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Syllabus

Final assignment:

“Giving way to the Y generation in the corporate world - smooth as it comes?”

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Abstract:

A new generation, or group of like-minded employees composed of similar ages, arrives every twenty years into the workforce. For the first time in corporate history, four generations with distinct character traits and approaches to work are to be found alongside in the workplaces. Each one bringing unique experiences, behaviors and attitudes, while working for a common good.

There are generational differences in how people from different generations want to be led, this means that Millennials see the world differently than the Silent, Boomer, and Xer generations, not only because of the difference in cohort characteristics but because of the stage in the human life-cycle in which they find themselves. As such, Millennials want the leadership style to be a balanced mixture of flexibility, high demands, responsibility, time for trial and error, clear directions and freedom to do things in their own way, not to mention that they adore collaboration and team play. Many Millennials believe in the statement “work to live - not live to work”. They do not settle for the old way of doing things and always try to find more efficient methods, yet this can be frustrating for managers, and for most supervisors Millennials’ attitudes remain a challenge. Indeed, previous generations didn’t necessarily impose their personal expectations on their employers, whereas millennial employees are challenging managers to “step up their games”.

Indeed, Generation Y expects to work in a transparent organization in which the corporation’s mission, values, operations, problems, and conflicts are open and known to all employees, and where all can access the organization’s vital information and be made aware of decision-making processes. It’s an environment that would benefit all employees, not just the Millennials, but because this generation is arriving in the workplace expecting to find transparency, organizations are realizing that they have to make a point of transparency to engage millennial employees. Each generation can disrupt custom and practice within an organization, but the hope is always that this disruption can be a catalyst for something better to take its place. Businesses understand that the competitive landscape is altering and they need to both bring in new talent and retain their top performers to remain relevant.

Still, Generation Y detests micromanaging and often view it as distrust. They desire to be coached, not directed. They give instant feedback to others and expect it in return. New managers in the generation Y want independence to decide on their own, do not need authority, existing models or theories to approach problems and situation. They want supervising and coaching, yet not by experts that tell them “how” to do it or “what” to do. They need feedback that stimulates them to come with own innovative ideas.

The key to managing Millennials is about understanding that everyone sees the world their own way, a concept crucial for managers to understand, for managing generational differences. Thus, transferring knowledge from one generation to another can be difficult since younger people acquire knowledge and skills differently from older people with different attitudes on authority, job stability, and learning. Organizations wishing to reduce attrition and turnover should consider training from the perspective of the millennial generation in order to assess the level of loyalty they are inspiring (or should expect) through training design. The loss of millennial employees because of a lack of millennial-preferred training design has the potential to significantly impact organizational climate, future growth and development of organizations.

Introduction

A new generation¹, or group of like-minded employees composed of similar ages, arrives every twenty years into the workforce. *“Several external forces in societies influence the creation of shared value system among people in each historical context, and while the world is continually changing, also the shared value systems change between generations”* (Parry and Urwin, 2011). Those are manifested in values and beliefs about work and organizations, work ethic and work-related goals and desires from work life. For the first time in corporate history, four generations with distinct character traits and approaches to work are to be found alongside in the workplaces. Each one bringing unique experiences, behaviors and attitudes, while working for a common good.

Yet, every time a new generation enters the workforce, managers tend to struggle to understand the new group, as they must adjust their management techniques to get better results. It is *“about understanding that everyone sees the world their own way, a concept that is crucial for managers to understand”* (Kilber et al., 2014). Each group do represent challenges for the organizations as per their (rising) assortment of (differing) values, expectations and approaches to work and communication, in a world where older workers are staying longer and hierarchies have been flattened over the past decades.

Having all these generations in one workplace force us to rethink how we hire, train, manage, and retain employees, while emerging concepts such as *“generational competence”* are set to describe *“the behaviors that organizations must make in order to meet the diverse needs of the four generations in today's workforce - behaviors and approaches around effective communication tools to minimize conflict, progressive Human Resources and work-life strategies to attract and retain key talent, and management practices to enhance productivity and personal and professional development”* (Jimenez, 2009). Yet, as Ferri-Reed (2014) remembered us: *“There have always been clashes between different generations, as long as there have been humans walking the earth. Aristotle, for example, wrote more than 2,000 years ago about how frustrating he found his students!”*

Today's workforce consists mainly of the following generations: Silent generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y, respectively. The latter is still entering the work life confronted to the previous ones as managers and authority. The challenge of managing a multigenerational workforce remains however still fairly new on company radar screens, and most workplaces have no mechanism to address the issue. It has nevertheless already been well hypothesized, as if these differences are ignored, they can grow into a source of misunderstanding and conflict.

¹ *Members of a generation are “people that grew up during a specific period of history leading to members experiencing the same significant historical or social events during periods of critical development”* (Twenge et al., 2010).

Yet, as Tulgan (2009) promised: *“Generation Y will be the most high-performing workforce in history for those who know how to manage them properly”*.

Figure 1 presents a brief of the main characteristics of the generation (con)currently at work.

Major generations at work					
names	periods of birth ²	alternative names	main characteristics ³		weight ⁴
Silent Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1928 - 1946 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matures, Veterans, Pre-Boomers, World War II generation, Traditionalists, the “Artist” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dedication, sacrifice, and respect for authority 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 percent
Baby Boomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1946 - 1964 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Prophet” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stand out calling for compassionate, honest, competent and spirited leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> honesty as the most important characteristic a leader should possess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 percent (still holding the lion's share of leadership positions in most organizations)
Generation X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1964 - 1982 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “Nomad” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> want their leaders to challenge the system and create change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> honesty is not necessarily the best policy and they are ready to stretch the rules concerning whether one should tell the truth or not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 percent⁵ (include diversity, informality, and self-reliance)
Generation Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1982 - 1995 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gen Y , Nexters, Millennials, Digital Natives, The Net (N-) Generation 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 percent (include sociability, civic duty, and morality)

Figure 1: Major generations at work (combined).

“There are generational differences in how people from different generations want to be led” (Arsenault 2004), this means that Millennials see the world differently than the Silent, Boomer, and Xer generations, not only because of the difference in cohort characteristics but because of the stage in the human life-cycle in which they find themselves. For instance, *“Millennials tend to work well in groups and be self-confident and technologically astute, whereas, Gen Xers tend toward independence and a hands-off style”* (Hadar, 2015).

Generation Y had gained a certain reputation for *“technological savvy, strong collaborative skills, and extreme self-confidence, all of which could make them a dynamic part of any workforce”* (Ferri-Reed, 2014). Many Millennials, however, had also gained a reputation for poor work habits, a lack of initiative, unrealistic expectations, and low respect for authority, yet cynicism seems to prevail when leveling the (publicly debated) issues Millennials are facing.

² No universal consensus is to be found on the exact dates that comprise generations

³ Arsenault (2004)

⁴ Hadar (2015)

⁵ Generation X, is expected by 2040 to outnumber the Baby Boomers

Figure 2 presents the top ten cynical reported issues by academics, journalists, experts with Generation Y, as gathered by Tapscott (2009).

Top ten cynical issues academics, journalists and experts had with Generation Y	
1	• <i>They're dumber than we were at their age</i>
2	• <i>They're screenagers, Net addicted, losing their social skills, and they have no time for sports or healthy activities</i>
3	• <i>They have no shame</i>
4	• <i>Because their parents have coddled them, they are adrift in the world and afraid to choose a path</i>
5	• <i>They steal</i>
6	• <i>They're bullying friends online</i>
7	• <i>They're violent</i>
8	• <i>They have no work ethic and will be bad employees</i>
9	• <i>This is the latest narcissistic "me" generation</i>
10	• <i>They don't give a damn</i>

Figure 2: Tapscott (2009) top ten cynical reported issues with Generation Y.

Now, even though our main focus is based on a Western approach to Generation Y, Millennials around the world can't all be seen as being the same, simply because the world appears as a global marketplace flooded with smartphones and social media. A 2015 Language and Culture Worldwide (LCW)⁶ study on global Millennials showed that:

"What we call the youngest generation, born in or after 1981, varies depending on whom you ask. The term Generation Y is widely used internationally, while Millennials is a more popular term in the United States. To add another layer of complexity, in other countries the youngest generation is called something completely different. In China, Generation Y is referred to as the Post 80's Generation - a reference to those born after the implementation of the One-Child Policy. Many European countries (such as Russia and much of Eastern Europe) refer to Generation Y as the Lost Generation, reflecting the current economic challenges the young are facing in the region. In South Africa, Generation Y is called the Born-Free Generation, as the first generation with no memory of apartheid".

⁶ Oana Amaria. *Generation Y in the workplace*. March 2015 MultiLingual. www.multilingual.com

What to expect?

Literature has revealed some differences between the generations. For the Baby Boomers, or Boomers, *“work and organizational goals are important. Thus, the loyalty to an organization is greater than within the younger generations”*. Generation X, is reported to *“be more “me”-oriented, cynical, and for them work is not the center of attention”* (Smola and Sutton, 2002). On their side, Millennials have grown up with technology, so *“their ways to communicate and enslave the technology differ enormously from the previous generations, and they are more socially active”* (Kulatahti et al., 2013). Each generation brings naturally to the workplace some disruptions of sort, which in turn help shape the corporations into mutant organizations, part geared toward their past, know-how, traditions and history (values) and part pulled by the future where they (are led to) belong (vision). The leveraging point, from the corporation’s perspective, remaining to balance it all, and see the organization leveraging each cohort’s unique (disruptive) strengths.

As such, Millennials believe in themselves and the future. Their being pampered has created the belief they are special and a drive to achieve, following their parents’ advice to study, avoid risk, and take advantage of opportunities. Yet according to Schooley et al. (2009), Millennials *“stress the importance of work-life balance as a result of seeing their parents work long hours and miss school events [and] tend to have less loyalty toward employers than their parents and grandparents did”*. With important implications for the workplace, Schooley et al. (2005) found that *“most Millennials have an “innate” ability to use information technology, are comfortable multitasking while using multiple digital media, and demand interactivity as they construct knowledge. While Millennials often lack a workaholic drive, they compensate by taking advantage of many technologies - often simultaneously - to efficiently perform work”*.

As such, Millennials want the leadership style to be a balanced mixture of flexibility, high demands, responsibility, time for trial and error, clear directions and freedom to do things in their own way, not to mention that they adore collaboration and team play. Many Generation Y employees believe in the statement *“work to live - not live to work”* (Espinoza et al., 2010). *“This new breed of talent does not work for the sake of working”*, shares Sheahan (2005). They want to be able to make time for their friends, families, and hobbies, as they realize that life exists outside work. *“They do not settle for the old way of doing things; but instead always try to find new and more efficient methods”* (Sheahan, 2005), yet this can be frustrating for managers, and for most supervisors Millennials’ attitudes remain a challenge. Indeed, previous generations didn’t necessarily impose their personal expectations on their employers, whereas millennial employees are challenging managers to *“step up their games”*. Millennials, in fact, have grown up in a more inclusive, participatory envi-

ronment than previous generations. In the traditional model, employee performance was “*tied directly to compensation, hence the concept of offering feedback (and raises) once per year. Millennials like feedback, lots of feedback. They want to know where they stand and what they can do to improve and advance*”, states Ferri-Reed (2014), but can’t seem to stand the idea of waiting for them.

Figure 3 shares Hannam and Yordi (2011) communications preferences of each generation.

Generation	Suggested ways to communicate
Boomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Conversations should be more formal, perhaps over coffee or lunch. Boomers tend to see relationship and business results as intertwined. Ask about mutual interests, e.g. “How is your son doing in college?” Make the conversation participative by getting the other’s input, and link your message to the individual or team vision, mission, and values.</i>
Gen Xers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do not waste the person’s time. Be direct and straightforward. Avoid corporate-speak. Send an email or leave a voicemail that states clearly what you want, how it will serve you, and when you want it.</i>
Millennials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be positive. Send a text message or meet face-to-face. Tie the message to your personal goals or the goals the team is working toward. Do not be condescending. Avoid criticism and sarcasm.</i>

Figure 3: Communication in the multi-generational workplace (Hannam and Yordi, 2011).

It can thus be seen that the “younger” the generation, the lesser formal and/or rigid the communication, with a preference over the generations of shortening (in lengths, not in numbers) the interactions. While describing generational preferences for receiving and processing information, Hannam and Yordi (2011) further described the predominant learning style of Millennials as: (A) seeing context and value, (B) searching and exploring with others online in their time and place, (C) connecting to anything, and (D) being tech-savvy. These authors suggest a growing consensus among employers that “*Millennials need mentoring, which does not mean they have nothing to offer, as they tend to be collaborative, respectful of authority, and eager to learn*”.

Indeed, Generation Y expects to work in a transparent organization in which the corporation’s mission, values, operations, problems, and conflicts are open and known to all employees, and where all can access the organization’s vital information and be made aware of decision-making processes. It’s an environment that would benefit all employees, not just the Millennials, but “*because this generation is arriving in the workplace expecting to find transparency, organizations are realizing that they have to make a point of transparency to engage millennial employees*” (Ferri-Reed 2014). Indeed, more than previous generations, Millennials are living for that immediate satisfaction. “The biggest, most important difference between millennial workers and their Boomer or Gen X managers is that they really focus on characteristics of what they are doing in the moment”, Tamara Erickson wrote in 2008⁷.

⁷ Tamara Erickson. 2008. *Plugged In: The Generation Y guide to thriving at work*. Harvard Business Review Press

How to handle them?

The Gen Y cohort has grown up in an age in which seemingly no behavior goes unnoticed and unreported. The norm has been 24 hour news, increased governmental regulation, increased reporting of large-scale ethics violations and, of course, the pervasiveness of social media. They were pushed by their (midlife Baby Boomers) parents to *“winning and achieving became used to getting their way and were raised to believe their opinions matter, the world loves them, and they deserve this love”* (Forbes⁸, 2011).

As adults, Gen Y'ers are *“confident in both themselves and their future, motivated, goal-oriented, optimistic, assertive, and they believe they are “right.” As a result, they feel pressured to succeed and think others should be flexible with them when they want to negotiate scheduling conflicts”* (VanMeter et al., 2013). They prefer to work in groups, and are group oriented rather than being individualistic, and do not particularly conform well to hierarchies. They want more active and inspirational approach from their leader especially the ones who do not enjoy innovative and creative work tasks and are mainly expecting individualized consideration from the leader, or intellectual stimulation.

Each generation can disrupt custom and practice within an organization, but the hope is always that this disruption can be a catalyst for something better to take its place. *“Businesses understand that the competitive landscape is altering and they need to both bring in new talent and retain their top performers to remain relevant. Some businesses in pursuit of greater diversification have sought to bring Generation Y on board through such strategies as reverse mentoring (junior staff advising seasoned executives) or mergers and acquisitions, thus subscribing to a meritocratic culture that helps push aspirational young people to the top table”*⁹. This is where it gets interesting, because Generation Y has not just opened up new markets with revolutionary products and models, over the last few years we have also seen the huge impact of their input on core traditional industries.

Still, they detest micromanaging and often view it as a sign of distrust. Generation Y desires *“to be coached, rather than directed”* shares Sheahan (2005). Surprisingly, *“the biggest friction is with the 35-year-old Gen X (not the Boomers) middle manager who resents the whiney Millennial who needs hand-holding”*, wrote Lisa Orrell¹⁰ in 2008. This is leading to significant changes at many companies, where savvy leaders are shaking up the long-stagnant management level. *“Smart companies are getting really serious about this, stepping up their game with management, finally willing*

⁸ Move over baby boomers! The millennial generation has occupied Wall Street. Forbes (2011). Retrieved, June 18th, 2015 from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/daveserchuk/2011/10/13/the-millennial-generation-has-occupied-wall-street/>

⁹ Gen Y enters the boardroom. Director Magazine. March 2015

¹⁰ Lisa Orrell. 2008. Millennials Incorporated. Intelligent Women Publishing

to go through the hassle of firing mediocre managers” she added. “Because if someone doesn’t like their boss, they’re gonna leave. The other stuff doesn’t matter”.

This generation is adept to working with technology and they expect to do so in the workplace. Balda and Mora (2011), stated that Generation Y was “raised speaking fluently the language of computers, video games, information management and sharing, networks, and the Internet”. Indeed, technology has allowed this generation to “develop hypertext minds, which allow them to gather information rapidly from multiple sources and make connections or links between the data” (Bannon et al., 2011). This ability to take in information from numerous sources all at once and analyze it leads to the next characteristic of Generation Y, multitasking, especially with communication media. They are able to give instant feedback to others and expect it in return. “Sometimes they place more importance on the speed of the response rather than the content in the response” (Cekada, 2012). Generation Y learns best by doing and through visual methods rather than by reading text (Cekada, 2012). They like to discover things on their own and do not like being told the minute details on how to perform a task. Because they are independent learners, they need to be “set in motion and they will find the information they need” (Cekada, 2012) to accomplish the task.

Figure 4 gathers selected tips for leading the Millennials.

Five tips for leading the new generation	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize training and personal development. <p>➔ “Give them a challenge and let them figure it out.” (Tamara Erickson¹¹)</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage collaboration and transparency. <p>➔ Focus on: “Here’s what we have to get done, let’s figure out how to get there.” (Amy Lynch¹²)</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider the schedule. <p>➔ “Be more flexible and try four 10-hour days to give employees a three-day weekend. You’ll make your business a workplace of choice for Millennials.” (Amy Lynch)</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on mentorship. <p>➔ “Millennials have grown up with a lot of guidance from their parents, society and teachers. They truly value and seek hand-holding at work.”(Lisa Orrell¹³)</p>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to social causes. <p>➔ “Talk about the ways you are connected to the community, the ways you make the world a better place.” (Amy Lynch)</p>

Figure 4: Five tips for leading the new generation (*Entrepreneur Magazine*)

The new generation of managers will have “to be, “partners” and “players” in organizations, helping organizations to reach their goals. Besides that, they have to align themselves as a response to a process of cross functioning globalization. In fact, one of the most important characteristic of the Generation Y members seems to be that they are more “out-of-the-box” thinkers” (Kovary and Buahene, 2007). “Generation Y may be missing out on exploring more deeply, enquiry and reflection. They struggle more than previous generations with “difficult workplace conversations” and they need more support in becoming self-aware”, add Schofield and Honoré (2010). The new managers

¹¹ Tamara Erickson, author of *Plugged In: The Generation Y Guide to Thriving at Work*.

¹² Amy Lynch of Nashville-based consulting firm *Generational Edge*.

¹³ Lisa Orrell of San Francisco Bay Area based consultancy *The Orrell Group*. Author of *Millennials Incorporated*

in the generation Y “*want independence to decide on their own, do not need authority, existing models or theories to approach problems and situation. They want supervising and coaching, yet not by experts that tell them “how” to do it or that explains them “what” to do. They need feedback that stimulates them to come with own different and innovative ideas*” (Vinke et al., 2012).

The previously mentioned “*2015 Language and Culture Worldwide (LCW)⁶ study on global Millennials*” also showed that (A) the majority of global Millennials prioritized doing meaningful work, (B) although meaningful work is important, in many instances collaboration, good pay and good relationships with colleagues were an even higher priority in Europe, Asia and the United States, while (C) for African Millennials, equal rights such as nondiscrimination in hiring and promotions, equal pay across races and genders as well as equal working conditions were identified as a top priority. When asked what was most important for them in the workplace, Asian respondents shared that “*although money is important, the type of work is even more important for achieving growth. In Europe, doing meaningful work was prioritized over having a good work life balance. While in Africa, equal rights (an end to discriminatory practices across races and genders) in the workplace was valued over meaningful work*” as cited by Amaria (2015) about the study on global Millennials.

How to nurture them?

Generation Y employees view themselves as valuable merchandise who are not afraid to put numerous positions on their resumes, because they see it as added experience. Generation Ys will be in high demand in the job market due to many factors, such as the retirement of baby boomers, and the relatively smaller size (in the western world) of Generation X. Therefore “*it becomes crucial for managers to retain their Generation Y employees and take advantage of their talents and skills*” (Bannon et al., 2011). Retention of millennial employees has indeed proved problematic for companies whose older managers have failed to evolve beyond traditional corporate leadership strategies. In addition, Millennials do not need to be highly dissatisfied with their current job to make a change. “*If something more attractive comes across their radar screen, in the way of career advancement or lifestyle aspirations, they will leap, regardless of how long they have been with their current employer. Younger workers are increasingly mobile ... with a median turnover of only 1.8 years according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics¹⁴. “People don’t leave companies; they leave managers”*, the saying goes.

¹⁴ B. Lynn Ware is president and CEO of Integral Talent Systems. She wrote (2014). *Stop the Gen Y revolving door*. American Society for Training & Development.

Figure 5 gathers key advices about how to best handle the Millennials.

Seven tips for managing Generation Y	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>create a desirable work environment: one that allows them an opportunity for career development, includes access to technology, offer flexible work schedules, options for telecommuting, flexible work policies, a work-life balance, and trust</i>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>enhance award and recognition programs: feedback and praise serve as reinforcement as well as a corrective mechanism for this generation</i>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>adjust training techniques to Generation Y employees' learning styles: they learn best by doing with a little direction</i>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>stop, collaborate and listen: Generation Y has the unique ability to work well in teams due to their constant need for social connections</i>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>do not micromanage: micromanaging Generation Y employees results in disengagement and a loss of productivity</i>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>give Generation Y employees work that has a greater purpose: generation Y members like to do work that has a greater meaning of which they can see contributes the company in a real way</i>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Utilize sophisticated communication: Generation Y employee sends a message they expect an immediate response, but sometimes they place more value on the speed of the response rather than on its accuracy</i>

Figure 5: Seven tips for managing generation Y (Kilber et al., 2014)

“The key to managing [Generation Y] is about understanding that everyone sees the world their own way” (Sheahan, 2005), a concept that is crucial for managers to understand, for managing generational differences. Espinoza et al., (2010) also stated: “Simply put, failing to suspend the bias of one’s own experience excuses managerial leaders from the adaptive work that is required of them to manage in today’s world. Part of the adaptive process is getting outside of the orbit of your own experience and entering the world in which [Generation Y’s] live”.

Thus, transferring knowledge from one generation to another can be difficult since younger people acquire knowledge and skills differently from older people and have different attitudes on authority, job stability, and learning. Research has shown that knowledge sharing requires trust, which can be compromised when worldviews differ. Organizations *“are now looking at solutions to deal with these knowledge loss and knowledge transfer issues. To efficiently accomplish knowledge transfer, organizations may benefit from changing their traditional means of training to accommodate the preferences of their new employees. These younger people who grew up in a digital world have been shown to prefer digital technologies to the more static teaching methods used to train their predecessors”* shares Hadar (2015). Interestingly, actual changes of the neural circuitry of millennials have been detected, which could *“explain the tendency of many digital natives to succeed in multi-tasking, information filtering, and visual stimulation response while having difficulty with face-to-face interactions and interpreting non-verbal cues”* (Small & Vorgan, 2008). *“These changes in neural circuitry are suggested to be the result of technological skills being acquired and repeated”* they add. This propensity for certain skills or traits not found in previous generations may be directly caused by brain alterations brought on by the Millennials’ unprecedented relationship to and with technology.

Bohl (2008) emphasized the need *“to engage Millennials in the learning process - both in developing the process and learning the material itself”*. He also found that *“Millennials are less likely to internalize material presented in a lecture-only format and cited role-playing, externships, and clinical experiences as strong potential alternatives”*, while Partridge and Hallam (2006) cited *“shorter attention spans and low boredom tolerance as factors leading Millennials to an active learning style”*. Millennials do not necessarily believe that one must come to work with every necessary skill to be successful on the job. Millennials view work as a continual learning experience in which people collaborate in order to reach desired results. *“This heavy desire for feedback and attention has led many organizations to create mentor/mentee relationships that enable new employees to receive the feedback and attention desired, learn from those more knowledgeable, and assist mentors in technology-related tasks that may be less than intuitive”* (Hershatte and Epstein, 2010).

Utilizing technology-based learning techniques could create dissonance around the Millennials characteristic of team-orientation, as many of the techniques listed above are being employed currently in a relatively basic format and frequently do not include interactive team or collaborative elements. Alternately, utilizing technology-based learning techniques aligns well with the Millennials characteristics of multi-tasking, desire for structure, and attention and feedback seeking. New activity-based learning with a technical orientation is becoming increasingly important for a wide variety of stakeholders. Millennials are in part driving some of these changes in organizational learning.

It is thus also that if one company is not meeting the needs of a millennial, that millennial will most likely not think twice about finding another company that will meet those needs more effectively. Conversely, *“when Millennials feel valued and appreciated, employers are typically rewarded with loyalty, passion, and enthusiastic work”* (Hershatte and Epstein, 2010). Organizations wishing to reduce attrition and turnover should consider training from the perspective of the millennial generation in order to assess the level of loyalty they are inspiring (or should expect) through training design. If Millennials characteristics and tendencies are ignored, organizations run the risk of failing to effectively transfer knowledge to trainees. It is however important to remember that *“most training audiences are still comprised of several generations, and implementation of entirely millennial preferred training design may not be appropriate. At the same time, the risks to loyalty and effective knowledge transfer must be considered. The loss of millennial employees because of a lack of millennial-preferred training design has the potential to significantly impact organizational climate, future growth and development of organizations”* concede Farrell and Hurt (2014).

Conclusion

Tomorrow's star performers and talents are created in organizations today. Disconnection between these young professionals and their leader results only in wasted time and money, as organizations are usually investing efforts on their new employees. *"This mismatch can be dangerous when building future success. Thus, managing Generation Y has to be nurtured in organizations"* (Schofield & Honoré 2011). Loyalty and job satisfaction from this group can be encouraged *"by involving them in decision making and showing value and respect for their opinions"* (Morgan, 2006).

The Millennials are the first generation to completely grow up around information, media, advertising, and entertainment. Overall they are healthier and more economically secure than any earlier generation as per their all-time high rate of high school graduation and college degree completion. Because they were often raised as active participants in the running of their households, they have a remarkable ability to work the system and tend to respect authority without being awed by it, *"because they view management as a participative process"* (Morgan, 2006). In a sense, they have a better understanding of the importance of everyone's role in the organization, whereas previous generations placed more values on the hierarchy and the members at the top of the organization's hierarchy.

However, these youngest workers are the most likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs and their organizations and to feel they are being treated unfairly by the organization and its procedures. The way Generation Y can disrupt traditional industries is akin to a new industrial revolution. While such rapid change may make some feel uncomfortable, an even bigger upheaval is right round the corner. Just behind Generation Y is Generation Z. Born after the mid-1990s these are the first generation of *"tech-natives"*, who grew up never knowing life without the internet. Their impact on the workplace could make Generation Y seem like a mere bump in the road, in comparison.

Keenly interested by the topic raised by Tamara Erickson¹⁵, both as a DBA Candidate (academically) and as a Graduate and Post Graduate teacher (rationally), I have over the years aimed at understanding better those (nowadays) *"young adults"*. Aware of their differing perspective on life and things, I have always defended a point of view that *"they too shall bring something to the corporate (common) good"*, and that the disruption they are representing for my Generation (X) must have been of the same token, as the one I/we have brought to the corporate world for the Boomers' one, not so long ago.

And as Tamara Erickson kept saying in Sao Paulo: *"it is ok to be different"*.

¹⁵ Tamara Erickson: *How to lead a multi-generational workforce*. HSM Leadership Forum, April 09th, 2015, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

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