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# Generations in the Workplace: Similarities and Differences

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

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by

Jeffery G. Harber

May 2011

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Dr. Donald Good

Dr. Jasmine Renner

Keywords:

Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, Xers,

Millennials, Workplace

## ABSTRACT

### Generations in the Workplace: Similarities and Differences

by

Jeffery G. Harber

Occurrences of four generations working side by side are not unusual. The four generations include Traditionalist, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Members of each generation have views and opinions about their work ethic and their definition of loyalty to the organization.

Hiring managers will need to know characteristics of each generation. This knowledge will enable the hiring managers to place the applicant in certain positions within their organizations. By matching applicants with the correct work positions, employees are able to use their skills and abilities to be productive and to establish measurable goals for themselves and their departments. Productive work enables the employees to work individually and as a team member. The research has shown that each generation has its own strengths and weakness. Members of the older generations show characteristics that accommodate customer service and loyalty to an organization. Members of the younger generations have the technical knowledge and the ability to train others in order to use this technology to the benefit of the organization.

## DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family who has supported me through the different phases of this research project.

To my wife Jan, I am thankful for you being my wife and appreciate the support that you have shown over the long nights of studying. You have given me the encouragement to do my best and to look to the future. I look forward in using the knowledge that I have gained for the betterment of our family. I love you very much.

To my son Adam, I am very proud of you and what you have accomplished throughout your scholastic career and in your working career. We have spent many years together in sports and I have enjoyed being part of your life. You are an inspiration for me to keep going and to never stop learning.

To my daughter Lauren, you are a joy to me in your thoughtfulness and consideration. There isn't a time that has gone by that you have not sent a card or a phone call to remind your mother and me that we are in your thoughts. I am looking forward to your future and what you can accomplish. Thank you for your words that "you can do it". I am very blessed with you and Adam as my children. I love you both.

To my parents Gray and Joyce Harber, I cannot express what you mean to me. You have been a guiding light for me and have always been there. No problem was too great that we could not overcome. You prepared me for the future and have provided love and comfort to my family. I love you and I agree with the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother in that your days may be long".

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the committee members who have provided guidance during my exams and presentations. The committee members consist of Dr. Catherine Glascock, Dr. Cecil Blankenship, Dr. Donald Good, and Dr. Jasmine Renner. I would also like to thank Dr. Catherine Glascock for being the Chair of my research and for her support during the dissertation process, and I would also like to recognize the staff of the ELPA Department for their support.

I would also like to thank other people for their support during the program and with writing my dissertation. Members from my cohort include, Mr. Jim Myers, Ms. Renia Clark, and Dr. Lisa Stewart. Also Ms. Marietta Walton, a personal friend, was instrumental in assisting me in writing Chapters 1 – 3.

I would like to acknowledge the faith that I have in the grace and love that was provided to me by our Heavenly Father. Through His grace, I received the drive and the patience that was needed while pursuing this degree. I thank Him for all that He did for me and in providing assistance by other individuals to guide me toward the final project.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Employers are looking for specific talents among the candidates they hire for positions within their organizations. These skills and abilities are necessary to perform required tasks or services for customers. This research provides insights into the points of view of the hiring managers and of the employees of who belong to one of the four studied generations (Hansen & Hansen, n.d.).

There are five generations with only four becoming part of the work place and having the responsibility of working together. The generations are labeled Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. People born in today's generation, known as Generation Z, have not yet entered the work place because of their age; therefore, the study focuses on the Traditionalists through Generation Y.

Within this study, generations are referred to by their designated names such as Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X (Xers), and Generation Y (Millennials). Each name will represent the members of that generation.

“Peter Harbidge, general manager for HR Consultants Hudson New Zealand, says that a pilot study, *The Generational Mirage*, conducted by the University of Auckland Business School and commissioned by Hudson suggests generational differences in the workplace are overstated and may be detrimental to people management and retention if relied upon” (as cited in “*Talking ‘bout your generation*”, 2005, para. 12). “We wanted to know if there was any truth in generational differences and found there are actually more similarities. The study found the values of different generations tended to rub off on each other which means so-called generational attitudes aren’t

necessarily entrenched,” says Harbidge (as cited in *“Talking ‘bout your generation”*, 2005, para. 13).

Employers want employees who will be an asset to the organization and are receptive to the changing world. Members of the generations have different outlooks on what matters in their lives and what they are searching for, whether it is job security as in the older generations, or the enjoyment of being with their families as in the younger generations. Individuals have different needs and goals that create challenges for hiring managers in dealing with training, recruiting, and retaining qualified personnel. The differences between the four generations in areas such as personal goals, dedication to the working and home environments, and interactions with customers and other employees will create other obstacles and challenges for employers to place personnel in suitable positions within the company.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the different generations from the Traditionalist to the Millennials in the workplace from the point of view of both management and employee. The study involves the employees’ and employer’s views and concerns with the prospective employers and employees relations to attitudes and commitment to the company. Employers need the correct mix of experience and personality in order to maximize the operations of the internal environment of the corporation.

The Traditionalists, born approximately between 1922 and 1945, are considered loyal and want to build a lifetime career with one employer with hopes of making a lasting contribution. Many Traditionalists believe in conformity, authority, rules, logic, discipline, and a sense of right and wrong. Traditionalists generally believe in a

hierarchical society such as following the chain of command within military operations. They dislike conflict and are very much detail oriented, which compliments record keeping of the past. By keeping these records and being familiar with past events, Traditionalists are considered the historians (*"The Traditional Generation"*, n.d.).

Baby Boomers were born approximately between 1946 and 1964. This generation is considered to have positive attitudes and often exhibit tendencies of ruthlessness, arrogance, and selfishness that can result in factional strife or outright despotism. Boomers are considered to be overprotective parents and have large influences over political and cultural matters. Most are hard workers and feel that they must pay their dues to get ahead (Agarwal, 2010).

Xers were born approximately between 1965 and 1980. Typically this generation was raised with two-income families, and there was a rising divorce rate. Women joined the workforce in large numbers spawning the age of latch-key children. Xers values freedom and responsibility and dislikes being micro-managed. They are eager to get ahead, are not afraid to change employers, and seem to adapt well to lifestyle changes (Kane, 2010).

Millennials were born approximately between 1980 and 2000 and tend to be different from the older generations in that they are tech savvy having grown up with technology such as laptops, cell phones, Blackberries, and other gadgets. They prefer to communicate through e-mail or by text messaging and prefer webinars and online technology to traditional lecture-based presentations (Kane, 2010).

Millennials like the fast track and are willing to replace high pay for fewer working hours, flexible schedules, and a better work and life balance. They have high

expectations of their employers and are not afraid to ask questions and want meaningful work with a solid learning curve (Kane, 2010).

### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to evaluate similarities or differences between members of the four generations within the workplace. The ability of employees to bridge their generational differences is a growing issue in the workplace. As the workforce becomes increasingly age diverse, the ability to understand and get along with others of different generations will have an effect on profits and the inner office environment. Employers will need to know how to interact with each generation in order to provide challenges that each person deserves, and employees will need to make contributions that assist the company in reaching and creating new goals. In order for this to happen, each side, management and employees, needs to understand what makes each generation operate and how they can work together for the success of the company and for the individual (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

### Research Questions

1. What are perceptual differences among Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Xers, and Millennials in the corporate environment relating from the management and worker points of view
  - Work skill levels as defined by: Ability to communicate with coworkers, upper management, and customers and their ability to perform basic functions within their job descriptions.

- Loyalty to the organization: Protecting the image of the company with other employees and with customers and having pride within their positions.
- Work ethics as defined by: Protecting the assets of the company and being fair in dealing with all customers.

### Significance of the Study

Companies are interested in hiring employees who have the skills and abilities that will give their company the edge over competitors. Organizations must be able to respond to change from internal and external sources in order to remain competitive in today's market. Employers are learning to expand and contract the labor force as the economy and strategies dictate. Because of this, it is very important that companies understand the values and the strategies of the different generations and how they react and work with other generations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002)

Companies will have to look at different ways to communicate and to attract the newer generations. What may apply to one candidate, may not work with another. The old assumption that "one size fits all" will not work in every situation. Factors such as diversity are playing a major part in the way that companies are hiring and how employees react to the policies of the company. Therefore, companies are enlisting recruiters to screen the applicants per the requirements of the employer as the first step in the interview process. The recruiter is the one who will make the initial contact and establish rapport with the prospective employee regardless of generation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Possibly a good motto for the recruiter will be, "not the most words, just the right words" (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 187).

For the first time in history, “We have four separate generations working shoulder-to-shoulder and face-to-face in a stressful and competitive workplace” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p.17). Technology has improved causing employees to have skills that will use this technology to advance the company in order to compete in the global market. Older employees may not have the computer skills that the organization requires. Not having the needed skills may cause employees to be replaced, thus affecting the career and home life of the employees. Employers may ignore that each generation has not experienced the same events. We go through life and eventually die, but the generations do not approach life’s issues in same way (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Diversity is playing a large part in today’s corporate world in that workers differ in age, national origin, and gender. As in the age of the Traditionalist, men dominated the work force with women staying at home. With World War II many women left the home and entered the workforce to assist in producing materials for the war effort. Men and women both shared the responsibilities of providing for their homes and in creating an environment of both genders working together.

Diversity also refers to the national origin of an individual and how a person is accepted within the working world. In order to be considered a global company, each individual must be welcomed into the corporate world and thus giving their thoughts and talents to the operation of the business. Members of these two generations have been involved with daily interactions with people from other cultures and have been exposed to their cultures and rituals, whereas the older generations have not been exposed to the same degree that members of Generations X and Y have. Due to the interactions



with different cultures, opportunities can be introduced to an organization that will bring new ideas and solutions to the operations of the business.

Because American women are not having as many children, companies may have to look at immigration to fill the openings at their organizations. Companies will need to use multilingual recruiters and produce recruiting materials in several languages (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

A company's greatest asset is its employees, so it is very important that the managers understand each generation and how everyone can work together. What one may think is acceptable the other person may not think so. This is where the companies need to know how to develop a learning atmosphere for everyone to work together. Studies have shown that money is very important, but it is not the only reason that employees stay at a certain location. A mixture of financial, personal, and cultural factors produces a sense of loyalty to the organization. By being members of an organization, employees have opportunities in mixing within the organization's cultures thus allowing the employees to offer their talents in creating solutions to the challenges for themselves and the company (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Companies are looking for applicants who will be beneficial to their organization and be able to contribute to the goals of the company. Generations have different outlooks on what they perceive the company's values are. What may be structured to one generation may seem harsh to the other. The companies are also interested in the ethics that the employees bring to the organization. "Michael Hoffman, director of the Center for Business Ethics at Bentley College, said it's not that business people are less ethical today, but that the pressures of competition sometimes lead employees to

compromise their personal integrity to satisfy what they mistakenly believe are company goals” (as cited in Skrzycki, 1989, p.1).

### Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study reviews four different generations and how employers view each generation’s work habits and customs. The four generations are the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The generations have different characteristics and have different purposes in life. With these differences in mind, it is important to know how each person will interact with another. Companies need to keep an open mind and not place each employee in the same group (stereotype) but treat each person as an individual.

Companies within the same business setting, company size, and employee count were surveyed about management’s interactions with members of the different generations. This includes the company’s interviewing materials and how the employees interacted with their working environment. The interview questions are structured so that no bias can occur among the different companies.

A limitation to the study may be from the responses from the participants. People see and hear materials differently and what may mean to one individual may not mean the same to the next person. Interpretation of the questions and answers may be misunderstood. Therefore, it will be necessary for the questions to be properly stated and once the information is collected, it will be necessary to validate the information from the participants.

People in each generation are not all the same. Grouping all individuals from one generation will not accurately represent the feelings or actions of everyone in that

generation. Answers and actions are not controlled by the researcher; therefore, the report will depend upon received information from the participants.

### Definition of Terms

The following were used within this study:

- ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Designed to prevent discrimination of individuals with disabilities.
- Acculturation – A process by which a simple society adopts a more complex societal structure (John & Roberts, 1998).
- Baby Boomers – Born approximately between 1946 and 1964, the Boomers are established in their careers and hold positions of power and authority. They try to have a high work ethic, relish long work weeks, and define themselves by their professional accomplishments. They tend to be independent and self-reliant and will challenge established practices. Boomers are also goal oriented; they welcome challenging projects and strive to make a difference. Boomers are also competitive in the workplace and work with the hierarchal structures. They feel that promotions and advancements should be earned by hard work (Kane, 2010).
- Culture – Collection of behaviors and beliefs that make a group of people unique and identifiable (John & Roberts, 1998).
- EEOC – Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. A federal agency that enforces laws against discrimination (Skrentny, 1996).
- Enculturation – The process by which new members of a society become part of the culture (John & Roberts, 1998).

- Generation X (Xers) – Born approximately between 1965 and 1980, they are generally from a two-income family and have experienced a time period of a rising divorce rate. They started the generation of” latch-key” children due to many women entering the workforce. They display a casual disdain for authority and structured work hours. Xers are familiar with technology in using computers, cell phones, and Blackberries. They are less committed to one employer and are willing to leave the job to get ahead. Members of Generation X work to live rather than live to work (Kane, 2010).
- Generation Y (Millennials) – Born approximately between 1980 and 2000, they are a generation that is plugged in 24 hours per day. They are comfortable with technology and would rather communicate with e-mail or text than talking face-to-face. They are willing to trade high pay for fewer billable hours, flexible schedules, and a better work and life balance. They are ambitious and expect much from their employers. They are not afraid to ask questions and to question authority. They want meaningful work and have a solid learning curve. They work well in teams and are part of the no-person-left behind generation. Generation Y is loyal, committed, and wants to be included and involved (Kane, 2010).
- Generation Z – Born approximately between 2000 and the present, they are not good listeners and lack interpersonal skills. They are comfortable with the Web and feel to be effective communicators, they need to communicate by the Web (Generation Z, 2005).
- Millennials – Generation Y.

- Traditionalists – Born approximately between 1922 and 1945, they are known as Veterans or the Silent Generation. They believe in conformity, authority, rules, logic, a sense of right and wrong, and loyalty. They are consistent, they seek out technological advancements, and they prefer a hierarchical organization (“*The Traditional Generation*”, n.d.).
- Xers- Members of Generation X

### Overview of the Study

This qualitative study is presented in five Chapters. Chapter 1 contains an introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations or limitations of the study, definition of the terms, and the overview of the literature. Chapter 2 contains the review of the literature that consists of a study four generations that work in American businesses and how their skills and abilities differ from each other. The study reviews what motivates the generations and what is considered important. Chapter 3 contains the methods and procedures used in the study. Chapter 4 includes the information that has been collected from sources on the study. This includes interviews, recorded materials, a collection of documents, and observations. Chapter 5 contains a summary about the subject then presents conclusions and recommendations about the topic (Roberts, 2004).

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Skills and Abilities that Employers are Seeking

Applicants generally wonder what skills and abilities are important to employers. Certain abilities set them apart and give them an “edge” over other applicants. It will be up to the applicants to determine what skill or ability will make them unique to a particular employer (Hansen & Hansen, n.d.).

Employers are searching for those particular skills and abilities that will add value to the organization. Many applicants possess many of these skills but may be unaware that they possess these skills. Opportunities may not have been present in order for an employee to develop or discover these skills. Once the opportunity presents itself, the skills can be developed through further education or on the job training, thus giving the applicants what they need to be able to add value to the organization’s bottom line (Hansen & Hansen, n.d.).

Skills that employers recognize are summarized below:

- Communication Skills – these skills involve listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Employees need to know how to communicate within the workplace and how to relay instructions to others;
- Analytical and Research Skills – these skills will allow a person to seek multiple perspectives, gather information, and identify key issues;
- Computer and Technical Literacy – these skills requires individuals to have knowledge of programs such as spreadsheets, word processing, and e-mail;

- Flexible Skills– skills to enable management of different projects at the same time and to be adjustable to change;
- Interpersonal Abilities – to be able to relate to the employee’s coworkers, to have the ability to motivate and resolve conflicts;
- Leadership and Management Skills – skills that involve the ability to manage, lead, and make decisions concerning the working environment;
- Multicultural Awareness – skills to be sensitive to other cultures;
- Planning and Organizing – to develop goals and achieve these goals. Possess the ability to design, plan, organize, and implement projects;
- Problem Solving – to review and design solution to problems;
- Teamwork – to work with others within the internal and the external environments;
- Honesty – having personal integrity is a high value;
- Work Ethic – be at work on time, know what to do to get the job done correctly, and be responsible for one’s own actions;
- Self-confident with the willingness to learn – be confident in your abilities and have the inner drive to learn for the future; (Hansen & Hansen, n.d.).

### Interviewing

Companies are interested in hiring the right people for the right jobs. If the wrong person is hired, the cost of replacing a professional or managerial employee is about a year’s salary and benefits. If the separation is contested, the cost can be staggering (Hocheil & Wilson, 2007).

The consequences of hiring the wrong employee can create the following problems:

- increasing the workload for other employees;
- frustration and resentment resulting in low morale;
- decline in unit effectiveness;
- damaging the unit's reputation;
- increasing the turnover rate of effective employees; and
- wasting resources within the organization;

Research has shown that within the hiring process structured interviews have a higher productive validity than unstructured interviews (Hochel & Wilson, 2007, p. 3).

What is a model interview? "It is an interview that defines a specific purpose – a specific set of data to be obtained – and then proceeds through conversation to fulfill the purpose" (Metzler, 1977, p. 9). The interview should be sensitive to the feeling of the applicant. As with the communication between the interviewer and the interviewee, communication is successful when one party convinces the other that what is said is true and when both parties feel "free" to express their real feelings regardless if the other agrees (Metzler, 1977).

Successful applicants need to differentiate themselves from other candidates. Applicants need to show what was done in previous jobs, such as the results of their actions, and how value was added to the company. Candidates need to stress that they can work with minimum supervision because of lack of supervision due to companies trimming the management team. Due to downsizing, more responsibility will be placed on the worker to operate with less supervision (Place, 2008). The only way to really determine, at the end of an interview, if a job candidate is a potential match, is to take the time up front to learn about an interviewee (Sirbasku, 2002).



As with a Chinese Proverb, “He who asks is a fool for five minutes. He who does not is a fool forever”. According to a quote from Voltaire, “Judge a man, not by his answers, but by his questions” (as cited in Metzler, 1977, p. 2).

Once the decision has been made to conduct the interview, the manager must know the laws relative to interviewing. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it illegal to discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. In order for this to be enforced, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was enacted. Along with this law, in 1990 the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Many times it was not intentional to discriminate against a protected class. A protected class is a group that has a need for special protection due to past economic discrimination (Valente & Valente, 2005).

In searching for information, the ADA restricts the scope and purpose of questioning. For example, a person cannot “fish” for information about a candidate’s physical or mental condition on an application form or from an actual interview. The interviewer may only inquire about the person’s ability to perform specific job-related functions (Allen, 1993).

These are examples of guidelines that should be followed:

- No one interviewer should be given too much discretion. The evaluation should be as structured as much as possible to prevent any one person from feeling that he or she is not being treated like another candidate. Keep written records of the candidate’s performance for future use if questions arise;

- Women and minority applicants should not be treated any differently than others during the interview process;
- Women and minority applicants should not be asked any questions that are not routinely asked of other job applicants;
- Nothing should be said or done indicating that certain jobs are traditionally filled by men, women, blacks, etc.; and
- The group of people responsible for interviewing should be balanced in terms of its racial, sexual, ethnic, and religious composition, (Parnes, 1984, p. 9).

### Questions

The legality or illegality of pre-employment inquiries has been determined by government enforcement of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the various state anti-bias laws. Title VII prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin (Hubbartt, 1998).

Unfortunately some applicants do not tell the truth on their application. The employer needs to conduct reference checks to verify this information. Falsifying experience, education information, dates of employment to show a more continuous job history, salary information, or a reason for separation to cover up a firing are considered examples of incorrectly reporting employment history (Hubbartt, 1998).

Interviewers are required by law to keep questions job-oriented. Charges of discrimination can result from improper questioning during the interview. The following outlines the types of legality of inquiries into certain subjects before an individual is actually hired:

- Disability – Can ask about their ability to perform specific job functions. Cannot ask about the existence, nature, or severity of a disability before an offer of employment has been made.
- Name – Can ask if the person has ever worked for the company under a different name. Cannot ask if the applicant’s name has been changed by a court or otherwise. This would also include if a person has worked under another name while employed.
- Citizenship – Can ask if the person is a citizen of the United States, intends to become a citizen of the United States, or has a legal right to remain permanently in the United States. Cannot ask for the location of the birthplace of the applicant, the applicant’s parents, spouse, or other close relatives. Asking about the date of the citizenship is also prohibited.
- Experience – Can ask about one’s work experience.
- Relatives – Can ask of the names of the applicant’s relatives other than spouse who may be already employed by a company. Cannot ask the names, addresses, ages, or other information concerning the applicant’s spouse, children, or other relatives who are not employed by a company.
- Notice in Case of Emergency – Can ask the names of persons to be notified. This information may be disclosed by the applicant or the applicant may not disclose a person’s name or address as a contact.
- Military – Can ask about experience in the United States Services or in a State Militia. Managers can ask about an applicant’s service in a branch of the U.S. service. Cannot ask about an applicant’s general military experience.

- Organization – Can ask about an applicant’s membership in an organization that applicants consider relevant to his or her ability to perform the job. Cannot ask to list all clubs, societies, and lodges to which they belong, (“*Unlawful Interview Questions*”, 2001).

Other questions that cannot be asked are:

- Have you ever been treated for the following listed conditions or diseases?
- Has anyone in your family ever had any of the following listed illnesses?
- Have you ever been hospitalized? For what?
- Are you taking medications?
- Have you ever been treated for a mental disorder?
- Have you ever been treated for drug addiction or alcoholism?
- Have you ever filed for worker’s compensation benefits?

Questions that can be asked are:

- Can you lift a 50-pound box?
- Can you stand or sit for an extended period of time?
- Can you work five days a week?
- Do you have a driver’s license?
- Can you perform the job for which you are applying either with or without accommodations?
- What were your duties on your previous job and what accommodations were made to facilitate your work?

These are examples of questions that can be and cannot be asked to an applicant. Questions need to be job related and need not pry into the applicant's life style (Allen, 1993).

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) also allows the following actions:

- Employers can require post-offer medical examinations before an employee starts working and can condition the offer on the results, provided that all entering employees in the same category are subjected to the same examination.
- Employers may require a preemployment drug test.
- Employers may refuse to hire an applicant with a disability if the individual poses a direct threat to the applicant or others.

The ADA's confidentiality requirements concerning an individual's medical condition allows only three exceptions under which others may be told of a disability:

- Supervisors and managers who need to know in order to make accommodations.
- First aid and safety personnel.
- Government officials investigating compliance with the ADA.

If several people in your organization participate in the hiring process, everyone must follow the same hiring practices (Allen, 1993, p. 35).

Swan points out ways that information can be found that is both legal and sensitive. "The formula is simple, state the job requirements as early as you can and then ask the candidate a closed-ended question" (Allen, 1993, p. 32). This process will place the applicant in a position to relay information concerning the duties of the position (Allen, 1993).

If a person has a disability, the organization is obligated to provide a reasonable accommodation for that person to perform the essential functions of the job if the person is otherwise qualified. The interviewer can be aware of a disability if the person relays the information to the interviewer, the disability is apparent, or if you ask a question about the person's ability to perform a function of the job and that raises a question of providing accommodations (Allen, 1993).

“Affirmative action involves taking specific steps in hiring and promoting to eliminate the current effects of past discrimination and prevent future discrimination” (Hochel & Wilson, 2007, p. 17). In order for a company to correspond with affirmative action, the company will need to aggressively recruit applicants with various backgrounds and perspectives (Hochel & Wilson, 2007).

Strategies that can be used to develop a strong candidate pool are as follows:

- advertise as early as possible;
- make the application process as user-friendly as feasible;
- move the search along quickly;
- cast as wide a net as possible;
- personally recruit top applicants; and
- view communication with applicants as a recruiting tool (Hochel & Wilson, 2007, p.33).

Interviewing can be considered an art. Both the interviewer and the applicant can be nervous, and it's understandable that the applicant is trying to make a good impression (Allen, 1993). There are three ways that the interviewer can avoid perceptual errors.

“First, be aware of cultural differences in persuasive styles; second, avoid the tendency

to overemphasize the negative; and third, be cautious of selecting applicants in your own image” (Hochel & Wilson, 2007, p. 54).

A few guidelines that should be followed to minimize the danger of biased treatment are:

1. No one interviewer should be given too much discretion. The evaluation should be structured to information that was received during the interview. The received information should pertain to the position, not the interviewer’s perception.
2. Women and minority candidates should not be asked any questions that are not routinely asked of other job applicants.
3. Women and minority candidates should not be treated any differently than others during the interview process.
4. Nothing should be said or done indicating that certain jobs are traditionally filled by men, women, or other groups.
5. The group of people responsible for interviewing should be balanced in terms of its racial, sexual, ethnic, and religious composition, (Parnes, 1984).

### Generation Profiles

#### *Traditionalists*

The Traditional Generation, also known as the Silent Generation or the Veterans, comprises employees and retirees who were born between the years of 1922 and 1945. Some of the Traditionalists are continuing to lead and contribute to organizations and are re-entering the workforce. These Americans hold three quarters of the nation’s wealth and are the executive leaders of most established companies (“*The Traditional Generation*”, n.d.).

Traditionalists survived the Great Depression and helped to shape the United States as an economic and military power. They are famous for patriotism, team work, “doing more with less”, and being task oriented. Important values for this generation include rules of conduct, respect for authority, and following directions. They helped to develop the space program, create vaccines for many diseases including polio, tuberculosis, tetanus, and whooping cough, and helped to create an environment for today’s technological society. This generation was the first to pursue equality through the Civil Rights Movement (*“The Traditional Generation”*, n.d.).

Traditionalist values include a belief in conformity, authority, and rules, belief in logic, a defined sense of right and wrong, and loyalty. Attributes of this generation include discipline, viewing history as a way to plan for the future, a dislike for conflict, and attention to detail. Work styles include consistency and uniformity, the ability to seek out technological advancements, and operating within a hierarchical organization (*“The Traditional Generation”*, n.d.).

### *Baby Boomers*

Baby Boomers were born within the years of 1946 and 1964 with many holding positions such as firm leaders, corporate executives, senior paralegals, and legal managers. It is estimated that approximately 80 million Boomers will exit the workplace within the next decade. Loss of this skilled labor will dramatically impact the workforce (Kane, 2010).

Boomers have characteristics that are different when compared to other generations. They were brought up in an American military world and were raised by stay-at-home mothers. Many of these mothers listened to influential pediatricians such as Dr. Spock



about the way that parents should raise their children (Mitchell, 1998). The world consisted of wonders such as awesome gadgets and household appliances. During this time, few families had the burden of a parent who was unemployed (Agarwal, 2010).

Because of some of the Boomers' birth dates, many did not experience the military draft. The late Boomers were known as the X's of the early generation and are possibly in a position to help make a historical mark by being involved with political and cultural matters, belonging to positions of power, and being able to withstand the worst of situations (Agarwal, 2010).

Baby Boomers are considered extremely hardworking and motivated by position, perks, and prestige. Boomers relish long work weeks and define themselves by professional accomplishments, and many feel that by their sacrifices members of Generations X and Y should pay their dues in order to excel up the corporate ladder. Many of the working Boomers seem to have a strong work ethic and feel that others should have this ethic as well. Often this Generation may feel that when considering the work habits of members of Generations X and Y that their work ethic is not as intensive (Kane, 2010).

Boomers are confident, independent, and self-reliant and feel that they can change the world. They are not afraid to question authority or to challenge the status quo and not afraid of confrontation and will not hesitate to challenge established practices. The Boomers are achievement-oriented, dedicated, career focused, and enjoy exciting projects to make differences. Being competitive within the workplace helps them to improve their personal skills. Most Boomers are clever and resourceful and have the

desire to win. They feel that a hierarchal structure should be followed thus causing a problem in adjusting to a flexible work environment (Kane, 2010).

Many Boomers will be retiring in the near future causing a worker shortage that is expected to continue for some time. Companies need to prepare for a mass exodus of experience that they're going to have to replace from a much smaller pool of talent. The shortage will come with a very different set of values and expectations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Economist Lawrence Kotlikoff and journalist Scott Burns predicted that by 2030 when 77 million Boomers hobble into old age walkers will outnumber strollers. The event will be leading to what the authors described as "fiscal child abuse" (Freedman, 2007).

#### *Generation X (Xers)*

Members of Generation X were born within the years of 1965 to 1980 and are considered smaller in number than the Boomers. Xers were exposed and had the opportunity to interact with other cultures which gave them the chance to see individuals in a way that Boomers missed. Along with being included in a diverse atmosphere, Xers were considered better educated than the Boomers in that 60% of Xers attended college (Kane, 2010).

According to Raines, "They have different definitions for leadership and loyalty and incentive rewards. Work isn't the number one most important thing in their lives".

"Anything that makes work less corporate, resonates well with a generation that feels betrayed by corporate interest" (as cited in Hays, 1999, p. 1). Xers are typically self-reliant and entrepreneurial in spirit, which would give a HR professional a problem in

that members of this generation would rather work for themselves than for someone else (Hays, 1999).

Andrea Healey of the American Compensation Association (ACA) defines the characteristics of Generation X as:

- **Diverse:** Xers have the expectations of diverse ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic status among co-workers;
- **Success:** Xers knew that downsizing occurred within their parents' workplace. With this in mind, Xers hopes to be more successful than their parents by not experiencing downsizing;
- **Pragmatism:** Xers feels that they are part of a generation of entrepreneurs who will be successful because they have earned it; and
- **Attitudes and values:** Self-reliance is a part of Xer's attitude which gives the feeling that they work for themselves and not the company (as cited in Elbo, 1998, pp. 1-2).

Members of Generation X were involved with two income families and rising divorce rates. Within this generation, women were joining the workforce in greater numbers. Because of the working mother not being home with the child when the child returned from school, the nickname latch-key children was born (Kane, 2010).

Generation X members are considered resourceful, self-sufficient, and independent. They work hard within a structured workday and many dislike being micro-managed while completing a task. They prefer managers to keep their distance and let them complete the project. Give instructions for the project and let the employee complete the task (Kane, 2010). "The workplace is accelerating. People are living turbo-charge

lives which makes it crucial for employers to know what drives employees to stay or leave” states Ann Piacentini, director of market research at Scudder Kemper Investments (as cited in Hays, 1999, p. 2).

Xers grew up with the interaction of technology and within an economy that changed from manufacturing to a service industry. Changes occurred within the corporate world due to the use of computers, PDAs, cell phones, Internet, e-mail, laptops, Blackberries, and other technological devices (Kane, 2010).

Xers grew up with parents who spent many hours within the working environment. Seeing their parents dedicate their lives to one employer, caused Xers to be less committed to one employer and caused them to be willing to change jobs in order to get ahead. The change includes being tolerant of alternative lifestyles and being willing to learn and accomplish tasks on their own merits (Kane, 2010).

Children of the Boomers were used to having a lot of possessions and are not keen on going without “stuff” that they really want. Generally Xers are not demanding that they have everything or even though they like a lot of “stuff”, but they are very selective about material possessions. If it does not have a meaning, the possession is not valued (O’Malley, 2010).

Generation X members are less likely to be emotionally attached to their material possessions. A reason for this may be that their era of technology made them more adaptable than the previous generations. They may even view their parents or grandparents materials as “junk” while viewing their own possessions as necessary for their own comforts (O’Malley, 2010). Due to the feelings against personal possessions,

this generation needs to be recruited, rewarded, and managed differently from earlier generations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Xers will want to help the environment and to encourage others to reuse or to recycle. This philosophy is different than from the previous generations. If material possessions will not add value to their lives, the materials are removed (O'Malley, 2010).

### *Generation Y (Millennials)*

Millennials, or generation Y, was born within the years of 1980 to 2000. They, like the Xers, grew up with technology by using cell phones, laptops, Blackberry's, and other technologies. Millennials are plugged in 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Using this technology creates a feeling that the Millennials would rather communicate by use of e-mail or texting to face-to-face meetings. Millennials also prefer to use webinars and online technology over traditional lecture presentations (Kane, 2010).

Millennials do not have the desire for the fast track within the corporate world. They would rather trade high pay for fewer hours at the office. The fewer hours can be considered as flexible hours that would create a better work or life balance. Past generations were different from the Millennials because they valued time at the office and felt that time was needed to complete jobs to support the operations of the company. Millennials value family life and will sacrifice monetary values for this interconnection with the family. By the values taught to them from their families, they are ambitious and achievement-oriented. Millennials have high expectations of employers; they enjoy challenges and are not afraid to question authority (Kane, 2010). Even though they question what seems out of place, Millennials are considered a

caring generation by placing the greater good ahead of individual rewards (Greenberg & Weber, 2008).

Within Generation Y's time period, women were moving into areas such as sports that were once dominated by males. Young women also outnumber younger men in the nation's colleges and are included within the first high-tech graduates. This acceleration was enhanced by their surroundings of computers, the Internet, cell phones, ATMs, and advancements such as laser surgery (Mitchell, 1998).

The Millennials are unlike any other youth generation in living memory by being more numerous, more affluent, more educated, and more ethnically diverse. Millennials are beginning to manifest a wide array of social habits that includes teamwork, achievement, modesty, and good social conduct (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Americans have been wishing for a youth generation that would quit talking and start doing. Boomers and Xers, now that the Millennials are here, can your generations handle them? Once this generation begins to move, America will be on the brink of becoming someplace very fast, very new, very "millennial". Current history may stop at this point and the beginning of a new history will begin, the "Millennial" (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

Millennials like to participate in team sports, play groups, and other group activities. They value team activities and promote the value of participation from others. Millennials want to be included in group activities that will involve them in projects and one-on-one interaction with other team members. Millennials generally crave attention, value feedback, value praise, and accept guidance from an experienced mentor (Kane, 2010).

Seven traits associated with Millennials are:

- Special – Vital to the nation and to the parents’ sense of purpose;
- Sheltered – The focus of the most sweeping youth safety movement in American history;
- Confident – High levels of trust and optimism;
- Team – Strong team instincts and high peer bonds;
- Achieving – Track to be the best educated and best behaved;
- Pressured – Pressure to excel; and
- Conventional – Support convention, the idea that social rules help

Millennials are supportive of parental supervision and believe that lack of discipline is a major contributor to social problems within this country. Many teenagers feel that it is “cool to be smart” and in order to prepare for the future, they look forward in attending school (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

### *Generation Z (Silent)*

Members of Generation Z came after Generation Y. Due to the short time span of this generation, they have not lived through enough trials to be able to place a value on their name (“*Generation Z*”, 2005).

Members of Generation Z were born approximately between the years of 2000 to the present. According to the book, *Generations, by* Strauss and Howe, the dates of the generation will range from “2004 to 2025”, and they refer to this generation as the “New Silent” generation (as cited in *Generation Z*, 2005, para. 2). Their great grandparents primarily belong to the generations noted as the Silent Generation and the Baby

Boomers. Generation Zs member's parents seem to be divided between Generation X and Generation Y (*Generation Z*, 2005).

Unlike the other generations, members of Generation Z are not good listeners and lack interpersonal skills. Communication with others generally consists of use of the World Wide Web. Due to the interest of the new technology, members of Generation Z can generally be found at locations that offer the advantage of being hooked up to the Web (*Generation Z Behaviour Change*, 2007).

Generation Z member's interpersonal skills are different from the other generations as they are set apart and are the newest generation. Interpersonal skills are awkward for this generation. They lack the interpersonal skills that are needed to communicate and relate to individuals (*Generation Z Characteristics*, 2007).

Generation Z is also known as the "silent" generation due to technology ruling the world thus giving them the name of the "silent, the iGeneration, generation quiet, and the next generation" (*Generation Z Characteristics*, 2007, para. 1). They take the Internet for granted and consider web sites such as Orkut, Google, and Face Book as their community. Within this community of cyber space, a person can have many acquaintances without personally meeting anyone. By being considered the quiet generation, members of this generation do not have personal meetings with their friends that may lead to relationships. They consider living around others as an invasion of their space (*Generation Z Characteristics*, 2007). Refer to Table 1 for comparisons.

#### Cultural Changes

"Culture, is the collection of behaviors and beliefs that can make a group of people unique and identifiable" (John & Roberts, 1996, p.19). Culture diversity is a fact of life in



the corporate world. When different cultures combine, ground rules and goals need to be established in order for the organization to go the same direction and to give all employees the ability to know what the future holds (John & Robert, 1996).

Table 1

*Personal and Lifestyle Characteristics of the Four Generations*

PERSONAL AND LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS BY GENERATION				
	Veterans (1922-1945)	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Generation Y (1981-2000)
Core Values	Respect for authority Conformers Discipline	Optimism Involvement	Skepticism Fun Informality	Realism Confidence Extreme fun Social
Family Education	Traditional Nuclear	Disintegrating	Latch-key kids	Merged families
Communication	A dream	A birthright	A way to get there	An incredible expense
Media	Rotary phones One-on-one Write a memo	Touch-tone phones Call me anytime	Cell phones Call me only at work	Internet Picture phones E-mail
Dealing with Money	Put it away Pay cash	Buy now, pay later	Cautious Conservative Save, save, save	Earn to spend

(*FDU Magazine*, p. 4).

American businesses are constantly changing due to plant closings and relocation of workers. Change causes the workers to look for employment in order for them to establish a permanent location for themselves and their families. Workers need to develop newer skills in order to be considered an asset to the changing organization and to compete for positions against other applicants (John & Roberts, 1996).

*Changes*

“The Technological Revolution has exacerbated the situation” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 8). The advent of the Internet, supercomputers, and high-speed connections are driving massive changes in the ways companies do business. This

increase in technology has placed a greater divide between the generations who grew up with technology and the ones who are playing catch-up (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Economists rightly say that the rising wave of trade-driven service globalization will benefit Americans and foreigners alike. There are fears that expanding trade will destroy jobs and disrupt the economy (Cohen & DeLong, 2005).

“Four basic changes for the population are as follows:

- population increase and mobility;
- the influx of foreign born workers;
- the shrinking pool of talent from working young people; and
- changes in the employment of women”, (John & Roberts, 1996, p. 2).

Changes are usually initiated gradually and are partially because people become aware of doing tasks one way and do not always understand that changes can make the work life easier. An example of resisting change would be the views that the older generations have toward the younger generations. Traditionalists and Boomers are accustomed in doing tasks certain ways. Making changes in these daily routines promotes a feeling of insecurity or uncertainty for members of an older generation (John & Roberts, 1996).

“Acculturation” is the process by which a simple society adopts a more complex societal structure. Any culture will change and will adopt a more complex way of dealing with the growing demands of population and production (John & Roberts, 1996).

There are basically two ways in which a culture can grow and change. “People can borrow from other cultures, or individuals can invent within the culture to create new growth and change” (John & Roberts, 1996, p. 24). Either way the affected persons must be willing to accept the changes and work to make the changes a success (John & Robert, 1996).

“Enculturation” is the process by which new members of a society becomes part of the culture. When members are not present through procreation, the culture will either die out or it will be continued through the importation of new members (John & Roberts, 1996).

Ryder, stated, “Education is the civil rights movement of the twenty-first century”. “We cannot afford as a democracy to leave as many kids behind and unprepared as we have” (as cited in Freedman, 2007, p. 17).

### Turnover

Turnover rates of personnel are higher than in the past. Every industry experiences turnover of personnel causing a higher cost for the company relating to tangible expenses like recruiting, hiring, and training new workers. Morale and efficiency are affected. Generation gaps can cause employees to feel that they do not “fit” in causing them to decide whether or not if they want to stay with that employer (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Generations of employees will not become more alike with age. The different generations carry their “generation personalities” with them. If hard times hits, the generations are likely to entrench themselves deeply into the attitudes and behaviors that have been ingrained in them. Companies need to find ways to adjust the ways that

they recruit, retrain, and manage personnel in order to have a workforce that enables them to compete in a global market (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

### *Ageless Thinking*

For the first time in history we have four separate generations working shoulder-to-shoulder and face-to-face in a stressful, competitive workplace. The Traditionalists are in positions of leadership and some are re-entering the workforce after a first retirement. Boomers are considered the largest generation numbering approximately 80 million with Xers at approximately 46 million, and Millennials with approximately 76 million (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Boomers were labeled as the “me generation” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They were privileged to be able to focus on themselves and they knew where they were going. Boomers identify themselves with accomplishments and with achievements that were obtained at work (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Some of the members of Generation X in the past years were able to say, “show me the money” and mean it while in the business world, producing remarkable accomplishments as managers, inventors, and entrepreneurs (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). They saw almost every role model of their time indicted or exposed as someone far too human to be a hero. Xers were marked as skeptical as a result of seeing every major American institution called into question. Members of this generation are considered very resourceful and dependent who count on peers and members of the generation to get things done (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Xers seems particularly solid with their work ethics. “The Roper Center finds that 87% of Xers have a ‘strong sense’ of company loyalty, that 87% are satisfied with the

demands of their current jobs, and that 69% accept that “people get ahead by their own hard work” (Zinsmeister, 2002, p. 4).

Millennials have used technology such as cell phones, personal pagers, and computers since diapers. They are realistic about the challenge of modern life for a modern kid. During their generation, Millennials have experienced violent acts such as Columbine, available drugs (illegal), and the proliferation of gangs. Their number one issue in the workplace is “personal safety”. Millennials expect the workplace to resemble the diverse world that they are growing up in. (Greenberg & Weber, 2008).

### Recruiting

Organizations must be able to respond to changes and pressures from community and regional events. Employees are becoming more agile at landing on their feet when employment scenarios change. Employers are learning to expand and contract the labor force as the economy and business strategies dictate. Due to these changes, it is important for the organization to understand generational differences (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

If companies cannot offer the prospective employees the type of employment they are searching for, then the company will need to re-evaluate the process of obtaining employees. Strategies need to be changed, locations for employees needs to be evaluated, and requirements for the positions need to change. What appeals to one candidate may not appeal to another. A company cannot assume that “one size fits all” approach in order to reach all generations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Leadership skills need to change and it is up to management to determine which style will be appropriate for each individual. “Hersey and Blanchard developed a

leadership model that focuses a great deal of attention on the characteristics of employees in determining appropriate leadership behavior” (as cited in Daft, 2000, p. 515). “Employees vary in readiness level. Employees can be limited by inability, lack of training, or insecurity. Other employees can be considered high in readiness due to abilities, skills, confidence, or a willingness to work. The contingency approach links the leader’s behavioral style with the task readiness of subordinates” (Daft, 2000, p. 515).

According to Henry, “The war for talent is not just for graduates and younger generations but for all people able to work. The question on the lips of every CEO is ‘how are we going to get enough people to do the work?’” (as cited in *Talking ‘bout your generation*, 2005, p. 1). Organizations need to align management, Human Resources, strategies, and policies to suit the values and views of each generation and to have managers trained to lead collaboratively rather than hierarchically (*Talking ‘bout your generation*, 2005).

Companies enlist services from recruiters who are able to establish rapport with the candidates. The organization needs a recruiter who has the ability to establish conversation with whomever they are trying to recruit. Interpersonal skills are obtained from knowing the generations and understanding what values are likely to attract attention. A good motto would be, “not the most words, just the right words” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 187).

### *Diversity*

Talent development, or identifying and serving a broad range of students with the potential for greatness across a diversity of fields, must again become a primary

ingredient of American education. However, talent development must be inclusive of all manner of human abilities and all manner of people and not simply gauged around those fields and people most likely to entertain society (Olenchak, 2005).

During the Traditionalist period, the workplace was mainly made up of white males. Women made up a large number within the total population, but men are the ones who were mainly employed within the corporation. Generally, women remained home to take care of the family, but in times of crisis they entered the workforce to support the nation such as the time period of World War II. Due to this change within the workplace, the generation saw women enter the workforce and noticed that the industry was confronted with issues of racial and sexual equality (*The Traditional Generation*, n.d.).

As a result of the women's and civil rights' movements, when the Boomers entered the workforce, the definition of diversity was beginning to include equality for women and people of color. As a result, during the formative years, the line between the genders became gray and ethnically fit into four distinct categories white, black, Asian, or Hispanic (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

The Millennials, along with Xers, have been exposed to a more diverse world than the previous generations due to their interactions in day care, in classrooms, in after school programs, and in enrichment sessions. Boomers and Millennials have learned to accept diversity as a natural way of doing business. A problem is that the Millennials are way beyond the Boomers and Xers in accepting diversity and according to their beliefs, they will expect it (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

One out of three workers is of a minority race, and one of four workers was reared by a single parent. The Millennials are the most diverse generation in American history, more so than even the “melting pot” time of European immigration to America (Slahor, 2007).

Workers from all generations should sit down and talk with each other. Management guru, Tom Peters, was quoted in *USA Today* as saying, “if your top management isn’t spending at least a half day a month sitting down with someone twenty-five years old or younger, then they are blowing it” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 334).

### Career Goals

Career goals of the different generation are as follows:

- Traditionalists – “Build a Legacy”
- Boomers – “Build a stellar career”
- Xers – “Build a portable career”
- Millennials – “Build parallel careers” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010, p. 1).

The Traditionalists are loyal to a fault, but they expect to build a lifetime career with one employer in order to make a lasting contribution. The Boomers are less likely to job hop and will have the loyalty that organizations are looking for because Boomers love to be challenged and they like having meaning within their careers. Xers likes to build a repertoire of job skills and experiences for their resume and do not like to reach dead ends, as this might give a feeling of becoming stagnant. A challenge to these generations is to accept that they are looking at the world of work



through skeptical lenses and that their skills will help with the next job (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

The Millennials are interested in the wealth that they can accumulate. By a poll that was taken by the "Pew Research Center of young people ages 18 to 25, 81% of the Millennials have a goal in becoming rich and 51% said the same thing about being famous. The Millennials are accustomed in being noticed, and having been showered with awards" (as cited in Jayson, 2007, para 2).

### *Paths*

The older generations are interested in knowing about the steps for their careers and they have the patience to not rush into new adventures. Boomers, for example, feel that to be promoted workers need to pay their dues in the working world. The usual time for promotion can be from 1 to 5 years (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Xers are looking to see that they are headed in the correct direction. If not, they are willing to change routes and take another course. Specific information is needed in order to make decisions and assist the generation to talk about what it will take to get ahead with the company. Xers do not have the patience that the Boomers have as they want to speed up their careers and possibly be promoted next month (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Millennials need specifics and extensive portfolios. Millennials are able to balance hobbies, sports, and volunteer activities with their work life experiences. In order to enhance an employee's skills, multitasking or cross training was needed. An estimation was made to determine that as many as 10 career changes, not job changes, will occur in the Millennials' working life (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Employee discipline problems and stalled promotions among Millennials may have resulted from deficiencies in soft skills. Darrell Luzzo, Chairman of the National Work Readiness Council (NWRG), describes millennials' collective attitude as "me expectations that negatively affects their workplace success"(as cited in McNamara, 2009, para. 8). Training must be deployed electronically in order to engage and maintain Millennials' interest and satisfy their on-demand, on line, and interactive learning preference (McNamara, 2009).

Millennials like rewards that are tangible and intangible such as gift certificates, discounts at retail stores, free meals, and possibly tickets as rewards. They like a fun environment and the ability to work in a team setting with peers and bosses. Millennials like to feel that they have meaning in their working life. The ability to serve the client is important, but it is important for employees to know how their services assisted the customer's needs. Work life is important as having time with their families, but at the end of the day, it is time to leave and go home (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

#### Employers Evaluation of the Generations

Today's workforce has a new set of social values. Values do change. Managers who would have gone for a promotion 5 to 10 years ago would now just as likely put family happiness and stability ahead of career advancement. Employees need to have clear values in order for them to set goals and have the desire to accept new challenges. When people understand their own priorities, they become more decisive, confident, and responsible. Employees need to understand what is important and understand how their goals correspond to the goals of the organization (Emde, 1998).

Employers have noticed differences in work ethic and in the relationship between the different generations. “Character without knowledge is weak and feeble, but knowledge without character is dangerous and a potential menace to society” (McDonnell, 2002, para. 21).

The Traditionalists reached a point of financial and career stability where balance is required. Traditionalists placed their work life ahead of the family life and when retirement approached, support was needed to help them make the transition from work life to family life. Managers in this period were not long on words, but when instructions were given, results were expected. (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010).

Boomers like to distinguish themselves from the other generations and enjoy the rewards of a company car, travel, expense accounts, and promotions that relate to work and dedication. Boomers generally take great pride in accomplishments and that their projects made a difference within the organization. Boomers feel that they are changing from values to the value of time and want to stay at their location just for the fact of “making a difference” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 245). Making a difference is equated to an idea and a strong desire to put a mark on things. Boomers are loyal and feel that Xers are not loyal to the company and do not have strong work ethics (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Boomers sometimes feel a “sandwich effect” in that pressure builds by being placed with aging parents and growing children. The effect may come at the very time when the Boomers may be reaching the apex of their career achievements and earning power (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Boomers work in touch with feelings and with the love with communication and adopted the once-a-year performance appraisal with lots of

documentation in the file. It is best to know the rules and play by them (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Today's Boomers do not want to be seen as old or obsolete. Sometimes the younger generation views them as being outmoded or lagging behind. While generational differences do exist, conflicts do not need to exist between the age groups. The untapped potential exists for different generations to appreciate one another's strengths, communicate effectively, and work together collegially (Lewis & Walker, 2010).

A trend is heading toward more adult education. One reason is the need to train for a new career as an old career may be displaced or if boomers grow bored with it. Another reason for additional education is to promote the need of healthy, energetic people to keep active during retirement (Cetron & Daview, 2005).

Xers were the first to forgo the fancy titles or having the corner office. Freedom is the ultimate reward. The world is uncertain and working toward solutions will create a feeling of safety for everyone. Xers are not comfortable in participating with retirement programs that may not be used for 45 years because this program may not be used due to changing jobs or the participants may not live long enough to use the benefits. Use the money and benefits now. Plans are best that are transferable and not tied up to only one option. Portable savings, investments, training, flexible leave policies, paid time off, accelerated career paths, dress codes, and an open corporate environment are important to this generation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Xers want instant and immediate feedback where 90% want feedback within a few days. Along with feedback, reinforcement such as constructive criticism or additional

training will be important to correct any problems that may occur in any career path and eliminate some of the guesswork struggling to fit in. When praise is used, it should carry meaning (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Xers were born in an age of instant; instant meals, instant cash from an ATM, instant news from CNN or from the Web. Changing jobs may be necessary in order to stay competitive and to help build their skills and abilities (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

To the Millennials, job changing is part of my daily routine. Feedback is desired even quicker than with the Xers. The feedback should be up-to-date and up to the minute. Millennials expect lots of praise and feel that silence may give a feeling that something is wrong or there is disapproval of performances (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

### Working Together

In Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs, safety, security, employment, and resources are baseline requirements that all people seek. Higher order needs such as friendship, respect, trust, recognition, and opportunities to learn and grow are examples of psychological and growth needs that people value regardless of their generation. What may seem rebellious in one generation, may not be the same in another. *New York Times* writer Virginia Heffernan suggested that "each generation has the tendency to accentuate its own distinctive experiences, not thinking that others before or others who follow may have similar experiences, but in different social contexts" (Lewis & Walker, 2010, pp. 2-3).

Employers are seeking ways to motivate multiple generations at work and implement effective cross-generation innovative management approaches to retain and engage

professionals with their careers. With workers leaving the workforce, for every one inexperienced worker entering, boomers are a valuable resource for developing newer generation talent (Lewis & Walker, 2010). According to Marston, “The four generations all have different work ethics and value systems. That doesn’t mean the younger generations don’t work hard. They just work in different ways” (as cited in Nayyar, 2007, para. 6).

Workers are finding that their styles are causing conflicts when it comes to communicating and completing tasks. Managers who are able to accommodate, rather than overlook the different styles, will find the different generations working side-by-side (Wagner, 2007).

Martie Kemodle, a partner with LeaderFuelNow, stated, “Everyone brings something really important to the work place” (as cited in Wagner, 2007, p. 29). It takes a team. Managers should not separate the generations at the workplace. A multigenerational office can provide a host of opportunities if the strengths of each generation are allowed to flourish (Wagner, 2007).

### *Qualities*

A 7-year study by the Center for Creative Leadership for individuals born between the years of 1926 and 1986, a book written by Jennifer J. Deal suggests that “boomers have fundamental qualities in common with younger generations. The study finds that:

- Basic values are shared in common among the boomer and newer generations. Conflicts can occur but are due largely to differences in behavior.
- Individuals in all generation want respect.

- All generation feel that trust is important and that it must be earned. People need to show that they know what they are talking about (credibility), do what they say they will do (reliability), and keep the other person's interests at heart (sincerity).
- Loyalty to an individual or an organization is important but depends on the context", (as cited in Lewis & Walker, 2010, p. 6).

Boomers want to maintain their clout, while younger individuals want to increase theirs. Older persons in authority tend to make decisions and expect younger individuals to follow them. According to a Talent2, a recruitment firm in Australia, a "survey shows that 35 % believe that the Boomers have the strongest work ethic, which is followed by Xers at 16 %. Talent2's Danielle de Guara says that members of Generations X and Y are perceived as being lazy and spoiled but in reality it is simply that they have a different set of priorities to Baby Boomers. Whereas a Boomer would put up with a terrible boss, Millennials would leave the position for a job that is perfect for them" ("*Bosses say Gen-Y has worst work ethic*", 2006, para. 2, 3, 4, 6). The newer generations are more likely to ask questions and expect to know the reasoning for doing a job (Lewis & Walker, 2010). Refer to Table 2 for a comparison of the 4 generations.

Table 2

*Workplace Characteristics of the Four Generations*

WORKPLACE CHARACTERISTICS				
	Veterans (1922-1945)	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Generation Y (1981-2000)
Work Ethic and Values	Hard work Respect authority Sacrifice Duty before fun Adhere to rules	Workaholics Work efficiently Crusading causes Personal fulfillment Desire quality Question authority	Eliminate the task Self-reliance Want structure and direction Skeptical	What's next Multitasking Tenacity Entrepreneurial Tolerant Goal oriented
Work Is...	An obligation	An exciting adventure	A difficult challenge A contract	A means to an end Fulfillment
Leadership Style	Direct Command-and-control	Consensual Collegial	Everyone is the same Challenge others Ask why	*TBD
Interactive Style	Individual	Team player Loves to have meetings	Entrepreneur	Participative
Communications	Formal	In person	Direct Immediate	E-mail Voice mail
Feedback and Rewards	No news is good news Satisfaction in a job well done	Don't appreciate it Money Title recognition	Sorry to interrupt, but how am I doing? Freedom is the best reward	Whenever I want it, at the push of a button Meaningful work
Messages That Motivate	Your experience is respected	You are valued You are needed	Do it your way Forget the rules	You will work with other bright, creative people
Work and Family Life	Ne'er the twain shall	No balance Work to live	Balance	Balance

\*As this group has not spent much time in the workforce, this characteristic has yet to be determined.

(*FDU Magazine*, p. 5).



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### Introduction

The qualitative method was used for this study to examine 4 generations of workers, their managers, and the views and expectations of the managers and employees within the business setting. Each generation has specific qualities and work habits that may or may not relate to other generations. The information for the study was reviewed through the descriptive method. This method allowed the researcher to compare the different qualities of each generation and how they interact with each other. The qualitative data consisted of “direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge” obtained through interviews; “detailed descriptions of people’s activities, behaviors, actions” recorded in observations; and “excerpts, quotations, or entire passages” extracted from various types of documents (Merriam, 1998, p. 69). The descriptive method aided into providing assessments for the acquired information for review.

#### Research Design

A descriptive research method is one that has a thick, rich description of the phenomena that can also emerge from case studies, comparative studies, and surveys. Narrative descriptions of small numbers of cases are involved; the research uses description as a tool to organize data into patterns that emerge during analysis. The researcher must insure that the collected data is reliable, valid, and free from any error or bias (Galfo, 2003).

Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizing, tabulating, and describing the data collections. Some of the common data collection methods applied to the questions within the realm of descriptive research includes surveys, interviews, and observations. Description emerges following creative exploration and serves to organize the findings in order to fit them with explanations, and then test or validate those explanations. “The purpose is to find out ‘what is’, so observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data. This method might describe the current state of multimedia usage in schools or patterns of activity resulting from group work” (“*What is Descriptive Research*”, 2001, para. 4, 5).

“A single descriptive research design is used when data are collected to describe persons, organizations, settings, or phenomena. Comparative descriptive is when the researcher describes two or more groups on the phenomena being studied” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 22). The researcher chose different organizations because of their corporate size and that they have been in business long enough to incorporate the different generations in their work force.

This descriptive method helped to evaluate the differences or similarities among the different generations and how they relate to the work place. Generations have their own views of work ethic and how interaction occurs with other members of other generations. The study compared and contrasted the four generations.

### Research Questions

Questions were sent to the participants for their review then sent back to Survey Monkey for review. The following are examples of the questions that were asked:

1. What are perceptual differences among the following generations:  
Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Xers, and Millennials in the corporate environment relating from the management and worker points of view
  - Work skill levels as defined by: Ability to communicate with coworkers, upper management, and customers and their ability to perform basic functions within their job description.
  - Loyalty to the organization: Protecting the image of the company with other employees and with customers, and in having pride within their positions.
  - Work ethics as defined by: Protecting the assets of the company, and being fair in dealing with all customers.

#### Population

The population consisted of seven organizations. Each organization has a similar size employee base and is involved in retail and customer service businesses. The company's names will be kept confidential with a code that will correspond to each business. Each business has a human resource office that is involved with the interviewing, hiring, and monitoring of the new employees. Each business has been established for over 27 years, which has enabled them to have people from different generations within their work force.

#### Researcher's Role

Descriptive research should be designed to be able to include all factors that may have important bearings on the materials of the investigation. Methods involved in the study range from the survey, which describes the status quo that investigates the

relationship between variables, to developmental studies that determine changes over time (Galfo, 2003).

The researcher reviews the qualities of each generation and how they operate within the work place. The four generations have their own styles and feelings on how the work will be completed and how the work day is viewed. Traditionalists and Boomers are interested in being at the office, while members of Generations X and Y are interested in their family time.

Information will be collected through interviews, surveys, or observations in order to collect data to determine the connections between the different generations. The human resource departments were contacted and asked to participate with predetermined questions. The surveys were administered through Survey Monkey, a source on the Internet that is able to offer participants the ability to participate in an online survey. The participant logs onto the Survey Monkey site and takes the survey. Once finished, the result is relayed back to Survey Monkey where the researcher has access to the participant's responses. Once retrieved, the information is reviewed and a determination will be made as to the attitudes and beliefs of the four generations toward the other generation work ethics and the work place.

#### Data Sources

As the researcher, I used the purposeful sampling method which selects particular information, selected by the researcher, from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic of interest. The population consisted of the seven organizations and the information that was selected within the organizations was the information from the respondents. Once the information has been collected, a review of

the information will expose the purpose of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

“The population is a group of individuals, persons, objects, or items from which samples are taken from for measurement. Sampling can be defined as the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of the whole population. The population includes the companies surveyed and the sample included the hiring managers who completed the survey. The purpose of sampling is to draw conclusions about populations from samples” (“*Sampling in Research*”, n.d., para. 3).

Surveys and interviews were accomplished using individuals who have the responsibility of interviewing and hiring applicants. These respondents have experience with the human resources field and have the ability to work with the managers to monitor the performance of the applicants, thus enabling different generations to work together. Their responses reflect their viewpoints about how personnel’s work ethic has changed over the years since the Traditionalist entered the workforce to the Millennials and how they perceive the workplace.

#### Data Collection

Before a survey can be administered to a respondent, permission must be granted through the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Copies of the IRB approval letters are shown in Appendix A and Appendix B. Once the approval letter was received, the surveys were available to the respondents via Survey Monkey. The questions allow the respondents to place their responses within provided spaces. Questions range from

differences between the four different generations to the work ethic of the applicants within the workplace.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) explain that data will be collected by the following:

Phase 1 includes analyzing the problem and developing interview questions. The researcher has developed a list of respondents for the questionnaires. Phase 2 involves introducing the researcher to the respondents and the reason for the study. By contacting the respondents, the researcher will establish rapport, trust, and a relationship with the respondents. Phase 3 includes collecting the data by both the surveys and the interviews. Tentative data analysis progresses as the researcher mentally processes ideas and facts while collecting the data. Initial descriptions are summarized and identified for later corroboration. Phase 4 includes the researcher leaving the field and ending the data collection. The information is reviewed with different interpretations and verifications of the findings. Phase 5 consists of the completion of collecting the data and reviewing it for meaningful ways of presenting the data. Data analysis is essential for presentation of the data (pp. 329-330).

#### Data Analysis

“Qualitative approach is based on the philosophical orientation called phenomenology, which focuses on people’s experience from their perspective. “Researchers look at the essential character or nature of something, not the quantity” (Roberts, 2004, p. 111).

First, information was collected through interviews and surveys. The information was transcribed in order for the researcher to place it in a usable form for the researcher to review the information repeatedly. Second, the data were explored in order to become familiar with the interviewed or surveyed information. At this point, the researcher saw themes emerging from the data. "A theme is an implicit topic that organizes a group of repeating ideas" (Auerback & Silverstein, 2003, p. 38). Themes were identified and notations were made on the received data. Third, the information was further developed toward the interview questions. The themes became more refined in order to address the questions. A coding system was developed that identified the themes and a way to break up the data for further analysis. Coding was used to divide the information into the same category. Reviewing the sections was made easier with the introduction of the themes or categories. Fourth, in order to ensure reliability of the coding scheme, it was advisable to have another person's perspective. This individual reviewed the information and the coding system to ensure that the information was grouped together and was easily retrieved. Fifth, the data were reviewed within the themes or categories for an understanding of each theme. Quotes were selected as to add the respondent's voice and feelings to the received information. Notes were used to assist in labeling the information for use at a later date. Comparison among the multiple data sources served to validate the

data interpretation through triangulation (“*Qualitative Data Analysis*”, 2010, para. 4-8).

Members of chosen organizations were asked to answer questions on a survey that relates to the attitudes and the working ethic of members of four generations. The surveys were returned to Survey Monkey for the researcher to retrieve for evaluation and coding. The respondents were contacted and a personal interview conducted concerning employees within the ages of the four generations and their behavior in the workplace.

#### Methods for Verification

“Validity refers to the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 330). The researcher insures that the findings are valid through fieldwork, triangulation of data, review of documents and other media, accurate recording and note taking, coding the materials, and review of the materials (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

“Reliability is the degree to which your instrument consistently measures something from one time to another” (Roberts, 2004, p. 137). If the same thing was measured again, a person would get the same results. “Interrater reliability is a check on the consistency between raters, or between a rater and an expert. This information is necessary when measurement involves subjective interpretation, such as open-ended questions” (Roberts, 2004, p. 137).

#### Limitations

The accuracy of the study can be affected by the following:

- Will the respondent use accurate data



- The generation of the respondent
- The researchers ability to code the information in order to retrieve this information at a later date
- Receiving enough data in order to evaluate the difference between the four generation in dealing with interviewing and the workplace. If the surveys and the interviews are not completed and the information not returned to the researcher, material will not be available to compare or distinguish between the four generations
- Keeping an ethical perspective in dealing with materials and with individuals. Personal knowledge or bias cannot be placed in the received information
- Using the correct type of analysis on the materials. Coding correctly in order to retrieve and compare or contrast information

Most of the limitations are under the control of the researcher while some limitations are not under the researcher's control. Above all, an ethical perspective is observed to keep confidentiality to the respondents and to their responses.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### Introduction

As explained in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to examine differences or similarities between the Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Xers, and the Millennials within the workplace. Comparisons included attitudes, work ethics, loyalty, and teamwork which are requirements of any organization in having employees work together toward the goals of the organization. Data concerning these attitudes were collected through surveys, interviews, and observations. By comparing the results collected, credibility was established for the study.

Hiring managers from seven companies were contacted about completing a brief survey that addressed members of the different generations. Each person received an Informed Consent Form and a copy of instructions with the link to Survey Monkey for the survey. Once the respondent completed the survey, the respondent returned the survey to Survey Monkey for the researcher to retrieve the information. Participation with the respondents consisted of six companies out of seven that were contacted. This was an 85% return rate. After the information was retrieved, members of the organizations were contacted for an on-line interview that consisted of 10 questions about comparisons or differences between the generations.

The interview questions ranged from communication within the organization to helping the organization into the next century. Responses were similar between the different organizations about how each generation responded to the operations of the company. The questions had the option of having more than one answer. The

questions may have provided an opportunity for the respondents to respond equally to more than one generation.

Once the interviews were completed, the data were reviewed for patterns and themes. Codes were placed on the information that presented similar information and then the information was grouped together. Themes were found that corresponded to the survey questions. These included communication, dedication, image, pride, and service. The questions asked involved perspectives from a manager's and an employee's point of view. Information from the received data noted that the surveyed organizations provided similar information concerning characteristics of members of each generation.

Questions and answers are as follows:

#### Communication

Survey question 1: *Which of the following generations communicates best as a manager to their employees?*

According to the survey, the Traditionalists and Xers were the best communicators as managers with employees, with the Baby Boomers coming in third. Millennials did not score as being effective as a manager communicating with employees.

Information from the interviews indicated that the Traditionalists and Xers were the generations that had the interest in having the face-to-face contact with the customers. The Traditionalists were noted as the generation that was totally dedicated to the organization. Xers is the generation that has the initial contact with incorporating technology within the work place thus enabling them to instruct employees on the use of technology in the workplace. Baby Boomers were also listed as being able to

communicate with employees and being able to express ideas freely and able to assist the company in daily routines. Managers need to have constant communication in order to monitor the progress and the competency of the employees. Communication not only involves talking with individuals but the use of e-mail, video conference, and the Internet for daily operations. As stated in Chapter 2, both Xers and Millennials use the technology to gather and process information (Kane, 2010). Millennials have the ability to use technology but have a problem in communicating face to face with individuals thus causing a problem in providing interaction with customers or with other employees. Instead of the personal interaction, Millennials will prefer the use of e-mail or texting information.

Survey question 2: *Which of the following generations communicates best as an employee to management?*

Traditionalists were chosen as the top generation that communicates best as employees to management. Nearly two thirds of the respondents chose this group with the Baby Boomers second. The traditionalists are seen as a group that are very structured and prefer the face-to-face communications. They are very dedicated and involved with projects that involve individuals. The Traditionalists prefer a structured environment, a hierarchy structure, and the chain of command. During the interviews, it was noted that the Traditionalists are team players, enjoy working together, and getting along.

Baby Boomers were close to the Traditionalists because of the dedication that they have toward the work place. Boomers get to the point of a subject, which gives them the feeling that they have accomplished a task. It was noted that the Boomers like to

follow up with information, provide communication to each person, and have sensitivity to their audiences. According to the interviews, the Boomers should be close to ratings with the Traditionalists because of the interest that they have with coworkers, team work, and their ability to respect and question authority.

Xers were viewed as generational members that worked hard but asked why and seemed to challenge authority. They like the constant feedback and feel that if the situation will not produce what they feel they need for growth, the next move is to find other employment. Xers are seen as not forgiving of bureaucracy even though the structure is there to assist their needs and provide guidance.

Millennials were not considered due to their individualistic characteristics. They are not the best at communicating face to face. This generation prefers the communication in the forms of e-mail, or texting. Technology is the key to this generation. The one on one meeting with managers can be accomplished, but Millennials feel more comfortable with non-personal meetings.

In Chapter 2, leadership was an issue that showed employees or managers are at different levels. A model that was mentioned was "Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership II Model". This contingency theory was mentioned in Chapter 2 (Daft, 2000). People are at different levels of the organization. Someone can be high on supportative behavior and high on directive behavior but be low on other tasks. Employees will need the constructive feedback in order to improve skills or abilities in order to move to the next level.

Survey question 3: *Which of the following generations communicates best as a manager with customers?*

The Baby Boomers were chosen as the top generation in communicating with customers with the Traditionalists and Xers coming in second. The Boomers prefer face-to-face meetings and are able to express their ideas clearly. Customers like the interaction and the friendly atmosphere of a person who can relate to their problems or wishes. Boomers are considered excellent with customer service and in providing the attention that customers admire.

Traditionalists, by being loyal to a company, have the ability to provide customers with the service they require. Providing for the customer is a way to help promote the company and to ensure repeat business. Traditionalists relate to the older generations and are able to relate to their needs by having the report that the older people can relate to.

Xers offer a new approach to customers in that they were brought up in a world of technology. Reviewing accounts and retrieving information is important in ordering materials and in having this knowledge will keep the customer from waiting an excessive amount of time. Xers may not have the thought process of fully waiting on customers in that they feel if the product is on the shelf the customers can wait on themselves. The extra help is not needed.

Millennials have the ability to retrieve information that will be used at locations such as customer service or in special ordering products. Face-to-face meetings are not preferred over transmitting data or sending messages via e-mail.

Situations dictate which person or persons will be needed to respond to customer service. Each generation, as noted from the respondents, is valued in certain locations within the organization. People are needed to meet customers and be able to find out

information about the customer. Others are needed to handle the transactions that order and sell the products. A mixture of personal interaction and technology skills is needed to make any organization functional for customer service.

Survey question 4: *Which of the following generations communicates best as an employee with customers?*

As in question 3, the Baby Boomers were chosen as the top communicators with the Traditionalists and Xers in second place. Millennials came in fourth. As stated in the above question, the Boomers have the personal skills and the ability to relate to individuals. They enjoy communicating with people and having conversations that establish trust with customers.

Traditionalists are more structured and have the ability to be a team player. Customer service is essential with growing and sustaining the business. Personal attention is required and formalization is used in providing for the customer's needs. This generation may portray a more professional image of dress clothes and the professional image but may not always be as sensitive to what the customer wants.

Xers have the style that is laid back and will provide customer service but also have the ability to use technology to provide demonstrations for the customers or to repair mistakes in customer billing. Whereas the older generations have the personal touch, Xers can provide personal attention with the customers but often will let the customer shop for themselves.

Millennials prefers to be left alone so they can manage the technological aspects of the business. They do not have the personal skills or the desire to meet face to face for personal interaction. They like to supply the technical skills to the workplace.

## Dedication

Survey question 5: *Which of the following generations, as a manager, will do what is needed at work to make the company successful?*

According to the survey the Baby Boomers are considered the group that will work the longer hours and take on extra responsibilities in order to help the company become successful. The Traditionalists are next with the Xers and Millennials tied for third.

According to the interviews, the Boomers are perceived as a group that will get the job done, they are dedicated and enjoy being in contact with people. They are interested in looking at futuristic goals, have a desire to succeed, and use an action and result-oriented approach to the business. Boomers have families and homes to provide for so they are in the working world for the long-term benefit.

Traditionalists are the next group with well organized plans and dedication to the operations of the company. Traditionalists communicate well; they have a style that relates to people and are able to motivate employees toward the right directions that are in relation to the goals of the company. Learning styles are different in that Traditionalists believe in direct leadership and a hierarchy to provide direction for everyone.

Xers have feelings of what can the company do for me. Within the framework of the interview, they want to know if I produce the required product or service, what I can expect in return. Xers have the ability to see other sides of the situations as they have been raised with Boomers and have grown up in a world with technological devices such as the personal computer, the cell phone, and iPods. Xer managers will support employees, but when the end of the work day approaches, the employees are



interested in leaving work to return to their homes and their families. A difference occurs with the Traditionalists and the Boomers as they will give extra to provide for the company. It is usually the company over the family.

Millennials will provide the technical support for the company. While working with the computer games that are offered in this generation, they have learned to maneuver through different levels to gain access to the next skill level. These problem solving skills can assist the employee to manage the technology for future success.

In situations that require personal involvement with customers, Millennials prefer to avoid face-to-face meetings but have conference calls or video conferencing. The personal interaction is not preferred over the technical meeting.

Survey question 6: *Which of the following generations, as an employee, will do what is necessary to make the company successful?*

Baby Boomers have been chosen as the highest group that will provide services to make the company successful. Boomers are dedicated to their jobs and communicate with each other and with the managers. As an employee, a Boomer will generally take the initiative to explore what can be done and what can improve. They look for personal goals along with the company's goals and see where the comparisons are and what is in the working relationship for them.

Traditionalists are generally well organized and have the dedication to produce the type of work or service that will advance the company. They can help motivate others in a positive manner and due to their past work experiences are able to mentor others. The leadership style is different from the generations that follow them, but because of

the structure that is present in their work ethic, they have many abilities that can be taught to younger generations.

Xers are considered independent and confident. With these attributes, they are willing to assist within the organization and help develop a team atmosphere. This generation has been exposed to technology allowing them to mentor the older generations. Xers are great problem solvers and are willing to make mistakes with the hopes of discovering a change in the context of the solution that will make it viable.

### Image

Survey question 7: *Which of the following generations, as a manager, would protect the image of the company with the employees and with customers?*

The Baby Boomers were chosen as the top choice in relation to a manager to their employees or to customers. Boomers are seen as loyal to the company and in order for the company to survive, the image of the company has to be where other organizations or the community will trust what the company stands for. Boomers are customer oriented and have the ability to work as a team. They do what is needed in order to make the company successful. Boomers can communicate with others and help to train individuals. Interviews have noted that Boomers have a high work ethic and project a professional image. Ethics and images are important in projecting this image that can be emulated by employees.

Traditionalists and Xers have an image that the Traditionalist are personal and have the older experience that brought companies up from conception to the modern world. Xers have the ability to help introduce technology to the work place which enables assistance to other employees in learning this technology. By being involved with

technology, Xers have an edge in seeing the world from different angles and the ability to think through situations in order to get to the next level. A business environment combines experience and technology to become a diverse workplace. Technology is needed in order to communicate and operate in today's society. The image that is portrayed by the company determines if individuals can trust what the company stands for.

Millennials assist the companies with expertise needed to make the company competitive in the global community. Technology is the base of their working environment and not the personal interaction. The image projected will be the company's interaction within the business world.

Survey question 8: *Which of the following generations, as employees, would protect the image of the company with managers and customers?*

Baby Boomers were chosen as the top generation because of their desire to work and to provide for their families. Boomers are loyal to an organization and will do what is needed to make the company successful. Boomers are customer oriented and have the ability to work as an individual or with teams. Boomers have many individuals within the workforce and have the reputation of getting the job done.

Traditionalists are loyal but may not have the service ability that the Boomers have. Traditionalists are interested in doing their jobs, and they have the willingness to do what is needed to complete the job and do what is needed to make the company successful. They believe in a hierarchical society so working with managers or customers is a formality with this generation.

Xers and Millennials have abilities to work with companies to make them successful but they may not have the personal skills that will enable them to be as effective as the Boomers or the Traditionalists. Xers works for the companies and are interested in what benefits they can receive from the company. What can the company do for me? Millennials operates within the technological framework. They do what is needed by technology and communication to the managers or other departments is done by electronic options such as e-mail, texting, or video conferencing.

### Pride

Survey question 9: *Which of the following generations, as a manager, would have the most pride in their work?*

Traditionalists and Boomers tied for the top position with Xers and Millennials for the third position. As managers, the Traditionalists and the Boomers have the work ethic to ensure that the company succeeds. They have abilities to work with individuals and customers and have work experience and discipline to require standards in their daily tasks. Traditionalists and Boomers take pride in their work especially when the job is completed.

Xers and Millennials have pride for their work but they do not have the dedication to go the extra mile as the Traditionalists or the Boomers have. X and Y generations will make sure the work is completed but at the end of the shift, they are ready to return to their social activities.

Survey question 10: *Which of the following generations, as an employee, would have the most pride in their work?*

The Baby Boomers are the generation that would take the most pride as employees because they enjoy the interaction with customers and other people. The work is completed and goals are set within their lives. Boomers determine which way to effectively complete tasks and set forth the extra effort to ensure the task is complete. Boomers are loyal to the company and will stay for security of retirement.

Traditionalists are set in their ways and have a problem with change. They will provide customer service and are very dependable. Their work ethic can assist other generations in providing services to people and to the management system. Traditionalists are loyal to the company and have the desire to stay thus lowering the training cost to the company for training other individuals.

Xers and Millennials provide services for the company during their working hours, but at the end of the shift, they are interested in leaving for home or other personal activities. Both Xers and Millennials enjoy working with technology and by doing the technical tasks, take great pride in their accomplishments.

Considering all generations, members of each generation contributes to the goals of the company. Members have different desires and are able to contribute independently their skills to the operations of the company. Leadership will vary with each of the generations thus requiring a different approach with individual employees.

Survey question 11: *Which manager of the following generation or generations would take more pride in protecting the company's assets from internal or external theft?*

Traditionalists and Baby Boomers were the two generations that will protect the assets of the company. Managers monitor their employees and evaluate if any

materials are leaving the facility in order to protect the company's assets as this pride is part of the Traditionalists and Boomer heritage. Material possessions and positions are earned by hard work and placing time with the company.

Xers and Millennials are interested in being promoted within a short period of employment. Six months is a time period that they like to see the possibility of advancement. They want to know what the company can do for them, but as a manager they have their work ethic in protecting the assets of the organization. Theft can cause higher prices and a reduced work force. The more money paid out or lost, creates less to pay for labor.

Survey question 12: *Which employee of the following generation or generations would take more pride in protecting the company's assets from internal or external theft?*

The survey related that the Baby Boomers and Xers are the top two generations that would protect the assets as an employee. The other two generations, the Traditionalists and Millennials came in third and fourth. Interviews from the four generations revealed a strong work ethic to protect a company's assets. The Boomers and Xers work well with customers and some feel that they develop a rapport with the customers learning their mannerisms.

### Service

Survey question 13: *Which manager of the following generation or generations would provide the best service to their customers?*

The Baby Boomers were chosen as the generation that would give the best service to the customers. Managers ensure that employees are waiting on customers and that

any problems that may arise are dealt with. Communication with employees is important in keeping everyone informed. Boomers relate to the working world as a necessity for their livelihood. Their leadership style is one of participative in that they will assist the employee and strive for completion of that task so that they can proceed to the next task.

Traditionalists and Xers are the next two chosen because Traditionalists are set in their work style and may be different to change. Xers knows what they want but they have the feeling that the company owes them. Managers monitor employees so that customers are serviced and that inventories are monitored to make sure that merchandise is on the shelf ready for the customer.

Survey question 14: *Which of the following employee from the following generation or generations would provide excellent service to their customers?*

The Baby Boomers were chosen as the generation that offers the best service to customers as employees. Traditionalists, Xers, and Millennials were chosen as tying for second place in offering customer service. Boomers have the ability to provide customer service and to work with the management team. Boomers are dependable and want work completed the same way in order to ensure the task is completed.

Xers or Millennials provide service but may not be willing to change their style or to personally relate face to face with customers. Change is necessary to keep up with service for customers and to provide the technological advantage in ordering materials for the customers.

Interview question: *Which generation as of this time period would be able to promote the company into the next century?*

The top two generations chosen were Xers and Millennials because of their ability to operate with the technical devices of the time. Xers can interact with customers and are able to operate within the technical age. Millennials prefer not to have the face-to-face meetings with individuals but they have abilities to operate the technological devices that are being introduced to the working world. Technology is never constant requiring the expertise of the Millennials to keep the organizations changing with the times.

### Observation

The researcher visited several of the surveyed companies to observe managers and employees interactions with employees, managers, and customers. Managers were walking around the stores watching the interaction skills of their employees with the customers. Opportunities included interacting with customers, merchandising the sales floor, and having discussions within the aisles with the employees.

Employees within the stores were working with their products and waiting on customers. Some of the customers did not need assistance but others needed assistance. Some customers would make conversation with the employees while some of the employees did not make the initial contact with a customer.

Employees and managers ranged in ages that represented different generations. Older managers and employees seemed to develop a rapport with the customers involving longer conversations. The younger employees waited on the customers but did not spend the extra time with the customers to determine if the customer had what was needed to complete the jobs. Once the younger employee showed the customer the product, the employee walked away and continued stocking merchandise or stood near customer service.



## Summary

Making an organization function and successful involves everyone working together. The older generations of the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers have experience in customer service and possess a loyalty to the organization. Both generations have the desire to make the company a success and to stay employed until retirement. The work will get done, changes will be initiated but not always fully accepted, and training will continue.

The younger generations want to be involved with an organization but providing the extra effort or to go the extra mile is not as evident as in the older generations. A concern for Xers and Millennials are the benefits. Both generations give their efforts during work time, but at quitting time they are ready to leave for recreation or for their families.

Xers and Millennials have abilities to produce results with modern technology. This technology may be foreign to the older generations. Due to the inexperience with operations of the technical age, Xers and Millennials are placed in the role of teachers to the Traditionalists and Boomers. If an organization cannot grow with the technical age, the company will not be as competitive as companies that have the advanced technology. Xers and Millennials have been raised with cell phones, Internet, e-mail, and Blackberries which gives them a knowledge to process information with this technology, but customer service skills are not present as with the Traditionalists or Boomers. Members of all generations contribute their own specified skills; team work is needed in order to take the business into the next century. Recommendations are discussed in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study and conclusions from Chapter 4. Information is included on the actions and recommendations for further study. It is recommended that this information be used to further research in the areas of comparing and contrasting generations (Roberts, 2004).

#### Summary of the Study

##### *Overview of the Problem*

Members of the different generations work together in today's workplace, each with characteristics, skills, and abilities. Employers need to know how to react, interpret, and manage the differences in order to keep the organization effective and able to provide a challenging environment for the managers and employees. Information about each generation is important for any manager or Human Resource Manager in order to effectively operate and manage certain aspects of the modern workplace.

##### *Purpose Statement*

The purpose of the research was to determine any differences or similarities between the Traditionalists, Boomers, Xers, and Millennials in the workplace. Differences or similarities can assist organizations in providing staffing in order to provide services or products with the intent of maximizing profits for the organization.

### *Research Questions*

What are the perceptual differences among the following generations:

Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Xers, and Millennials in the corporate environment relating from the management and worker points of view:

- Work skill levels as defined by: Ability to communicate with coworkers, upper management, and customers and their ability to perform basic functions within their job descriptions.
- Loyalty to the organization: Protecting the image of the company with other employees and with customers and having pride within their positions.
- Work ethics as defined by: Protecting the assets of the company and being fair in dealing with all customers.

### *Review of the Methodology*

A qualitative method was used for this study. Data obtained from surveys, interviews, and observations were presented by the descriptive method. The descriptive method offers a rich description of the phenomena that can emerge from the studies and the surveys. Observations were made in the workplace to validate the information that was received from the surveys and the interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

The data for the study were collected by a survey that was conducted through an Internet provider, Survey Monkey. Respondents were contacted and asked to participate in a study that involves members of different generations in the workplace. Once the respondents agreed to the study, an informed consent form and an instruction sheet were e-mailed to their locations. Instructions provided to the respondent inform

that the survey is voluntary and that the results are confidential. The instruction sheet has a copy of the link to access the survey. Once the survey was taken, the respondent activated the “done” button and the survey results were returned to Survey Monkey for the researcher to be able to retrieve the information. After the surveys were collected, a person at the organization was contacted to participate in a phone interview.

Instructions were explained to the respondent that the interview is part of the research and that the results will again be confidential. Upon agreeing to the interview, the interview started and upon completion, the review of the information began. Information was placed in themes and coding began. Similar information was grouped and reviewed again. Once the information was grouped, the data were used in the preparation of Chapter 4.

Data analysis involves the qualitative approach based on the philosophical orientation called phenomenology, which focuses on people’s experience from their perspective. “Researchers look at the essential character or nature of something, not the quantity” (Roberts, 2004, p. 11).

### *Summary of the Findings*

Information from the surveys, the interviews, and the observations relate to the following about each of the four generations. The four generations studied are the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y.

The Traditionalists are seen as being very loyal to the organization and will combine efforts to do what is needed in order to help the company succeed in training of other employees. Traditionalists believe in a hierarchical society where structure guides the company and the employees. They are conservative, clear, and direct with their work

life. This generation may not have the education that the later generations have, but they take pride in their work and consider being dependable as a great asset as an employee.

Baby Boomers are a generation that ranked very well as managers or employees toward other employees, other managers, and with customers. Boomers enjoy communicating with individuals and holding meetings in order to clarify what needs to be done and who is responsible for assigned tasks. Boomers look toward the future and are considered very dependable at work because they work very well in teams and are considered to have a consensual leadership style. Boomers like the face-to-face meetings but are not as strong as Xers or Millennials with technology. This generation feels that a person is valued and that the organization needs people that contribute to their strategic goals. Boomers work to live.

Xers are not considered as customer friendly as the Traditionalist or the Baby Boomers. Members of this generation looks at the organization as what can you, as a company, do for me? Xers works for the company, but if problems occur they are inclined to seek employment with another company. Traditionalist or Boomers would stay with the company during the problem times until an agreement has been reached. Xers did not rank as high as the Baby Boomers in having relationships with employees, managers, or customers. They were seen as a generation that can work with managers and other employees but they were not seen as establishing a close relationship with managers or employees. Xers likes to have their time at work but when the work day is complete, they are ready to leave. They want the balance in their lives with work and with families.

Millennials were not rated as top candidates in the surveys or in the interviews. They do not like the personal interaction and do not project the skills to assist customers at the level that customers expect. Generally members from this generation are laid back and see the company as having benefits for them and if the rewards are not there, another job is sought. Millennials are the generation that operates the technology for a company, but not for the face-to-face meetings. They want meaningful work, but at the end of the day, they want to go home. Millennials are very educated and will assist others in learning how to operate technology.

From the data collected, members of each generation have certain skills that are important to any organization. Members of the Traditionalists or Boomers feel that to progress up the ladder people need to pay their dues. Members of the younger generations feel that they are working for the benefits that they will receive from the employer. Xers or Millennials have the technical skills that will be used to assist the organization move into the next century. The Traditionalist, the Baby Boomers, and Xers have the ability to work as a team, with the Millennials wanting to avoid the face-to-face interactions. Employees will work together with the understanding that each person has contributions that are needed to make the organization successful.

#### Findings Related to the Literature

Employers are searching for employees who can and will add value to their organization. Skills sought include communication, analytical, computer or technical, interpersonal, teamwork, ethics, and multicultural awareness (Hansen & Hansen, n.d.). Employees have different skills and abilities that can be used in combination to make the organization effective and functional. Whereas the Traditionalists and the Baby

Boomers have the customer service skills, Xers and Millennials have the skills that will lead the organization into global acceptance with technology. From data from the research, generations are interested in working with other generations to learn new techniques and to provide their knowledge. The Traditionalists and Boomers feel that the Xers and Millennials need to pay their dues in order for advancement.

Xers and Millennials have the advantage in experiencing a different culture from the Traditionalists or the Boomers. Diversity is important in today's working environment because of ideas that each culture can bring to the table. Each person is valued and can contribute to the goals of the organization.

Research has confirmed that the Traditionalists are team players, are task oriented, have a respect for authority, and are very patriotic. Traditionalists believe in a hierarchical society and believe in following directions ("The Traditional Generation", n.d.). Information from the surveys and the interviews indicates that people recognize this generation as fore-mentioned. Traditionalists want to work with an organization until retirement and feel that loyalty is directed to the organization. Their work life comes before pleasure. Traditionalists are managers and employees who offer service to customers, direct associates in daily tasks, and have the desire for their own career.

Boomers are career oriented, dedicated, enjoy projects that can make differences, and a chance to change the world. Change can cause members of any organization to feel uncertain and Boomers feel that the work ethics of the younger generations may cause feelings of insecurity or uncertainty among the employees of the organizations (John & Roberts, 1996). Boomers are considered hard working, motivated by perks and prestige, and like long work weeks. In consideration of the younger generations,

Boomers feel that they need to earn their dues before making career changes.

According to the research, Boomers are dedicated, enjoy being with people, and have interest of work over family life. The information relays a relationship between work and the interest of this generation. Boomers are the largest generation and within a short time period millions will be leaving the working environment making positions available for the younger generations (Kane, 2010).

Information from the research shows that Xers have a desire to produce excellent work but the service will not be as intense as with the Boomer generation. Not having the extra personal attention will be noticed by customers as they enter the stores.

Xers are considered better educated than the previous two generations and have been exposed to an ethnically diverse environment than the Traditionalists or Boomers. Chapter 2 explains that Xers have the desire to become successful, they are self-reliant, and they feel that freedom is the greatest reward. Rewards such as materials are owned by this generation, but they do not hold onto any possession unless it has a value (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Research shows that Xers have values similar to the Boomers such as wanting to produce excellent work and being at work when needed with an exception that technology will need to be used in daily business functions. Xers did not score as high as the Boomers in the management and employee roles when it relates to communication and service to others. Xers will provide the services but they may be laid back to where the customer will obtain the materials that they need themselves without assistance. Guidance is needed in order for them to know what is expected and what their place is in the organization.



Millennials are concerned with technology and where more technology can be obtained. Millennials prefers the use of e-mail or texting in communicating with others over the traditional face-to-face meetings. Being on the fast track of the organization is not an interest to this generation as they are interested in what is in it for them now. Planning for the future is wasteful in that they may not be here to enjoy the savings.

Millennials operates the technical devices that operate within the company. The data show that members of the organizations relate this generation to operations of the computers and communications. Members of this generation are instructors for the changing technology.

Results from the interviews and research show that the Baby Boomers are considered the generation that will work well as managers and employees in situations that need customer service. What may appeal to one may not appeal to another person. The same techniques may not work for the other generation (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002).

Hersey and Blanchard's Leadership Model in Chapter 2 relates to leadership behavior and the differences that are presented when different situations arise. One person may be rated high on one circumstance but may be low in another (Daft, 2000). The information that was received by the interviews notes that the Traditionalists are structured and believe in the chain of command. Boomers are loyal and believe in a hierarchical structure. Xers feels that everyone is the same and they are not afraid to challenge authority. Millennials have high expectation of the employer and if challenged may consider changing jobs.

Career goals are as follows: “Traditionalists want to build a legacy; Boomers want to build a stellar career; Xers wants to build a portable career; and Millennials wants to build parallel careers” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010, p. 1). The Traditionalists and Boomers want to plan for the future that includes retirement, whereas Xers and Millennials wants to live for the present.

Information received relates to the information in Chapter 2. The Traditionalists, Boomers, Xers, and Millennials view management and the workplace differently as in relation to their goals. As stated by Tom Peters from *USA Today*, “if your top management isn’t spending at least ½ a day a month sitting down with someone twenty-five years old or younger, then they are blowing it” (as cited in Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 334).

### *Surprises*

The survey form was transmitted to the respondents via the Internet by a survey source known as Survey Monkey. The researcher contacted the respondents and explained the reason for the study and asked if they would assist in completing a survey. The respondents agreed to take the survey then return it to Survey Monkey for the researcher to gather the information.

Uncontrolled variables could have influenced the information thus affecting the outcome of the survey. Variables could include the following:

- The respondent did not understand the purpose of the study
- The respondent did not fully read or understand the questions of the survey
- The respondent was not familiar with members of the different generations
- The respondent did not fully concentrate on each question and answer truthfully

- Bias may have been included in the results from the respondents
- The researcher may have misunderstood answers from the respondents
- The researcher may have included bias from previous experiences

Once the survey was completed, each respondent was notified and asked to complete a telephone interview. The interview included 10 questions that related to the survey.

Uncontrolled variables could have resulted from the following:

- The respondent was nervous and did not understand the question
- There were other people in the room with the respondent and the respondent was very careful what was answered to the questions
- The respondent did not have the correct knowledge of the generations
- The researcher misunderstood the answer and wrote down an answer that sounded correct
- Researcher bias due to past and present experiences on the subject

Answers were repeated to the respondent and a conversation was initiated about the questions. Asking the questions in this form helped to validate the findings.

### Conclusions

Information received from the surveys and the interviews indicated that initial contact and observations correlates with the information in Chapter 2. Managers from any business will benefit from knowing how employees interact within the workplace. In order for a business to be profitable, profits must outweigh costs and one of the largest costs that a business can incur is labor costs. If a hiring manager knew the requirements for the opened position, the correct person can be sought to fill that position. Employees not only fill openings, but they must work with others in order to

produce and ship products or are able to offer services to the public or to the corporate world.

Managers will need to train themselves to keep an open mind when individuals are interviewed. Having a fixed mind set will not allow the expansion of talent within the organization. Keeping members of the older generations will not allow companies to compete in today's market. Xers and Millennials have the technical skills that will keep corporations technically up to date with the world's demands. Hiring managers will need to keep an open mind but also enforce policies of the organization.

#### Implications for Further Research

Human Resource Managers and senior management will benefit from the study because of the knowledge of the characteristics of the different generations. Certain positions require certain skills and placing the wrong people in these positions can create an atmosphere of failure for the employee and inadequate services for the customers. Members of the generations have certain characteristics and beliefs that have been instilled in them for many years from members of previous generations. Placing the wrong person within a position can cause failure in that the person may not have the correct qualifications or the goals to make the position succeed within the business.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

This study reviewed the Traditionalist, Boomers, Xers, and Millennials in providing basic functions within an organization. Themes were communication, dedication, image, pride, and service. Other areas that may be reviewed include technology, personal goals, education, and corporate mobility. Themes that deal with customer

service will relate to the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers. Themes that relate to technology will relate to the experience of members of Xers and Millennials.

### Concluding Remarks

It is my belief that all generations can work together to make the organization a success. Pulling apart will not create a team atmosphere and thus pull the business in separate directions. In the global environment, businesses must run effectively in order to compete. Processes that were used in the beginning years of the Traditionalists or the Baby Boomers will not survive in today's market. Corporations are laying employees off and shutting down businesses. The only way to survive is to have a work force that is dedicated and has the ability to look into the future and "go beyond the box". I believe each person within an organization can learn from the other if each person keeps an open mind and is receptive to change.

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## APPENDICES

### *Appendix A*

#### IRB Approval

##### *East Tennessee State University*

*Office for the Protection of Human Research Subjects • Box 70565 • Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-1707*

*Phone: (423) 439-6053 Fax: (423) 439-6060*

#### **1KB APPROVAL - Initial Exempt**

January 11, 2011

Mr. Jeffery Harber  
Route 1, Box 1438  
Dryden, VA 24243

RE: *Interviewing and Evaluation of People from the Different Generations in the Workplace IRB #:*

*c!210.14e*

*On January 7, 2011, an exempt approval was granted in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Policies. No continuing review is required. The exempt approval will be reported to the convened board on the next agenda.*

- Form 103; Narrative (12/16/10 stamped approved 01/07/11); Potential Conflict of Interest (no conflict identified); CV; Assurance Statement; Participant Letter (no version date stamped approved 01/07/11); Research Questions*

*Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others must be reported to the IRB (and VA R&D if applicable) within 10 working days.*

*Proposed changes in approved research cannot be initiated without IRB review and approval. The only exception to this rule is that a change can be made prior to IRB approval when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the research subjects [21 CFR 56.108 (a)(4)]. In such a case, the IRB must be promptly informed of the change following its implementation (within 10 working days) on Form 109 ([www.etsu.edu/irb](http://www.etsu.edu/irb)). The IRB will review the change to determine that it is consistent with ensuring the subject's continued welfare.*

*Sincerely,  
Chris Ayres, Chair  
ETSU Campus IRB*

*Appendix B*

IRB Modification

*East Tennessee State University*

*Office for the Protection of Human Research Subjects Box 70565 Johnson City, Tennessee  
37614-1707*

*Phone: (423) 439-6053 Fax: (423) 439-6060*

**IRB APPROVAL - Minor Modification**

*Februarys, 2011*

*Mr. Jeffery  
Harber  
Route 1,  
Box 1438  
Dryden,  
VA 24243*

*RE: Interviewing and Evaluation of People from the Different Generations in the  
Workplace*

*IRB #: cl210.14e*

*On February 8, 2011, a final approval was granted for the minor modification listed below.  
The minor modification will be reported to the convened board on the next agenda.*

- *Modification request to follow-up with participants.*

*Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others must be reported to the IRB  
(and VA R&.D if applicable) within 10 working days.*

*Proposed changes in approved research cannot be initiated without IRB review and approval.  
The only exception to this rule is that a change can be made prior to IRB approval when  
necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the research subjects [21 CFR  
56.108 (a)(4)]. In such a case, the IRB must be promptly informed of the change following  
its implementation (within 10 working days) on Form 109 ([www.etsu.edu/irb](http://www.etsu.edu/irb)). The IRB will  
review the change to determine that it is consistent with ensuring the subject's continued  
welfare.*

*Sincerely,  
Chris Ayres, Chair  
ETSU Campus IRB*

## VITA

Jeffery G. Harber

Personal Data:   Date of Birth:   September 29, 1957  
                  Place of Birth:   Pennington Gap, Virginia  
                  Marital Status:   Married

Education:        A.S. Science  
                  Mountain Empire Community College  
                  1977

                  B.S. Degree Industrial Technology  
                  East Tennessee State University  
                  1979

                  M.A. Degree Organizational Management  
                  Tusculum College  
                  1993

                  Ed.D. Doctorate of Education  
                  East Tennessee State University  
                  2011

Experience:       Director of Human Resources, Lee Regional Medical Center;  
                  Pennington Gap, Virginia  
                  2001-2002

                  Instructor, Lee County School System; Jonesville, Virginia  
                  2002-2004

                  Manager, Lowes; Wise, Virginia  
                  2004-Present