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Work environment preferences of Los Angeles Generation Y contract managers in the defense and aerospace industry

Santor Nishizaki

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Graduate School of Education and Psychology

WORK ENVIRONMENT PREFERENCES OF LOS ANGELES GENERATION Y

CONTRACT MANAGERS IN THE DEFENSE AND AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Santor Nishizaki

July, 2014

June Schmieder-Ramirez, PhD – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Ekaterina, who has been my inspiration and motivation throughout my entire doctoral journey. I also would like to dedicate my dissertation to my grandmother, Fumiye Nishizaki, who unfortunately did not live long enough to see me finish, but encouraged me to pursue a career in business on my first day of college and have been eternally thankful.

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I would like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. June Schmieder-Ramirez, for being an amazing coach, mentor, and creative thought leader for the entire time that I have known her. In addition, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. James DellaNeve and Dr. Patrick Billiter, who have provided me with exceptional feedback for my dissertation.

I would like acknowledge and thank the participants of my study. Without your input and dedication to taking the time to do these interviews, there would be no results or conclusions.

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Lastly, I'd like to thank Christie Dailo for her willingness to go above and beyond for all the EDOL students.

VITA

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▪ Develop metrics and analyze historicals for future trends
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ABSTRACT

There are currently 4 different generations in the workplace, and the newest generation, Generation Y, has caused leaders within organizations to rethink their management and workplace cultural approach to leading this emerging generation. This qualitative phenomenological dissertation examines the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers who work in the Los Angeles area in the defense and aerospace industry by interviewing 11 participants from both the public and private sectors. The research indicates that this new generation, Generation Y or Millennials, prefer to have autonomy over their workload and schedule, but prefer to have their direct manager active in a mentoring and coaching role, rather than acting as a task-master. In addition, the participants in this study preferred a healthy amount of pressure, but not too much of a workload that would cause them to fail. Lastly, this dissertation found that Millennials have a high preference for innovation and using innovative technology in the workplace to increase efficiency.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

According to Altes (2009), "Generation Y, also known as Gen Y, or the Millennial

Generation, consists of people born between 1985 and 2003" (p. 45). In addition, Altes

(2009) states, as of 2009, there were 73.5 million Millennials in the workplace, compared

to Gen Xs 49.1 million and the Baby Boomer's 76.7 million (p. 45). Futher, according to

Millennial expert Dan Schawbel, as of 2012, there were a recorded 80 million Millennials

and 76 million Baby Boomers in the workplace (Schawbel, 2010). The definition of

Generation Y can vary depending upon who is asked. Talgan (2009) states that Generation

Y consists of people born between 1978 and 1990 (p. 50). For the purpose of this research

study, as described by Howe and Strauss (2007), Generation Y will be known as people

who were born between 1982 and 2005.

Westerman and Yanamura (2007) state that "Firms must recognize the influence of

the values and work preferences of the next generation on organizational outcomes in

order both to retain staff and to groom future leaders" (p. 150). With the anticipation of

Baby Boomers to retire in record numbers, it is necessary for leaders in organizations to

identify the work environment preferences of the emerging Millennial generation into the

workplace.

According to Rothe, Lindholm, Hyvönen, and Nenonen (2012), "There is a growing

body of evidence linking the physical workplace with both satisfaction and productivity of

employees" (p. 78). Rothe et al. (2012) also state that "Preferences are issues that cause

happiness and satisfaction, but which are not necessarily needed to perform a task.

Preferences are the things end-users would like to have if they had the choice" (p. 80).

Being that there are four different generations in the workplace, having to satisfy the needs of all employees who have different work environment preferences can be difficult. Rothe et al. (2011) conducted a study of 1,100 office workers in Finland and found the following:

> In order to satisfy the entire workforce, no matter age, the future work environments have to both fulfill the users' needs, and allow the users to make more decisions themselves in terms of deciding on where and how they work, and how they use the provided environment. (p. 90)

Even though this study was not conducted in the United States, it is important to note that there may be some work environment preferences that are universal across age groups.

Statement of the Problem

This dissertation examines whether the work environment preferences of contract managers of the aerospace and defense industry in Los Angeles are a phenomenon consistent with current literature regarding characteristics of Generation Y.

The Aerospace Industry in Los Angeles was chosen as the location of this study because it is where the researcher is geographically located and has a rich history with a large number of companies who operate within this region. The Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation's (2012) report describes the aerospace industry in Southern California as being the following:

> Comprised of companies that manufacture aircraft (civil and military), missiles, satellites, and other space vehicles and the companies that manufacture and distribute parts and components. Buyers of these products include private industry, the military, and government space administrations (Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, 2012, p. 2).

The Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation's 2012 report also states that, "In 2011, the industry exported $81.9 billion in goods (the bulk of which were civil aerospace products) and imported $35.5 billion for a positive net trade balance of $46.4 billion" in reference to the U.S. Aerospace industry (Kleinhenz, Ritter-Martinez, de Anda, & Avila, 2012, p. 5). The *Wall Street Journal* reports that the leading U.S. military contractors are the following companies: Northrup Grumman (n.d.) with 70,000 employees, Lockheed Martin with 123,000 employees, Raytheon with 71,000 employees, General Dynamics with 93,000 employees, and Boeing with 170,000 employees, all with a presence in the Southern California area (as cited in Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, 2012, p. 9). Kleinhenze et al. (2012) show employment in the Aerospace Industry in Southern California has been gradually decreasing over the past 20 years but still is well above 50,000 employees. Finally, Kleinhenze et al. (2012) state in their report the following:

> The aging of the U.S. workforce also presents serious challenge. The Baby Boomer generation began retiring in 2011, and very few organizations have dedicated significant resources or implemented plans to close the skills gap that will open up as a result of older workers leaving the workforce. (p. 19)

With older workers leaving the workforce, there will be a gap to fill, which might largely be filled by Millennials, because of their large workforce size and technological familiarity. Companies need to be able to attract and retain the Millennial workers by accommodating their workplace preferences. The significance of work environment preferences can have a profound impact on employees and can influence their engagement levels, as well as their job satisfaction. Bakker (2011) defines both work engagement and job satisfaction as

follows: "work engagement is different from job satisfaction in that it combines high work pleasure (dedication) with high activation (vigor, absorption); job satisfaction is typically a more passive form of employee well-being" (p. 265). Bakker describes engaged employees being "full of energy, are dedicated to reach their work-related goals, and are often fully immersed in their work. Work engagement is predicted by job resources and personal resources and leads to higher job performance" (p. 268). Kahn (1990) defines personal engagement as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances" (p. 694). Kahn's (1990) research found that "supportive, resilient, and clarifying management heightened psychological safety" and "managerial reluctance to loosen their control sent a message that their employees were not to be trusted and should fear overstepping their boundaries" (p. 711).

Now that workplace engagement has been generically defined, it is necessary to examine how and why the new Millennial Generation and their workplace engagement is applicable to organizations. Bristow, Amyx, Castleberry, and Cochran (2011) state that Generation Y employees are "the most technically literate, educated, affluent, and ethnically diverse generation in U.S. history; they are also more procedural than outcome oriented" (p. 78). In addition, Bristow et al. state that "Gen-Yers need to be challenged and excited, are opinionated, want flexible jobs, view a company as a job or career store in which they are customers, have less direction, and earn money to spend rather than save" (p. 78). If organizations are able to successfully engage Generation Y employees and create a work environment that is appealing, it can directly impact a company's bottom line. In addition, if aerospace and defense companies in and outside of Los Angeles do not attempt to have

an engaged Millennial workforce by helping to satisfy their work environment preferences, Generation Y workers will find a company that can provide them with a comfortable work environment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to qualitatively examine the workplace preferences of contract managers in the aerospace and defense industry in the Los Angeles area at non-profit and for-profit organizations. The qualitative model used was the phenomenological model, and the researcher interviewed between 10 to 20 Generation Y employees who were currently working in the field of contract management in the Los Angeles area. I hoped that by using a qualitative approach, I would be able to dig deeper for answers that employee surveys cannot capture.

This study attempts to (a) identify recurring themes that occur when coding the interviews of the Generation Y employees, and (b) examine if these themes are consistent with the themes of Generation Y employees in current literature. I also examined if the Generation Y contract managers in the Los Angeles area have higher or lower expectations of the ideal work environment.

Research Question

The research question was answered by tailored questions that were based upon the Moos and Insel (2008) Work Environment Scale, which determined the work environment preferences of the participants of this study. Moos and Insel define the 10 criteria of work environment preferences as consisting of the following: "involvement, coworker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity, managerial control, innovation, and physical comfort" (p. 8). The research question

answered in this dissertation was as follows: What are the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area?

Significance of the Topic

This study is significant because if a company does not know how to properly engage their workforce, resources such as productivity can be wasted. For example, according to a study done by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2011), "38% of Millennials who are currently working said they were actively looking for a different role, and 43% said they were open to offers. Only 18% expect to stay with their current employer for the long term" (p. 4). If organizations do not figure a way out a way to stimulate the Generation Y employees, they can lose valuable talent and can result in high employee turnover, which can affect a company's bottom line.

In addition to not fully engaging Generation Y employees, managers and leaders within the Contract Management Industry must understand how to communicate with Generation Y employees. PricewaterhouseCoopers' (2011) study found from Millennials that "there are signs of tensions, with 38% saying that older senior management does not relate to younger workers, and 34% saying that their personal drive was intimidating to other generations" (p. 5). If these leaders and managers are not coached correctly, they may lose the opportunity to employ these emerging Generation Y workers. Lastly, Westerman and Yanamura (2007) state the following:

> People placed in work environments that "fit" are more likely to intrinsically enjoy their work. The reverse is true for those placed in work environments that do not fit. For these employees, normal daily work occurrences may be unpleasant and

interpreted more negatively, thus resulting in negative outcomes such as boredom,

poor work performance, and lack of satisfaction. (p. 152)

Moos and Insel (2008) define the social ecology of social transformation as follows: "The

instrumental, structural, relational, and cultural aspects of social environments are clearly

interrelated and interactive. Indeed it is the emergent, mutual influences between and

among capacity-building, group empowerment, relational community-building, and

culture-challenge that constitute the heart of social transformation" (p. 14). In addition,

Moos and Insel state that "a multidisciplinary and multilevel framework for social

transformation is proposed, encompassing four foundational goals: capacity-building,

group empowerment, relational community-building, and culture-challenge" (p. 2). Moos

and Insel use these four foundational goals as part of the WES that will be discussed in

greater detail in Chapter 3. Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) state that burnout can

have a profound impact on job performance, particularly in that it "leads to lower

productivity and effectiveness at work," as well as "is associated with decreased job

satisfaction and a reduced commitment to the job or the organization" (p. 406). Maslach et

al. (2001) states the following:

Of all the demographic variables that have been studied, age is the one that has been

most consistently related to burnout. Among younger employees, the level of

burnout is reported to be higher than among those over 30 or 40 years old. (p. 409)

In addition, Maslach et al. (2001) state the following:

People vary in the expectations they bring to their job. In some cases these

expectations are very high, both in terms of the nature of the work (e.g., exciting,

challenging, fun) and the likelihood of achieving success (e.g., curing patients,

getting promoted). Whether such high expectations are considered to be idealistic or unrealistic, one hypothesis has been that they are a risk factor for burnout. (p. 411)

Job burnout can be seen as a potential issue for future Generation Y employees if their employers do not create a working environment that exceeds this new generation's demanding and needy work environment preferences.

Lastly, Maslach et al. (2001) define burnout as consisting of "six areas of work life that encompass the central relationships with burnout: workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values. Burnout arises from chronic mismatches between people and their work setting in terms of some or all of these six areas" (p. 414). Hausknecht, Sturman, and Roberson (2011) confirmed the importance of fairness-perceptions in determining the workplace is experienced, that "the results suggest that improving [or declining] fairness conditions over time motivate more [or less] favorable employee attitudes" (p. 877). As one can see, organizations must put a great deal of effort into understanding the needs of their employees because they can deeply affect each individual in a different way. Individual or generational work place preferences affect the level of engagement and job satisfaction, and hence affect the prevalence of turnover.

Qualitative Method Used

As stated above, the qualitative method used for this study is phenomenological. I chose the phenomenological method because my intent is aligned with Creswell's (2007) description of phenomenology as the following: "exploration of this phenomenon with a *group of individuals* who have all experienced the phenomenon. Thus, a heterogeneous group is identified that may vary in size from 3 to 4 individuals to 10 to 15" (p. 78).

Different methods of coding were used to collate the interview transcriptions. NVivo

coding was used for line-by-line coding, among other techniques. I did not share any of my

own experiences in that field, but only interviewed current Generation Y contract

managers with the specified questions that can be seen in Appendix A.

I obtained the consent of participants for the study by emailing and calling members

of my professional network. Once indication of interest was received for participating in

this study, I used the snowball sampling approach to gain more participants.

This study employed qualitative methods, because examining the phenomenon of

contract managers in the Los Angeles area cannot be done adequately simply by

administering a survey. By an in-depth interview of how the participants arrived at their

current work environment preferences, understanding was gained about how preferences

may have been influenced by previous events. The need for qualitative data is highlighted

in a quote by Hausknecht et al. (2011):

> Our findings show that even if all employees hold similar fairness perceptions at a
>
> given point, resultant *attitudes and intentions will differ* depending on how
>
> employees feel relative to how they have been treated in the past. Thus, to retain a
>
> satisfied and committed workforce, managers may want to be cognizant of how
>
> employees are reacting to ongoing workplace experiences over time. (p. 878)

A pre-listed set of possible attitudes and perceptions, if presented by the researcher as a

quantitative survey, would likely have resulted in far less variety in participant responses,

as the contents of a survey would have depended on the researcher's limited

understanding of options to present. Thus a qualitative phenomenological study can be

deemed more appropriate for understanding and listing the common themes of work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the Los Angeles area.

Key Assumptions

The key assumptions when the researcher contacted the Generation Y contract managers was that (a) they would correctly self-assess that they met all of the requirements for inclusion in of the study and (b) the participants would be honest with the answers they provided. In addition, another key assumption was that the 10 key components of the Work Environment Scale (WES) that was converted into interview questions was sufficient to obtain an in-depth look at the phenomenon of work environment preferences of contract managers in the Los Angeles area. Lastly, the researcher assumed that any participants that were referred by procurement executives who participate in this study would have participated of their own free will, rather than being volunteered by their supervisor.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study was the unknown number of Generation Y contract managers that reside in the for-profit and non-profit sectors within the Los Angeles area. Potential participants in this study were first identified from among the researcher's known network within the San Gabriel Valley Chapter of National Contract Management Association (NCMA). Also, the researcher established and created a formal mentoring program that helps recently graduated contract managers transition into the professional workforce, and the participants of this program were contacted as well.

A personal bias can be considered to be a limitation in this study because the researcher is very active in NCMA and previously was employed as a Generation Y contract

manager in the non-profit sector. I made the attempt to minimize possible bias by using

carefully designed interview questions and avoiding the appearance of positive or negative

verbal or nonverbal responses to questions. To decrease the possibility of bias and to

ensure validity, the researcher used a collaborative approach, asking each participant to

review his or her transcript after the interview took place, to ensure that each participant

viewed their own transcript as being accurate and true.

Delimitations of the Study

The delimitation of this study is that the participants resided in California between

and including Orange County to Santa Barbara, were born between 1982 to 1991 (inclusive

of those dates), were currently working or had worked in the contract management field in

the past 6 months, and worked in the aerospace and/or defense industry.

Key Definitions

Below are the definitions of the terms that are commonly used in this study. These

are presented here in context of prior research to minimize the possibility of

misconceptions:

- Baby Boomer: Born between 1943-1960 (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 34).

- Contract manager: "means a person with the authority to enter into, administer,
  and/or terminate contracts and make related determinations and findings" (U.S.
  General Services Administration, 2005, p. 2.1-5). Procurement professionals may
  be referred to as *contract managers*, *subcontract managers, procurement clerk,
  strategic sourcing specialist,* and *contract officers* and are to be treated as the same
  type of professional throughout this dissertation.

- Employee engagement: Bakker (2011) defines work engagement as "different from job satisfaction in that it combines high work pleasure (dedication) with high activation (vigor, absorption); job satisfaction is typically a more passive form of employee well-being" (p. 265).

- Generation: Ryder (1965) uses the synonym *cohort* for generation, "defined as the aggregate of individuals [within some population definition] who experienced the same event within the same time interval" (p. 845). Howe and Strauss (2007) note that a generation's unique set of characteristics "begins to dawn during adolescence and typically takes full shape during and immediately after collegiate, military, marriage, or initial work experience" (p. 41)

- Generation X: Born between 1961-1981 (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 34).

- Generation Y/Millennial: Born between 1982-2005 (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 34).

- Great Generation: Born between 1925-1942 (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 34).

- NVivo coding: "Codes being taken directly from what the participant himself says and is placed in quotation marks" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 3).

- Job burnout: "A prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job . . . defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy" (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 397).

- Leadership: "The ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or a set of goals" (Robins & Judge, 2011, p. 410).

- Phenomenology: Exploration of a phenomenon with a group of individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon, for which "a heterogeneous group is

identified that may vary in size from 3 to 4 individuals to 10 to 15" (Creswell, 2007, p. 78).

- Procurement: "The act of obtaining or buying goods and services. The process includes preparation and processing of a demand as well as the end receipt and approval of payment" (Procurement, n.d., para. 1).

- Qualitative research: "Based upon the philosophy of empiricism, follows an unstructured, flexible, and open approach to enquiry, aims to describe more than measure, believes in in-depth understanding and small samples, and explores perceptions and feelings more than facts and figures" (Kumar, 2011 p. 394).

- Researcher/author: Santor Nishizaki

- Snowball sampling: "A process of selecting a sample using networks" (Kumar, 2011, p. 399).

- Work environment: "refers to the qualities and characteristics of the experience of working in your agency. Put simply, it is an expression of what it is like to work in your organization—the employer-employee relationships and work setting" (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d., p. 6). In addition, Moos and Insel's (2008) Work Environment Scale (WES) measures and defines a work environment as consisting of three categories—relationship dimensions, personal growth dimensions, and system maintenance and change dimensions—which consist of 10 subsets: "involvement, coworker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity, managerial control, innovation and physical comfort" (p. 9).

Summary

As stated earlier, the number of Generation Y workers entering the workforce is growing, and organizations must find ways to actively engage this new wave of employees by creating a work environment that is conducive to these new employees' preferences. The researcher used his network and professional affiliations to target a small group of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area and obtained their permission to participate in an interview to discuss their work environment preferences.

The researcher chose to structure the interview questions based upon Moos and Insel's (2008) Work Environment Scale (WES), which has been tested and validated through numerous studies. The researcher used the interview questions to dig deeper to discover whether or not a phenomenon exists. In addition, the researcher used NVivo coding software to help examine if there were common themes in the interview transcripts.

This study is particularly significant for any of the aerospace or defense companies that exist in the Los Angeles area that employ contract managers. As stated previously, not having the right work environment preferences in place can create job burnout, decrease employee engagement, and possibly drive employees away to their competitors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review covers (a) leadership, (b) the four generations that are currently in the workforce, (c) work environment preferences, (d) employee engagement, (e) procurement professionals in the Southern California aerospace industry, and (f) exemplary companies that provide excellent work environments for Generation Y. This literature review intends to examine ways that the aerospace companies in the Los Angeles area are or are not motivating and creating a work environment that leverages the skills and talents of Generation Y procurement professionals. This study in no way intends to state that all members of a generation can be categorized in to one group (i.e., stereotyped), but intends to examine commonalities of characteristics of each generation. In addition, the literature review intends to examine the commonalities of employee engagement and work environment preferences, as well as the leadership implications for these two factors.

Significance of the Topic

Forbes.com and Time.com generational expert contributor, Schawbel (2012), states that "approximately 10,000 Millennials turn 21 every day in America, and by the year 2025, three out of every four workers globally will be Gen Y" (para. 4). In addition, Meister and Willyerd (2010) state that there are 88 million Millennials in the U.S. population, compared to Generation X's 50 million (p. 69). The year 2025 is a little more than 10 years away, and corporations and governmental organizations need to start planning now to keep this generation engaged and satisfied as more and more Millennials enter the workforce. Not only is this demographic going to dominate this industry, but their tech-savvy skills can be put to good use to create a competitive advantage. Buckingham (2005) states that "Great

managers know and value unique abilities and even the eccentricities of their employees,

and they learn how best to integrate them into a coordinated plan of attack" (p. 23).

Sources and Search Phrases used for Literature Review

Generation Y is a relatively new topic, and peer-reviewed articles on Generation Y

primarily consist of publications ranging from the 1990s and 2000s. The research

databases used were EBSCO, Proquest, Google Scholar, and World Cat. Also, trade

publications, books, magazines, and business publications have been utilized to capture the

full essence of all the generations discussed in this dissertation, as well as examining

popular culture for Generation Y.

Leadership

This literature review is written in the pursuit of a doctorate in education with the

emphasis of organizational leadership. This section outlines the definition of leadership

and the styles and types of leadership that are necessary when examining the leading of

Generation Y. Leadership is defined by Robins and Judge (2011) as "the ability to influence

a group toward the achievement of a vision or a set of goals" (p. 410). Maccoby (2004)

states that "For leaders to lead, they need not only exceptional talent but also the ability to

attract followers. Regrettably, however, it's becoming harder to get people to follow" (p.

77). In addition, Maccoby states, "You can't lead without followers. But getting them

requires more than your talent and charisma. Followers are driven by their own powerful

motivations" (p. 77), which makes it necessary for leaders to understand their followers.

In the terms of this literature review, a leader in a procurement department

working with Generation Y procurement professionals should emulate this definition at its

most simplistic definition, to meet an organization's goals by persuading the workforce he

or she manages or leads, based on understanding their motivations. Wallace and Trinka (2009) state that "the leadership of an immediate manager is more important than any other organizational variable," and these authors define the core elements of effective coaching performance as "frequent discussion clarifying performance expectation, active appreciative feedback, more frequent performance feedback, and supportive encouragement of performance improvement" (pp. 10-11). In addition, Wallace and Trinka state that "Employees who believe their manager cares about their development and is on the lookout for learning opportunities for them give higher levels of discretionary effort. Manager engagement begets employee engagement" (p. 11).

Conversely, ineffective leadership can sometimes negatively impact a company's bottom line. For example, Zenger and Folkman (2002) state that "poor leaders have a substantial influence on an organization's success. They consistently achieve less effective results, create greater turnover, discourage employees, and frustrate customers" (p. 37). The opposite is true for effective leaders. Zenger and Folkman state that "a good leader will have lower turnover, higher profitability, and more employee commitment" (p. 37).

Leadership is important to all employees in an organization, regardless of age or generation. In particular, it can be extremely difficult to lead four different generations because of the different preferences they have for leadership. For example, Dulin's (2008) study of over 30 Generation Y participants found the following:

To this Gen Y cohort, a career is still a job, and life outside work is important to them. Their personal lives are important to them; therefore, they want their leaders to consider their needs outside the workplace. Several interviewees explained that they had grown up in divorced homes, and they wanted to reduce their chances of

divorce once they married. In their careers, they want leaders who encourage employees to make family their top priority. Moreover, they want to see their leaders make family a priority. (p. 62)

Leaders in an organization may have to change their style of leadership to adapt to a certain situation or type of person. Renowned leadership expert, Bass (1985), defines transactional leadership as "Time pressures, poor appraisal methods, doubts about the efficacy of positive reinforcement, leader and subordinate discomfort with the method [of leadership], and lack of management skills are partly responsible," and explains that a seasoned transactional leader would examine "how reinforcements are scheduled, how timely they are, and how variable or consistent they are [which] all mediate the degree of their influence" (p. 28). Bass's theory of transformational leadership can be applied to the workforce of Generation Y because of their group characteristics that are explained in depth below. More notably so, Bass is known for his research of transformational leadership, which he defines as a leader who "motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do" and can be achieved in the following ways:

1. Raising our level of consciousness about the importance of value of designated outcomes and ways of reaching these outcomes.

2. Getting us to transcend our own self-interests for the sake of the team, organization, or larger polity.

3. Raising our need level on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy from, say, the need for security to the need for recognition, or expanding our portfolio of needs by, for example, adding the need for self-actualization to the need for recognition (p. 31).

Bass's theory of transformational leadership can be applied to the workforce of Generation Y because of their group characteristics that will be explained in depth later in this capter.. Maxwell (2013) defines Level 1 leadership as follows:

> The lowest level of leadership—the entry level. People who make it only to Level 1 may be bosses, but they are never leaders. They have subordinates, not team members. They rely on rules, regulations, policies, and organization charts to control their people. Their people will only follow them within the stated boundaries of their authority. Position is the only level that does not require ability and effort to achieve. Anyone can be appointed to a position. This means that position is a fine starting point, but every leader should aspire to grow beyond Level 1. (para. 3)

This Level 1 manager is not acceptable to the Millennials anymore, who are seeking a leader, one who they want to follow. Maxwell (2013) defines a Level 4 leader as demonstrating the following traits and qualities:

> Leaders on the people development level of leadership shift their focus from the production achieved by others to the development of their potential. And they put only 20% of their focus on their personal productivity while putting 80 percent% of it on developing and leading others. This can be a difficult shift for highly productive people who are used to getting their hands dirty, but it's a change that can revolutionize an organization and give it a much brighter future. (sec. Level 4: People Development)

In addition to transformational and transactional leadership, emotional intelligence is seen as being an integral capacity of a leader. Emotional intelligence is necessary when working with different generations, because generational differences can involve communication and emotional intelligence's applications, which consist of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills (Goleman, 2000, pp. 78-90). Xu and Thomas (2011) state that, "leadership that provides a supportive, trusting environment allows employees to fully invest their energies into their work roles" (p. 401). This emphasizes how critical leadership is within an organization, because it can have a profound impact on employee engagement, which in turn will have an impact for a company's bottom line. In addition, Xu and Thomas state that "leadership research shows consistent links between transformational leadership and constructs that are argued by some to be part of engagement, such as motivation, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, proactive behaviors, and organizational citizenship behaviors" (p. 402). Lastly, Xu and Thomas state that "only certain leader behaviors that are associated with engagement, principally those that support follower performance (e.g., role clarifying) or connect followers with the organization's goals (e.g., inspirational)" and found from their study that "leaders who act in ways that support and develop team members can expect to have team members who show higher levels of engagement, with *supports team* explaining the most unique variance in employee engagement" (p. 411).

From a global perspective, BlessingWhite Inc. (2008) found in their research of an online survey of 7,508 individuals from Southeast Asia, Australia, New Zealand, China, Europe, and North America that "there is a strong correlation between engagement and retention, with at least 8 in 10 engaged employees in the Asia-Pacific indicating that they

plan to stay with their employer through 2008 [compared to only 22% to 41% of

disengaged employees who want to stay]. This pattern is consistent with findings in North

America and Europe" (p. 1).   BlessingWhite Inc. also found that

> drivers of increased contribution vary. Respondents in India, Southeast Asia, and
>
> China rank 'development opportunities and training' and 'regular, specific feedback'
>
> as most important. While respondents in Australia and New Zealand also
>
> highlighted the need for feedback, they identified 'a coach or mentor other than my
>
> manager' and 'more resources' as more important than development. (p. 1)

In summary, employee engagement can be increased or decreased based upon leadership.

Ferri-Reed (2012) states that "There are three things leaders can do to assure these

Millennials will achieve success on the job despite generational differences: give them the

big picture, help them find the 'me' in team, and mentor them on career-building

behaviors" (p. 18). Ferri-Reed also goes on to state that "the best way leaders can keep

millennial employees focused is to lay out a detailed career path, which specifies the skills

and competencies required to advance up the career ladder" (p. 1). In addition, Ferri-Reed

states that "unfortunately, failure in any job is inevitable, but the way an employee deals

with failure—learning from his or her mistakes—has a huge impact on that employee's

future success and career progress," and also states that "the savvy manager, however,

looks for opportunities to give developing employees 'stretch' assignments, where the

rewards are great but the risk of failure is present" (p. 1). Ferri-Reed states of learning

through failure that "Coaching employees through the process, letting them take risks and

make decisions, is an effective way to teach the value of experience. Nothing surpasses the

sense of accomplishment that follows from taking a risk and watching it pay off" (pp. 1-2).

Goleman (2000) defines the six styles of leadership as the following: coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting, and coaching. As the reader will see throughout the literature review, the style of leadership preferred by the followers will vary from generation to generation.

Dulin's (2008) study of 30 generation Y states that they prefer their leaders to have the following attributes:

> (a) provides constructive feedback, (b) good listener, (c) treats others with respect, (d) manages conflict effectively, (e) fosters fun, (f) friendly, (g) has a good sense of humor, (h) approachable, (i) has a positive attitude, (k) provides praise, and (l) encourages others. (p. 55)

In conclusion, employee engagement, different types of leadership styles, and integration of emotional intelligence must be taken in to account when leading an organization and examining the work environment preferences and motivational attitudes of Generation Y from a leadership or managerial position.

Generational Cohorts

Ryder (1965), the 1960s generational expert, uses the synonym *cohort* for generation and describes a cohort as being "defined as the aggregate of individuals [within some population definition] who experienced the same event within the same time interval" (p. 845). Later scholars, such as Pilcher, (1994) suggest that

> the likelihood of a generation developing a distinctive consciousness is seen to be dependent on the tempo of social change, but in any case, the change over of social generations is always smoother by the presence of an intermediary or buffer generation. (p. 483)

Characteristic of more recent scholars, Sayers (2007) bluntly states that "most cohorts take approximately 20 years [in the workforce] to reach full economic maturity" (p. 475).

Current researchers Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010) suggest that generation members "are born, start school, enter the workforce, have children, and retire at about the same time and age" and that these members are the same age when "wars are waged, technological advances are made, and other social changes occur" (p. 266). Howe and Strauss (2000) define a generation as "a society-wide peer group, born over a period of roughly the same length as the passage from youth to adulthood [in today's America, around 20 or 21 years], who collectively possess a common persona" (p. 40). Pilcher's (1994) explanation is particularly useful because it refers to the subjective characteristic of a generation that can be determined by the pace of what was happening at that time period. Sayers' (2007) explanation gives an objective definition, noting it is important to understand that the societal social changes that took place help shape a Generation's attitudes and beliefs and how long a generation can be considered in duration (years), but conflicts with Crumpacker and Crumpacker (2007) who defines that Generation Y spans 20 years, while Generation X spans only 15 years.

Howe and Strauss (2000) state that generational self-perception "begins to dawn during adolescence and typically takes full shape during and immediately after collegiate, military, marriage, or initial work experience" (p. 41). Howe and Strauss (2007) also state, "to anticipate what 40-year-olds will be like 20 years from now, don't look at today's 40-year-olds; look at today's 20-year-olds" (p. 42). Also, Irwin (1998) states that "the idea of a generation [includes] a collective strategy to secure and maintain resources [which]

implies that generation groups aim to secure advantage over other generations . . . to see

generations as cohesive and distinct entities which are structurally at odds with each

other" (as cited by Joshi, Dencker, Franz, & Martocchio, 2010, p. 400). In sum, generational

differences in the workplace is not a new concept and can rather be defined by age group

categories, rather than one particular generation versus another particular generation.

The Great Generation

The most senior generation in the workforce is the Great Generation, and is often

referred to as the *Veteran*, *Silent*, *Traditional*, or *Mature* Generation (Costanza, Badger,

Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012). Generational experts Howe and Strauss (2007) refer to the

Silent Generation as being born from 1925-1942 and having grown up during the Great

Depression and the WWII time periods (Howe & Strauss, 2007). They can be characterized

as follows: "gray-flannel conformists, they accepted the institutional civic life and

conventional culture of the GIs until the mid-1960s" and as America's "leading civil-rights

activists" (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 43). This generation can also be seen as

communicating in a chain-of-command style, tending to avoid conflict (Crumpacker &

Crumpacker, 2007), valuing family and patriotism, and are "self-sacrificing employees"

(Lowe, Levitt, & Wilson, 2008, p. 45). Crumpcracker and Crumpcracker (2007) define the

Great Generation stereotypes as "old-fashioned/rigid, autocratic, do not want to learn new

ways of working" (p. 355). Howe and Strauss (2000) state the following:

The Silent are less enthusiastic than Boomers and Gen Xers about trying to push

Millennials in the direction of more protection and structure. Yet the humility and

sensitivity of many in this generation, combined with their lingering guilt about

family and civic duties left unperformed, has led them to take a very 'involved' role

in the lives of their grandchildren. (p. 53)

Baby Boomers

The Baby Boomers follow the Great Generation and can also be referred to as the

Boom Generation (Howe & Strauss, 2007). Sayers (2007) describes the birth period of Baby

Boomers to range from 1943 to 1960, while the Segal Company (2001) states that they are

born between 1946 to 1965. Sayers states that the high number of Baby Boomers in the

current population can be attributed to the "extended period of economic prosperity,

progressive social change, and resulting optimism about the future" (p. 479). According to

the Segal Company's (2001) research, Baby Boomers can be characterized as having high

divorce rate and being well educated. In addition, their leadership style can be defined as

collaborative and tending to question authority (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007). Howe

and Strauss (2007) state that "today graying college leaders on the verge of retirement

continue to carry the ideological torch, crusading for various causes in ways that often

irritate their younger Gen X colleagues" (p. 42). Baby Boomers prefer feedback in the

forms of promotions and raises and enjoy communicating on a face-to-face basis

(Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007).

The events that defined their generation were the Vietnam War, Civil Rights

Movement, and the high inflation in the 1980s (Segal Company, 2001). In addition, Howe

and Strauss (2000) state that

many Boomers recollect the giant new edifices of their childhood—Marshall Plan

and NATO, Social Security and AFL-CIO, Interstates and Apollo missions, Selective

Service and CIA, loyalty oaths and schools painted in army-surplus green, the 'new

industrial state' and the 'military industrial complex.' (p. 103)

Generation X

Generation X "represents the smallest generation" in number of births, and has been

known to be independent, task-oriented, direct, autonomous, and skeptical of authority

(Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007, pp. 353, 355), while Sayers (2007) describes them as

"the first population to grow up with personal computers and the information age, but

impacted heavily by the social and economic upheaval and thus less optimistic but more

self-reliant" (p. 479). Rodriguez, Green, and Ree (2003) found that the five themes of

importance from their research of Generation X are fulfillment, flexibility, technology,

monetary compensation, and work environment (p. 68) and that Generation X employees

prefer "challenging task accomplished within workday, surfing and buying using the

internet, and working alone with flexible hours" (p. 73). In addition, Sayers notes that "it

should come as no surprise that the Generation X learning style is typically motivated by a

desire to enhance professional skills and thus marketability to future employers" (p. 480).

They tend to "place more importance on intrinsic work values relative to Baby Boomers,

Generation Y, or the Silent Generation" (Hansen & Leuty, 2012, p. 36). Lowe, Levitt, and

Wilson (2008) describe of Generation X that "what they lack in social skills, they make up

for in their technical ability" and describe an example as "the 1990s dot-com star" (p. 45).

Howe and Strauss (2000) state in *Millennials Rising* that Generation X's attitude

evolution ranged from their parents accusing these Generation X children of having

"impeded their self-discovery" and the parents "found comfort in experts who reassured

them that little Gen Xers thrived best when left to their own wits, to grow up tough and

self-reliant, like the Gary Coleman or Tatum O'Neal child proto-adults then popular to the media" (p. 33).

Generation Y Attitudes and Beliefs

As the main demographic for the topic of this literature review, this section goes into more depth on the history, evolution, work habits, and what factors motivate the Generation Y workforce. Long-time generation experts Howe and Strauss (2007) describe Generation Y as "upbeat, team-oriented, close to their parents, and confident about their future" (p. 42). Lipkin and Perrymore (2009) state the following:

> The frustrations of management from previous generations are clear because they
>
> worked hard, sacrificing family time, performing menial tasks to please their
>
> supervisors, and working long hours (in some cases at the expense of their health),
>
> to earn respect and get promoted. The frustrations of Generation Y are also clear, as
>
> they want to live now rather than live when they retire. Generation Y values their
>
> free time, energy, and health during long hours at the office, and they insist that
>
> work be part of life, not life itself. (p. 17)

A study conducted for the Society for Human Resource Management found that "The most commonly occurring negative effect of an intergenerational workforce involved conflicts between workers of different generations regarding acceptable work hours" (p. vii). In addition, the Society for Human Resource Management found the following:

> About one out of five human resource professionals (18%) viewed organizational
>
> hierarchy as a source of generational conflict. Again, some issues stemmed from
>
> younger generations resisting authority and structure and bypassing the chain of

command, while others involved employees who feel having seniority gets them specific jobs, regardless of employee's qualifications. (Burke, 2004, p. 4)

This quote indicates that Millennials might resist hierarchical structure in that they prefer flatter more egalitarian structures, team-based work, and bosses who function as informational resources more than as authority figures. They may not speak with the deference prior generations have come to expect of subordinates. Similarly, Millennials may believe qualifications are the key to a position, rather than time spent in a position. As a result, bosses in prior generational cohorts might see this preference as disrespect or disregard toward authority.

Howe and Strauss (2007) describe Generation Y as being born between 1982 to 2005, Simons (2010) describes them as being born from 1977 to 1998, and Lowe et al. (2008) from post-1980. Lowe et al. also state that Generation Y "tend to have a strong sense of morality, to be patriotic, willing to fight for freedom, sociable, and value home and family" and "tend to favor an inclusive style of management, dislike micromanagement and slowness, and desire immediate feedback on their performance" (p. 46), while Howe and Strauss define them as "becoming less edgy, with a new focus on upbeat messages and big brands, and more conventional, with a resurgence of oldies and remakes" (p. 45). Behrens (2009) states that some challenges that organizations and managers face as Millennials enter the workface include that these workers "will need to be coached on team-building skills and will need mentoring on the importance of persuasion in order to get organizational results" and "will need to be convinced that the organization will continue to progress in the technology arena and will offer them the chance to participate" (p. 21). In addition, Behrens states the following:

Millennials also require structure and challenges because they were raised in structured and scheduled environments. They are quick to move if they don't feel they're receiving enough organizational support. However, they can be very loyal if they feel the organization is trying to work with their perceived beliefs and challenges. (p. 21)

In addition, Steiner (2007) states the following:

more than previous generations, the Millennials respond positively to one-on-one mentoring; it is interpreted as management's commitment to their achieving success. The response by Millennials manifests itself in high levels of loyalty, devotion to corporate goals, and sustained high levels of productivity. (p. 7)

This generation has characteristics that are inherently different from their parents (Generation X and Baby Boomers). As a result, it is imperative for human resources to recognize this and train leaders to learn to motivate them, as well as educating Generation Y about the differences of the other generations within the workplace.

As Behler mentioned, Millennials prefer a mentoring and coaching relationship rather than being micromanaged (as cited in Lowe et al., 2008). Kram (1988) defines the career functions of mentoring as "sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments" (p. 23). Kram defines the psychosocial functions of mentoring to be "role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counseling, and friendship" (p. 23). Kram states that coaching "enhances the junior person's knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world. Much like an athletic coach, the senior colleague suggests specific strategies for accomplishing work objectives, for achieving recognition, and for achieving career aspirations" (p. 28).

Howe and Strauss (2000) state that those of Generation Y see the adult world as follows: "politicians as squabblers; media audiences segmented into an infinitude of special-interest magazines, cable stations, and web sites; and pro sports are less about teams than stars," who on the subject of opinions and fashions believe that "the only ones worth noticing belong to self-authenticating 'niche groups,' each focusing zealously on a sex, race, religion, ideology, occupation, or hobby—and occasionally [as with the Branch Davidians, Heaven's Gate, or the Michigan Militia] breaking out in maniacal midlife theory" (p. 104). Howe and Strauss also go on to say that Generation Y is focused more on racial equality and that "to Millennials, diversity doesn't mean Black or White, it means Korean, Malaysian, Latvian, Guatemalan, Peruvian, Nigerian, Trinidadian, and skins in more hues from more places than seen on any generation in any society in the history of humanity" (p. 218). Generation Y has even made an immediate impact in the race for the Presidency of the United States. Dickenson (2012) of *The Rolling Stone* states the following:

> Sorry, Boomer Nation: President Obama owes his second term to Generation Y. Voters under 30 turned out in greater numbers than senior citizens and broke for Obama over Romney 60-37. Gen X wasn't too shabby, either: Voters 30 to 44 gave Obama a 7-point edge. (Dickenson, 2012, para. 7)

In addition to being racially sensitive, on the subject of gender, Howe and Strauss (2000) state that "in school, girls are showing more progress than boys in nearly every area" and that "across all ethnic groups, girls do up to 10 hours more homework per week than boys" (p. 223). In addition, Howe and Strauss notes girls take "more advanced placement tests, have higher enrollments in every level of math and in every science except

physics and advanced technology, and receive more honors in everything except sports and science" (p. 223).

Generation Y's Historical Significance

Howe and Strauss (2000) state that the Millennial persona has seven distinguishing traits: being special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, achieving, pressured, and conventional (p. 44). When Howe and Strauss state that they are to be considered achieving, they note that with "accountability and higher school standards rising to the very top of America's political agenda, Millennials are on track to become the best-educated and best behaved adults in the nation's history" (p. 44). John Leo of *U.S. News & World Report* states that "the high divorce rate and liberated lifestyles of the Boomer generation may now be producing more cautious, conservative attitudes among the young" (as cited by Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 45). In addition, Howe and Strauss (2000) go on to state that "the 1990s became the first decade since the 1920s in which federal spending on kids rose faster than spending on working-age adults or elders" (p. 111). Using Herzberg's two-factor theory as the framework for his dissertation, Baldonado (2008) did a qualitative study of 19 Generation Y University of Hawaii students and found that 73% of the students responded positively to his survey question that "my personal life is just as important as my professional life," which was one of highest percentages out of his 16 hygiene factors (p. 38). Having Generation Y placed in the correct position to match strengths to work opportunities is becoming more apparent and imperative for companies to recognize.

Generation Y's Career Goals and Focus

Generation Y employees need to feel challenged, and by "applying timelines or expected outputs can transform everyday tasks such as organizing, event planning, and

data gathering into challenges," which can be a key to successfully engaging this generation (Dewalt, 2012, p. 30). For example, Generation Y expert Schawbel (2010) quotes from Generation Y, "We value our time and want to spend it in meaningful ways, which is why we aren't always ecstatic about accepting entry-level jobs" (p. 30). In addition, Schawbel quotes, "we know we have many career options, so we are focused on selecting the appropriate one that connects with our passions" (p. 30).

According to a study of undergraduate Millennials in Canada (sample size of 23,413) that Ng, Schweitzer, and Lyons (2010) analyzed, Millennials's "have great expectations for their careers through their job choice decisions" and "surprisingly, a majority of Millennials do seem to have some realistic expectations when it comes to their initial pay and first job after graduation" (p. 288). In addition, Ng et al. found that "Milllennials identified opportunity for advancement as a top priority, which confirmed their ambitious and impatient nature, and also elevated expectations for rapid promotions and pay increases" (p. 288). Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010) state that "the shift to flatter organization hierarchy structures may also act as impetus to mature the practice of career development conversations and might offer Millennials more lateral career options" (p. 276). Finally, to confirm the need for a change of leadership practices, Gratton (2011) states that

> Gen Y workers see no value in reporting to someone who simply keeps track of what
> they do, when much of that can be done by themselves, their peers, or a machine.
> What they do value is mentoring and coaching from someone they respect.
> Someone, in other words, who is a master—not a general manager. (p. 36)

Lastly, Lipkin et al. (2009) describe Generation Y's need for praise with the following

theory:

> Generation Y grew up with the idea that no matter what they do, they are important
>
> and should receive recognition for their behavior. When you are constantly
>
> rewarded and praised for lack of performance or subpar performance, you start
>
> developing strong expectations for reward and recognition for everything you do.
>
> These expectations just get stronger and stronger with age if they are not corrected.
>
> (p. 77)

Lipkin et al.'s explanation for strong expectations for being given everything in their life

sometimes dub them as the *trophy generation,* and they can be seen as very difficult to

accommodate at that level of encouragement and support, which is seen as quite the

opposite for some generations' preferences and expectation.

Ogbeide, Fenich, Scott-Halsell, and Kesterson's study (2013) was conducted with the

following goal:

> to determine the most preferred methods of communication with and among the
>
> Millennial generation that may also be used to attract them to meetings, events, and
>
> conventions. The results concluded that face-to-face communication, email, and text
>
> messaging were the top 3 of 11 channels. The study also indicated that the
>
> Millennial generation preferred a channel of communication that required a certain
>
> amount of personal interaction. (p. 341)

Generation Y and Popular Culture

Howe and Strauss (2000) state that "the number of periodicals offered to young

children doubled (to 81 titles) between 1991 and 1994, and the sale of children's music

doubled, directly anticipating the explosion of teen magazines and music later in the 1990s" (p. 34). In 1997, Judy McGrath, then president of MTV, stated of the Generation Y youth that "attitude is over. They like what is nice and fun in fashion and sports" and that they are "simple and sweet" (as cited in Howe & Strauss, 2000, pp. 38-39).

Work Environment Preferences

Now that the different generations have been discussed in great detail, it is pertinent to this study and the reader to understand the components that make up a work environment and the effect that work environment preferences can have on employees. Blumberg and Pringle (1982) state the following:

> Although some variables that affect the subordinate's opportunity to perform, such as social influences, cannot be altered by managerial actions, other variables provide considerable potential for the enhancement of subordinate performance. If managers are to realize this potential, they must be made aware that they are responsible for providing a facilitative environment for their subordinates' work. (p. 567)

Next, Moos and Insel (2008) describe the work environment as "as a dynamic system composed of four domains: physical features, organizational structure and policies, suprapersonal and task factors, and work climate" and explains that "the work climate can alter the influence of the other three domains on work stressors, coping responses, and employee morale and performance" (p. 63). Moos and Insel created a Work Environment Scale, which is an assessment that measures what respondents' ideal work environment would be by these constructs: "relationship dimensions, personal growth dimensions, system maintenance and change dimensions, which consist of the following 10 subsets:

involvement, coworker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work

pressure, clarity, managerial control, innovation, and physical comfort" (p. 9). Moos and

Insel define in the WES Manual each criterion below:

- Involvement: the extent to which employees are concerned about and committed to
  their jobs.

- Coworker cohesion: how much employees are friendly and supportive of each other

- Supervisor support: the extent to which management is supportive of employees
  and encourages employees to be supportive of one another

- Autonomy: how much employees are encouraged to be self-sufficient and to make
  their own decisions

- Task orientation: the emphasis on good planning, efficiency, and getting the job
  done

- Work pressure: the degree to which high work demands and time pressure
  dominate the job milieu

- Clarity: whether employees know what to expect in their daily routine and how
  explicitly rules and policies are communicated

- Managerial control: how much management used rules and procedures to keep
  employees under control

- Innovation: the emphasis on variety, change, and new approaches

- Physical comfort: the extent to which the physical surroundings contribute to a
  pleasant work environment (p. 9).

To go even further, Kirmeyer and Lin (1987) state that there are three dimensions

of communication, consisting of the following:

The first concerns the source of information, or who initiates an interaction. It is

important because initiating interaction may enhance (a) personal control and (b)

positive feelings. The second dimension of communication at work relevant to

supportiveness is direction of information flow, which can be lateral or vertical with

peers or with superiors. A third relevant dimension in determining perceived

support is an interaction's content, especially its task relevance. (pp. 139-140)

Dorsey (2010) states that the "ten hot buttons that instantly connect with Gen Y job

seekers" consist of "fun, challenge, creativity, opportunity, ethics, entrepreneurship,

lifestyle, diversity, technology, and mission" (pp. 60-61).

Christmas (2008) states of the work environment, that "Relationships can also have

a negative impact. If peer behavior is threatening, isolating, or hostile, then this negativity

can also drive turnover" (p. 316). A hostile work environment helps reiterate the

importance that communication and social relationships play in the grand scheme of how

employees see their company and how their job performance can sometimes wither away.

Other pioneers of defining work environment preferences include Hackman and

Oldham (1975), who developed the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS), which measures the

relationships between the "core job dimensions, critical psychological states, and personal

and work outcomes" (p. 161). Hackman and Oldham define the job dimensions as

consisting of "skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback from the job

itself, feedback from agents, dealing with others" (pp.162-163). The critical psychological

states consist of "experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for

work outcomes, and knowledge of the results" (p. 162). Lastly, Hackman and Oldham state

that the affective reactions to the job consist of "general satisfaction, internal work motivation, and specific satisfactions" (p. 162).

Innovation has generated a lot of buzz in corporate culture and is defined as one of Moos and Insel's (2008) work environment preferences. On the subject of innovation in the workplace, Juillerat (2010) states that "formalization at the organizational level, combined with appropriate work characteristics at the individual level, can provide the structural capacity and creative environment to enable creative innovation in the current work context" (p. 226). On the subject of innovation and work pressure, Juillerat cites Hambrick that the current work climate increasingly involves time pressure, which represents greater challenges for decision making, as research shows individuals facing time pressure exhibit greater reliance on automatic and habitual decision processes. In essence, the time pressure inhibits innovation. Seklecka, Marek and Lacala (2013) state that "roles stress can be associated directly and indirectly with job performance" (p. 597). In addition, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) states the following:

> Creativity is a central source of meaning in our lives. Most of the things that are interesting, important, and human are the results of creativity. What makes us different from apes—our language, values, artistic expression, scientific understanding, and technology—is a result of individual ingenuity that was recognized, rewarded, and transmitted through learning. (p. 36)

As is apparent from the various generation descriptions in this chapter, people, regardless of age, have different preferences and may or may not fit within a particular organizational setting. Westerman and Yamamura (2007) state the following:

People placed in work environments that 'fit' are more likely to intrinsically enjoy their work. The reverse is true for those placed in work environments that do not 'fit.' For these employees, normal daily work occurrences may be unpleasant and interpreted more negatively, thus resulting in negative outcomes such as boredom, poor work performance, and lack of satisfaction. (p. 152)

Lubinski and Benbow (2000) state the following:

To predict which environments an individual is likely to enter, work in, and thrive in, you must not only know what they can do (their abilities, or capabilities), you must also know what they want, their interests, needs, or motives. (p. 146)

In addition, Dulin's (2008) study found the following:

Early in each focus group session, it became clear that this Gen Y cohort wants to be part of an organization in which fun is cultivated. Included in the culture is a leader who is friendly and has a good sense of humor. This generation wants to enjoy the workday; they see no reason why work should be drudgery or dull. The interviewees not only want to have fun, they see it as a way to maintain a healthy emotional balance. (p. 55)

Leveson, McNeil, and Joiner (2013) state that Millennials are "entering the labour market at a time of increased sensitivity and scrutiny of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities of organizations" (p. 21). Leveson et al. conducted a study of "238 senior undergraduates studying in three discipline areas at an Australian metropolitan university" and found that "workplace practices [such as peer and supervisor relations, health and safety, and anti-discrimination measures] was rated as the most important social responsibility dimension among millennial students in this Australian context, and

environmental impact, corporate governance, and climate change the least important" (pp. 21, 29).

Hillhouse (2012) surveyed 500 Millennials from ages 19 to 28 in 2011 about work environment preferences, and found that nearly 6 in 10 think they will switch jobs in less than 5 years, one-third prefers recognition from their boss/coworkers or a promotion over higher pay, half of Millennials would rather have no job than have a job they hate, 89% of Millennials think it is important to be constantly learning at their job, 85% of Millennials think their mastery of technology makes them faster than their older coworkers, two-thirds of Millennials think they should be mentoring older coworkers on technology, 61% say that they need specific directions from their boss to do their best work—a level twice as high as observed among Boomers—three-fourths of Millennials would like to have a mentor, and 8 out of 10 want regular feedback from their boss. In addition, nearly 9 in 10 Millennials want the workplace to be social and fun, 93% want a job where they can be themselves, 71% want their coworkers to be like a second family, 81% of Millennials think they should be allowed to make their own hours at work versus 69% of Boomers, and 79% of Millennials think they should be allowed to wear jeans to work (at least sometimes) versus 60% of Boomers. These authors promote the idea that having employees who are content about their surrounding work environment and the support they have from their leaders is of paramount importance for a productive organization.

Motivation and its Variance Across Generations

Now that the different generations and characteristics of these generations have been discussed, it is important to examine and compare the different motivation factors across the generations. Hackman and Oldham (1975), define internal work motivation as

"the degree to which the employee is *self*-motivated to perform effectively on the job, and experiences negative internal feelings when doing poorly" (p. 162). Shaul (2007) states in his dissertation that "Employers have relied on three extrinsic and well-established organizational rewards or incentives in order to obtain a desired level of employee performance: (a) promotion, (b) fringe benefits, and (c) pay" (pp. 6-7). Yamauchi and Templer (1982) were some of the first researchers to state and test how people view money, and these researchers concluded that there are

> three broad content areas of the psychological aspects of money: (a) security, which concerns optimism, confidence, comfort, and its reverse, pessimism, insecurity, and dissatisfaction; (b) retention, which includes parsimony, hoarding, and obsessive personality traits; and (c) power-prestige, which comprises aspects of status, importance, superiority, and acquisition. (p. 522)

On the topic of promotion, Shaul (2007) states in his dissertation (which was written prior the economic crash of 2008) that

> since a large cohort of Baby Boomers still remain in the workforce, estimated earlier to be until the year 2015, promotional opportunities in filling supervisory and managerial positions in some organizations may be limited and serve to diminish the motivation of Gen Xers to stay with the same employer for any length of time. (pp. 37-38)

> Patrick (2013) states in her dissertation that "hygiene needs to fulfill conditions

such as pay, benefits, or safe working conditions in the working environment" and that "hygiene or maintenance factors could prevent job dissatisfaction but do not ensure workplace motivation" (p. 29). In addition, Lancaster and Stillman in 2002 wrote that

generational motivational differences within an organization can cause resistance and negative attitudes from employees (as cited in Patrick, 2013). Patrick's (2013) research from her dissertation on Generation Y college students yielded the following:

> The results of the data analysis for this first research question revealed that participants scored higher on basic belonging and ego-status than they did on safety. Safety needs on the job resonate with fringe benefits that may include worker compensation, insurance, retirement plans, performance standards, and safe working conditions. (p. 75)

Steiner (2007), states another important characteristic related to the work environment:

> Millennials come from the world of MTV, of quick cuts and rapidly changing focuses. They process small pieces of data very rapidly. As a result, they follow through on projects that are given to them in segments. They are impatient with long, drawn-out presentations. Rapid fire, short presentations will, therefore, get the most productive results. (p. 6)

Talgan (2009) explains the basis for what has been noted as Millenials' preference for more intensive supervision, and sometimes mistaken for micromanagament:

> When Gen Y-ers know someone is keeping track of their day-to-day performance, their measuring instinct is sparked and their competitive spirit ignited. Keeping close track of their work tells them that they and their work are important. The process motivates them to perform because they want to get credit and score points. (p. 51)

Generational expert Dorsey (2010) continues this thread, stating of Generation Y that they need feedback "ideally twice a month. However, don't confuse frequency with a major time investment. We don't want in-depth 360-degree performance review, complete with personality assessment, just a five-second check-in that says you notice we exist" (p. 24).

Conversely, Meyer (2013) found from his dissertation that "by specifically comparing individual generational groups of incentive-compensation-eligible versus not incentive-compensation-eligible, it can be concluded that Generation X is distinguished from the Baby Boomer and Generation Y cohorts" and "Generation X employees that were eligible for incentive compensation were more engaged" (p. 89). Meyer's study does not imply that Generation Y employees do not care about financial incentives, but Generation X cares more than Generation Y. In addition, Meyer's (2013) study found of Generation Y the following:

> The relationship between employee engagement and incentive compensation
> eligibility was negative for the youngest age cohort in this study; strategic caution is
> warranted in the investment of significant pecuniary resources in compensation
> program changes that may not achieve desired results over the long term. (p. 90)

Lastly, Lipkin et al. (2009) state that "Generation Y can have a false sense of internal motivation [which was developed and then continually rewarded externally], a problem occurs when the external motivation and rewards are not present or available immediately" (p. 85). Lipkin et al. (2009) also states that "Gen Y's tendency toward external motivation has created unique challenges for managers and HR professionals alike when it comes to grooming this generation and helping them become more self-sufficient

and committed to the workplace" (p. 85). Patrick (2013) summarizes that Generation Y

needs to have a sense of belonging and status, as opposed to their predecessors who are

concerned with job-security and other benefits.

Job Satisfaction

It is imperative to examine job satisfaction and employee engagement in the

workplace in order to apply this framework to Generation Y. Wofford (1971) defines job

satisfaction as "the overall attitude of well being with regard to the job and its

environment" and that job motivation can be defined as "the tendency to perform or to

expend the effort required to maintain a high quantity and quality of output" (p. 501).

Hackman and Oldham (1975) define general satisfaction as "an overall measure of the

degree to which the employee is satisfied and happy with the job" and specific satisfactions

as "job security, pay and other compensation, peers and co-workers, [social satisfaction],

supervision, and opportunity for personal growth and development on the job ['growth'

satisfaction]" (p. 162). Hackman and Oldham's study was comprised of responses from 658

White collar respondents who indicated that "the job dimensions are positively related to

measures of work satisfaction and motivation, and are generally independent of the

measure of *growth need*" (p. 166).

Bauer (2012) states in his dissertation that "McGregor argued that most employees

had their survival and safety needs met, therefore, leaders should focus on the higher needs

of social, esteem, and self-actualization to motivate employees and increase job

satisfaction" (p. 24). Wofford (1971) states of Hertzberg's two-factor theory regarding

content and context elements, that "job content elements such as responsibility,

advancement, recognition, achievement, growth opportunities, and the work itself account

for variance in job satisfaction and job motivation" (p. 501). In addition, Wofford states

that "The context elements such as company policy and administration, supervisory

relationships, peer relationships, salary, and working conditions are determinants of job

dissatisfaction" and differentiates that the two are independent of each other (p. 501).

Wofford's (1971) study of job satisfaction rejected Maslow's hierarchy of needs,

stating that "in opposition to Maslow's theory, these results suggest that upper level needs

have a greater effect upon job satisfaction when lower level needs are not gratified than

when they are gratified" and "may occur because gratification of upper level needs are

offsetting the effect of lack of gratification of lower level ones" (p. 516).

Robbins and Judge (2011) state the following:

If an organization faces a dynamic and changing environment and requires

employees able to readily change tasks and move easily between teams, it's more

important that employees' personalities fit with the overall organization's culture

than with the characteristics of any specific job. (p. 186)

The idea of an organizational fit that does not necessarily depend upon the job task that

they are currently being paid a paycheck to perform exemplifies the greater need for

management and leadership to pay close attention to the work environment preferences of

all generations (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p. 186).

Smith and Galbraith (2012) conducted a survey that had 185 completed responses

of Millennial library employees at BYU to examine what motivates them, and the responses

are described as follows:

The top choice (selected by 59%) was flexibility. This choice was followed by

proximity (43%), enjoyable work (29%), and work environment (27%). Only 8%

selected pay. Students were also asked what they look for in a potential job, and again were asked to select two options (see Fig. 2). Fifty-three percent selected meaningful work, 43% selected pay, and 20% selected growth opportunities. (p. 137)

It should be acknowledged that this sample was taken within an institution that has a highly religious student body and staff. Further, the sample was taken within only one specific location that represents a specific job environment; therefore, it may not be highly generalizable. Smith and Galbraith (2012) also found from their 185 Millennial respondents that

Millennials believe they can change the world, and they want a job where they feel like they are doing so. Supervisors can capitalize on this value by helping their Millennial employees understand the importance of their job. Supervisors can explain how an employee's specific job contributes to the library as a whole. Doing so can make the job more attractive to potential employees, or can show appreciation for and help motivate current employees. (p. 139)

In conclusion, Bauer (2012) states in his dissertation that "Research on job satisfaction has indicated that since the development of a quantifiable means of determining leadership characteristics and job satisfaction, many organizations have embraced the development to gain competitive advantage" (p. 25). With the growing changes in private space travel and an increasingly competitive global economy, it has become imperative for the aerospace and defense organizations in Los Angeles to ensure that they are properly satisfying the current work and future work force's work environment preferences.

Employee Engagement

As stated earlier, Bakker (2011) defines work engagement as "different from job satisfaction in that it combines high work pleasure (dedication) with high activation (vigor, absorption); job satisfaction is typically a more passive form of employee well-being" (p. 265). Employee engagement is an important concept for companies to measure and cultivate because lack of employee engagement has an direct impact to the bottom line, as well as being a cause for job burnout. Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002) conducted a study using the Gallup database to come up with the following conclusion:

Business units in the top quartile of employee engagement had, on average, from $80,000 to $120,000 higher monthly revenue or sales (and for one organization, the difference was more than $300,000). Assuming even an $80,000 difference per month per business unit, this difference translates into $960,000 per year per business unit. (p. 275)

Harter et al. (2002) also found the following, where presumably engagement was low:

for high-turnover companies (ranging from 60% to 182% annualized turnover), the difference between the average unit in the top quartile of employee engagement and the average unit in the bottom quartile ranged from 14 to 51 percentage points. For lower turnover companies, the difference was from 4 to 19 percentage points. (p. 275)

Dorsey (2010) states, as self-described member of "Gen Y," that such employees decide "on our first day at work whether or not we will stay with an employer long term. The unprecedented importance of a first day to Gen Y makes the easiest opportunity you

have to build a foundation for our loyalty, enthusiasm, and tenure" (p. 48). In addition, Dorsey states that his interviews with Gen Y show that

> the first 30 days of employment largely determine our career trajectory with your company for the next 30 months. The sooner Gen Y employees find our fit and path within your organization and are able to identify and measure the results most important to you, the sooner you can begin to earn a significant return on your hiring investment. (p. 49)

When engagement is low, burnout is more likely. Job burnout is defined by Maslach et al. (2001) as "a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy" (p. 397). Maslach et al. state that burnout consists of six areas of the work life: workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values (pp. 414-415). Maslach et al. describe the workload criteria of burnout, stating that "a workload mismatch may also result from the wrong kind of work, as when people lack the skills or inclination for a certain type of work, even when it is required in reasonable quantities" (p. 414). Maslach et al. describe lack of fairness as "lack of appropriate rewards" such as "when people are not receiving salary or benefits commensurate with their achievements," as well as "the lack of social rewards, as when one's hard work is ignored and not appreciated by others" (p. 414). Maslach et al. state that "a lack of fairness exacerbates burnout in at least two ways. First, the experience of unfair treatment is emotionally upsetting and exhausting. Second, unfairness fuels a deep sense of cynicism about the workplace" (p. 415). Fairness seems to have different meanings to Generation Y than it does to prior generations. As Lipkin et al. (2009) states, "Generation Y grew up with the idea that no matter what they do, they are important and

should receive recognition for their behavior" (p. 77); accordingly, it is important for managers and leaders of organizations to give constant praise in order to prevent employee burnout and foster their job engagement. Maslach et al. state that "people thrive in a community and function best when they share praise, comfort, happiness, and humor with people they like and respect" and "unfortunately, some jobs isolate people from each other, or make social contact impersonal" (p. 415). Community, for Generation Y, is a key component for job engagement.

Generation Y Procurement Professionals

Dewalt (2012) states that "on May 28, 2009, the U.S. Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense released a memo outlining its intent to add 10,000 more people to its DOD acquisition workforce" and that the challenges in the contract management profession consist of "the cancellation of the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP), budget issues, and hiring freezes [which] only leaves one to question the future of the contract management profession" (p. 26). The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (n.d.) states in their plan to engage Generation Y in the federal workforce that

> To compete successfully for those potential employees, we must adapt to their
>
> expectations and create an environment that will support their success. The federal
>
> government must cultivate, accommodate, and advertise the broad range of
>
> opportunities and arrangements that will characterize federal careers in the future.
>
> In short, we must develop a new mindset. We are dealing with a 21st century
>
> challenge that requires a 21st century approach. (p. 1)

In addition, the OPM states that the core values of the emerging students that are graduating college are "diversity, adapting to change, confidence and self-reliance, innovation and creativity, non-traditional workplace, social responsibility, work-life balance," and the strategies to recruit and retain Generation Y by OPM HR are the following:

> recruitment and/or relocation incentives, superior qualifications and special needs pay-setting authority, term appointment, excepted appointing authorities, veterans appointing authorities, direct hire authority (pursuant to regulatory requirements), flexible work schedules and leave policies, student loan repayment program (must fulfill 3-year service requirement), tuition reimbursement and TSP[Thrift Savings Plan] matching contribution paid by the government, telework, flexible spending accounts, and childcare and eldercare benefits. (p. 11)

Generation Y and Technology

Schawbel (2010) notes that there is a sizable gap between Generation X and Generation Y in the expertise of technology. For example, Schawbel states that "while Gen X professionals may have established brand names and enough disposable income to pay other experts for services such as blogging, podcasting, and media outreach, Gen Y has the competitive advantage of early education in these technologies" (pp. 31-32). To describe Millennials and technology from an organizational context, Steiner (2007) states that "having been raised with the latest technologies, Generation Y expects real time results and information from the Internet, cell phones, and Blackerberries" (p. 6). Smith and Galbraith (2012) also found from their 185 Millennial respondents that "Several students commented that they had difficulty understanding or following their supervisors'

instructions, and others said they struggled to explain problems to their supervisors, especially regarding technology. For example, one comment reads, "it's often apparent that our supervisor doesn't understand what we are trying to say because they're not as familiar with tech jargon. . . . I can easily explain a problem I'm having to a fellow Millennial coworker, but my supervisor doesn't quite grasp it'" (pp. 139-140). Smith and Galbraith (2012) also found the following from their 185 Millennial respondents:

> Supervisors feel that cell phone calls are more appropriate in the workplace, while students feel that texting is more appropriate. There may be several reasons for this difference: some supervisors may not use text messaging or may not communicate with people who text message. Millennials may feel that texting is less disruptive at work, or maybe they simply are more accustomed to communicating in this way. Whatever the reason, these results identify a generational difference in the way in which Millennials and their supervisors use technology. Because supervisors tend to prefer cell phone calls to texting, when they see their student employees texting at work they may see it as a disruption or a problem—when, in fact, the employee may be trying to avoid being disruptive. This is an example of how generational miscommunications can cause conflict or misunderstanding in the workplace. (p. 140)

Having up-to-date technology within an organization could make an impact on the level of comfort that the Generation Y employees may have, and possibly could have an impact on employee retention and engagement. If Millennials and Baby Boomers attempt to understand each other's preferences, they may be able to find a happy medium to alleviate some of the problems that were apparent in Smith and Galbraith's library study.

Companies That Adapt

Now that Generation Y's behaviors and work environment preferences have been explained, this next section will describe how some companies have listened to their Millennials and are providing a work environment that fits this new generation's preferences. Specifically, Google is the one company who appears in headlines as one of the best companies to work for numerous times, and is almost synonymous with Millennial work environment preferences (CNNMoney, 2013). Reiss and Costello (2007) state the following:

> Google Inc. has flourished because the company is recognized for providing a unique environment for its employees. From an array of gourmet cafeterias to rock-climbing walls and lap pools, to inviting meeting space and informal 'open areas' that encourage impromptu collaboration and big-idea spawning, the internet giant has created a workplace environment to attract and retain the employees it needs to continue growing. (p. 50)

In addition, Reiss and Costello (2007) state that the "workplace environment is one of the top three factors influencing an employee's decision to accept or stay in a job—just behind compensation and benefits" (p. 50). As Hoffman (2010) states, "Google, a forerunner in employee perks, has a number of futuristic napping pods scattered throughout its Mountain View (California) campus" (p. 84). According to Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For in 2013, Google has been ranked first for the past 2 years, and "New this year are three wellness centers and a seven-acre sports complex, which includes a roller hockey rink; courts for basketball, bocce, and shuffle ball; and horseshoe pits" (CNNMoney, 2013,

para. 1). Google is not innovating this work environment, but is simply listening to employees and implementing their requests.

On the same list, the Boston Consulting Group, ranked fourth, helps workers maintain work-life balance by issuing a *red zone report* to flag when individuals are working too many long weeks. New consultants can delay their start date by 6 months and receive $10,000 to volunteer at a nonprofit (CNNMoney, 2013). Besides the companies that make billions of dollars in annual revenue, non-profit company, Teach for America, is ranked 60th by Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work for in 2013 because their employees receive ample paid time off for vacation, as well as help providing care for their family members (CNNMoney, 2013). Another company that has notable cost-saving perks is Stryker, which Fortune ranks as 61st because "The medical-device manufacturer keeps things light by offering ping-pong tables on-site and having 'pie-your-manager' competitions" (Stryker, n.d., para. 1).

Ferri-Reed (2014) states that "Millennials are more attracted to employers that engage in charitable and philanthropic causes. The desire to 'do well by doing good' is a generational touchstone for Millennials, who tend to place more importance on an organization's social value, rather than its share value" (p. 13).

Ferri-Reed (2014) states that "the work environment of the millennial generation needs to be quite different from the cubicle-farm environment of previous generations" (p. 14). In addition, Ferri-Reed states that

> Modern office designs incorporate the following: less private space and more 'common space' for workers to collaborate, 'write-on walls,' warm color tones and natural materials, conversation pits or casual group seating for dialogue, 'play'

options, such as billiards or paddle ball tables to re-energize employees, and private

spaces where individuals can work without being disturbed. (p. 14)

Meister (2014) of Forbes.com similarly states the following of Ernst and Young's physical

workplace design:

> The company's current model workplace includes collaboration rooms complete
>
> with teleconferencing support, lounges covered with televisions screens, and
>
> flexible desk spaces, which are open to whoever logs in to the kiosk, rather than
>
> assigned to a particular employee. Small, phone-equipped pods serve workers on
>
> confidential calls, conference rooms facilitate collaboration, and open desk space
>
> allows for face time to punctuate screen time. (para. 13)

If companies want their Generation Y employees to be passionate and fully engaged,

they should start listening to their employees and implementing the changes immediately,

before they start applying to Google and Stryker. The changes could be implemented on a

shoestring budget, but managers need to change their mentality on what the workplace has

been in the past, and embrace the new work environment preferences to utilize the

incoming Millennials to their competitive advantage. As one way to bridge the differences

between generational expectations and proficiencies, Beekman (2011), in the following

description, states that the different generations should mentor each other and coexist:

> Traditionalists who are well-versed in your company culture and policies would
>
> make excellent mentors to new hires entering your workforce. Baby Boomers can
>
> impart their team-oriented outlook on their more individualistic counterparts.
>
> Generation Xers can demonstrate how to solve problems and achieve goals with

little instruction. And Millennials can introduce older workers to emerging

technology and help ensure everyone knows how to use it effectively. (p. 16)

Conclusion

This literature review elaborated on the general definition of a generation,

described characteristics of the current generations in the workplace, and touched on

many other topics such as employee engagement, employee motivation, and job

satisfaction, all pertinent to understanding the logic behind work environment preferences

of contract managers that reside in Los Angeles.

Leadership was covered in this literature review, mainly because leaders of an

organization have the power to create a corporate culture or work environment that their

employees want, which helps employees to thrive, and in turn become a more efficient and

content workforce.

As stated earlier, work environment preferences have been placed into three

categories by Moos and Insel (2008), which consist of the following: "relationship

dimensions (involvement, coworker cohesions, supervisor support); personal growth

dimensions (autonomy, task orientation, work pressure); and system maintenance and

change dimensions (clarity, managerial control, innovation, physical comfort" (p. 9), which

is the basis that I used for interview questions, as described in Chapter 3 of this

dissertation. Moos and Insel's 10 criteria are crucial to the examination of Generation Y

contract managers' work environment preferences in Los Angeles because these criteria

are prior-researched key ingredients to examining the phenomenon of interest for this

study (p. 9).

As this chapter has shown, the work environment preferences of employees can have a profound effect on determining the motivation and job engagement of employees. As stated by Dorsey (2010), it is important for management to understand how to manage and lead Millennials before they arrive on their first day, because "Gen Y decides on our first day at work whether or not we will stay with an employer long term" (p. 48). Knowing what type of work environment each generation prefers, and creating an environment for all generations to harmoniously interact, is important for senior leaders of any organization, in or outside of the Los Angeles aerospace and defense industry. In addition, this literature review has shown that Millennials prefer a manager who acts as a mentor and coach, rather than a micromanager. As stated earlier, a Maxwell's (n.d.) definition of a Level 1 leader is no longer sufficient with the emerging Millennials and will force managers and leaders to stretch themselves to take an active approach in developing these employees, including using such styles as transformational leadership.

The intent of this study is to examine with great detail (a) what drives the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the Los Angeles aerospace and defense industry and (b) if these participants are any different from the Generation Y contract managers. As the literature review describes, there are many different life events that have shaped the different generations that currently exist in today's workforce and can modify how they prefer their ideal work environment to be. From World War II to 9/11, these four generations have seen a great deal of tragedy to become who they are today. It is also important to note that even though the different generations may not always see eye to eye, it is crucial for organizations to communicate (a) the importance of creating a work environment that emphasizes respect for each other's differences and (b) that generational

differences are not a new topic but has been present for decades. It is the hope of the researcher that the reader of this literature review has a moderate to intermediary understanding of Generation Y, more than he or she would have before reading this literature review, and understands the need for additional research to take place.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to restate the research questions, explain the researcher's methodology, explain the data gathering process techniques and process used for this study, and the researcher's plans for IRB approval. The qualitative research method was chosen over the quantitative research method because it allows the researcher an in-depth look into the phenomenon that the participants are experiencing. Creswell (2013) notes, "The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon" (p. 81). As previously stated in Chapter 1, the research question is the following: What are the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area?

This study's primary focus was to examine the work environment preferences of contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area. Particularly, the researcher wanted to examine if there are any work environment preferences of contract managers in Los Angeles that make them unique, compared to the rest of the general population.

Research Design

A qualitative approach for this study was appropriate because the researcher wanted to get an in-depth understanding of the work environment preferences of contract managers in Los Angeles that cannot be procured by a quantitative survey method. Moustakas (1994) states that the essence of a phenomenological study "consists of 'what' they experienced and 'how' they experienced it" (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 76). Creswell (2013) states, "Interactions among people, for example, are difficult to capture with existing measures, and these measures may not be sensitive to issues such as gender

differences, race, economic status, and individual differences" (p. 48). Work environment preferences are not static and can sometimes change over time based upon personal experiences and circumstances. The qualitative approach gives the researcher the tools to dig deep and get to understand the participant's viewpoint and frame of mind. Using the phenomenological approach allows the researcher to capture details such as the moments in this small group's careers that led to their current work environment preferences.

Nature of Study

This qualitative study endeavored to examine the phenomenon of work environment preferences of contract managers in the Greater Los Angeles area, and compare the results to what is in the current literature. The importance of this topic has been on the minds of many leaders in the procurement industry, and this researcher hoped to help these executives understand, beyond the typical employee satisfaction survey, what makes an ideal work environment for Generation Y contract managers in Los Angeles. Also, since this study was independent of any organization and each participant's identity was anonymous, the researcher anticipates that the participants were more honest than they might be when completing employee satisfaction surveys administered by their employers, for fear of negative consequences.

Process for Selection of Analysis Unit, Population, and Sample

The analysis unit (targeted participant group) for the qualitative phenomenological approach consisted of adult participants who were born between 1982 and 1990 that currently worked as contract manager specialists in the Los Angeles area. As previously stated in Chapter 2, Generation Y can be considered to range from being born in 1982 to 2005 (Howe & Strauss, 2007, p. 45). However, for the purpose of this target population, the

researcher only wanted to interview college graduates who were already full-time

employees in the contract management field, which would limit the demographics to a

maximum age of 31 and a minimum age of 22 years old, assuming the youngest

participants graduated college in 4 years and became employed immediately upon

graduation. In addition, the researcher hoped to entice participation by Generation Y

contract managers primarily from defense and aerospace industries in research and

development.

The researcher has (a) previously worked in the contract management field, (b)

started a formal mentoring program at the local National Contract Management

Association (NCMA) Chapter of San Gabriel Valley, and (c) has had prior contact with

potential participants through NCMA and the researcher's prior employer. To ensure that

the researcher could obtain the desired number of interviews, the researcher utilized the

snowball approach, which can be defined by Kumar (2011) as the following:

> A few individuals in a group or organization are selected and the required
>
> information is collected from them. They are then asked to identify other people in
>
> the group or organization, and then these people are asked to identify other
>
> members of the group, and in turn, those identified become the basis of further data
>
> collection. (p. 208)

In addition, the researcher utilized his personal network to reach out to contract managers

and executives to identify qualified persons who would be interested in participating in

this study.

The researcher conducted 10 to 20 interviews by phone (face-to-face interviews were not feasible due to participants' schedules). The process for the selection of participants is described below.
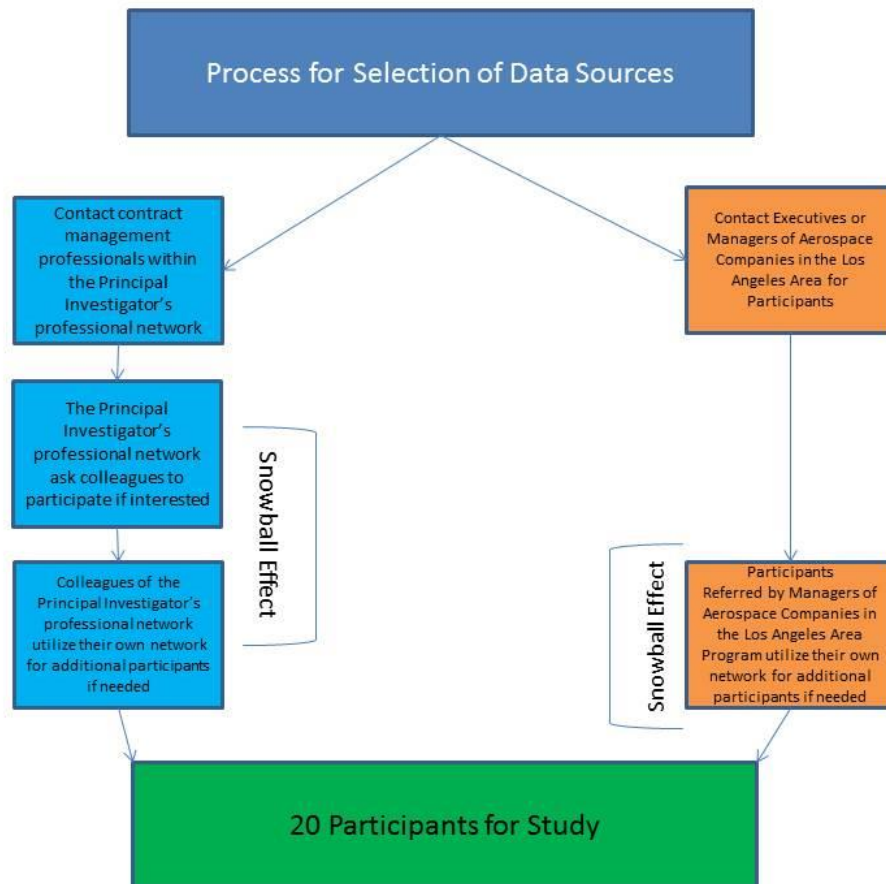
Figure 1. Process for selection of participants.

Characteristics Studied and Description of the Interview Instrument

After researching instruments that measure work environment preferences, the researcher used the 10 criteria of Moos and Insel's (2008) Work Environment Scale (WES) for the researcher's interview questions, which consist of the following: involvement, coworker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, clarity,

managerial control, innovation, and physical comfort. Moos and Insel state in the WES

Manual, Form R, that

> The Work Environment Scale (WES) measures the social environment of all types of
>
> work settings. It comprises 10 subscales or dimensions, which are divided into
>
> three sets: the relationship dimensions, the personal growth or goal orientation
>
> dimensions, and the system maintenance and system change dimensions. (p. 134)

The interview questions were derived from the Moos and Insel's (2008) Work

Environment Scale Manual, and are structured as follows, which can be seen in detail in

Appendix A. Below are the actual questions that were asked during the interview, which

were derived from the WES. Demographic questions were as follows:

1. What year were you born?

2. How long have you lived in the Los Angeles area?

3. Do you work for the public or private sector?

4. How long have you been at your current place of employment?

5. How long have you been a contract manager?

6. What is your highest level of education?

Work environment preference questions were as follows:

7. What is the best way you think a company can make you feel like you are involved
   and are proud to work at your organization?

8. What do you think would be the ideal surroundings if you just started a company
   and it was your first day? Follow up: Would you prefer to have your workplace be a
   family-like and personal atmosphere, or business-only?)

9. What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support (career development, mentoring, etc.)?

10. What would be your ideal level of autonomy (having the ability to make your own decisions)?

11. What would your most efficient work environment look like? Follow up: Would you like your company to instill a high emphasis on quality of work, not just quantity?

12. What would be your ideal work pressure environment? For example, knowing that there are time-sensitive projects and tasks that will need to be completed, how would you prefer your company to handle these issues?

13. What is the ideal work environment for task and job clarity (e.g., everyone knows their job and it is communicated clearly, from management to line workers)?

14. What is your ideal work environment preference for managerial control (level of management interaction with enforcing the rules)?

15. What is your ideal work environment preference for the use of innovation?

16. What is your ideal work environment for physical comfort (lighting, decor, free breakfast, nap time, etc.)?

Validity and Reliability of Data Gathering Instrument

According to Guba and Lincoln, "trustworthiness in a qualitative study is determined by four indicators: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability" (as cited by Kumar, 2011, pp. 184-185).

Credibility. Kumar (2011) states that

credibility, which is synonymous to validity in quantitative research, is judged by the extent of respondent concordance whereby you take your findings to those who

participated in your research for confirmation, congruence, validation, and

approval.   The higher the outcome of these, the higher the validity of the study. (p.

185)

As stated previously, to ensure that the results would have a high validity, the researcher

showed the transcriptions to each participant to determine either agreement or need for

modifying.

Transferability. Trochim and Donnelly describe transferability as "the degree to

which the results can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings" (as cited

by Kumar, 2011, p. 185). In addition, Kumar (2011) states that transferability can be

achieved to some degree if "you extensively and thoroughly describe the process you

adopted for others to follow and replicate" (p. 185). As shown in the previous diagrams on

data collection and the process of how to collect the data, the researcher has sufficiently

provided enough direction for another researcher to replicate the study using different

demographics.

Dependability. In qualitative research, dependability is analogous to reliability in

quantitative research (Healy & Perry, 2000). One element of dependability is consistency.

Although the researcher did not use additional raters, which would be one way to measure

consistency, the researcher did make the interview process as consistent as possible by

asking the questions in the same order and in the same manner for each participant.

Confirmability. Kumar (2011) expresses that "confirmability is also similar to

reliability in quantitative research. It is only possible if both researchers follow the process

in an identical manner for the results to be compared" (p. 185). Confirmability means the

ability to obtain similar results in a replicated study. The researcher used a large enough

sample and gathered enough data per participant to reach saturation with the data, which

increases the likelihood of obtaining similar results with another similar sample.

Validity of the instrument. Moos (1986) states, of the WES, that "Our conceptual

framework integrates concepts from three major perspectives on the workplace: the

human relations approach, the socio-technical perspective, and a social information

processing orientation" (p. 52). In addition, Moos and Insel (2008) state that their

framework

> reflects the idea that work stressors stem from the nature of the tasks employees
>
> perform and how work groups are organized [socio-technical characteristics]. In
>
> addition, it emphasizes the quality of relationships among employees and
>
> supervisors [human relations] and employees' appraisal of the workplace [social
>
> information processing]. (p. 52)

Westerman and Yamamura (2007) used the WES to conduct a study to examine the

generational differences of the work environment preferences of 234 accountants in

different accounting firms (p. 150). Elements of Moos and Insel's framework have been in

use for multiple decades, which gave the researcher confidence that the interview

questions based on the WES could be effectively used for a qualitative phenomenological

study. I used the criteria within this instrument to develop interview questions.

Data Collection and Description of the Data Analysis Process

As stated earlier, the researcher conducted qualitative phenomenological interviews

from 10 minutes to 30 minutes on the phone. Once the interview was complete, the

researcher transcribed each interview himself to gain a personal relationship with the data.

I then used NVivo software to code for themes and *common phrases*, which Creswell (2013)

describes as "names that are the exact words used by participants" (p. 185). Once this process was complete, the researcher presented the transcribed interview to each participant to ensure that the researcher did not miss anything and the participant was satisfied with the results. Once the dataset was complete, the researcher gave each participant a letter designation to refer to statements anonymously while coding. The researcher copied the results into a table presented in Chapter 4. The researcher kept all electronic files on a USB deposited this USB in a locked cabinet, along with all printed documents, and will destroy them after 3 years. The data collection overview can be seen in Figure 2.
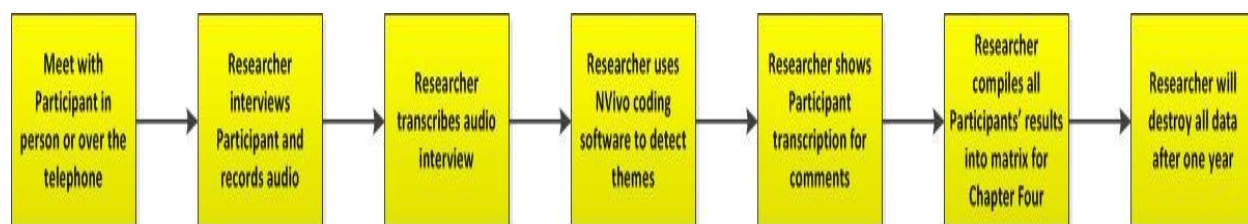
Figure 2. Data collection process overview.

IRB Approval

This proposal was sent to Pepperdine University's IRB board, and complied with all the necessary rules and stipulations before reaching out to any potential participants. In addition, the researcher obtained the National Institute of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research's certification for the completion of Protecting Human Research Participants online training (attached in Appendix B) and received IRB approval (Appendix C).

Matrix for Data Analysis

See Table 1 for a simplified view of how the research questions were expected to

correspond and were answered by interviewed questions. Although this table presents

somewhat duplicated categories for those presented in Chapter 4, this table is included for

the benefit of researchers who might replicate the study.

Table 1

Matrix for Data Analysis

RQ	#	Interview question	DC	Dimension
Demographic questions	1	What year were you born?	-	-
	2	How long have you lived in the Los Angeles area?	-	-
	3	Do you work for the public or private sector?	-	-
	4	How long have you been at your current place of employment?	-	-
	5	How long have you been a contract manager?	-	-
	6	What is your highest level of education?	-	-
Work environment questions	7	What is the best way you think a company can make you feel like you are involved and are proud to work at your organization?	Relationship	Involve-ment
	8	What do you think would be the ideal surroundings if you just started a company and it was your first day? Follow up: Would you prefer your workplace being a family and personal atmosphere, or business-only?		Coworker cohesion

(continued)

RQ	#	Interview question	DC	Dimension
	9	What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support?		Supervisor support
	10	What would be your ideal level of autonomy?	Personal growth	Autonomy
	11	What would your most efficient work environment look like? Follow up: Do you feel that your company puts a high emphasis on quality or work, not just quantity?	Personal growth	Task orient-ation
	12	What would be your ideal work pressure environment? For example, knowing that there are time-sensitive projects and tasks that will need to be completed, but how would you prefer your company to handle these issues?	Personal growth	Work pressure
	13	What is the ideal work environment for task and job clarity?	System maintenance & change	Clarity
	14	What is your ideal work environment preference for managerial control?	System maintenance & change	Managerial control
	15	What is your ideal work environment preference for the use of innovation?	System maintenance & change	Innovation
	16	What is your ideal work environment for physical comfort such as lighting, decor, free breakfast?	System maintenance & change	Physical comfort

Note. DC as the third column heading indicates dimension category.

Summary

      This chapter discussed in detail the significance of the qualitative phenomenological approach to this study, to delve deep into understanding the experience of the Generation Y contract managers of the Los Angeles area. The researcher found an excellent tool, the Work Environment Scale, which has been used for decades to examine the work environment preferences of different generations. I used the criteria within this instrument to develop interview questions. Lastly, this Chapter 3 documented the process by which he selected and collaborated with his participants, collected the data, protected the data, and collated for analysis so the study can be replicated and deemed reliable.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the Los Angeles area in the aerospace and the defense industry. This chapter includes results from the 11 participants who met the proposed demographic criteria. I interviewed 11 Millennial generation contract managers in the Los Angeles area by phone, based upon convenience, and no phone call lasted longer than 30 minutes. Prior to each interview, I sent each participant the consent form that can be found in Appendix B, as well as the letter to participate, that can be found in Appendix A.

Demographic Summary

Demographic information is summarized in Table 2, listed by interview question. The average age of participants was 28 at the time of the interviews, and the age range was from 24 to 32. Only four of the 11 participants have lived in Los Angeles less than 5 years.

Table 2

Summary of Respondent Demographic Information

Q#	Interview question	*M*	Range
1	What year were you born?	1986	1982 - 1990
2	How long have you lived in the Los Angeles area?	25 years	2.5 - 32 years
3	Do you work for the public or private sector?	-	(3 in public & 8 in private)

(continued)

4	How long have you been at your current place of employment?	2 years	2 months - 4 years
5	How long have you been a contract manager?	4 years	5 months - 7 years
6	What is your highest level of education?	-	BA - MA

Note. For interview question 2, the measure of central tendency used is the median.

Three worked for the public sector and eight for the private sector. Seven had an MBA

degree, three had a different bachelor's degree, and one was working on an MPA.

Participant Textural Description

The research question, as stated in Chapter 1 is: What are the work environment

preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area? I

transcribed all 11 interviews myself to gain an in-depth understanding to each participant's

answers. Once I transcribed all of the interviews, I used the NVivo 10 coding software to

look for the top work environment preferences per the research question. I then examined

the top three themes for each interview question, as displayed in Table 3. This table

reveals the top one to three most common answers to each interview question.

As evident in Table 3, the most common themes of work environment preferences of

Generation Y contract managers in the Los Angeles area working in the aerospace and

defense industry are: (a) prefers having autonomy and going to supervisors only when they

need help (15 responses); (b) prefers working in an environment with pressure, but not a

degree of pressure that will cause the participant to fail (10 responses); (c) prefers and

environment encouraging innovation (9 responses); (d) prefers a mixed atmosphere

between personal and friendly versus business; (e) appreciates innovation for the use of

technology in the workplace (8 responses); (f) prefers that managers communicate with

Millennials on high-level discussions and let them actively participate (7 responses); (g)

prefers responsibility outside of contract management and prefers to be given a clear

objective (7 responses); but also (h) prefers autonomy to figure out the tasks to get to the

finish line on their own (7 responses).

Table 3

Frequency Count of Most Common Themes by Interview Question

Interview question	Top 2 to 3 most common themes from interview question	f
Q7: What is the best way you think a company can make you feel like you are involved and are proud to work at your organization? (Relationship dimensions: Involvement)	Empowerment and autonomy	5
	Communicate with the Millennials on high-level discussions and let them actively participate	7
Q8: What do you think would be the ideal surroundings if you just started a company and it was your first day? Follow up: Would you prefer to have your workplace being a family and personal atmosphere, or business-only? (Relationship dimensions: Coworker cohesion)	Mixed personal and business	8
	Personal and family-oriented	2
	Business-only	1

(continued)

Interview question	Top 2 to 3 most common themes from interview question	f
Q9: What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support? (Relationship dimensions: Supervisor support)	Guidance when needed	7
	Immediate feedback and active participation in employee's workload, but not micromanager	3
	A leader	3
Q10: What would be your ideal level of autonomy? (Personal growth dimensions: Autonomy)	Support when needed	6
	Manager commenting frequently on job performance	4
	Anti-micromanagement	2
Q11: What would your most efficient work environment look like? Follow up: Do you feel that your company puts a high emphasis on quality or work, not just quantity? (Personal growth dimensions: Task orientation)	Communication	3
	Privacy	3
	Dual computer monitors	2

Interview question	Top 2 to 3 most common themes from interview question	f
Q12: What would be your ideal work pressure environment? For example, knowing that there are time-sensitive projects and tasks that will need to be completed, but how would you prefer your company to handle these issues? (Personal growth dimensions: Work pressure)	Pressure, but not enough so that we'll fail	10
Q13: What is the ideal work environment for task and job clarity? (System maintenance and change dimensions: Clarity)	Likes responsibilities outside the field of contract management	7
	Task clarity: given a clear objective but autonomy to figure out tasks to get there on their own	7
Q14: What is your ideal work environment preference for managerial control? (System maintenance and change dimensions: Managerial control)	Allow autonomy of employees	10
	Engaged management, but there to help, not to control employees	4

Interview question	Top 2 to 3 most common themes from interview question	f
Q15: What is your ideal work environment preference for the use of innovation? (System maintenance and change dimensions: Innovation)	Loves innovation	9
	Appreciates innovation for technology in the workplace	8
	Appreciates innovation for efficiency in the workplace	6
	Implementing innovation hinders current processes and productivity	2
Q16: What is your ideal work environment for physical comfort (lighting, stylish and modern, free breakfast, etc.)? (System maintenance and change dimensions: Physical comfort)	An ergonomic workstation	5
	Similar to Google's physical work environment (i.e., free food, free massages, nap pods)	4
	Open space	4
	Gym or physical activities	3

Tables 4 through 6 show the response themes grouped by the dimension categories created by Westerman and Yamamura (2007) for the WES survey on which the interview questions were based.

Table 4

Responses for the Relationship Dimension Category

Q#	Interview question	Dimension	Response themes
7	What is the best way you think a company can make you feel like you are involved and are proud to work at your organization?	Involve-ment	• Empowerment and autonomy • Communicate with the Millennials on high-level discussions and let them actively participate
8	What do you think would be the ideal surroundings if you just started a company and it was your first day? Follow up: Would you prefer to have your workplace being a family and personal atmosphere, or business-only?	Coworker cohesion	• Mixed personal and business • Personal and family-oriented • Business-only
9	What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support?	Supervisor support	• Guidance when needed • Immediate feedback and active participation in employee's workload, but not micromanager • A leader

Table 5

Responses for the Personal Growth Dimension Category

Q#	Interview question	Dimension	Response themes
10	What would be your ideal level of autonomy?	Autonomy	• Support when needed • Manager commenting frequently on job performance • Anti-micromanagement
11	What would your most efficient work environment look like? Follow up: Do you feel that your company puts a high emphasis on quality or work, not just quantity?	Task orientation	• Communication • Privacy • Dual monitors
12	What would be your ideal work pressure environment? For example, knowing that there are time-sensitive projects and tasks that will need to be completed, but how would you prefer your company to handle these issues?	Work pressure	• Pressure, but not enough so that we'll fail

Table 6

Responses for the System Maintenance and Change Dimension Category

Q#	Interview question	Dimension	Response themes
13	What is the ideal work environment for task and job clarity?	Clarity	• Likes responsibilities outside the field of contract management • Task clarity: given a clear objective but autonomy to figure out tasks to get there on their own
14	What is your ideal work environment preference for managerial control?	Managerial control	• Allow autonomy of employees • Engaged management, but there to help, not to control employees
15	What is your ideal work environment preference for the use of innovation?	Innovation	• Loves innovation • Appreciates innovation for technology in the workplace • Appreciates innovation for efficiency in the workplace • Implementing innovation hinders current processes and productivity
16	What is your ideal work environment for physical comfort such as lighting, decor, free breakfast?	Physical comfort	• An ergonomic workstation • Google • Open space • Gym or physical activities

Theme: Autonomy

The need for employee autonomy showed up in 15 different occasions over two different interview questions. One participant stated the following:

I'd rather like to be left alone so I can concentrate on my own tasks and I can learn better as an individual. That's how I work best, more alone than [with] a manager who is always breathing down your neck.

Another participant noted the following:

I work at a project office, so my manager, my immediate manger, is on site with me, so if I need to go to him for a situation, whether it be to sign off on something or get an approach on something or have him review a document, I'll go to him for that. That's really rarely, and my director is at a whole different building, so I don't really have that face-to-face with them all the time, but they are there if I need them as a resource.

Lastly, this participant stated the following:

I'm big on the managers stepping back, helping set the expectations and then being available as needed, but kind of throw you in the water and let you figure out how to swim and how to decide about how to go about the project by yourself, but they're close by to provide guidance, or if you're doing something wrong, or you're thinking on the wrong track, they're there to step in and give you a quick slap in the face and tell you you're either breaking a policy or shouldn't be handing out certain information or whatnot, but being able to step in and take control and back out again.

Theme: Work Pressure

The second most recurring theme that emerged from the interviews was the level of work pressure that they prefer in the work environment. Surprisingly, 10 responses from the participants stated that they enjoy plenty of work pressure to keep them on task, but not too much pressure to the point that they feel that they will fail. For example, one participant stated the following:

I work better under pressure. I tend to procrastinate when something is not due in a certain time. I think that's difficult for people my age; we wait until the last minute. I work much better under pressure. I don't necessarily wait until the last minute, but I don't put my full attention on it until the last minute.

Another participant stated the following:

I like being busy. I don't like a lot of downtime. If my week can fly by pretty quickly, I have no problem with that. If it's something I'm really enjoying and engaged in, I don't mind working 50 to 60 hours a week, if it's something I'm learning, and I'm growing, and helping grow the business.

Lastly, another participant stated the following:

We do get a lot of pressure. Pressure's good and keeps me on my toes and gives me an incentive to get my work done, but I do like deadlines. I don't like deadlines every day. So I guess deadlines would be good, but like a manageable day-to-day task load or work load.

Theme: Work Environment Preference for Innovation

Out of the 11 total participants, 9 spoke passionately about their love for innovation within the work environment. One participant stated the following:

I like to have more of the innovative work environment, and I feel like the younger

generations right now really have that up, because of all the different apps and

creations and technology that they're working on, and the type of work environment

for that innovation would be more of a fun type of work environment where you

don't really have more deadlines, kind of at a Google environment where it's more

casual and it's not all about the corporate ladder.

On the topic of innovation and technology in contract manager, one participant stated the

following:

I'm the type of person that really likes being an early adopter, so anything we can do

to innovate the way we work—whether that be an automated system or just a key

step in our processes and how we work around them or how we work with them—if

can get rid of some of the inefficient processes, then yeah, I'm all for innovation and

it's really important. I don't think there's a lot of innovation going on in contract

management, from a technology standpoint. I think contract managers can be

innovative when it comes down to piecing together items for a contract. So from

that standpoint, I think innovation is highly involved on how people draft contracts.

This was followed by another participant who stated the following:

It's a public agency; I feel that innovation is not a key element in our work

environment. I mean I would like it, simple things like using a computer, like using

Microsoft software, like Excel, the new Word versions. I find that to be efficient and

really useful, but a lot of employees who have been there 15 to 20 years plus are not

used to those kind of software, so innovation is really not big at my agency because

it would be hard to envision employees who have been there for a while to use those kinds of things.

One participant explained the following reason for preferring an organization that values innovation:

I'm the type of person that really likes being an early adopter, so anything we can do to innovate the way we work, whether that be an automated system or just be a key step in our processes and how we work around them or how we work with them, if can get rid of some of the inefficient processes, then yeah, I'm all for innovation and it's really important.

Lastly, one participant is undergoing an innovative change in the workplace, and stated the following:

Specifically, where I'm working right now, the file keeping was all done by hardcopies, and that pretty much was the standard for any place where you deal with contracts management, [you] could say, for record keeping in general. So now we're moving to the system where everything is going to be tracked online; it's pretty innovative for a lot of folks. I don't think it's as innovative for our generation. Our generation is already up to date I think you could say, with getting stuff online, but for the people who have been there for a long time already, change is hard, but I think that innovation is necessary to keep up with the times and to streamline things. At least for this application that we're adding to our business place, it's going to be able to streamline a lot of stuff and make things more efficient, and I think those growing pains will subside in a few months and people are going to love it.

Theme: Mixed Atmosphere Between Personal and Business

      This theme, which Moos and Insel (2008) define as representing the relationship dimension of coworker cohesion within the workplace, was asked. The results were lop-sided in the favor of preferring both a personal and business atmosphere, with eight responses indicating this preference for both, two to the personal work atmosphere, and one to the business-only work atmosphere. To represent the majority, one participant stated the following:

> I think it's got to be a mix of both business and personal atmosphere. You want to be friends with your coworkers. At the same time, you're there to work, and you need to have some kind of boundaries in there as well.

Similarly, another participant stated the following:

> I would definitely like both. I think that if it's just strictly business it can be very detached and impersonal. . . . [To] feel like if it is just a family small business, then it's kind of hard to be an outsider with that.

Lastly, another participant stated the following:

> Both; supportive coworkers and management, but at the same time, a professional atmosphere, where people observe a code of ethics.

Theme: Innovation of Technology in the Workplace

      Although the love for innovation has been discussed, the responses showed that having a preference for innovation was particularly linked to using innovation with technology to streamline processes and procedures in the contract management field. For example, one participant stated the following:

It's sad to say the aerospace industry has really aged; there are really no new

developments in it. Its main focus now is trying to maintain business. Whereas IT,

things are changing every day. The solutions that you had available to you last

month are outdated or soon to be outdated, so you always have to be in touch with

what's the newest thing coming out, how it's going to affect your business, how

much it's going to cost. So having that type of pressure in the outside environment

really helps you focus internally in your corporation on how we are going to get

problems solved. And for the most part, it's really bringing out the creativity and

innovation for everyone on the team, when it comes to trying to solve problems and

manage risks.

Another participant noted the following:

I mean I would like it, simple things like using a computer, like using Microsoft

software, like Excel, the new Word versions.

Lastly, one participant had a great story about integrating technology and innovation for

furthering his company's goal:

What I've done is hunt down someone that works for the campaign company or

hunt down someone that works for Kickstarter or Indiegogo and network in and

find out who the owner of the campaign is, and then I'll set up a side relationship

with them so I'll actually have a PO and a contract in place, so even if their campaign

fails, they're committed to hand me a product, even if it's a crappy prototype, that I

can at least take, and they hand me something that might not be functioning and

working, but at least they fulfilled their part of the contract.

Theme: Communicate With and Include Millennials

The next theme that occurred, with eight responses, was to include and

communicate with Millennials when a company makes big decisions or on a day-to-day

basis. For example, one participant stated how companies could make him or her proud to

work at their organization:

Inclusion. One of the reasons I left my old job was that the fact that although the

younger generation was more involved, willing to participate, and manage the

entire projects of the company, as a whole there was resistance to let us lead

anything.

One participant stated the following of their company, as a positive example:

They're always open to these meetings where we pitch these ideas and have a lot of

websites/forums where you can put your idea out.

Lastly, another participant stated the following leadership preference:

In-person discussions with all levels of employees just discussing why the company

is going this way.

Theme: Prefers Responsibilities outside of Contract Management

This theme was developed based upon the concept of clarity, one of Moos and

Insel's (2008) system maintenance and change dimensions. Seven participants responded

with similar answers to this question about being defined specifically as a contract

manager. For example, one participant stated the following:

Working in contracts is a repetitive environment; however, the type of work may

vary from purchase order to purchase order, or the customers that you are working

with, and suppliers. That does get draining at some times, and I feel like that would

burn me out for sure.

Another participant stated the following:

I like to have the ability to get my hands wet wherever I see fit. Honestly, it gives

you the ability if you have another function group that is not doing their job, you can

assist them or even do their task, which allows you to still reach your goals and not

be hindered.

Lastly, one participant stated the following:

I definitely like stepping outside of my contract manager's hat. Luckily for me, I've

gotten the opportunity to work in subcontracts and contracts, as well as working in

a project management role in my few years. It's cool for young contract managers

where a lot of the time, at least in the industry that I'm in where you deal with a lot

of engineering folks, a lot of technical folks. So being able to have first seen that

project management side, it's cool so you're able to tie two things together. But I

think that going forward, especially people from our generation, it would be

beneficial for individuals to be able to venture into those other disciplines, and not

just be stuck in contracts, because again, I think that to be a successful contracts

professional, you need to be able to see the view from the people you're working

with. Again, those technical folks or the other business folks, so I think it helps out

greatly to have that variety.

Theme: Task and Objective Clarity

This theme, also based on the concept of clarity, one of Moos and Insel's (2008)

system maintenance and change dimensions, became apparent with seven responses from

the participants. They stated that they prefer to have the autonomy to figure out the path

and tasks to get to the objective, but have the objective clearly defined. For example, one

participant stated the following:

> I don't necessarily want all tasks to be fully defined. I like having an idea of the end
>
> goal. Rather than identifying all the different subtasks that need to happen on a
>
> daily basis, I would rather just have the objective of what my team needs to do to get
>
> there; let me define the task. If there is a need to do new certain tasks, then I do like
>
> the clarity, but in general I would like to define the tasks that I need to get there.

Another participant stated the following:

> I like being able to go through and have clearly defined what the project's goals are.
>
> I think if you start with the overall goals and what the level of expectations for the
>
> results are going to be, you'll be able to plan that project and put together a better
>
> action plan than if you're trying to piece things apart each step of the way, and
>
> you're not sure where the hell you're heading, because then that way every time you
>
> make a decision, you're going to come back up with 10 to 20 questions that they're
>
> going to want to change and modify each time.

Lastly, this participant noted the following:

> I prefer in having some control on how we do things. My preference would be, this
>
> is the target. How we get there is up to you, but we have to both save 10% and only
>
> spend this amount of money, or we have to get this implemented by this date, cost is
>
> not an issue. I prefer having just the generic task of having to get things done by this
>
> date by this cost, and I'll find a way to get there.

As one can see, there was a strong response to having the objectives clearly defined, but for management to get out of the way of the process.

Summary

This chapter has answered the research question in great detail, which is: what are the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area? Choosing the qualitative phenomenological approach, rather than a survey quantitative method of research study, greatly benefited the researcher because he was able to find out the "why" to the workplace preferences of Millennial contract managers in Los Angeles. In addition, some of the responses were in line with what the topics touched on in the literature review, and some of them were not. It was fascinating to find out how important autonomy and innovation were to the participants, whereas the literature usually stated that Millennials like to be complimented often and prefer automatic promotions. Also, it was interesting to find that none of the participants mentioned anything about social responsibility and the environment, which was found in the literature as well. Also, even though none of the questions had the word *leadership* in them, it is compelling to notice the importance of leadership in the workplace for the participants of this study, especially with the emerging Millennials.   In summary, the main topics mentioned by the participants were as follows: (a) leadership, (b) the four generations that are currently in the workforce, (c) work environment preferences, (d) employee engagement, (e) procurement professionals in the Los Angeles area aerospace industry, and (f) exemplary companies that provide excellent work environments for Generation Y. All 11 interviews were transcribed to have the ability to give the reader more depth into

each theme that was discovered. The main themes will be discussed further in the next

chapter, Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the work environment preferences of Generation Y contract managers in the greater Los Angeles area. By interviewing 11 participants from some of the biggest public and private aerospace and defense agencies, I was able to get an in-depth knowledge on what leaders and managers within these organizations can do to make their Millennial employees engaged and happy, which should in turn lead to increased productivity and higher profit margins. This chapter will examine the themes that were discovered, the implications of this research, recommendations, suggestions for further research, and the main conclusions.

Summary of Findings

As the researcher, I was able to identify the work environment preferences of Los Angeles contract managers in the aerospace and defense industry firsthand by interviewing 11 participants that were born between 1982 and 1989. This is not to say that this study represents all Millennial contract managers in the Los Angeles area in the aerospace and defense industry, but the responses are from a wide variety of contract managers that work at some of the largest public and private aerospace and defense firms in the Los Angeles area.

The question that received many comments and responses that were similar was the question about the participant's ideal preference of supervisor support (interview question 9). The majority of the participants in this study had a low tolerance for being micro-managed and highly preferred to have control of their own schedules. They preferred to only go to their supervisors when they came across a problem they could not

solve. Interestingly enough, most of the participants stated somewhere in their interview that they want a leader and a mentor, not a taskmaster. Some participants liked to have almost complete autonomy, while others liked to have their manager show interest in what they were doing and at least stop by and say hello. When performing a word search using the NVivo coding software, leader or leadership was mentioned 12 times, and mentor was mentioned 3 times. Conversely, the term *micromanager* was mentioned 8 times in the transcript.

Another interesting finding was the high preference for innovation in the workplace. Nine out of the 11 participants were extremely passionate about the use of innovation in the workplace, while the remaining two participants were accepting of innovation, just as long as it did not slow down productivity.

Next, on coworker cohesion, responses showed that the majority like to have a balance of a personal work atmosphere and a business work atmosphere, although two participants wanted their ideal work environment to be completely personal and one participant wanted it to be completely business-oriented. This is interesting because the majority of the participants liked the hybrid approach to business and personal, whereas the outliers were "all business" and "all personal."

Lastly, this study found that Millennials enjoy or at least appreciate pressure because it helps them get things done, but too much pressure can make them uneasy because they do not want to fail.

Relationship to the Literature Review

The literature review in Chapter 2 covered the following topics, which are similar to those touched on in the interview responses: (a) leadership, (b) the four generations that

are currently in the workforce, (c) work environment preferences, (d) employee engagement, (e) procurement professionals in the Los Angeles area aerospace industry, and (f) exemplary companies that provide excellent work environments for Generation Y.

Leadership. The word *leader* and *leadership* were mentioned on 12 separate occasions throughout five different interview questions. Interview question 9 asks, "What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support?" One participant had a response that was repeated in different words by five other participants:

I feel like it would be nice to have a supervisor that you can go to who can be supportive and you can ask questions, but it would be more of a supervisor, and leadership that I would want to see from my supervisor, and if I was working more as with a team, I would go to them first before going to my supervisor. A supervisor more is going to be giving leadership more than giving task advice. They have more things to worry about than little things, so kind of more of the leadership I'd like to see from my supervisor.

Maxwell (n.d.) defines Level 1 leadership as position: "position is the lowest level of leadership—the entry level. The influence a positional leader has is that which comes with the job title. People follow because they have to. Positional leadership is based on the *rights* granted by the position and title" (p. 7). Level 1 leadership is essentially what the participants in this study do not want. Instead they want a leader who is at the very least at Level 2 (permission level), which Maxwell (n.d.) defines as being "based entirely on relationships. On the permission level, people follow because they want to. When you like people and treat them like individuals who have value, you begin to develop influence with them" (p. 8). Another participant prefers managerial support to be the following:

Has to be trust, allow autonomy, and more of a mentor, not a supervisor or a

manager, definitely not a big fan of the micromanaging.

While still another participant prefers a manager with the following similar approach:

To be more of a mentor than anything else. I prefer autonomy. Having a supervisor

that supports you and works with you as a team member, rather than someone who

directs you where to go.

As stated earlier in Chapter 2, the literature review, Bass's (1990) theory of

transformational leadership has characteristics the participants of this study desired in

their direct supervisors, rather than one who exemplifies an aspect of transactional

leadership, management by exception (active), which Bass defines as a leader who

"watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, takes corrective action" (p.

22). For example, one participant stated:

She'd help give me guiding questions that lead me to an answer, but never straight

up tell me what to do, which I think is a better leadership style then a manager that

comes in and says 'here's what I do and here's what you need to do, step 1, 2, 3,4,

and 5'. If you can bring the person to come up with a decision on their own, they're

going to grow further than if you take foresight of everything.

The participants felt strongly about elements of transformational leadership, which

Bass (1990) defined as characteristic of a transformational leader: "charisma, inspiration,

intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (p. 22). Bass defines charisma as

"provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust," (p. 22)

inspiration as "communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses

important purposes in simple ways,"(p. 22) intellectual stimulation as "promotes

intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving" (p. 22), and individualized

consideration, which is a leader who "gives personal attention, treats each employee

individually, coaches, advises" (p. 22). Interestingly enough, some of the participants

preferred elements of transactional leadership as well, which Bass defines as *management*

by exception (passive), described as "intervenes only if standards are not met" and

providing contingent reward by actions such as "contracts exchange of rewards for effort,

promises rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishments" (p. 22). For

example, one participant stated when asked the question about feeling valued by the

company: "For me it would be incentives, or awards, or some sort of accolades for young

contracts managers." Lastly, the participants' leadership preference can be seen as similar

to Blanchard and Hersey's (1996) theory of situational leadership, which is Style 2

(coaching) and Style 3 (supporting) (p. 45).

     As one can see, the aspect of leadership has a very strong presence and is the

underlying theme in this study. Responses in this study revealed that being a Level 1

leader in the workplace will no longer be sufficient with this emerging Millennial workforce

of contract managers in the Los Angeles area.

     The four generations currently in the workforce. The participants did not speak

specifically about each generation by name, but one participant mentioned the following:

> I think the workplace is changing from when my parents used to work or your
>
> parents, where you go to work and you're expected to not complain and that's it, but
>
> I think our generation is turning the tide, where hey, we realize we got a job to get
>
> done but we don't want to feel miserable at the same time.

This quote from this participant can be linked back to the literature review and is in agreement with Lipkin and Perrymore's (2009) quote:

> The frustrations of management from previous generations are clear because they worked hard, sacrificing family time, performing menial tasks to please their supervisors, and working long hours (in some cases at the expense of their health), to earn respect and get promoted. The frustrations of Generation Y are also clear, as they want to live now rather than live when they retire. Generation Y values their free time, energy, and health during long hours at the office, and they insist that work be part of life, not life itself. (p. 17)

Opposing previous generations, one of the older participants stated the following on the ideal work environment of autonomy:

> Giving you the flexibility to kind of help mold your own schedule of something that's going to fit your personality. Other folks in our program will do the 9/80, some will do the 5/40's, like me, I'll flex up and down, all over the place to kind of fit my own needs. Especially for me, like I love surfing and stuff so if there's good surf on a Friday, I'll just take Friday off, and then I might come in on Saturday or I'll just work extra during the week so I don't have to come in on Friday, but I might take my laptop with me to the beach and do some work from the parking lot if needed.

Saval (2014) stated of the first study of telecommuting, performed by Nilles in 1994, that

> supervisors would no longer be able to control their employees, and workers themselves might miss out on the social atmosphere of office life. But the company went forward with it. As soon as it became effective, the project was canned. It turned out managers felt threatened by telecommuting: they weren't able to control

their employees in the same way as before and had to change their methods. (p.

259)

This problem is still relevant today, and as the participants have stated, autonomy is the

top work environment preference.

Work environment preferences. The research question for this study was to

determine the work environment preferences of Los Angeles contract managers in the

aerospace and defense industry, and was covered heavily in both the literature review and

by the results in Chapter 4. Interview questions 7 through 16 were developed directly

from Moos and Insel's (2008) Work Environment Scale, which consists of the following

criteria: "involvement, coworker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation,

work pressure, clarity, managerial control, innovation, and physical comfort".   As stated in

the results, autonomy, work pressure, and innovation were the most reoccurring themes

that were discovered in this study.   In conjunction with Smith and Galbraith's (2012)

survey of 185 completed responses of Millennial library employees at BYU to find out what

motivates them, their top choice (selected by 59%) was flexibility, similar to the

participants in this study. To reiterate the importance of flexibility, a prior quote is again

noted:

I love surfing and stuff, so if there's good surf on a Friday, I'll just take Friday off, and

then I might come in on Saturday or I'll just work extra during the week so I don't

have to come in on Friday, but I might take my laptop with me to the beach and do

some work from the parking lot if needed.

Specifically on the subject of autonomy, Ryan and Deci (2000) state, "The fullest

representations of humanity show people to be curious, vital, and self-motivated. At their

best, they are agentic and inspired, striving to learn; extend themselves; master new skills; and apply their talents responsibly" and "Yet, it is also clear that the human spirit can be diminished or crushed and that individuals sometimes reject growth and responsibility" (p. 68). Liu, Zhang, Wang, and Lee (2011) studied employee survey responses of 817 workers and found the following:

> Our results yield a viable solution to managers, suggesting that individual autonomy orientation and the interaction between contextual autonomy orientation and the interaction between contextual autonomy support and its differentiation catalyze team members' psychological empowerment and ultimately, reduce the likelihood of turnover. (p. 1314)

In other words, giving employees autonomy the make their own decisions is a psychological need, whether it applies to Generation Y or Generation X. In addition, Ryan and Deci (2000) found the following:

> Our early investigations focused on the social conditions that enhance versus diminish a very positive feature of human nature, namely, the natural activity and curiosity referred to as intrinsic motivation. We found that conditions supportive of autonomy and competence reliably facilitated this vital expression of the human growth tendency, whereas conditions that controlled behavior and hindered perceived effectance undermined its expression. (p. 76)

Employee engagement. Employee engagement is a vital part to run an organization, and as stated in the literature review, Bakker (2011) states that engaged employees being "full of energy, are dedicated to reach their work-related goals, and are often fully immersed in their work. Work engagement is predicted by job resources and

personal resources and leads to higher job performance" (p. 268). Bakker's (2011) quote is in line with this participant's response on the subject of work pressure:

> If it's something I'm really enjoying and engaged in, I don't mind working 50-60 hours a week. If it's something I'm learning and I'm growing, and helping grow the business.

> Csikszentmihalyi (1997) defines people being fully engaged in what their job or passion is as "flow," and "the metaphor of flow is one that many people have used to describe the sense of effortless action they feel in moments that stand out as the best in their lives" (p. 46).

Procurement professionals in the Los Angeles area aerospace industry. Previously stated in the literature review, the OPM states that the core values of the emerging students that are graduating college are "diversity, adapting to change, confidence and self-reliance, innovation and creativity, non-traditional workplace, social responsibility, work-life balance," which is congruent with some of the responses of the participants of this study, particularly the self-reliance, innovation and creativity, and work-life balance. Similar to Leveson et al.'s (2013) findings on Millennial preferences, none of the participants commented with conviction or elaboration that they would like to see their employer be socially responsible or environmentally conscious.

Exemplary companies that provide excellent work environments for Generation Y. As stated earlier, the word "Google" was mentioned on five separate occasions, specifically interview questions 15 (innovation) and 16 (physical work environment) by the participants of the study. It is no secret why Google been ranked in

the top five best companies to work for by Fortune, since 2006 (CNNMoney, 2013). One

participant made the following comment about furniture in the workplace:

> Furniture-wise, I think the place should look presentable and inviting, and I think a
>
> lot of the aerospace firms don't like to invest that kind of money, because they don't
>
> want to show the customer that they're being so profitable. It's so different where
>
> you go into the commercial world when you go into a company and go 'wow, this is
>
> an amazing lobby!' I've never found that in aerospace before.

With the aerospace and defense industry being heavily reliant on government

funding, it is understandable that an image of luxury and thoughtless spending can be

perceived by the taxpayer as waste. As stated earlier in the literature review of other

companies who made simple changes that were not expensive, another example is DPR

Construction, who prides itself on an open-office floor plan, two net-zero-energy office

buildings, and business cards with no titles (CNNMoney, 2013).

Implications and Recommendations

After interviewing all 11 participants in the study, it has become clear that for

leaders in aerospace and defense organizations to have fully-engaged Millennial contract

managers, they should start analyzing how their individual corporate culture addresses the

major themes in this study, which consist of the following:

Recommendation 1: Train and coach direct supervisors to Millennials to

recognize their preference of management style. This recommendation is based on

respondents' stated preference for allowing employees to have autonomy and go to

supervisors only when they need help (15 responses).

Recommendation 2: Keep metrics related to the workload and regularly utilize employee engagement surveys. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for working in an environment with pressure, but not too pressure that will cause the participant to fail (10 responses)

Recommendation 3: Develop an innovation reward program. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for an environment that encourages innovation (9 responses).

Recommendation 4: Institute solid human resources policies to promote a professional environment, but initiate other activities such as team-building outside of work. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for a mixed atmosphere between personal and friendly versus business (8 responses).

Recommendation 5: Provide funds for purchase and use of the latest and most cutting edge software programs in relation to contract managers' needs. This can be done even if the use is optional, not mandated. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for innovation for the use of technology in the workplace (8 responses).

Recommendation 6: Engage Millennials in high-level discussions and encourage them to participate in decision making on all levels. Even if the final decisions cannot accommodate the preferences of everyone, these workers appreciate having their preferences considered. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for managers to communicate with Millennials through high-level discussions and let them actively participate in organizational decision making.

Recommendation 7: Encourage your Millennial employees to take on responsibilities outside of contract management. This recommendation is based on respondents' stated preference for (a) responsibility outside of contract management and (b) to be given a clear objective, but autonomy to figure out the tasks to get the tasks completed on their own (7 responses each).

These seven themes had the most frequency and were prevalent among many of the Millennial contract managers' comments. It appears some of the organizations in which these contract managers are employed are already asking these questions and trying to make a difference.

As stated earlier in this dissertation, Millennials can sometimes be misunderstood or even stereotyped as lazy or entitled, but the implications of this study are summarized best by Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes' (2002) study, which used the Gallup database to come to following conclusion: Business units in the top quartile of employee engagement had, on average, from $80,000 to $120,000 higher monthly revenue or sales (and for one organization, the difference was more than $300,000). Assuming even an $80,000 difference per month per business unit, this difference translates into $960,000 per year per business unit (p. 275). Whether it be Millennials or Baby Boomers, satisfying a generation's work environment preference can lead to higher employee engagement, lower turnover rates, and minimized job burnout, which will lead to a more generous bottom-line or saving taxpayers' dollars.

Limitations

As stated earlier in Chapter 3, the researcher of this study is, and has been, very active in the Los Angeles contract management community, serving on the board of the San

Gabriel Valley Chapter of the National Contract Management Association for 2 years, in addition to starting a formal mentoring program for his chapter. That being said, he has been able to meet a large amount of Millennials and even worked in the field of contract management at an aerospace company in the Los Angeles area. His association with possible participants from his professional network could be seen as a possible limitation. At the same time, the researcher's background allowed a level of trust for participants to know their responses would be correctly interpreted, and a level of trust was added that the participants had the ability to review the transcribed interviews before the researcher included them within this study.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Now that the work environment preferences of Generation Y Los Angeles contract managers in the aerospace and defense industry have been examined in this qualitative phenomenological study, it would be interesting to do a comparative survey analysis on a national level to see if the results are consistent with this small sample. Also, it would be relevant to see what the expectations of Generation Y Los Angeles contract managers in the aerospace and defense industry supervisors have to say about the performance of contract managers represented by this sample. More importantly, it would be of value to implement the recommended changes and evaluate whether these Millennial contract managers perform at a higher level when their preferences are met, such as their preferences for autonomy and room for innovation. Next, it would be useful for leaders and managers to understand the Millennial breaking point, when they do not feel like they are going to collapse under the pressure of their workload, but are still intellectually stimulated. Lastly, it would be interesting for a study to be performed specifically for examining the use of

innovation by Generation Y Los Angeles contract managers in the aerospace and defense industry and the impact to the organizations they work at, in dollars and cents (as a measure of efficiency).

Conclusion

As noted in the beginning of this dissertation, Altes (2009) states, as of 2009, there were 73.5 million Millennials in the workplace, compared to Gen Xs 49.1 million and the Baby Boomer's 76.7 million (p. 45). As more Baby Boomers retire and more Millennials enter the workplace, organizations are going to have to rely on this emerging Generation Y to carry out the organization's goals and objectives. That being said, if organizations cannot provide these Millennials a work environment that they can feel comfortable in and thrive in, employee engagement will decrease, and the resulting turnover will impact the organizations' bottom-line. This study examined the literature of the following topics: (a) leadership, (b) the four generations that are currently in the workforce, (c) work environment preferences, (d) employee engagement, (e) procurement professionals in the Southern California aerospace industry, and (f) exemplary companies that provide excellent work environments for Generation Y.

The method used for this study was a qualitative phenomenological approach, because the researcher wanted to gain an in-depth understanding on specific examples and situations to understand why they have the work environment preferences that they have. This method allows for a more personal approach, inviting depth and variety that cannot be captured in a survey format, as well as additional information. For example, beyond understanding that respondents "strongly prefer innovation," this method allows the researcher to explain why. Having a qualitative phenomenological format gives managers

or leaders reading this dissertation specific examples to see if their organization is on the

right track, or needs to look at their current way of conducting business and creating the

ideal Millennial workplace.

Lastly, the common themes that appeared to be the most frequent were (a)

autonomy (15 responses), (b) work pressure (10 responses), (c) company valuing

innovation (9 responses), (d) co-worker cohesion, (e) innovating technology in the

workplace (8 responses), (f) involvement in decision making (8 responses), (g) job clarity

or preference for lack of job clarity (7 responses each). Leadership was mentioned

numerous times as well, and it seems that the days of gaining leadership authority solely by

a title on a manager's business card are over. With the new Millennial generation emerging

from colleges across the United States, managers are going to have to shift from a

transactional and coercive leadership style to a transformational leadership style, one

mentoring and coaching session at a time.

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APPENDIX A

Participant Interview Questions

Demographic Questions:

1. What year were you born?

2. How long have you lived in the Los Angeles area?

3. Do you work for the public or private sector?

4. How long have you been at your current place of employment?

5. How long have you been a contract manager?

6. What is your highest level of education?

Work Environment Preferences:

7. What is the best way you think a company can make you feel like you are involved and are proud to work at your organization? (Relationship Dimensions: Involvement)

8. What do you think would be the ideal surroundings if you just started a company and it was your first day? Follow up: Would you prefer to have your workplace being a family and personal atmosphere, or business-only? (Relationship Dimensions: Coworker Cohesion)

9. What would be your ideal preference on supervisor support? (Relationship Dimensions: Supervisor Support)

10. What would be your ideal level of autonomy? (Personal Growth Dimensions: Autonomy)

11. What would your most efficient work environment look like? Follow up: Do you feel that your company puts a high emphasis on quality or work, not just quantity? (Personal Growth Dimensions: Task Orientation)

12. What would be your ideal work pressure environment? For example, knowing that there are time-sensitive projects and tasks that will need to be completed, but how would you prefer your company to handle these issues? (Personal Growth Dimensions: Work Pressure)

13. What is the ideal work environment for task and job clarity? (System Maintenance and Change Dimensions: Clarity)

14. What is your ideal work environment preference for managerial control? (System Maintenance and Change Dimensions: Managerial Control)

15. What is your ideal work environment preference for the use of innovation? (System Maintenance and Change Dimensions: Innovation)

16. What is your ideal work environment for physical comfort (lighting, stylish and modern, free breakfast, etc.)? (System Maintenance and Change Dimensions: Physical Comfort)

APPENDIX B

National Institute of Health Certification for the Completion of Training in Protecting

Human Research Participants

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Santor Nishizaki** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 02/05/2012

Certification Number: 858082

APPENDIX C

IRB Approval Letter

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

May 16, 2014

Santor Nishizaki

Protocol #: E0414D01
Project Title: Work Environment Preferences of Los Angeles Generation Y Contract Managers in the Defense and Aerospace Industry

Dear Mr. Nizhizaki:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Work Environment Preferences of Los Angeles Generation Y Contract Managers in the Defense and Aerospace Industry,* for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. Schmieder-Ramirez, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsrsite/guidelines/45cfr46.html) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

> (b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:
>
> **Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the