody pretty much knows what I'm there for they- they are very supportive- they're very open and they're glad I'm there. Overall I think people know I'm there- that I'm there if they need me and they appreciate that.

Developing Trust

Educating employees on what chaplains do is not effective unless the chaplains are trusted, they said. When asked if they felt employees trusted them in their role as chaplains, all 14 immediately said yes. Some spoke about the time it took to build this trust, however, particularly if the program is new in their plant.

Chaplain #12: Yes, I think that takes time. Trust is something that's built and I think that takes time. I think that's another reason why I think it's important to be here for a while. I think people do trust me. I purposely avoid- I do not sit at HR in the Human Resource area- I think that's unwise. I purposely don't spend a lot of time with HR people- so they're not going to see me interacting with HR people because I think that would raise suspicions- so there are things you can do to help assure people that it's in confidence.

Chaplain #6: Probably in the beginning they were a little skeptical but after we were here in the plant for a bit and got to meet people on an

individual basis and of course certainly to be able to participate in some of

the funerals and visit people in the hospitals and things- I think the overall

word sort of got around the plant that you can talk to these guys- you can

let them know what's going on and they are willing to help you without

judging you or without ratting you out to anybody or something like that

because that's not a goal but I do tell people when they come in that if

they tell me something that I could perceive to be a threat or safety hazard

that I will have to let somebody know about that- I couldn't sit by and

watch somebody be hurt or watch the company suffer damage... there's a

real good example that was told to me in my orientation process by three

people who kind of oversee the chaplaincy program for all 130 chaplains

and one of the them came and interviewed me and hired me. The example

he gave was that in one particular plant where there was a chaplain

serving, (an employee) came to the chaplain one day and said "You know,

I've got something that's been kind of gnawing at my conscience for a

long time and I just need to get it out in the open. For a long time I've

been stealing chickens from the plant and I've been taking them out and

selling them and I realize that was wrong and I'm not going to do it

anymore but I just wanted to tell somebody about that and what should I

do? Should I go tell management and just turn myself in? And the

chaplain said no, don't do that. I'll ask management what they would like

you to do and I'll get back to you. And so the chaplain spoke to the plant manager and the plant manager said well, just ask if this person has some idea of what's been stolen or if- what they could afford to reimburse us and have them give it to you and you give it to us and we won't know about them or who they are but we will assume that the debt has been paid and it will be off their conscience and just ask that they don't do it again. And that's what they did, the chaplain went back to the employee and said, the plant manager would like you to make some amount of restitution and then promise that you won't steal anymore from the plant and no charges will be filed and we'll start fresh. And there's not too many places you could do something like that- I read everyday with people charged with embezzlement and people stealing from companies and things like that- but we're not here to see that anybody gets punished or anything like that- we're here to help resolve issues. And I know I've talked a lot about negative stuff but I tell employees all the time that I want to hear about the good stuff- if somebody graduates, if there is a marriage coming up, if somebody has a new baby- let me know about that because I want to celebrate with them.

   Chaplain #10: For some it took about a year because some think you're just represented by the corporate and that you represent (the organization)- you're not there as an independent and it's seen because

you're hired by (the organization) so they are maybe suspicious that

you're- that you might go back and reveal something to (the organization)

about each employee or- we had a union here at one time so sometimes we

were looked on as maybe puppets of (the organization) not independent

but we try to tell everybody that everything is confidential and what they

tell us we don't run back to the office and tell them. But for some once

they got to know us- it's taken some maybe two years to really get to trust

and come to an understanding that we're here for them but we're not just

there because of corporate- what corporate wants but that we're an

independent program for them- specifically for them. So I think over time

now people are seeing that we are independent that we don't represent this

type as their ears and eyes and mouth but that we have our own

independent role here so they don't have to fear us being over them and

reporting back to HR- Human Resource Managers.

Chaplain #5: I feel like I'm doing a really good job because I'm

getting more references everyday from different (employees).

Chaplain #9: I think that we're a stabilizing force here in the sense

that- because we are trusted and because we are here to hear both sides

(management and hourly) - I think it helps workers stay here. I think they

stay here because they say "well at least I have advocates here who can

listen to me and listen to my side between management and myself.

Most of the chaplains did not report any negative responses to their role as

a chaplain, and most reported highly positive reactions. None mentioned any

organizational backlash to this organization due to having chaplains.

    Chaplain #12: I just get a lot of affirmation. Just yesterday, a lady

stopped me because I'd done a memorial service and I'd ministered to the

family- a death occurred – (an employee) had died and she just said "You

are doing- it's so obvious this is what you were made to do- I just want to

thank you." I just get a ton of affirmation which is really encouraging to

me. In a church context it's more likely you'll get criticism- it's just

fascinating to me how here in the workplace people are just so

appreciative of just caring about them. Just showing them a little respect

and caring about them. So I get that a lot- I get tons of notes, tons of

emails and so to pull out a specific thing- I don't know.   I really do- I

would say everyday I'm here I get affirmation in some way. It is

amazing!

    Chaplain #11: I think overall they respond very, very positively. I

think it is sometimes hard for the supervisors because they are production

oriented, so I think that it has grown over time- they're more accepting,

more supportive over time that's really come. But hourly workers- I think

everybody pretty much knows what I'm there for - they- they are very supportive- they're very open and they're glad I'm there.

> *Chaplain #9:* I've never had a negative confrontation with anybody, but if they don't respond I just keep saying "good morning" to them or "good afternoon" but I just kind of leave them alone.

> *Chaplain #13:* Not negatively (responding) just "I don't need a chaplain."

> *Chaplain #8:* Then there would be maybe 30 to 40 people that are very antagonistic towards our presence in the plant but mostly they just walk away or- I've gotten to know who they are so I just appreciate the fact that they don't- it's not ministry if they hate you, so I just minister to them by leaving them alone.

The greatest negative reaction reported came from Chaplain #10 in Washington:

> *Chaplain #10:* Sometimes they make jokes about us coming on the line- maybe you get meat thrown at you or something on the line- or they'll tell jokes with the other employees about you while you're walking the line. Or they're a few that don't even want to talk to you and they won't even answer you. That's okay -that's their choice so you go by and say hi and go to the next person- you don't take it personal.

Chaplain #12 spoke of negative interactions turning into extremely positive interactions.

Chaplain #12: When I first started there was a lady who had been here quite a while and she sat with the same group of people at the lunch table and they had introduced me to the company and these people are telling me now after the fact that she was going "Oh man, you know all the money that they could be spending on other things and they hired a chaplain." And the very first day I was here these people were telling again that ate with her everyday I walked right up to their table. And they said as I was walking up she said "Don't encourage him, don't encourage him." And I walked up and introduced myself and got to know them and they said as I walked away she was rolling her eyes going "Oh, this is crazy." Well about a month later she was diagnosed with lung cancer and I knew she was pretty- one of those people that were hard- a lot of people were scared of her and I would go and stop by and hang by her spot little bit and over time she warmed up a bit and within about 2 months she was not doing well and she had brought me into not only her life but into her entire family's life and I just got to play a significant role in helping her pass through.

First Responders to Employee Assistance Programs

Most chaplaincy programs in the for-profit sector are classified as Employee Assistance Programs. One of the major concerns with EAPs is that they frequently are underutilized (Felix, 1998). According to Jack SantaBarbara, a

psychologist and chief executive officer of CHC Working Well, an EAP provider based in Ontario, the utilization rate is roughly 7 percent but it should be about 15 to 20 percent to make a real difference in the workplace (Felix, 1998). SantaBarbara suggests that most organizations underpromote their EAPs (Felix, 1998). Thus providing services onsite arguably increases use. However, employees may also have confidentiality concerns in regards to being seen accessing EAP services in the workplace. This stigma may be reduced though through this program because speaking with a chaplain does not necessarily indicate that an employee has a problem and other avenues are available (such as a home visit to an employee's house) if privacy is an issue. Additionally, chaplains described themselves as first responders of the EAP system, granting immediate access to resources without the need for employees to take time off from their jobs.

> ***Chaplain #5:*** (The organization) pays my wage and so basically we're counselors and it saves (the organization) time with an employee being off of work for basic counseling- they can see us first and then we can recommend for the treatment- whatever we're not capable of giving or they don't want what we can give. And maybe get employee assistance programs in place for them or where they can get off to go to treatment without being penalized.

Chaplain #6: There are a lot of jobs where people don't have that kind of support- you hear about- to use a cliché- people going postal at work- I think it helps to eliminate some of that or at least maybe to alleviate some of it. Because it does let people know that they have avenues to deal with personal issues and in this case they don't have to take time off from work to do it.

Chaplain #8: Like I said, I really see us as chaplains- our responsibility and our chore is to be friends to the employees and so there's some people that I meet and counsel with that I'm not- I have some basic training as a counselor but I don't have in depth training as a counselor- and so I reach a point and I recognize- you know what this needs to go further than me so I connect with a counselor but I think that the key to why people respond is because we have relationships and they're willing to move on to counselors or they're willing to look at the issues in their life and start changing because of relationship and so I think counselors could help in some areas deeper than we could but at the same time if they're recommended by their supervisor to a counselor there could be far fewer people that would be accessing that resource.

Benefits to the Organization

Chaplains felt that their services to the organization brought reduced turnover/higher employee retention/employee loyalty, higher morale, a decrease

in workplace violence and helped establish the idea that the organization cares about its employees.

Chaplain #1: One thing I always tell them (employees) is you've got to understand (the organization) cares about you because that's the only reason we (chaplains) are here. We come right off the bottom line and most companies wouldn't do this for any amount of money. The only reason we have jobs and work here is because this company genuinely cares about you- they're putting their money where their mouth is. It's just true. That's how people come away- there's people that genuinely care- that will go the extra mile- that have an ear and that it comes across that we are genuinely interested- not just in their hands on the production line- but the newborn baby that's having trouble in the hospital too, or the grandma and grandpa that's getting Alzheimer's and they're having a tough time dealing with it. We really want to be a part of their family too.

Chaplain #8: When you have stories going around the community like that- that the chaplain from (the organization) helped my husband's funeral and just released a real blessing- that's going to help (the organization) in the community- it's also going to help with the employees that they have because they are feeling cared for and turnover is a major problem.

Chaplain #13: Well I think that basically the idea is job retention and when you've got people that come to work and have major family problems going on outside the plant and they dread coming to work- knowing that they have someone they can talk to is really what I think is one of the primary benefits. They know that they can go and see the chaplain- that the chaplain is going to be there for them. Now whether they take advantage of that- some do, some don't. But I think that's probably the greatest advantage is that (employees) feel like the company cares about them if they're going to employ a chaplain to come in and talk to them.

Chaplain #6: I think overall it lets them know that the company cares about who they are as people – is probably the best way to put it. I think when a company does that the result is employee loyalty, employee attitude- a higher level of morale in the plant, so I think it benefits both ways.

Chaplain #8: I think that our society is going faster and faster- things are changing- relationships are breaking down because of the pace of our society and people are losing their own personal value of who they are and it's causing destruction in relationships at work and at home and even people's relationships with themselves (i.e. do drugs, alcohol, other dangerous activities and even lead to suicide). So to have chaplains

working with your employees- there are people there that are building relationships and that adds to the value of the employees and also the company- it's good on a personal and spiritual level and also on a profit level because when people feel that they're cared for they want to be there- they want to work and you just see improvements happening all the time.

Chaplain #4: there was a lady that was being disciplined and sent home for doing some bad paperwork in her department and it was critical- she had been warned and she just kept slipping up and normally she didn't do that and he (HR Manager) asked her as he was suspending her for 3 days, you got something going on at home? She said yeah. He said, would you be willing to talk with a chaplain? And she said yes. So he called me and I knew her and I knew her family situation – there had been a lot of incest and molestation in her family of origin between siblings and all kinds of stuff and it was a mess- in the rest of her family. And she told me after we sat down on the doorsteps that she was thinking about committing suicide in the plant- she told me how she was going to do it and I got her through that and referred her to some more help in the community and followed up with her and stayed with her. And I went back and told our HR Manager- I said we dodged a bullet on this one- not just her and her family but this would traumatize a lot of people at work if

that happened and sometimes people do bizarre things at work when they see no other way out and just him asking that simple question- is there something going on in your life at home that could be causing it? And nobody had ever asked her that- they were just criticizing her for her bad work and generally there is always something beneath the surface because most people don't just do bad work particularly when they've been doing good work. But most people don't have the time to sit down and allow a person to get it out because mostly they're not going to come out and tell you I'm thinking about committing suicide sometimes they do and it takes a while. ...but those were times when I came away thinking I'm glad I was there as a chaplain- that's what turns me on about it. It doesn't happen every week but when it does I know that's why I'm there.

<div align="center">Role Development and Enactment Challenges</div>

The chaplains also were asked about negative effects and backlash to their role, what things interfered with their role, and what they saw as the most difficult part of their job. Two themes emerged that met Owen's (1984) thematic analysis criteria regarding how the chaplains described their roles and their challenges: Ambiguity of their role and the balance of their role between hourly and management employees.

Ambiguity of Role

The first theme is ambiguity of the chaplain's role. In the interviews, chaplains described the need to be flexible and to respond as the situation demanded.

Chaplain #6: Our role as chaplains is not like the people who work on the production line because they know when they come into the plant from one day to the next what they're going to be doing, as chaplains we never know. We're here to respond to the need of the employees and that changes from day to day it seems.

Chaplain #11: (Employees) were wondering what are you doing here? Are you here to bless the meat before we package it? What are you doing here? And so I had to do a lot of interpretation to people and I still do that a lot to new employees but I've learned to do that and I'm comfortable doing that now. Part of it was just the production- the whole production climate and the whole production environment was foreign- it was a foreign land for me for the first three or four months because I had never been in production before.

Chaplain #4 : (My role is to) be available for spiritual help. And I'm not sure what that means- they don't talk a lot about job descriptions- I think being available to minister is probably a general strategy...

Neutrality of Role

Additionally, chaplains have to balance their position between supporting management and supporting hourly employees. To side with one or the other will create difficulty with the other side. Chaplains need to serve both sides to continue to be effective. Chaplains spoke of the importance of appearing neutral and of the importance of balancing relationships with both management and hourly workers to continue to be trusted on all sides.

> ***Chaplain #2:*** We are here not to discuss issues, we are here to provide support to all the (employees) regardless of their- if they're affiliated with union or not. So, that's part of my job, to be neutral.

> ***Chaplain #6:*** There has to be a balance. I don't think it would be very good for any of the chaplains to be perceived by any level of employment as being more- siding more with one than with the other. And I go to our weekly staff meetings here but I've also been invited to the monthly labor management meeting, so I think that's a good thing.

> ***Chaplain #10:*** That's why it's important for us to be on both sides so everybody trusts us. If the workers think we're on management's side or the management thinks we're on the workers side all alone, then they're not going to trust us and (in) those certain situations.

> ***Chaplain #7:*** The biggest thing I think is a friend- and when I say that- they have someone who does not- that's neutral- I don't have to

worry about any one particular interest, any one particular idea- I can be a

mouthpiece for those who can't speak for themselves.

This study explored the role creation and enactment of full-time clergy

working part-time as chaplains in the context of a for-profit organization. Roles

are emergent and negotiated between individuals (Blumer, 1969) so it makes

sense that when a context changes, roles will have to be renegotiated. This role

creation and negotiation take place through our interactions with others, through

communication (Apker, 2001). This study sought to explore specifically how the

role of corporate chaplain is created and enacted when a context changes for a

member of the clergy from a religious organization to a for-profit organization.

Corporate chaplains are a new role within most for-profit organizations

and are also a new role for clergy in this context. Together these two roles help

create and negotiate who a corporate chaplain is and what a corporate chaplain

does. This innovative role adds a new dimension of spirituality into the

organization, and in the case of this particular organization also adds the

dimension of onsite support for their Employee Assistance Program. The results

of this study indicate that the role of a clergy member in this for-profit context

centers on provision of social support.

Corporate chaplains interviewed for this study described their tasks in this

role as one of primarily communicating social support to employees. This

supportive communication was revealed through the themes of caring, being a

friend, displaying extra role behaviors, and listening. Cutrona and Suhr (1992) identify five different types of social support: informational support, tangible support, network support, esteem support and emotional support. All five types of support were identified in the interviews; however, emotional support was the most dominate type of support found, encompassing themes of caring, being a friend, and listening. Specifically, emotional support is represented by supportive expressions of caring, trust, concern or love (Cutrona & Suhr, 1992).

After emotional support, the second type of support most often cited within their discourse was *tangible aid*. This was especially dominant in the discourse of the chaplains who were bilingual and worked mostly with Hispanic employees. These chaplains mentioned that Hispanics often face language barriers that required more tangible aid. Additionally, hourly workers in the processing plant environment are often without a high school education and often without any specific workplace skills. Their job prospects are limited, and salaries for the jobs available are low. Poverty is a constant threat, especially in a time of crisis. Tangible aid can be a very important resource, and chaplains often mentioned their connections to social services in the communities or church-related social services that would allow them to provide tangible aid to employees.

One interesting finding from a communicative standpoint was the theme of *listening*. Often in the field of communication, scholars focus upon the speaking or the message portion instead of the reception. Mankowski and

Rappaport (1995) argue that listening is a form of empowerment that helps the speaker by allowing them to create value and support for their personal stories and for their collective stories. Chaplains stated that they spent a lot of their time listening to the personal stories of employees, especially hourly workers. Chaplains also shared that these workers were not often listened to by anyone else. Listening is not mentioned and does not have a code in Cutrona and Suhr's (1992) social support coding scheme. This is interesting because the coding scheme focuses upon both the sending and receiving of messages but does not address when someone is just receiving the message, which is the case when someone simply listens. Listening can be a very supportive behavior and can empower individuals to find value in themselves (Mankowski & Rappaport, 1995).

Corporate chaplains also are a fresh source of support for employees. Traditionally there are three sources of support in the workplace: the organization, a supervisor or a peer. Chaplains fit none of these set categories. Chaplains interviewed said they often speak with workers about non-task related topics such as marriage, children, or health. Cohen and Wills (1985) found that non-task related interactions enhanced social support. Additionally, employees are not required to speak with chaplains and can determine whether or not to initiate a conversation with a chaplain. The choice of initiating the interaction was an

important feature identified by Kirmeyer and Lin (1987) as a determinate of favorably or unfavorably perceived interactions.

Chaplains in this study primarily identified with their dominant role as a clergy member. This was shown through the second research question regarding how chaplains framed their role as a corporate chaplain. The results of this study found that the clergy members framed their role as a *calling from God* to minister to people in every context. The participants felt that being a chaplain did not change their role identity but did alter a few of their role behaviors. Role identity is a role that individuals use to define who they are (Ashforth, 2001). It makes sense that a dominant role such as that of clergy would need to remain constant for the role to be effective. The role of clergy is not a role that one can leave at the doors of a church. Instead as spiritual teachers, clergy are expected to live out their beliefs in every aspect of their lives. However, even in the dominant role of clergy, behaviors had to be modified in the for-profit context. The behaviors changed included refraining from proselytizing and refraining from church recruitment. In fundamental or evangelical Christian churches in the United States, proselytizing and church recruitment are two very important tasks that often determine the success of clergy within their churches or denominations. This referent change may also be viewed in new role behaviors such as an increased focus upon providing support by utilizing behaviors such as listening.

These modifications not unique to corporate chaplains and have been experienced in military chaplains as well (Burchard, 1954).

Another frame utilized by chaplains was the view of their role as critical in catastrophic events such as illness and death. This is important because a majority of employees may no longer participate in traditional organizations such as religious organizations that may provide support in times of trauma. They may not live near family that once provided this type of needed support. The mobilization and thus disbursement of society and social networks may have caused Americans to have smaller networks of familial support. This may influence the organization as well as workers. Employees who do not have support networks may experience breakdowns, find it difficult to concentrate, work at a slower rate, have motivational issues or be prone to making mistakes or causing accidents (Dobni, 2004). Having relationships pre-established in the organization has allowed the chaplains to be in a place to support employees in times of tragedy. The death of employees or immediate family members was mentioned by each chaplain interviewed as a time where they were able to serve. Not only can chaplains comfort in times of death, they can also officiate a memorial service, as all the chaplains mentioned that they had done at some point in their chaplaincy.

The third research question addressed how chaplains perceived employee response to their role in the organization. The participants reported that the

employee response was overall positive with a small percentage of employees reacting negatively and/or simply not participating in the services offered (i.e., ignoring the chaplain). Since chaplaincy programs are new in for-profit contexts, chaplains articulated that they spend a lot of time describing their role boundaries within the organization. All the chaplains mentioned the need for educating employees on the role of a chaplain in a food processing plant. This occurred in orientation sessions with new employees or in one-on-one conversations with employees or even in the use of email, bulletin boards or newsletters. The concept of not proselytizing or recruiting for church membership was especially important to communicate to employees to establish trust, according to the chaplains. For a chaplain to be an effective source of support, trust is an essential component. All 14 of the chaplains in the study responded that they felt that employees trusted them and trusted that they would uphold confidentiality. Trust-building, however, was a process that occurred over time; chaplains noted it took a year to two years. Referrals from other employees who were helped by chaplains became the best advertisements for chaplains, and chaplains often saw a growth in requests as their tenure increased.

Organizational benefits that chaplains perceived to provide the organization consisted of reduced turnover or higher employee retention, increased employee loyalty, higher morale, decreased instances of workplace violence, and a perception from employees that the organization cares for their

well being. While these results were not quantitatively measured in this study, chaplains said that being onsite allowed for them to serve as first responders to situations which made access easier for employees, especially hourly employees who cannot afford to take time off work to seek help. For example, a chaplain may help connect a morning shift employee having a marital problem with a counselor in the community that has evening hours. Having onsite EAP services may increase usage of those services, especially if there is a pre-established relationship with the person offering those services (the fact that they know Bob, the chaplain). These benefits would correspond with previous findings in the organizational support literature that suggests employees evaluate the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being, and reciprocate the perceived support with increased commitment, loyalty, and performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). While further studies are needed to confirm these claims, it does make sense that offering onsite services would increase use of those services.

The final research question addressed challenges that chaplains face in their role. Two themes were found in the discourse: role ambiguity and role neutrality. Role ambiguity occurs when expectations within role messages are unclear (Katz & Kahn, 1966). When organizational information about role behavior is vague, research suggests that an individual may withdraw psychologically or physically from an organization (Jackson & Schuler, 1985).

However, the fact that this job is a part-time position might allow for their dominant role identity of clergy to be maintained with relatively small alterations to meet the requirements of the new context. However, a few chaplains did express that it was difficult to figure out at first what to do in new programs and that time spent in conferences, in educational classes, or with other chaplains in this organization assisted in reducing ambiguity. In describing role neutrality, chaplains said the key was to balance their relationships with both management and hourly workers. To be perceived as too one-sided on either side would be perceived by employees as a violation of trust. Neutrality is also a challenge that clergy face in a religious organization, so role behaviors may already be in place for this challenge.

CHAPTER FOUR

Discussion

This study sought to understand the role enactment and development of part-time corporate chaplains for a large multi-site food processing company. Of particular interest was how they manage concurrent responsibilities as members of the clergy and employees of a for-profit organization. This combination is a shift from the long-practiced separation of organizational and religious domains in the work place. Findings from interviews with 14 chaplains center around three key ideas:

A. The task role of these corporate chaplains is primary relational, specifically providing social support to workers on the production line;

B. Their religious vocations (or calling) influence how chaplains enact and describe their role; and

C. The company's strategic ambiguity in defining the chaplain role serves to support role flexibility and chaplain credibility among employees and individualized enactment.

Taken together, these findings illuminate the role enactment of corporate chaplains. The following section discusses these four primary findings, presents implications for practice and for theory, and describes limitations of the study and areas for future research.

Chaplains' task role: Emotional social support

Chaplains interviewed were consistent in describing their activities in the company as primarily providing social support to production line employees. Their accounts emphasize the nature of this support as providing friendship, individual affirmation, and emotional support in times of difficulty. While the chaplains provided instrumental support as well, directing employees to resources and the like, this was often done in the context of providing emotional support. The chaplains attributed some of the need for emotional support to the population they serve, hourly meat processing plant workers. Although the chaplain's job is to serve anyone in the organization who needs help, they noted that most of their interactions are with this hourly population. This group has a particular need for such support. As popular press articles report, organizational climates often make it difficult for many employees to find supportive channels of communication within organizations (Lilienthal, 2003). The absence of support may lead to turnover, lower employee satisfaction, and lower employee effectiveness (Rockett, 2004). For those with less access to resources, such as hourly employees, the effect may be even greater. In addition, this group may have few communicative channels for emotional support outside work. It can be argued that the mobilization and disbursement of American society has contributed to reduced access to social networks, such as familial support. The chaplains

described how they were able to add a relational dimension to the task-oriented workplace.

The effect of vocation

The corporate chaplains in this study overwhelmingly stated that they felt called by God to provide pastoral care. They did not view their chaplaincy with this organization as only a job but rather as a part of their larger vocation. Vocation in this sense comes from the Latin root vocare meaning "to call." and reflects the notion of a calling, being called to the ministry. The extra-role behaviors all the participants described, that is, conduct outside the norms of workplace activity (i.e., towing a car out of a ditch or making doctor's appointments for employees), did not occur because of their commitment to the organization but instead came out of commitment to their vocation or calling. They referred to their vocations as the reason for communicating caring and support for the employees. As a result, none of the chaplains expressed dissonance between their role as clergy and their role as a corporate chaplain. Part of this may be that clergy are in the business of spreading positive messages of hope. Although dissonance may exist, it may be inconsistent with their self-image for clergy to talk of it, especially in the context of the chaplaincy program.

Additionally, due to the importance of a chaplain's vocation, corporate chaplains indicated that they have high identification with their vocation as well as high role integration, which would encourage one way of being in any context

(Nippert-Eng, 1966a). Even though roles are typically situated and grounded (Zurcher, 1983), this study of corporate chaplains indicated that they did not greatly alter their roles in differing contexts, with the exception of particular behaviors such as evangelizing, which they did only in their role as clergy.

Strategic ambiguity in the job description and individualized enactment

The job description of a corporate chaplain at this organization is ambiguous (see Appendix A), partly because it is structured to provide for response to a wide variety of possible events. The company's Corporate Chaplain Standard Operating Procedure Manual identifies "family or individual crisis, illness, hospitalization, deaths, births, marriages, and special accomplishments." Not only must chaplains respond to a diverse list of events, they are expected to provide "pastoral counseling" or "pastoral care" to meet employees' or their immediate family's needs. The term "pastoral care" can be seen as strategically ambiguous because it allows chaplains to identify needs and respond to them without being constrained by a job description that could prescribe or prohibit particular actions. A similar finding regarding strategic ambiguity was found by Apker (2001) in a study of nurse enactment of multiple roles in a changing hospital environment. In short, ambiguity allows for adaptability in how an individual enacts a role.

In a similar way, there is a dialectical tension between the concurrent role of clergy and corporate chaplain, a dynamic informing how individuals enact

these roles. Given the potential for conflict between roles of clergy and corporate

chaplain and the high ambiguity of this developing role, it is not unreasonable to

anticipate that different individuals would interpret and enact the corporate

chaplain role for the same organization in different ways. In particular, different

individual clergy might draw on their faith and their clergy role differently.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, chaplains make sense of their

roles based on their interactions, or their communication, with other employees.

The corporate chaplain's roles are important to consider because the process of

role enactment is related to an employee's success and tenure in an organization

(Jablin & Miller, 1993). The interaction between the chaplains and other

employees becomes even more salient when formal role definitions do not exist

(Miller, Joseph & Apker, 2000), such as in this case.

Previous studies have indicated that role ambiguity produces negative

consequences such as anxiety, tension, stress, dissatisfaction, and even low levels

of performance (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Beehr, 1976;

Greene & Organ, 1973; Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970; Seligman, 1975).

However, findings from this study suggest that ambiguity may not only be

positive but may also work to the advantage of the corporate chaplain in meeting

the emergent demands of the situation.

Implications for Practice and Theory

This study offers two practical findings within the context of this organization: a) Corporate chaplains appear to be a positive organizational approach to support employees and to be EAP first-responders, according to the chaplains interviewed, and b) The strategic ambiguity in the position description may be beneficial to the role enactment of a chaplain.

First, corporate chaplaincy programs may provide a new source of support as onsite, first-responders for Employee Assistance Programs. Traditionally there have been three sources of workplace support: support from peers, support from supervisors, and support from the organization. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) were implemented in organizations to address personal issues that employees brought with them to work. Most EAP services are provided offsite and are often underutilized by employees (Felix, 1998; Reynolds & Briner, 1994). By bringing another level of support onsite, access to these resources increases. In this case, chaplains described their role as serving as a bridge to help employees access these resources. This may be particularly important in production environments where hourly workers may experience barriers of access whether it may be because of a lack of time off, language barriers, a lack of funds, fear, or a lack of education regarding resources available. Onsite support may be a key to increasing use of EAP programs.

Second, strategic ambiguity may be an effective approach for organizational roles that are highly diverse in nature (Apker, 2001). When a role is constantly changing and responding to the unexpected it may, be helpful for organizations to strategically be ambiguous in their description of the role. It is an effective approach in part because it would be impossible to list all of the situations that may be experienced in a role such as a corporate chaplain. Leaving the enactment of the role up to the individual allows the individual to alter the role to best adapt to the situation. An example of this occurred in this study when chaplain #14 enacted his role as someone who would investigate state resources to determine if Medicare would cover the surgery needed by the granddaughter of one of the employees. This was not part of chaplain #14's job description, yet the ambiguous nature of the role allowed for this sort of accommodation so the chaplain could be an effective source of support for the family. The benefits of adaptability in regards to *how* the role is enacted can be seen through the narratives in this case. However, this does not mean that guidelines or boundaries were not or should not be used by the organization. The key finding is that strategically utilizing ambiguity in the description of a position allows for adaptation to changing situational needs.

Findings from this study contribute to theory on role development and enactment in two ways. First, this study serves a reminder of the importance of the individual as a human agent in the role developing and enacting process.

Much of the communication research regarding roles focuses upon the role characteristics and minimizes emphasis on the individual as a human agent. For example, in this particular study the corporate chaplains articulated that the purpose behind their work was derived from their vocation. An individual who feels called to the work and an individual who is working solely for a paycheck may enact their roles differently, even when their position descriptions are identical. In this study, the power of vocation is evident, serving to guide chaplains to go above and beyond traditional workplace parameters. Examples from the narratives such as finding free housing for six employees who lost everything in a flash flood, to driving an employee without a car over an hour each way to a doctor's appointment, or even in counseling individuals who no longer work for the organization remind us of the importance and power of the individual in the development and enactment of a role.

Second, chaplains' descriptions of their role suggest that they identify primarily with their vocation. A vocation, or a calling, provides the purpose behind work and influences how roles within a particular position may be enacted, especially when the role is ambiguously defined. Furthermore, a vocation does not have to be a calling in a religious organization; people in diverse occupations such as doctors, teachers, and lawyers may also feel that they have a calling to do the work they do. A vocation allows for powerfully framed

sensemaking of multiple roles and may reduce dissonance of enacting multiple roles.

In this case chaplains strongly identified with their calling of pastoral care. This corresponds with prior research by Russo (1998) that identifies three potential sources of workplace identification: a) identification with an organization, b) identification with a profession, and c) identification with an ideology. The chaplains indicated strong ties to their vocation which allowed them to manage their multiple roles by recognizing their connection to their vocational calling. While they also expressed messages indicating some level of attachment to their respective organizations (the food processing organization and their religious congregation), they framed both roles within the framework of their vocation. The salience of a particular role may be contextually driven; however, if the roles (i.e., minister and corporate chaplain) are linked to an individual's vocation it would make sense that this would reduce the dissonance and perhaps make the management of multiple roles less demanding. This would allow for the management of multiple roles while still allowing for the construction of a fairly stable sense of self through social interactions and through internalizing collective meanings, values and standards (Burke, 1991; Stryker, 1980). Instead of a dominant role, chaplains may instead have a dominant vocation that affects all of the roles they may enact.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although valuable information was obtained from this study, it is not without its limitations. The generalizability of the findings is limited by the number of participants and the context of one organization. Additional interview research with a greater number of chaplains from a variety of companies would be fruitful in providing confirmation of these findings across contexts. Additionally, it may be useful to compare chaplaincy programs across contexts by asking chaplains to complete reliable instruments measuring organizational identification, organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

This study was also limited by the reporting of just one position in the organization, the corporate chaplains. As noted earlier, chaplain self reports may be influenced by their identities as clergy. Additionally, how the chaplains perceive their supportive communication may not match perceptions of received support. Thus, to more fully understand the role of a corporate chaplain, the voices of both hourly employees and management need to be heard. Interviews with employees who have utilized a corporate chaplain and those who have not would shed light on the interactive nature of this role.

Summary

This study sought to better understand the phenomenon of spiritually-oriented organizational support; particularly how corporate chaplains manage the role negotiation and enactment that occurs in their simultaneous roles as clergy in

the community and their roles as corporate chaplains. Findings demonstrated that role negotiation and enactment was trumped by chaplains' ubiquitous identification with their religious vocation, as the particular jobs as clergy (i.e. minister) and corporate chaplain seemed to fall under the wider umbrella of vocation. Thus any context (job) may be integrated as long as it allows the individuals to pursue their vocations. Second, the findings acknowledged how strategic ambiguity positively supported the situational emergence of the chaplain's role and the individualization of those roles.

On a more pragmatic level, the accounts of the chaplains demonstrated the ways in which on-site support through EAPs could successfully serve production line workers and, by extension, the organization. Frost (2003) suggests that corporations should create healthy atmospheres that help people find meaning in the midst of pain. Corporate chaplaincy programs may be a highly effective way to promote this "environment of caring" (Mumby & Putnam, 1992); however, additional research is needed to substantiate these claims. Researchers should continue to examine chaplaincy programs as well as other Employee Assistance Programs to find additional avenues for supportive communication in the workplace.

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Appendix A

Chaplain Job Description

JOB TITLE: Part-time Chaplain

SUMMARY: This position will be responsible for making personal contact with (employees) and their families on occasions of family or individual crisis, illness, hospitalization, deaths, births, marriages, and special accomplishments. The chaplain will provide short-term pastoral counseling (not over four sessions) when requested by (employees), supervisors, or managers. All counseling will be confidential. Long-term counseling will be referred to community resources.

The chaplain will be available to all people regardless of their religious affiliation or beliefs. There are to be no ethical or moral breaches of conduct. Chaplains must maintain a high standard of integrity and strictly avoid inappropriate behavior with any individual he/she is counseling. The (organization's) Chaplain must be an active member in good standing of a local congregation or faith group of the chaplain's choice. The chaplain must have the approval of their local church or judicatory in order to be hired as a (organization) Chaplain. The chaplain should actively follow the teachings of their faith group as a lifestyle and have a good reputation in the community as a pastor/minister.

Ordination is preferred.

Chaplains are also encouraged to seek the endorsement of their denominational endorsing agency. When the chaplain is ministering to (the organization's employees) they must maintain a clear identity of their role as the (organization's) Chaplain and not as their role as pastor of a local parish/church.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Education: It is preferred that a Chaplain have a broad educational background with seminary studies completed at the Master's level. It is preferred that chaplains will have completed a minimum of one quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education. Preference is given to clergy who are board certified by one of the following: The Association of Professional Chaplains; the NationalAssociation of Catholic Chaplains; The American Association of Pastoral Counselors; The Association of Clinical Pastoral Educators.

Experience: The style of ministry in the workplace is very different than that of a traditional ministry. The Chaplain must be a seasoned minister that can identify and understand people and issues that arise in the workplace. Preference is given

to those who have had workplace Chaplain Services experience and/or have previous work experience in a secular workplace.

Computer Skills: Basic computer skills.

Other Requirements: The chaplain must have strong interpersonal and communications skills and the ability to work well with people from various cultures & economic levels. They need the ability to relate well to both management and hourly (employees). They must have an ecumenical approach to ministering across faith groups and to people who have not affiliated with a faith group. The chaplain needs to be familiar with referral sources in the community for financial, medical, or counseling issues. The chaplain must maintain confidential any information they learn about (an employee) or (the organization). They are not required to keep confidences when there is a clear and present danger to the lives or physical security or safety of counseled (employees) or others. Chaplains are also required to report instances of harassment, sexual or otherwise, and illegal activity that could put the company at risk.

Bilingual skills are beneficial at many of our locations. Bilingual chaplains must also possess English language proficiency to communicate with the management and supervisory staff.