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# Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

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INTERGENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION  
IN THE WORKPLACE

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate School of  
Clemson University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
Professional Communication

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by  
Gayle Elizabeth Ruddick  
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Accepted by:  
Dr. Sean Williams, Committee Chair  
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## ABSTRACT

For the first time in history there are four generations in the workforce: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Generation Y, the emergent working generation, has a vastly different way of communicating, a different perspective on work, and a different set of needs and values than those who dominate the current workforce. When Traditionalists and Baby Boomers retire Generation Y will be placed into professional positions they may not be prepared for. With the current trend of young people frequently changing jobs and feeling unfulfilled by the work they do, Generation Y needs guidance, leadership, and mentoring in order to become the professionals the workforce needs. In order for this to happen, older generations have to take those leadership roles now before they retire. The major issue is that there is a drastic difference in generational characteristics, values, needs, and communication practices between older generations and Generation Y, which may hinder this much-needed mentoring.

This empirical study interviewed 17 participants and conducted focus groups containing 12 different participants whom are categorized as Generation Y. Interviews and focus groups addressed Generation Y's needs and expectations of the workplace, preferred communication practices, and desired leadership qualities. Based on participant responses, this study then explored how Generation Y most effectively responds to leadership communication practices in the workplace, and how leaders can adjust behavioral communication patterns for an emergent workforce.

This study found that Generation Y seeks conflicting leadership communication patterns. They desire directive and consultative leadership communication yet they want to be autonomous when working while still craving praise and guidance. This paradox in desired leadership is a result of Generation Y's orientations and needs, which are much different than those of older generations. Due to this paradox and the lack of responses from participants the question emerged: is the concept of leadership obsolete? This study found that leadership is *wanted* among Generation Y. Leaders have to establish personal relationships founded in trust and adapt on a situation-by-situation basis to successfully communicate with Generation Y.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average American between the ages of 18-30 has held seven to eight different jobs (Gray). Management Consultant, Marnie Green suggests financial debt and instability, intensified competition in the job market, and a delusional view of workplace expectations, requirements, and culture has led to an increase in turnover among young people (1-9). Today's emergent working generation has a vastly different way of communicating (physically and technologically), a different perspective on work (work culture, work-life balance, and the workplace itself), and a different outlook on life in general than those who dominate the current workplace: the Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, and Generation X generations. Due to generational differences in communication practices and workplace expectations versus workplace realities, employers are having a difficult time retaining young, qualified, and valuable employees.

As the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations will soon retire, Generation Y will join Generation X and take over the workforce. There are approximately 25 million more Baby Boomers than Generation X. Twenty-five million working Americans is a huge gap to fill. According to communication consultant Christine Zust, When Traditionalists and Baby Boomers retire, Generation X will be expected to do more work in the workplace, while Generation Y will be catapulted into professional positions they may not be prepared for due to their lack of experience (Zust). With the current trend of young people frequently changing jobs and feeling unfulfilled by the work they do,

Generation Y needs guidance, leadership, and mentoring in order to become the professionals the workforce needs. In order for this to happen, older generations need to take those leadership roles now before they retire. The issue is there is a drastic difference in generational characteristics, values, needs, and communication practices between older generations and Generation Y, which may hinder this much-needed mentoring. There is a need to reevaluate and revise thinking on how to communicate and lead young workers.

A starting point is to evaluate generational characteristics and leadership communication in the workplace. While there is extensive research on generational characteristics and leadership theory, there is a gap in research on leadership theory as it applies to a young, emergent workforce. By examining the differences in generational characteristics, values, and needs among young people in the workplace today and those of current workers, as well as the leadership communication preferred among Generation Y, the findings of this research study discovered that Generation Y has unreasonable leadership expectations. This study found Generation Y seeks conflicting leadership communication patterns. According to participants, a leader needed to communicate in a directive manner yet give them the autonomy to work alone but consult with followers. They also wanted praise and guidance but found negative feedback—a type of ineffective communication. Due to these paradoxes in communication it became clear leadership needs to operate on a situation-by-situation basis concerning Generation Y, which agrees with much of the literature about leadership theory. The results of this study found Path-Goal Theory to be a more appropriate leadership theory that may apply to Generation Y.

Interestingly, it was the lack of results and the paradoxical results from this study that led this study to question whether leadership is identifiable among members of Generation Y. Generation Y *wants* leaders. Leaders have to be malleable and build relationships with Generation Y to be successful.

This chapter develops the framework for this study in two stages. The first stage describes the current workforce's generational characteristics and needs from the perspectives of Kenneth Burke, Karl Mannheim, and Abraham Maslow. The second stage outlines leadership communication behaviors and how those behaviors operate within leadership theory. The chapter concludes with a discussion of generational characteristics, needs, and adaptations of leadership theory.

### Orientations and Collective Memory

Generations were chosen for this study because for the first time in history four different generations (Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y) are present in the workforce. Due to generational diversity, there are major shifts in communication across generations. In order to gain an understanding of what makes these generations diverse, an exploration of how generational identity is formed at the individual level and then at the group level was examined. The following discusses Kenneth Burke's theory on the development of individual orientations followed by Karl Mannheim's analysis of what "generation" means and how generational perspectives are developed as a collective.

One major objective of this study was to gain some understanding of generational characteristics, perspectives, and needs. Burke explains individual perspectives with his

theory of orientations. In Kenneth Burke's book Permanence and Change, his theory of orientations synthesizes the concept of developing character and judgment. Burke describes developing character and judgment at an animal level using an analogy between a trout and human judgment.

We may begin by noting the fact that all living organisms interpret many of the signs about them. A trout, having snatched at a hook but having had the good luck to escape with a rip in his jaw, may even show by his wiliness thereafter that he can revise his critical appraisals. His experience has led him to form a new judgment, which we should verbalize as a nicer discrimination between food and bait. A different kind of bait may outwit him, if it lacks the appearances by which he happens to distinguish 'jaw-ripping food.' And perhaps he passes up many a morsel of genuine food simply because it happens to have the characters which he, as the result of his informing experience, has learned to take as the sign of bait. I do not mean to imply that the sullen fish has thought all this out. I mean simply that in his altered response, for a greater or lesser period following the hook-episode, he manifests the changed behavior that goes with a new meaning, he has a more educated way of reading the signs. It does not matter how conscious or unconscious one chooses to imagine this critical step—we need only note here the outward manifestation of a revised judgment. (Burke 5)

As this quote demonstrates, Burke's theory of orientations find that "all living organisms" enter the world as the world is already operating. Organisms then respond, adjust, and adapt to the situation around them. Humans thereafter try to interpret what exactly happened and thus gain character from past experiences. Based on these past experiences, humans attribute significance and thus repeatedly revise their judgment. This informed judgment allows humans to learn what to expect in the future. Thus, a human's orientation is created. As Burke states, "Orientation is thus a bundle of judgments as to how things were, how they are, and how they may be" (14). Much like the trout, humans learn the difference between food and bait and, therefore, "revise [their] judgment" on a continual basis. "Revised judgment" informs human action. For through

ourselves and our relationships, “we have implicit judgments not only as to how the world may become but also as to what means we should employ to make it so” (Burke 14).

While Burke believes that orientations are created at an individual basis, Karl Mannheim finds that those orientations are more heterogeneous than Burke may assume. Instead of looking at character as developing on an individual basis, Mannheim approaches the development of character through a collective basis. Mannheim states, “The generation one is born into is unalterable [...]. Ultimately, placement in a given generation should be considered a ‘particular type of social location’” (qtd. in Carver and Candela 986). Based on the placement of one’s social location, Mannheim theorized generations are socially constructed. In his book The Problem of Generations, Mannheim describes people as being born into a particular generation from which they live through specific historical experiences. Mannheim, along with more recent scholars, found that the experiences lived through adolescence and early adulthood (formative years) shape generational perspectives (Dencker, Joshi, and Martocchio 182). A generational identity is thus socially constructed through the members of the generational cohort themselves based on what Halbwachs termed, a “collective memory” of common historical events from which members of generation experience (Schuman and Scott 359, 378). These experiences create a lens which “colours their perspectives of their own life experiences,” according to Mannheim (qtd. in Carver and Candela 986), and ultimately influence later attitudes and behaviors (Dencker, Joshi, and Martocchio 182).

Mannheim finds that people create a generational identity and perspectives based on the point in time they were placed on earth and the experiences they have thereafter. People of the same generation will have similar perspectives based on lived experiences like the Vietnam War, a presidential assassination, and 9/11. Of course this is not to stereotype or say every member of a generation will have the same perspective, but the majority of a generation will have certain perspectives and characteristics based on shared historical experiences (Carver and Candela 986).

Burke argues that an individual's experience will differ from another individual's, thus no two orientations, character, or judgments will be the same. Mannheim on the other hand, contends that because major, historical, experienced events occur to a generation of people, their characters will thus be shaped more similarly than those of another generation. While it is true, no two "bundle of judgments" (Burke 14) will be the same, their "collective memory" (Schuman and Scott 378) will allow for similar perspectives. One of the main goals of this study was to gain an understanding of generational characteristics, perspectives, and needs. Burke and Mannheim specifically address this. According to Hugh Duncan, who authored the Introduction to Permanence and Change, "Burke demands that we become masters of *many* perspectives in order that we may understand *one* perspective" (Duncan xv). Coming to a complete understanding of one perspective is impossible and as Mannheim wrote, "In order to understand the perspective of people born in another generation, one must attempt to view it from the outside, with true and total comprehension being impossible" (qtd. in Carver and Candela 986). While it was impossible to achieve a "total comprehension" of each generation,

this study provided the groundwork for coming to a closer comprehension of Generation Y's orientations, perspectives, and needs. Gaining some understanding of how Generation Y's orientations and "collective memories" were formed provided a background for the research inquiries: "What are considered ideal job attributes?"; "How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?"; and "How does Generation Y define a leader?" (which were asked of Generation Y participants in this study), which aided in answering the research question, "How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?" These inquiries gauged Generation Y's workplace expectations, and effective and ineffective communication and leadership. By using Burke's and Mannheim's theories, they explain generational diversity and why Generation Y's perspective of work and communication is drastically different from previous generations.

### Needs

It is not enough to merely examine the orientations and perspectives of the current working generations. People are motivated to work for various reasons. Some of those reasons are basic needs, like providing food and shelter for survival. Other motivations for working are based on higher need levels, such as gaining status in social groups and self-development. Humans have to work in order to fulfill certain needs and those needs will resonate in the job attributes and leaders in the workplace one seeks. By exploring human needs, the research inquiries of this study, "What are considered ideal job attributes?" and "How does Generation Y define a leader?" was more fully understood.

The following section addresses human motivation and needs according to Abraham Maslow.

For the purpose of understanding what Generation Y seeks in an ideal job to fulfill their needs, Abraham Maslow's motivation theory and Need Hierarchy were analyzed. Maslow finds in studying motivation, part of motivation requires the study of "human goals or desires or needs" (5). He states, the "individual is motivated rather than just a part [of the individual]." To that end, once an individual is satisfied, it is the whole individual that is satisfied (3). Motivation is driven by the unconscious because "particular desires that pass through our consciousness dozens of times a day are not in themselves so important as what they stand for, where they lead, what they ultimately mean upon deeper analysis" (5). When analyzing one's motivation, certain factors need to be taken into consideration, such as the nature of the human and the situation or environment in which the human is placed. Based on that situation or environment, human behavior is determined much like Burke's orientations and revised judgment. Maslow claims that "human motivation rarely actualizes itself in behavior except in relation to the situation and to other people" (10). However, it is not the environment or culture that creates barriers from actualizing motivation, it is the individual. Maslow writes, "individuals partly create their barriers and their objects of value, that they must be defined partially in terms set by the particular organism in the situation... Physiologically there is no such thing as a barrier there is only a barrier for a particular person who is trying to get something that he or she wants" (10). It is possible for humans to place barriers from attaining their own desires or needs because of their

orientations. To refer to Burke, based on an individual's lived experiences, he or she will "revise judgment" (5), and create their own barriers.

Maslow's Needs Hierarchy can easily be applied to generational needs. By examining each generation according to Maslow's Needs Hierarchy, one can see there is a clear distinction between one generation's needs from another generation's needs.

Older generations who act as leaders should be aware of the difference in generational needs so that they can better help fulfill them. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy contains five levels of human need, arranged in order from basic to complex (Blech and Belch 109).

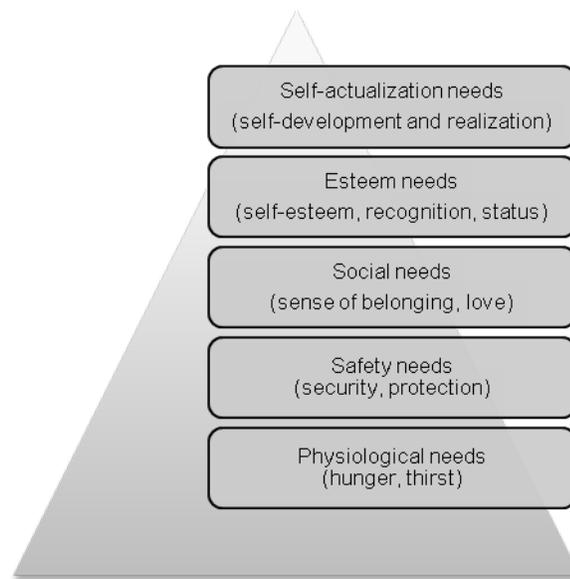
On the first, lowest, most basic level, humans have physiological needs, such as hunger and thirst.

At the second level humans require safety, such as security and protection. Often safety needs can be translated into "preference for a job with tenure and protection, the desire for a

saving account, and for insurance of

various kinds (medical, dental, unemployment, disability, old age)" (Maslow 18). The third level deals with humans' social needs, including a sense of belonging and love.

Those who have unsatisfied social needs lack positions with friends, family, a mate, and colleagues (Maslow 20). The fourth level entails esteem needs: humans need to build



**Figure 1.1: Maslow's Needs Hierarchy**

self-esteem, gain status, and feel recognized. Esteem needs are twofold: “first the desire for strength, achievement, adequacy, mastery and competence, confidence in the face of the world, and independence and freedom. Second, we have what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation” (Maslow 21). The fifth, top level is the self-actualization need, such as the development of one’s self and the need to find a realization of one’s self. Maslow defines self-actualization as “people’s desire for self-fulfillment, namely, the tendency for them to become actualized in what they are potentially...to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (22). As the pyramid grows, it is harder and harder to achieve the top-level needs.

Maslow’s Needs Hierarchy is dynamic in structure and function. When a human is dominated by a particular need then the human’s “whole philosophy of the future tends...to change” (Maslow 17). In a sense, when a particular need dominates a human, his or her behavior is governed by that unsatisfied need. Once the need is satisfied, a higher need emerges, and the previous needs cease to exist as “active determinants or organizers of behavior” (Maslow 17-18). After a need is satisfied, it is no longer important.

When comparing generations to Maslow’s Need Hierarchy, there is a correlation between generational orientations and the needs that have developed from those orientations. One may find it arguable to generalize an entire generation of people based on common life experiences and needs, but as both Mannheim and Maslow suggest,

humans are more alike than one may think. Maslow finds that a human's "fundamental or ultimate desires" (e.g. love, belonging, esteem, etc.) do not differ as much as their everyday desires (6). Maslow compares desires as a means to satisfying needs or "ends": "Apparently ends in themselves are far more universal than the roads taken to achieve those ends, for these roads are determined locally in the specific culture. Human beings are more alike than one would think at first" (Maslow 6). Although the road one takes may differ from the next person, the desire or need or "end" will be the same.

### Leadership Theories

Thus far, this chapter has presented the first theoretical framework used to explain generational identity. Burke's theory on orientations suggest we act based on our bundle of judgments we have developed due to past experiences. Mannheim takes this theory a step further and implies, based on the social location from which people are born, they live through historical experiences which create orientations but also create a "collective memory" among people of one generation. Thus, members of a generation are homogeneous. Similarly, Maslow finds that humans are fundamentally the same based on needs. Although every human will have a different orientation, a generation of people is alike because of their "collective memories" and the needs they have to fulfill. In order to fulfill those needs, humans have to work. The second theoretical framework this study explores is leadership in the workplace. Due to generational diversity (based on orientations, "collective memories," and needs) retention of young employees is problematic. Leaders in the workplace need to be aware of this diversity since Generation Y will be taking over the workforce at an exponential rate in the near future.

Strong leadership in the workplace is necessary in order to retain young workers and help them reach their potential. In order to create strong leadership in the workplace, an exploration of how leaders interact with followers (subordinates) on a communicative level is outlined here. The following portion of this chapter outlines leadership communication behaviors and how those behaviors function in certain types of leadership theory.

The key to strong leadership is interaction between leaders and followers. This study focuses on the communicative interaction or the communicative behavior of leader toward follower. One model of behavioral communication is Bernard Bass and Enzo Valenzi's Five Leadership Model created in 1974. The original purpose of their investigation was to "test and modify a model accounting for the tendency of managers to be directive, participative, or to pursue styles in between such as manipulative, delegative, and consultative" (Bass and Valenzi 131). Their research was a two-person system of inputs, transforms, and outputs. The inputs consisted of organizational constraints, tasks, power between subordinates and manager, and the difference in the amount of information managers and subordinates know. The managerial styles that will most affect subordinates are the transform. The outputs are effectiveness and satisfaction (Bass and Valenzi 132-133; Bass et al. 720). Bass and Valenzi created the Five Leadership Model based on their research. The Five Leadership Model identifies leader behavior when interacting with followers.

Table 1.1 explains the five leadership behaviors as described by Bass and Valenzi. The leader acts in a directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, and/or delegative manner toward subordinates.

**Table 1.1: Five Leadership Model (adapted from Gill 44; Bass and Valenzi 139)**

<b>Leadership style</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Directive</b>	You tell subordinates what to do and how to do it. You initiate action. You tell subordinates, what is expected of them, specifying standards of performance and setting deadlines for completion of prescribed ways of doing things. You also ensure they are working to capacity, reassigning tasks to balance the workload.
<b>Consultative</b>	You tell subordinates what to do, but only after discussing matters with them first and hearing their opinions, feelings, ideas, and suggestions.
<b>Participative</b>	You discuss and analyze problems with your subordinates to reach consensus on what to do and how to do it. Decisions are made by the group as a whole and your subordinates have as much responsibility for decisions as you do. They participate as equals in decision-making.
<b>Negotiative (manipulative)</b>	You employ political means and bargaining to gain desired ends, making political alliances, promising subordinates rewards for meeting expectations, releasing information to suit your interests, maintaining social distance, 'bending' the rules, encouraging subordinates to compete, and 'selling' decisions to them.
<b>Delegative</b>	You describe the problem or need and the conditions that have to be met, and you make suggestions, but you leave it to subordinates to decide what to do and how to do it.

This Five Leadership Model is the focal point of this study. While Bass and Valenzi's leadership model is traditionally used to describe leadership behavior, for the purposes of this study, leadership behaviors are considered behavioral communication of leaders directed to followers because, after all, leadership behaviors are communication activities.

Directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, and delegative leadership behaviors function within certain types of leadership theory. Since this study concentrates on the relationship between leader and follower, only certain categories of leadership theory, which center on the relationship between leader and follower, were explored. Those categories of theory are, Psychodynamic theories, Contingency theories, and the “New Leadership” theories. Reviewing these theories conceptualize the relationship between leader and follower. These categories of leadership theory are outlined here but will be revisited in-depth in Chapter Four – Analysis.

Roger Gill, Director of the Research Centre for Leadership Studies at The Leadership Trust Foundation, describes Psychodynamic theories as focused on “the characteristics of the leader, their individual followers and their relationship” (46). If followers permit leaders to influence them, then leaders will give direction and guidance (Gill 46). Psychodynamic theories, such as Leader-Member Exchange, primarily examine one-on-one relationships between a leader and a follower. Leaders who practice Psychodynamic theories do not exhibit directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, or delegative communication behaviors of leadership; however, Psychodynamic theories emphasize that followers contribute and give feedback in order for leaders to be more effective (Gill 46).

Contingency theories of leadership argue the situation will dictate the behavioral style of leadership used, thus there is no best leadership communicative behavior for every leader. However, some theories that are classified as Contingency theories do prefer certain leadership behaviors. Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Leadership

suggests that leadership styles are either “‘telling’ (directive), ‘selling’ (consultative), ‘participating’ and delegating’” based on the follower’s maturity level within the organization (Gill 48). Similarly, Reddin’s 3-D Model of Leadership demonstrates whether a leadership behavioral style will be effective or ineffective based on the situation. Leadership styles that he considers effective are the bureaucrat (delegative), the developer (participative), the executive (consultative), and the benevolent autocrat (directive) (Gill 48-49). By reading the situation, a leadership behavior based on Reddin’s 3-D model of leadership can be applied (Gill 49).

Similar to Situational Leadership and Reddin’s 3-D Model, another Contingency theory that employs a variety of leadership behavioral communication is Path-Goal Theory. Leadership communication theorists Dr. Michael Hackman and Dr. Craig Johnson, describe Path-Goal Theory as examining how followers will be more motivated and productive if they believe completing a task will place them on a “path to a valuable goal” (70). The leader’s role is to shape the follower’s perception in a way that clarifies the path to the task and the desirability of the goal (Hackman and Johnson 70). Leaders are responsible for clearly communicating tasks and rewards, removing barriers along the way, and thus creating personal satisfaction among followers. Leadership behavioral styles used in Path-Goal Theory are participative and directive, and two other styles not listed by Bass and Valenzi, supportive (“Interpersonal communication focusing on concerns for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction”) and achievement oriented (“Communication focusing on goal attainment and accomplishment, emphasizing the achievement of excellence by

demonstrating confidence in the ability of followers to achieve their goals”) (Hackman and Johnson 70).

“New Leadership” theories can be described best as Bass and Avolio’s Full-Range Leadership model consisting of Laissez-faire, Transactional leadership (directive), Transformational leadership (consultative, participative, delegative, directive). Laissez-faire leaders allow followers the autonomy to work as they please and refrain from any participation with followers unless asked (Bass 547). Essentially, Laissez-faire leaders abdicate all power and use no particular leadership style (Gill 51). Transformational leadership extends from Transactional leadership. Transactional leadership rewards followers contingent on their performance. The motivational appeals used in Transactional leadership are “designed to satisfy basic human needs,” to refer to Maslow; the basic needs are considered physiological, safety, and social needs (Hackman and Johnson 88, 90). Most Transactional leadership demonstrates a directive leadership style in order for followers to achieve objectives (Gill 51). The Transformational leader goes beyond merely satisfying lower-level needs. The Transformational leader motivates followers to achieve “performance beyond expectations” to help followers satisfy higher-level needs of self-esteem and self-actualization (Bass qtd. in Gill 52; Hackman and Johnson 88). Transformational leaders “...stimulate followers to transcend their own immediate self-interest for the greater good of the group, organization, or society. Transformational leadership makes a positive impact on empowerment, motivation and morality” (Gill 52). According to Bass, transformational leaders have four common characteristics: individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation,

and idealized influence. These characteristics are closely related to delegative, consultative, participative, and directive in different ways (Gill 53).

The following table displays the above-mentioned leadership theories and which leadership communication behaviors (from the Five Leadership Model) operate within each.

**Table 1.2: Leadership Theory and Leadership Behavior that Function within Each Theory**

<i>Leadership Theory</i>	<i>Directive</i>	<i>Consultative</i>	<i>Participative</i>	<i>Negotiative</i>	<i>Delegative</i>	<i>No Clear Style/Other</i>
<b>Leader-Member Exchange</b>						X
<b>Situational Leadership</b>	X	X	X		X	
<b>Reddin's 3-D Model</b>	X	X	X		X	
<b>Path-Goal Theory</b>	X		X			X
<b>Laissez-Faire</b>						X
<b>Transactional Leadership</b>	X					
<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	X	X	X		X	X

Psychodynamic, Contingency, and the “New Leadership” theories provide a basic understanding of how leaders interact with followers, as well as the behaviors of leaders to followers in those theories. This study has outlined these theories to acknowledge that preferred leadership of Generation Y somewhat aligns with the current literature. This backdrop of leadership theory will be revisited in the Analysis chapter to examine the most applicable leadership theory to use with Generation Y.

### Generational Demographics of the Current Workforce

The previous portion of this chapter has presented two theoretical frameworks from which to study generational characteristics and explore preferred leadership

practices of Generation Y. As discussed previously, Burke finds that humans, on an individual level, develop orientations based on lived experiences. Those orientations inform their judgments, which direct their actions. Similarly, Mannheim believes historic experiences generate character, which thus direct action. But Mannheim finds that humans are more heterogeneous than Burke may believe. Because generational cohorts live through the same historical experiences, a generational cohort has a “collective memory,” which causes that cohort to have a similar perspective, which in turn creates diversity between generational perspectives. Additionally, Maslow’s motivation theory and Need Hierarchy anchors Burke’s and Mannheim’s approaches to orientations and social perspectives to the basic motivation to work and to fulfill needs through work. Due to generational diversity, differing communication practices, workplace expectations, values, and attitudes, leadership in today’s workplace is challenging. Since Generation Y is the emergent workforce that will advance quickly once Traditionalists and Baby Boomers retire, they need leadership in the workplace. There is a lack of leadership in the workplace as demonstrated by the high turnover rate of young workers. Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X have developed strong distinctions in character, values, needs, communication, and perspectives based on their orientations and “collective memories.” Generation Y is a developing generation and do not have those strong distinctions as of yet. It is essential for leaders to understand from what perspective they come and try to come close to “total comprehension” (Mannheim qtd. in Carver and Candela 986) of the perspectives of those they lead. Although “total comprehension” is impossible, attempting to achieve some comprehension is important.

Thus, the conclusion of this chapter provides an overview of the generational characteristics as applied to the theories previously discussed.

Currently, four generations comprise the workforce: the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. Researchers disagree as to the exact ages and population sizes of each generation, but an estimation of each generation's year of birth and population are the following: the Traditionalists were born between 1927–1947 with a population of 44.2 million (making up 8.5 percent of the workforce), the Baby Boomers were born between 1947–1965 with a population of 76.8 million (39.9 percent of the workforce), Generation X was born between 1965–1981 with a population of 52.4 million (35.7 percent of the workforce), and Generation Y was born between 1981–2000 with a population of 77.6 million (15.8 percent of the workforce) (Dobbs et al.; Carver and Candela 989; Zust).

### Traditionalists

Traditionalists are also known as the “silent generation” and they know the meaning and value of hard work. During this generation's formative years they lived through the Great Depression and World War II, which is ingrained in their “collective memories.” People of this generation were “called on... of all ages to make various sacrifices, some through rationing of goods and services for those at home, and some through the ultimate sacrifice of fighting and dying in service to their country. The people of this generation grew up with a strong value placed on sacrifice for the greater good of everyone, loyalty and hard work” (Carver and Candela 986). Researchers Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas found that as a result of their orientation, which was a

tough upbringing, this cohort defines success by a steady paycheck, stability, and security. They are firm believers in playing the game hard and by the rules, and staying loyal to company and country with the expectation that such loyalty will be rewarded. As a result, Traditionalists have had only one to two careers in their lifetime (Bennis and Thomas 48, 37). According to author Brenda Douville, by nature, this cohort works hard and puts in their time. They tend to find satisfaction from work itself, rather than from the meaning within the work they do and tend to favor obedience instead of individualism (Douville).

Emerging from the Great Depression and World War II, the Traditionalists entered the workforce with a desire to fulfill Maslow's two bottom level needs of providing food, shelter, and safety for themselves and their families, which they may not have had growing up. Staying in one career for the duration of their lives and staying loyal to the organization gives them a sense of job security, which in turn would provide the physiological and safety needs they desired.

Traditionalists value keeping one's word, mutual respect, loyalty, and trust. Face-to-face communication, formal language, and straight-to-the-point types of speech are the best communication styles for this group (Zust). As leaders, this generation is accustomed to "taking charge and making decisions alone," and as followers, they "thrive under a directive leadership style," states Daryl Green, author and leadership consultant (18). Traditionalists' leadership paradigm can best be categorized by the U.S. Army acronym OODA – observe, orient, decide, and act (Bennis and Thomas 83). Traditional

leadership practices in the workplace begin with observation and reflection, and action is taken last in a given situation (Bennis and Thomas 83).

### Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers grew up in a post-war, prosperous, and expansion period in the United States. The common historical events this generation lived through during their adolescence and early adulthood that created their “collective memories” and have shaped their perspectives on life include the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; man landing on the moon; the invention of the birth control pill; campus protests; the Korean War; and the Vietnam War (Carver and Candela 987). The Baby Boomer’s perspective has been shaped due to living during a time of constant social, political, and technological change, and because of that, this group has “always felt compelled to change the system” (Arnold and Williams 18).

Baby Boomers grew up in a more prosperous time than that of the Traditionalists, so their needs are higher on Maslow’s Needs Hierarchy than Traditionalists. While still needing to achieve their physiological and safety needs, Baby Boomers seek to achieve social needs within their workplace. By working hard and staying loyal to the organization, Baby Boomers find a sense of belonging and of being part of the organization, which, in their eyes, is bigger than themselves.

Much like Traditionalists, Baby Boomers are hard workers. Nearing 80 million people in size, this generation is accustomed to competition due to their size. Committed to climbing the corporate ladder, this generation began the “workaholic” trend. Unlike

Traditionalists, Baby Boomers “demanded a role in making decisions that affected their lives”; however, once involved in decision-making “they typically reciprocated with loyalty to their employer” (Cole, Smith, and Lucas). Baby Boomers are characterized as egotistical and competitive with peers and, as a result, are blamed for being “all talk and no action” (Zust; Douville). Baby Boomers prefer face-to-face or electronic communication, and an open and direct style of communication (Zust). As leaders, this generation leads “in a collegial and consensual fashion with a general concern of others.... [and thus] thrive under a participatory leadership style” (D. Green 18). Much like Traditionalists, the leadership paradigm of Baby Boomers can be categorized as OODA or COP—control, order, predict, according researchers Warren Bennis and Robert Townsend (Bennis and Townsend 95). The OODA and COP paradigms enforce a bureaucratic structure in organizations and do not encourage taking risks, changing the system, or adapting during a situation. Instead, these paradigms require leaders to command and control (Bennis and Townsend 95-96).

### Generation X

During Generation X’s upbringing there was an increase in women in the workforce and a higher divorce rate. Thus, members of Generation X were often referred to as “latchkey kids,” who learned to become independent at a very young age. According to Mannheim, it is during those independent, formative years when Generation X shaped their perspectives. Technology played a large role in Generation X’s young lives as Television and Cable TV became standard and was sometimes babysitters for this generation. TV provided access to a larger world for this generation.

They literally witnessed the diagnosis of AIDS, the first space shuttle launch, the Cold War, and the Iranian Hostage Crisis (Carver and Candela 1987; Cole, Smith, and Lucas).

Perhaps due to the lack of parental presence, Generation X created a drastic paradigm shift in work perspectives from that of older generations. Instead of living to work, Generation X works to live. Working is merely a “means to an end” and maintaining social and family relationships take priority for this group (Cole, Smith, and Lucas). While stereotypically this generation is labeled as “lacking a work ethic, loyalty, and commitment” (Carver and Candela 1988), this stereotype is not all together true. Generation X will work hard to survive, but at the end of the work day, they want to “pursue other interests” (Arnold and Williams 18).

Contributing to this theme, during the early 2000s Generation X “saw downsizing, widespread lay-offs and corporate scandals,” and thus do not trust large corporations or the government to keep them economically secure (Craver and Candela 1988; Cole, Smith, and Lucas). In fact, they expect job loss. The widespread corporate scandals that occurred during their formative years has been ingrained in Generation X’s orientations and revised judgments (Burke 14, 5). As a result Generation X has a complete opposite view of organizational loyalty than that of previous generations. Generation X has no problem switching job positions or employers for advancement. This group will not build a career but builds skills in order to transfer job positions. Generation X operates from a survival perspective mainly due to their upbringing. As children they were unsupervised and more unprotected than previous generations, and

thus have become self-reliant, practical, confident decision-makers (Craver and Candela 988; Cole, Smith, and Lucas).

Although Generation X's work perspectives differ from previous generations, their needs are similar. Like Baby Boomers, Generation X has social needs but they will not satisfy them in the workplace. Generation X fulfills their social needs through family and friend relationships, and they take the time to strengthen those bonds. Possibly just as important as their social needs are Generation X's safety needs. Survivalists at heart, Generation X were the most unsupervised and unprotected generation to date (Carver and Candela 988), and as a result, they try to fulfill their safety needs by creating their own security through transferable skills and staying prepared for an uncertain employment climate. Also, Generation X is considered to be the first generation that will not exceed the wealth or standard of living of their parents, and they know it (Carver and Candela 988). Thus, status and esteem needs are not as important.

When communicating, Generation X uses email as its main medium of communication. They would prefer to be spoken to in a straightforward, informal manner (Zust). As leaders, this group is "adaptable to change, fair, competent, participatory, and diversity-sensitive" (D. Green 18). Similarly, as followers, they do not thrive under an authoritative style of leadership (D. Green 18). Generation X is in the midst of a leadership paradigm shift. It is not clear as to what paradigm Generation X operates under, but it is possible Generation X has set the stage for a workplace leadership paradigm shift, while Generation Y is implementing it.

## Generation Y

Unlike older generations, Generation Y's orientations and perspectives are still developing since all members are in their formative years. Generation Y's lived, communal, historical experiences have been a rollercoaster of prosper, tragedy, and progress. During their adolescence and young adult years, older members of Generation Y experienced U.S. economic growth and terrorism, such as 9/11, school shootings (Columbine and Virginia Tech), and the Oklahoma City Bombing. They also experienced and witnessed natural disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. Also, this generation is the first to be led by an African-American President. Younger members of this generation will have only known an African-American President, which will alter perspectives on race relations and social equality drastically from that of previous generations.

Unlike Generation X, Generation Y has grown up in a very structured lifestyle created by their parents and the public education system (No Child Left Behind). At the end of the school day, most were shuttled to soccer practice and voluntary community service, followed by piano lessons and SAT prep, then dinner, homework, and bed. Perhaps due to Generation X's large teen employment rate or the competitive spirit of their Baby Boomer parents, Generation Y is *doing* more things that have more long-term value in order to be accepted by colleges. Generation Y is no longer doing paid, service jobs, but that does not mean they are averse to working. "Millennials [Generation Y] like to plan, are focused on the future, and believe any work they do today should be planned

and preparatory investment for the permanent kind of life they wish to lead tomorrow” (Strauss and Howe 69).

Generation Y is extremely diverse. In this cohort, one in three is not Caucasian, one in four grew up in single-parent households, and three in four have working mothers (Cole, Smith, and Lucas). This generation has close ties to friends and thus developed a team mentality (Cole, Smith, and Lucas). Due to these close ties, most will cite their parents or people they have close working relationships with as role models. Those who are real heroes to them are “the leaders who work with followers as intimate allies”; an establishment of intimacy and trust are essential in leaders of this group (Bennis and Thomas 79, 83).

Technology has played a major role in Generation Y’s lifetime. They have never experienced life without technology and thus have internalized it, unlike Baby Boomers who have had to adapt to ever-changing technology. Much of Generation Y’s communication and processing of information occurs through technology. “E-mail, cell phones, and the Internet are the principal vehicles of person-to-person communication: group chats are the first choice as the source for many kinds of information. This generation is getting its information in an unfiltered way via TV and the Internet which often results in opinions being formed without discussion” (Cole, Smith, and Lucas). Technology in the lives of Generation Y is different than previous generations. Traditionally from the 1920s to the 1990s almost all communication technologies and “the goods and services marketed by the entertainment industry have been *analog*, *media-bound*, and *passive*.” The technological communication paradigm was watch,

listen, and one-way communication. That paradigm has changed to “*digital, media-free, and interactive*” (Strauss and Howe 29-30). The digital shift in technology has allowed for a milieu of possibilities in two-way communication in entertainment, hypermediacy, and remediation (Bolter and Grusin 26-27). As a result of the endless possibilities of technology and the Internet and the mantra their parents instilled in them (“you can do anything you set your mind to”), Generation Y feels they face endless possibilities (Bennis and Thomas 73).

Generation Y’s needs are drastically different than that of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X. According to the Maslow’s Need Hierarchy, Generation Y has grown up with their physiological, safety, and, for the most part, social needs (from strong connections to family and friends) already established. Thus, Generation Y seeks fulfillment of their esteem and self-actualization needs. Generation Y’s young age may also contribute to their esteem and self-actualization needs. As they are now just entering the workforce, Generation Y is still finding their place in the working world, deciphering what they want to do, and how the work they choose to do is going to contribute to society. Also, as a result of their upbringing, Generation Y is accustomed to praise and is looking for that at work to boost their self-esteem.

Generation Y is highly creative, “more affluent, better educated and more ethnically diverse” (Cole, Smith, and Lucas), and as a result, this group “feels entitled to everything” (Zust) and is not obliged to anything. Similar to Generation X, Generation Y desires work-life balance and flexibility. They want to define their workplace and have input, and they crave challenge and desire to innovate for improvements. Generation Y

prefers respectful language, action verbs that challenge them, giving feedback, and technology as forms of communication (Zust). As leaders, this generation leads “with a tolerance of others, [and with a] value-centered, rule-oriented, and culturally sensitive” approach. According to the literature, as followers, Generation Y “does not thrive under [an] authority leadership style” (D. Green 18). The new paradigm of leadership (which is still a work in progress) for this group can be defined by the acronym ACE – acknowledge, create, and empower (Bennis and Townsend 95). To verify, *acknowledge* can mean “everything from praise...when someone does a decent job, to celebrating victories, to creating an environment where people really feel understood, where the reward system seems to be consistent and congruent and corresponds to the organization. People really feel appreciated for what they do” (Bennis and Townsend 96). *Create* means “initiative, autonomy, doing the right thing without having to ask permission” (Bennis and Townsend 96). Empower or empowerment means providing an atmosphere “in which employees feel free to offer contrary views and speak the truth,” leaders who “coach people to bring out their potential” by “expecting more of them than they think they can possibly achieve,” and “allowing the decisions to be made by people closest to the product and the customer” (Bennis and Townsend 73-74, 95-96). Unlike the OODA and COP paradigms, the ACE paradigm embraces chaos and encourages leaders to act first. After acting, leaders learn and adapt to their constantly changing work environment (Bennis and Thomas 83).

The following table summarizes life experiences/orientations, work outlook, communication styles, needs, and preferred leadership behavioral styles of the four generations in the workplace.

**Table 1.3: Summary of Generations, Generational Life Experiences/Orientations, Work Outlook, Communication Style, Needs, and Leadership Style**

	<b>Traditionalists (born 1927-1947)</b>	<b>Baby Boomers (born 1947-1965)</b>	<b>Generation X (born 1965-1981)</b>	<b>Generation Y (born 1981-2000 (still to be determined))</b>
<b>Life Experiences/ Orientations</b>	Great Depression, World War II	Assassination of JFK and MLK, man landing on the moon, invention of the birth control pill, campus protests, Korean War, Vietnam War	TV and Cable TV allowed access to view world events: diagnosis of AIDS, first space shuttle launch, Cold War, Iranian Hostage Crisis, increase in divorce rates	Homeland terrorism: Oklahoma City Bombing, Columbine, 9/11, and Virginia Tech; witness to natural disasters: Tsunami in India 2004, Hurricane Katrina
<b>Work Outlook</b>	-Loyalty to organization -Lifetime career -Gain satisfaction from doing work -Survivalist outlook on work	-Climbing the corporate ladder -Workaholic -Loyalty to organization	-Work-life balance -Distrust of large corporations and government for job security -Disloyal to organization -Multiple careers	-Team mentality -Work that provides long- term value -Disloyal to organization -Flexibility -Work-life balance -Young to workforce and still finding their place
<b>Communication Style</b>	-Face-to-face -Formal language -Straight-to-the- point	-Face-to-face -Electronic -Open and direct speech	-Email -Straightforward and informal speech	-Any form of technology to communicate -Respectful language -Want to give feedback and input
<b>Needs</b>	-Physiological -Safety	-Safety -Social	-Safety	-Esteem -Self-Actualization

<b>Leadership Style</b>	Thrive under directive style	Thrive under participatory style	Does not thrive under authority style	Does not thrive under authority style
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While there are established characteristics, work outlooks, communication, needs, and leadership communication behavioral styles of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X, Generation Y is still a developing generation. Members of Generation Y are in their formative years. Currently they are living through major historical events, which are continually shaping their orientations and “collective memories.” While there is some research on Generation Y’s generational characteristics, orientations, and perspectives, their outlook on work and preferred communication and leadership behavioral styles are developing. This study explored communication and leadership practices of Generation Y in conjunction with their needs and perspectives on work. Now more than ever, it is essential leaders recognize generational differences in the workplace because they will be playing an important role in employee retention and development of Generation Y as they take over the workforce.

### The Outline of this Study

This chapter has set-up two theoretical frameworks. Burke, Mannheim, and Maslow provide the first theoretical framework from which to begin observing orientations, characteristics, and needs of the four generations in the workplace. The second framework has detailed leadership behavioral communication styles, as well as briefly summarized leadership theories that exhibit those styles: directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, and delegative. The following chapter, Chapter Two –

Methods outlines the methods of this research, with the primary focus on the communication preferences of Generation Y. While it is easy to say a leader should know how to communicate with his or her followers, this study took an in-depth look into the most effective ways to communicate to young, emergent workers, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Three – Results. The theories discussed in this chapter will then be revisited in the fourth chapter, Analysis.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODS

The first chapter has explored generational orientations and needs through the theoretical lenses of Burke, Mannheim, and Maslow. It also introduced some leadership communication behaviors and theories that operate in the workplace today. The purpose of this study was to find preferred communication interaction among young people in the workplace (who are categorized as Generation Y), in order to more fully uncover how Generation Y interacts with leaders and what leadership means to them. It is essential, now more than ever, to become aware of Generation Y's differences in orientations, needs, and communication from that of older generations because Generation Y will take over the workforce very soon.

Three inquiries were designed for this study that explored values and behaviors of Generation Y. The three inquiries that were crafted for this study are the following:

1. What are considered ideal job attributes?
2. How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?
3. How does Generation Y define a leader?

Finding the answers to these inquiries aided in answering the primary research question:

1. How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?

The first inquiry gauged the workplace needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Y.

The second inquiry examined how this generation as a whole would prefer to communicate. By explaining how they have experienced effective and ineffective

communication in the workplace, this study began examining successful and unsuccessful behavioral communication patterns that Generation Y has experienced in the workplace. The third inquiry provided this study with a basic understanding of the characteristics that Generation Y considers exemplify a leader. By identifying what Generation Y seeks in a leader, this study could better explore the needs they seek to fulfill through someone considered a leader. The research question encompasses the previous three inquiries by establishing an effective leadership communication with young workers. These three inquiries and research question provide a thorough look into how Generation Y most effectively responds to leadership communication practices in the workplace, and how leaders can adjust behavioral communication patterns for an emergent workforce.

The target population of this study was Generation Y who has work experience post undergraduate studies. For the purposes of this study, Generation Y was considered persons born in 1980 or thereafter. Work experience was considered any variety of paid work after undergraduate studies. A sample of 29 young workers born in 1980 or thereafter participated in the study, each participant having between seven years and eight months of work experience post undergraduate studies. The sample was not random. Each participant was selected via personal contact. These 29 participants were recruited in two ways:

- Seventeen email interviewees received an email recruitment request, followed by an informational letter (Appendix A) describing the study and how to participate.

Participants were selected on a person-by-person basis from personal contact (Lauer and Asher 65).

- Twelve focus group participants received an email recruitment request, followed by an informational letter (Appendix B) describing the study and how to participate (Lauer and Asher 65). Participants were selected from the College of Architecture, Arts, & Humanities; College of Business and Behavioral Science; and College of Engineering & Science graduate programs at Clemson University.

The 17 participants who received email interviews responded via email at their convenience. The 12 participants who participated in the focus groups were divided by the researcher into groups of three, containing four participants in each group. Prior to the email interviews and focus groups, each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix C and Appendix D) based on a template from the Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The participants represented in the study exhibited a range in age and wide range of job experience and titles. Table 2.1 shows each participant by birth year, job title, years in current job position, field of work, and years of work experience post undergraduate studies.

**Table 2.1: Study Participant Demographics, Email Interviewees**

<b><i>Participant Number</i></b>	<b><i>Year Born</i></b>	<b><i>Job Title</i></b>	<b><i>Years in Current Job Position</i></b>	<b><i>Field of Work</i></b>	<b><i>Years of Work Experience Post Undergraduate Studies</i></b>
<b>1</b>	1980	Software Engineer	5	Government Defense Contractor	7
<b>2</b>	1983	Operations Specialist	3	Government sector	3
<b>3</b>	1983	Public Affairs Specialist	2 months	Government sector	3
<b>4</b>	1984	Research Assistant and Instructor	7 months	Academia/major University	3
<b>5</b>	1985	Au Pair	8 months	Child Care	8 months
<b>6</b>	1984	Program Assistant, Communications	9 months	Nonprofit Organization	3
<b>7</b>	1984	Research Technician	1	Lab Research at a major University	10 months
<b>8</b>	1982	Physical Therapy Technician	4	Health Care	5
<b>9</b>	1983	Manager of Marketing & Communications	7 months	Marketing	3
<b>10</b>	1983	Contracts Pricing Specialist	2 years, 11 months	Finance	4
<b>11</b>	1983	Desktop/LAN Support	1	Health Care	4
<b>12</b>	1984	Program Analyst	1 year, 9 months	Government Contractor	3
<b>13</b>	1984	Physical Therapy Aide	3	Health Care	3
<b>14</b>	1983	Associate Engineer	1 year, 2 months	Engineering/Consulting	3
<b>15</b>	1984	Youth Development Volunteer	1 year, 8 months	Peace Corps	2
<b>16</b>	1984	Senior Web Designer	9 months	Government Defense Contractor	3
<b>17</b>	1982	Lead Customer Service Operator	1 month	Sales and Marketing	4

Table 2.2 shows each focus group participant by birth year, job title, years in current job position, field of work, years of work experience post undergraduate studies, and college each participant attends.

**Table 2.2: Study Participant Demographics, Focus Group Participants**

<i><b>Participant Number</b></i>	<i><b>Year Born</b></i>	<i><b>Job Title</b></i>	<i><b>Years in Current Job Position</b></i>	<i><b>Field of Work</b></i>	<i><b>Years of Work Experience Post Undergraduate Studies</b></i>	<i><b>College</b></i>
<b>18</b>	1985	Graduate Teaching Assistant	1 year, 7 months	Academia/major University	1 year, 7 months	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities
<b>19</b>	1983	Graduate Teaching Assistant	1 year, 2 months	Academia/major University	3	Engineering & Science
<b>20</b>	1985	Graduate Assistant	7 months	Academia/major University	1 year, 7 months	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities
<b>21</b>	1984	Graduate Assistant	7 months	Academia/major University	3	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities
<b>22</b>	1982	SMART scholar	7 months	Academia/major University	5	Business and Behavioral Science
<b>23</b>	1984	Graduate Teaching Assistant	7 months	Academia/major University	1 year, 7 months	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities
<b>24</b>	1985	Graduate Teaching Assistant	1 year, 7 months	Academia/major University	1 year, 7 months	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities
<b>25</b>	1983	Engineer (on hiatus)	8 months	Engineering	3	Engineering & Science
<b>26</b>	1982	Graduate Assistant	7 months	Academia/major University	5	Business and Behavioral Science
<b>27</b>	1984	Graduate Teacher of Record	1 year, 7 months	Academia/major University	2	Engineering & Science
<b>28</b>	1986	Apple Store Employee	7 months	Retail	10 months	Business and Behavioral Science
<b>29</b>	1986	Graduate Assistant	10 months	Academia/major University	1 year, 7 months	Architecture, Arts, & Humanities

Participants of the study varied in age from 18 to 23. Participants' field of work ranged from graduate students teaching college courses to physical therapy aides to Peace Corps Volunteer. Also, participants represented a range of years of work experience post undergraduate studies from as little as 8 months to 7 years.

The sample was weak. While participants receiving email interviews represented a variety of fields in which they work, years of work experience, job title, and age range; the focus groups were limited to those available for research. Focus groups represented a graduate population at Clemson University in South Carolina, most of whom work as Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants for various college courses. Focus group participants did vary in age. Also, the sample was limited to participants working in the eastern, southern, and midwestern United States, specifically: Maryland, Washington, DC, Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee, as well as one participant working in Austria and one working in Honduras.

In order to answer each of the three inquiries, 11 questions were administered by means of email interview. Email interviews were selected to reach a wider range of participants. Participants responded to the questions at their own convenience and responded via email. Following research strategists Lauer and Asher's method of data collection, email interviews consisting of open-ended questions were constructed for this study. Open-ended questions were chosen, as opposed to a survey or a multiple choice questionnaire, because unprompted, varied, lengthy responses were desired for research (Lauer and Asher 65). Most open-ended research questions were asked dichotomously. Dichotomous, open-ended questions tested the validity of the questions, as suggested by

research strategist Mary MacNealy. Asking dichotomous questions like, “Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions,” and “Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions,” gauged the “correlation between the two questions” (MacNealy 173). Responses to dichotomous questions often closely correlated uncovering reliable information from participants, which was an indicator of internal validity (MacNealy 173).

The email interviews consisted of two questions, used as a preliminary screening of demographic information to ensure participants were qualified for this study (e.g. meet the age requirement and have had work experience post undergraduate studies), and nine open-ended questions (Appendix E). The nine open-ended questions were designed to answer the three inquiries: “What are considered ideal job attributes?”; “How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?”; and “How does Generation Y define a leader?” From there, the data from the 17 email interviews was compiled by each open-ended question (Appendices H, J, L, N, O, Q, R, T, U). Then responses were informally analyzed. Based on the informal analysis of the email interviews, focus group questions were created to ensure a multiplicity of observation or triangulation (Lauer and Asher 40), and to clarify and fill gaps not addressed in email interview questions to more adequately address the research question, “How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?”

Focus groups were administered face-to-face by a moderator. Focus groups were conducted to encourage the stimulation of new ideas through interaction among peers of

the same generation (MacNealy 177). Focus groups were conducted according to MacNealy's strategies for conducting focus groups (177-194). Three focus groups were administered, containing four participants in each. The first two questions asked were used as a preliminary screening of demographic information to ensure participants were qualified for this study (e.g. meet the age requirement and have had work experience post undergraduate studies). Then five focus group questions were designed to examine preferred communication practices, ideal job attributes, and leadership qualities defined by Generation Y (Appendix G). A moderator read a script (Appendix F) adapted from the IRB that introduced the study, followed by the five questions based on the analysis of the email interview responses (Appendix G). (Appendix F contains the original focus group questions and Appendix G contains the revised focus group questions based on the informal analysis of the email interviews). Three of the focus group questions asked participants to rank desirable and undesirable job attributes and qualities in a leader. Asking participants to rank attributes and qualities generated discussion, forced participants to define attributes and qualities, and ultimately portrayed what Generation Y values most. The other two questions asked were open-ended questions, which were designed to make participants "reflect on their past experiences and make connections to the topic" (MacNealy 189). Focus groups were audio recorded and depending on the focus group, focus groups lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. The interview questions were asked in order; however, participants were asked to write the answer to the first and second question, "What year were you born?" and "Please provide a brief summary of jobs you've had since graduating from your undergraduate

studies (including your current position) that lists the organization name and the dates you were employed.” Participants were asked to write the answer to these questions for easier note-taking purposes. After completion of the focus groups, audio recordings of the focus groups were transcribed.

After the email interviews and focus groups were complete, the email responses and focus group transcripts were compiled (Appendices H – U). In accordance with Lauer and Asher, the data collected from email interviews and focus groups were coded inductively based on content analysis. Subsequent categories that emerged were based solely on the data itself rather than categories being imposed on the data. Inductive content analysis was chosen as a way to gain information about the Generation Y perspective, rather than assume it (26-31). One of the limitations of this study was the absence of more than one coder to ensure “internal-consistency reliability,” also known as interrater reliability (Lauer and Asher 138). In an effort to gain some reliability, content analysis of the email interviews and the focus groups were conducted multiple times. After the focus groups were conducted, focus group data and email interview data were coded. A week later the content was coded again regardless of previously developed categories. Resulting from multiple content analyses, the subsequent categories did not vary but the amount of data categorized under each varied only slightly.

Email interviews and focus groups were chosen to ensure triangulation of this study. While the email interviews and focus groups are designed to specifically answer the three research inquiries: “What are considered ideal job attributes?”; “How does

Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?"; and "How does Generation Y define a leader?" Based on the results of these inquiries, a solution to the research question, "How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?" emerged.

The next chapter includes the results of the qualitative data analysis based on the methods discussed in this chapter. Following the Results chapter is the Analysis chapter. That chapter will summarize and explain in more detail the results of the qualitative data, as well as practical implications of this research and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESULTS

The previous two chapters have addressed the gap in research on leadership theory as it applies to Generation Y in the workplace. Chapter one examined the differences in generational characteristics, values, and needs (according to Burke, Mannheim, and Maslow) among Generation Y and those generations currently working in the workplace: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation X. Chapter one also investigated how leadership communication behaviors are implemented in certain types of leadership theory.

Chapter two introduced the methods this research study used in order to answer the three inquiries:

1. What are considered ideal job attributes?
2. How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?
3. How does Generation Y define a leader?

Which were used to answer the research question:

1. How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?

The goal of this study was to provide empirical evidence as to the different expectations of work and leadership, and communication preferences of the emergent workforce. With answers to these questions this research study discovered leadership for Generation Y somewhat varies from prior leadership literature and communication patterns.

Results in this chapter were a product of content analysis. Data collected from email interview responses and focus groups were compiled and coded using content analysis (Lauer and Asher 26-31). The content analysis provided categories from which to draw results. Some responses were tallied under multiple categories from what the responses indicated.

Based on the following results organizations may find some practical implications as to how to reevaluate and revise thinking on how to communicate and lead young workers.

#### What are Considered Ideal Job Attributes?

The research inquiry, “What are considered ideal job attributes?” was designed to gauge the workplace needs, desires, and expectations of Generation Y. By examining the responses to this inquiry, a link between Maslow’s Needs Hierarchy and generational orientations as it applies to Generation Y was addressed (to be discussed later in Chapter Four – Analysis). This inquiry was asked of email interviewees and the focus groups. The email interview and focus group questions, “Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions” and “Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions” (Appendix E and Appendix G), provided some answers.

#### Ideal Job Attributes

The most ranked ideal job attribute was open communication, mentioned eleven times. Open communication ranged from encouraged give ideas, constant feedback, to

understanding tasks. The second highest ranked ideal job attribute was flexibility in the workplace meaning hours, work location, and telecommuting (mentioned nine times). The third ideal job attribute was a challenging work environment with stimulating tasks. Following a challenging work environment was a variety of structured work environments. Structured work environments ranged from having autonomy to do one’s work to having a “fairly well-defined structure” in the workplace (mentioned seven times). Ranking fifth as ideal job attributes were team work and recognition/rewarding, both categories mentioned five times. Team work was defined as working with people, which provided the opportunity to learn from one another. Recognition/rewarding ranged from feeling personally rewarded by the work one was doing to being recognized by others. Closely following the top six attributes were opportunities for advancement, compensation (meaning a fair compensation rather than a large compensation), and feeling respected (mentioned four times).

**Table 3.1: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Ideal Job Attributes**

<b><i>Ideal Job Attributes</i></b>	<b><i>Number of Times Observed</i></b>
<b>Open Communication</b>	11
<b>Flexibility</b>	9
<b>Challenging Work Environment</b>	8
<b>Autonomy, Semi-Structure, Structured Work</b>	7
<b>Team Work</b>	5
<b>Recognition/Rewarding</b>	5
<b>Opportunities for Advancement</b>	4
<b>Compensation</b>	4
<b>Feeling Respected</b>	4

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix H

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.2: Email Interview Responses to Ideal Job Attributes**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Participant Responses</b>
<b>Open Communication</b>	<p>P4: Open communication between boss and employee</p> <p>P6: A place where I'm encouraged to share my ideas and am comfortable doing so</p> <p>P10: There should be constant feedback mechanisms instilled through the entire company.</p> <p>P12: Understand the full scope of the overall mission to better fulfill the task.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<p>P2: Flexible hours, ability to work from home/telecommute</p> <p>P4: Flexible schedule, not stuck in an office all day</p> <p>P10: An ideal job situation would have flexibility in terms of work location. The ability to telecommute would be useful.</p> <p>P13: Every other Friday off.</p> <p>P14: Field/office Balance</p>
<b>Challenging Work Environment</b>	<p>P1: Challenging, cutting-edge, innovative work.</p> <p>P14: Stimulating...Forefront of Industry</p> <p>P15: Continually challenged</p>
<b>Autonomy, Semi-Structured, Structured</b>	<p>P9: ...supervisors trust your judgment and allow you the independence and authority needed to do your job well.</p> <p>P10: Position should retain as much autonomy as possible.</p> <p>P13: Structured independence.</p> <p>P17: I need to have fairly well-defined structure but not a monotonous day-to-day routine.</p>
<b>Team Work</b>	<p>P6: A team environment</p> <p>P15: I like to work with people and enjoy being a part of a team in which I can learn from more experienced people and share my knowledge and experience.</p>
<b>Recognition/Rewarding</b>	<p>P2: Recognition for a job well done</p> <p>P11: A personally rewarding experience</p> <p>P14: Acknowledgement/Appreciation</p>

P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix H

Focus groups were asked a similar question to that of the email interviewees. The question asked, "As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions." Asking focus groups a similar question to

that of email interviewees verified responses from email interviewees. Also, this question set the tone for the focus group sessions (MacNealy 189). Each group brainstormed attributes and then ranked the attributes accordingly, one being the most desired, ideal job attribute. Upon collecting the ranked data from each focus group there was agreement between the focus groups of ideal job attributes. The most commonly cited ideal job attribute was variety and challenging work, mentioned three times by focus groups. Flexibility, geographic location of the job, salary, benefits, and comfortable work environment were all cited twice by focus groups.

**Table 3.3: Focus Group Categorical Responses to Ideal Job Attributes**

<i>Ideal Job Attributes</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited by Each Focus Groups</i>
<b>Variety and Challenging Work</b>	3
<b>Flexibility</b>	2
<b>Geographic Location of the Job</b>	2
<b>Salary</b>	2
<b>Comfortable Work Environment</b>	2
<b>Benefits</b>	2

Focus Group transcripts are located in Appendix I

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants said the following about each category:

**Table 3.4: Focus Group Responses to Ideal Job Attributes**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Variety/Using Different Skill Sets</b>	<p>P20: I think I like being at a job where I can do different stuff every day.</p> <p>P18: I think there is variety and I think there are different skill sets. They are kind of the same thing.... Because I think the skill set thing like I want different tasks in the job so that if I go to the next job I can say look I did seven different things instead of one different thing....</p> <p>P21: You are getting more experience.</p> <p>P25: Something interesting. You don't want to be like totally bored.</p> <p>P23: So like challenging, maybe.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p>

	<p>P26: Make sure you are doing something that you want to do.  P29: Yeah, so that you are not miserable at it.</p>
<b>Flexibility</b>	<p>P18: Like being able to do a lot of work on your own time.  P20: Or like if you want to come in early you can leave early.  P21: It would be ideal but some sense of like control over your hours.  P23: Like flexibility in hours  P22: I guess atmosphere would count as in terms of just physical space. You could be in jobs where it's just cubicles or everyone is open and friendly and stuff like that. It makes a big difference.</p>
<b>Location</b>	<p>P25: But you want to be close to home or do you want to be far from home or you know like if you want to travel. Like that fits into location as well. And like all that could be another challenge.</p>
<b>Salary</b>	<p>P22: I just know personally, if there is a company that I really, really like and they pay a lot lower than the industry standard for my position I just know I would take about a 20K pay cut just to work there. And I mean that is a pretty severe pay cut but I would do it just for the right company.</p>
<b>Comfortable Work Environment</b>	<p>P21: I had an incompetent boss and so I would just like go to the next person up because I couldn't deal with him.  P29: Co-workers because I want to have co-workers that are kind of the same age. At least some.  P26: Umm we have six right now, if we consider the co-workers are part of the work environment, say comfortable work environment.  P27: Yeah, that would be the same thing.</p>
<b>Benefits</b>	<p>P29: But at the same time you have to think of your teeth and the eyes.  P27: But with companies now-a-days they just give you standard benefits. You know, teeth, eyes, whatever.  P29: Benefits include stock options.</p>

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P#: Participant number; focus groups transcript is located in Appendix I

After examining the responses of the focus groups and email interviews the major themes that evolved from both was variety and challenging work that provides the opportunity to develop skills they can take with them to the next job and not be “totally bored” at work. Flexibility in the workplace was also a major, ideal attribute. The

sample preferred the option of making their own hours, working from various locations, and telecommuting. Another concern of the sample was salary. Ranking of ideal job attributes as cited by email interviewees and focus groups were as follows:

**Table 3.5: Email Interview and Focus Group Categorical Responses to Ideal Job Attributes**

<i><b>Ideal Job Attributes</b></i>	<i><b>Number of Times Agreed by Email Interviews and Focus Groups</b></i>
<b>Variety and Challenging Work</b>	11
<b>Flexibility</b>	11
<b>Salary</b>	4

#### Undesirable Job Attributes

On the other side of the spectrum, participants were asked to describe attributes of an undesirable job situation. According to email interviewees the most common undesirable job attribute was mundane, pointless tasks (mentioned 14 times). Mundane, pointless tasks were described as working in an assembly line. The second undesirable job attribute involved an isolated work environment, particularly a cubicle (mentioned ten times). Closely following working in isolation was one-way communication (mentioned nine times). Participants defined one-way communication as “closed-communication” and a chain-of-command that impaired communication. The fourth undesirable job attribute was a hostile work environment (mentioned six times). A hostile work environment was described as negative communication: gossiping, negative reinforcement, belittling, etc. The fifth undesirable job attribute was micromanaging (mentioned five times). Participants considered micromanagement as a “constant oversight.” Closely following the top five undesirable job attributes was a low

compensation, no advancement opportunities, inflexible work hours, rules that do not apply to all employees, and unethical work.

**Table 3.6: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Undesirable Job Attributes**

<i>Undesirable Job Attributes</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Mundane, Pointless Tasks</b>	14
<b>Isolation/Cubicle</b>	10
<b>One-Way Communication</b>	9
<b>Hostile Work Environment</b>	6
<b>Micromanaging</b>	5

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix J

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants said the following about each category:

**Table 3.7: Email Interview Responses to Undesirable Job Attributes**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Mundane, Pointless Tasks</b>	P1: Assembly line – Doing the same thing every day. P5: Doing monotonous work. P6: Pointless work. P9: ...a work week which consists of mundane repetitious tasks and no opportunity to develop new skill and interests.
<b>Isolation/Cubicle</b>	P4: A cubicle. P7: I would hate to work any job that requires me to be in a cubicle most of the time. P17: An undesirable job for me would be one in which I worked in isolation, staring at a computer screen all day.
<b>One-Way Communication</b>	P6: ...ideas/suggestions are disregarded, not considered, or solicited...one man rules the show and there is not staff input. P10: Closed style of communication. P12: Structured divisions that impair development and open communication.
<b>Hostile Work Environment</b>	P6: People talk behind other employees' backs. P9: A hostile work environment... P14: Negative reinforcement, inconsiderate of self...belittling.
<b>Micromanaging</b>	P2: Micro-managers. P6: Boss looking over your shoulder every second.

P10: Constant oversight and micromanagement.

P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix J

Focus groups were asked a similar question to that of the email interviewees. The question asked was, “As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.” Asking focus groups a similar question to that of email interviewees verified responses from email interviewees. Each group brainstormed attributes and then ranked the attributes. Responses from focus groups differed slightly than that of responses from email interviewees. Focus groups cited a bad work culture and a bad location as the most undesirable job attributes (mentioned three times). The second most cited undesirable job attributes were a stagnant work environment/no advancement and no relevance to personal interests (mentioned twice). Based on responses from focus groups a bad work culture could be considered what email interviewees considered a hostile work environment.

**Table 3.8: Focus Group Categorical Responses to Undesirable Job Attributes**

<i>Undesirable Job Attributes</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited by Each Focus Groups</i>
<b>Bad Work Culture</b>	3
<b>Bad Location</b>	3
<b>Stagnant Work Environment/No Advancement</b>	2
<b>No Relevance to Interests</b>	2

Focus Group transcripts are located in Appendix K

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants said the following about each category:

**Table 3.9: Focus Group Responses to Undesirable Job Attributes**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Bad Work Culture</b>	P18: Like if the company is a company that doesn't really promote like

interpersonal relationships or they are not trying to set a tone, I think that's where you run into some of those problems. Like, if your company tells you ahead of time we're very flexible, we're very friendly or you know like you have to basically sit there quietly at your desk or whatever, if there isn't some sense of an established culture there then I think you run into those problems were like you don't really get people or you don't like people or whatever because you don't feel like you're contributing to it, you know?

P21: Yeah, I feel like it has to be a good, like you have to have good working relationships but at least tolerable if not good social relationships with your people.

P25: ...I think a bad boss is definitely something too because like I have had a great boss and I have had bad bosses and that makes a lot of a difference into whether you want to go into work that day because if your boss is just a pain in your ass then you are not going to enjoy it.

P26: That would be the first thing that makes you miserable on a given day. Okay, so bad co-workers.

#### **Bad Location**

P18: I mean location can be viewed as the physical type of office. I guess that's kind of, I don't know how big of a priority that is but in an ideal world, as the question asks, it is a consideration at least.

P20: I think location is really a big factor for me. There are places I would never move and I don't care how good the job is.

P18: Not really move, even if you live....Like Chicago, the Chicago suburbs are like, you could be on a train an hour each way to get in and out of the city. Personally that's not something I'm doing. I'm not.

P25: ... I think the bad location, personally, it doesn't bother me but that is a personal thing. I think a location is a lot of what you make up of it. If you are with good people. Like I lived in Beaumont, Texas that place sucks but I had great co-workers and boss so like we had fun because of who I was with not really necessarily where I was at.

P27: A boring location or like a bad location that you don't really want to live.

#### **No Relevance to Interests**

P19: You don't really get into it, with the likeness, but how well, if there's no alignment between your interests, hobbies or personal goals and the job you're doing. I think that's something that make[s] a job mundane and boring and just hate it.

P18: Yeah, and that's not a step forward too. If you can't use this job to get your foot in the door for the next job, which is presumably

a better job, then you're constantly, if you can't beat back that voice that you are wasting your time, then you know, like a pay check is a pay check but you want to feel like you're kind of setting the stage for [the next job].

P22: I kind of think just mismatch in general with what you thought you would be doing and what you are doing because when you start it makes you really unhappy. Like you will be traveling to all these great places and you will be doing all these great things and then it's like no.

P25: Yeah, but two of them are almost like similar like working in something you are not used to versus like team and individual like work and like a mismatch between what you are doing and what you thought you would be doing. Like it's kind of a personal mismatch. You could link them.

P22: If you don't fit in with your job you would be like, I could be doing something else right now.

**Stagnant Work  
Environment/ No  
Advancement**

P21: So maybe no chance for promotion.

P18: A sense of your future with that job.

P29: Menial work tasks.

P28: I would say a stagnant environment where it feels like you are sitting at a desk all the time. Not getting a chance to go beyond that. Personal interactions.

P28: Yeah, stagnant could encompass dead end job.

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P#: Participant number; focus groups transcript is located in Appendix K

After examining the responses of the focus groups and email interviews the major themes that evolved were having a hostile work environment, which would include having a bad work culture; a bad geographic work location, commute, and/or office; a stagnant work environment, which includes no advancement opportunities and doing mundane, pointless tasks; working in isolation, a cubicle, having little interaction with others; and a mismatch or no relevance between personal interests and/or career goals and the work one does. The most undesirable job attribute as agreed by email interviewees and focus groups was as follows:

**Table 3.10: Email Interview and Focus Group Categorical Responses to Undesirable Job Attributes**

<i>Ideal Job Attributes</i>	<i>Number of Times Agreed by Email Interviews and Focus Groups</i>
<b>Bad Work Culture/ Hostile Work Environment</b>	9

### How Does Generation Y Prefer to be Communicated With?

The inquiry, “How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?” was designed to examine communication preferences of Generation Y. By explaining how they have experienced effective and ineffective communication in the workplace, this study examined successful and unsuccessful communication behavior patterns and uncovered where those patterns emerged based on orientations (to be discussed in Chapter Four – Analysis). This inquiry was asked of email interviewees and the focus groups. The email interviewees were asked, “If you have one, please describe one experience you had of effectively communicating with your supervisor?” and “If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor?” (Appendix E). Focus groups were asked, “How would you like a high level/difficult task versus a low level/low level of difficult task communicated to you by a manager?” (Appendix G). The answers to these questions provided insight about Generation Y’s communication preferences.

### Effective Communication

Based on email interview responses the most frequently preferred form of communication by Generation Y was to have a clear, direct form of communication.

Seven out of 17 participants found that having prepared, clear, and direct communication on both ends, meaning, speaking clearly and in a direct manner to a supervisor and a supervisor communicating the same way with a subordinate. Participants described having prepared, clear, direct communication when asking for a promotion, pursuing other employment, and drawing attention to a lack of resources among other things. Participants described this form of communication as “a logical, well thought out argument,” and “[my superior] gave me clear direction.”

Email interviewees also felt collaboration, discussion, and being able to ask for feedback was key in effective communication in the workplace. Five out of the 17 responses suggested sitting down and discussing how to improve projects or future career goals with superiors was favorable. Out of those responses often participants alluded to doing their own work and being able to “check-in,” “ask for opinions,” and “follow-ups.”

Closely following direct and collaborative communication; guidance, advising, and teaching, and informal praise and recognition were also favored communication practices by Generation Y. Participants highly regarded superiors who took the time to informally recognize their hard work or took the time to give advice or teach during the workday.

**Table 3.11: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Effective Communication**

<i><b>Effective Communication</b></i>	<i><b>Number of Times Observed</b></i>
<b>Direct, Clear, Prepared</b>	7
<b>Collaboration, Discussion, Giving and Asking for Feedback</b>	5
<b>Guidance, Advice, Teaching</b>	3
<b>Informal Praise and Recognition</b>	2

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix L

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.12: Email Interview Responses to Effective Communication**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Participant Responses</b>
<b>Direct, Clear, Prepared</b>	<p>P1: Asking for a promotion. I gathered my facts in advance and presented a logical, well thought out argument why I should be promoted.</p> <p>P3: While working as the Web Content Manager for the internal and external federal government I was successfully able to communicate to my leadership that we do not have the agency-wide support (writers, editors, “scrubbers”) for the creation of content that we need. Through tangible statistics, examples of out of date content, and verbal descriptions of the issues at hand, he was able to bring these issues to the highest levels of the agency leadership and get funding for hiring additional staff to alleviate the problems.</p>
<b>Collaboration, Discussion, Giving and Asking for Feedback</b>	<p>P7: I successfully communicate with my supervisor all the time in my job. I meet with him one on one multiple times a week to go over both old and new data from both of my experiments. We discuss possible ways to improve experimental procedure and ways to remove any bias. He listens to my ideas and, unless he finds any real problem with them, gives me a chance to implement them, whether they work or not. If not, we sit down again and try to come up with a better plan.</p> <p>P9: Recently my organization has been developing a social network for our members, and part of it falls directly on my department and specifically myself. I go to my boss for her opinion on these tasks since she sees things from a ‘big picture’ prospective and she will ask me for my opinion on the plausibility or best practice and approach of something since she considers me the expert on the technical side of things. We both realize that we have two different perspectives and that they can bring a lot to the table and cover more ground together.</p>
<b>Informal Praise and Recognition</b>	<p>P2: Many positive experiences with my supervisor occur during casual chats during lunch or walking to meetings – the lack of the “structured office” seems to lighten the mood and calm nerves.</p> <p>P12: In general: Communicates regularly, frequent informal praise, informal correction, formal evaluation, formal improvement support; sets goals, listens, helps define and understand professional development goals.</p>

<b>Guidance, Advice, Teaching</b>	P10: I discussed my long-term goals with my direct supervisor. I made it clear what I want for my career and asked how the company can support my goals. My supervisor advised me how to go about reaching my goals and effectively answered my questions regarding the company's support toward helping me achieve them.
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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix L

Similar to the email interview responses, focus group responses found that one of the most effective communication practices was direct, when expectations were clearly explained, and the level of priority or importance was understood. Direct communication was mentioned 13 times. Along those lines, once a task is directly and clearly communicated, participants agreed they would want to have the opportunity to ask questions, give input, collaborate, and open to communication (mentioned 16 times). Following direct and open communication, keeping it simple and knowing employee capabilities/level of knowledge was very important to the sample.

**Table 3.13: Focus Group Categorical Responses to Effective Communication**

<i>Effective Communication</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Open, Collaboration, Give Feedback and Input</b>	16
<b>Direct, Understood Expectations and Priority</b>	13
<b>Knowledge of Employee Capabilities, Simple</b>	7

Focus groups transcript is located in Appendix M

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants said the following about each category:

**Table 3.14: Focus Group Responses to Effective Communication**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Open, Collaboration, Give Feedback and Input</b>	P20: Well and I want to be able to ask questions and be able to put my ideas and stuff in. P21: And have initial part of it kind of be collaborative whether or not it stays that way.

P22: Yeah, and I think if it is something that you don't know how to do, like accepting questions because you know like sometimes when people explain something, I'm not really sure how they do it. I think they just assume you know what you are doing when you don't but I almost feel like not embarrassed but like...

P23: Open to communication and follow-up questions if necessary.

P27: ...Maybe constant feedback if it's a task that is going to take a long time. I'd like to have check-ups. You know, is this what you want?

**Direct, Understood Expectations and Priority**

P19: It seems like with the higher level tasks if you are almost like drafting an informal contract. Here are the expectations, responsibilities laid out for this extended period of time. Whereas the short term tasks, that's when like ?? give it to me, do it.

P23: If they say what the expectations are while they are explaining the task, so you don't have to go back re-communicate okay what, when do you want this exactly. Be very specific about what needs to be done and respond to you when you say okay, yes, and not just keep explaining.

P29: For me, I would just want the manager to come to me and tell me exactly what he wants, even like the subtasks that he expects or she expects from me then... I would just want to know what they want at the end and then I can do it.

**Knowledge of Employee Capabilities, Simple**

P22: I think with high difficulty tasks, it depends on what my knowledge base is, kind of, ?? because it really annoys me a lot when somebody explains to me something that I already understand... I want my boss to understand what I know and what I don't.

P25: ... they understand it's going to be a little bit challenging. If they are going to bring it to me that they need to be at least be like alright you have some time to do this because I know you have never seen this before. You know, I know you can do it but I know it's going to take you some time.

P#: Participant number; focus group transcript located in Appendix M

The overall two major themes from the sample of Generation Y from email interviews and focus group responses was a strong preference for direct, clear, prepared, understood expectations and priority communication; and collaborative, the opportunity to ask questions, and give feedback and input communication. As the major categories of

communication were being direct and collaborative, there is an obvious conflict of preferred communication styles. This paradox is addressed in the following chapter. There was also a strong desire for informal praise and recognition; a knowledge of employee capabilities; and guidance, advising, and teaching forms of communication.

### Ineffective Communication

When the email interviewees were asked, “If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor.” Expectedly, the most common response of ineffective communication occurred when communication was lacking and a task/problem/issue was ignored and/or forgotten (mentioned nine times). Surprisingly, mediating between a boss and co-workers or being a liaison between a boss and co-workers was mentioned three times. Following being a mediator and liaison, participants found misinterpretation of expectations and not having a task explained the first time was a form of ineffective communication, as well as negative feedback and being reprimanded.

**Table 3.15: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Ineffective Communication**

<i><b>Ineffective Communication</b></i>	<i><b>Number of Times Observed</b></i>
<b>Lack of Communication, Ignored, Forgotten</b>	9
<b>Subordinate as Mediator or Liaison</b>	3
<b>No Response</b>	3
<b>Misinterpretation of Expectations</b>	2
<b>Negative Feedback, Reprimanded</b>	1

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix N

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.16: Email Interview Responses to Ineffective Communication**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Participant Responses</b>
<b>Lack of Communication, Ignored, Forgotten</b>	<p>P9: During a project, which required group work across several departments, I was tasked with overseeing the development of a website. I gave my boss weekly updates on the progress that my coworkers were having on the development of it and he would ask for an update but rarely ask any questions beyond that during our conversations. About two months into the project, he came into work furious because of where we were in the web development stage. It was then that I realized that he had been listening to my weekly updates but not actually hearing what I was telling him.</p> <p>P16: While working at [excerpted for IRB purposes], a promotion that was passed down through Corporate to the different Markets wasn't completed because the communication between my supervisor and I was very poor. There were elements of the campaign that were not provided until the close of the campaign and we almost did not have a winner for the campaign.</p> <p>P17: I had poor communication patterns with one of my supervisors. This supervisor assured me that the training I received did not cover all of the job responsibilities and that questions would arise periodically. I was then reassured that it was OK to ask questions. Every time I mustered the courage to interrupt (this supervisor was always busy during the workday, often on the phone and typing an email simultaneously), I was given a quick explanation and dismissed without my concerns being addressed. In fact a large majority of my interactions with this supervisor were unsuccessful.</p>
<b>Subordinate as Mediator or Liaison</b>	<p>P10: I have had to act as a mediator between my supervisor and others in the company that are difficult for him to work with or have a strained relationship with him. This has proven to be tough and I've found myself in awkward positions where I have to stand by my supervisor's mode of operation but at the same time I understand the opposing view. During these times I have to assume the responsibility of conveying the most salient and rational points to both parties. There have been instances where the arguments are above my level of understanding and knowledge and I cannot effectively mediate between the two.</p> <p>P12: Many occasions – my client/boss tends to be brief in all her communications until it is clear that her brevity has led to problems and confusion down the road. Then she is extremely precise, but in a more annoyed way than helpful. I find that I have to communicate with those who are not on such a high level</p>

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as my boss/client, due to the shortage of time she can commit to instruction.

**Misinterpretation of Expectations**

- P1: I was given a task and worked on it for several weeks. Once I was closing in on completion, I asked my supervisor to review my progress and I had interpreted his instructions completely different from what he expected. All of my work was scrapped and I had to start over.
- P6: My boss is famous for giving me a task, like please send me a list of job listings for [excerpted for IRB purposes], and then when I give him what he asks for, he'll come back with 20 more instructions that he didn't give the first time and I end up having to go back and spend more time on it when I should have gotten clear directions (or done a better job of asking what he wanted) in the first place. [Response overlaps with lack of communication].

**Negative Feedback, Reprimanded**

- P13: I was reprimanded for something that I didn't think was a problem because it wasn't brought to my attention at the time. I was notified several weeks after the fact, when the supervisor above my manager spoke to me.

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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix N

Responses to ineffective communication as described by participants are slightly consistent with the sample's response to effective communication. Effective communication was described as direct, clear communication of expectations and priorities. The major categories of ineffective communication were a lack of communication, ignored, and forgotten tasks/issues and when expectations and priorities were not fully understood. While direct communication is an obvious preferred quality in workplace communication, there was a distinct conflict in effective and ineffective communication in regard to feedback. While the sample strongly desired collaboration, and giving and receiving feedback, participants disliked it when they received negative feedback. If expectations were not met the first time or there were behavior problems, the reprimand or negative feedback given by superiors was considered "ineffective

communication” by participants. This finding identifies yet another paradox among Generation Y, in that while they want to collaborate and receive feedback, they only expect positive communication in return (this paradox will be addressed in the following chapter).

### How Does Generation Y Define a Leader?

The research inquiry, “How does Generation Y define a leader?” was designed to find a basic understanding of the characteristics Generation Y considers comprise a leader. This inquiry was asked of email interviewees and focus groups. The email interviewees were asked, “What qualities do you look for in a leader?”; “If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader?”; and “If you have an example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader?” (Appendix E). Focus groups were asked, “As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader?” (Appendix G). The answers to these questions provided some insight as to who a leader is and how a leader interacts with Generation Y.

### Qualities Defined by Generation Y

There were varying responses to the question, “What qualities do you look for in a leader?” Participants interpreted the question in two ways. First, participants identified personal qualities they look for in a leader. Personal qualities described who the leader is rather than what the leader does. Second, participants interpreted the question as leadership qualities. Leadership qualities describe what good leadership does in terms of interaction with followers/subordinates.

Email interviewees identified 58 personal qualities leaders have, some of which were repeated by multiple participants and tallied. Personal qualities were one-word answers and not elaborated on. Thus, these results can only report those personal qualities and not imply what participants specifically meant by each personal quality. The most commonly mentioned personal quality was intelligence mentioned five times, followed by experience, which was mentioned four times. The third most common personal quality was people-oriented and confident. There were then a number of personal qualities which were mentioned twice including: likeability, firm, integrity, thoughtful, admits when wrong, relatable, respectful, fairness, and being a visible leader.

**Table 3.17: Email Interview Desired Personal Qualities in Leaders**

<i>Personal Leadership Qualities</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Intelligence</b>	5
<b>Experience</b>	4
<b>People-oriented</b>	3
<b>Confident</b>	3
<b>Likability</b>	2
<b>Firm</b>	2
<b>Integrity</b>	2
<b>Thoughtful</b>	2
<b>Admits when wrong</b>	2
<b>Relatable</b>	2
<b>Respectful</b>	2
<b>Fairness</b>	2
<b>Visible Leadership</b>	2

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix O

Aside from personal qualities of a leader, the email interviewees identified four qualities of leadership. The first quality, mentioned 18 times, was employee development/mentorship. Employee development/mentorship ranged from seeing the potential in employees to helping employees build on strengths and improve weaknesses.

Open to communication, mentioned 16 times, was the second most cited quality. Open to communication qualified as accepting input and questions, availability, and being a good listener. The third quality of a leader defined by Generation Y is a leader's ability to take action, mentioned 11 times. Leaders taking action included assessing the situation and acting to solve the problem, delegating responsibilities, and being proactive. Lastly, the quality, which was mentioned thrice, was employee advocacy. The participants found that a leader should stand up for employees.

**Table 3.18: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Leadership Qualities**

<i>Leadership Qualities</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Employee Development/Mentorship</b>	18
<b>Open to Communication</b>	16
<b>Ability to Take Action</b>	11
<b>Employee Advocacy</b>	2

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix O

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants said the following about each category:

**Table 3.19: Email Interview Responses to Leadership Qualities**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Employee Development/Mentorship</b>	<p>P4: ...[someone who] looks for the best in people and what they all bring to the table, and they help people become the best they can, help people work on improving their weaknesses</p> <p>P9: I look for someone who is willing to invest the time in their staff to nurture their strengths and encourage them to invest themselves in their own jobs. Someone who leads by example and allows their subordinates to carve out their own paths.</p> <p>P10: ...a person who...is willing to teach subordinates</p> <p>P17: Leaders earn respect through their commitment to helping others better themselves.</p>
<b>Open to Communication</b>	<p>P2: Open door policies... someone open to new and creative ideas for workforce development and performance improvement.</p> <p>P3: ...listens to employees questions/concerns.</p> <p>P6: Cares about what his employees think...is open to</p>

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suggestions...keeps his employees informed about what's going on in the office...asks his employees for feedback.

P7: ...listens to everyone's ideas. A good leader makes himself available as much as possible, whether through email, phone or in person. No question is a dumb question for a good supervisor.

P13: Someone who makes their employees feel that they can come to them with any problems/questions/concerns without hesitation.

**Ability to Take Action**

P3: ...gets things done...works to understand and takes action to fix problems.

P6: ...a Go-Getter.

P12: Autonomous but able to delegate and share workload efficiently.

P13: Someone who is proactive instead of reactive.

**Employee Advocacy**

P3: Stands up for what they think is right, advocates for employees.

P16: ...goes to bat for his or her employees.

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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix O

Focus groups were asked a slightly different question than the email interviewees. Focus groups were asked to “As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.” Asking focus groups to rank qualities in a leader forced participants to expand on each quality and thus generate operational definitions of each quality, which was somewhat lacking in email interviewee responses. Each group devised a variety of personal qualities and qualities of leadership, some of which agreed with one another. Each group’s list is as follows, one being the most desired quality (Appendix P):

Focus Group 1

1. A passion for your job
2. Competence
3. Being personable, approachable, and being able to relate to the people below you
4. Ability to motivate
5. Honesty and Integrity

6. Being genuine
7. Taking responsibility
8. Knowledge of people below you and what they do
9. Good organization
10. Doesn't abuse power/earned their position

### Focus Group 2

1. Efficiency
2. People-skills
3. Actually being able to understand the work that people under them do
4. Common sense
5. Being able to handle conflict
6. Smart (in their subject area)
7. Having the ability to motivate
8. Flexible
9. Experience
10. Approachable

### Focus Group 3

1. Good communication and listening skills
2. The ability to motivate others
3. A positive attitude
4. Practical knowledge of the area they are leading

5. Honest and sincere
6. Organized with good time management skills
7. Common sense and tact
8. Ability to delegate
9. Ability to give constructive feedback
10. Being a mediator

The most agreed upon leadership qualities according to the focus groups were, knowledge, having practical skills, and the ability to understand the work the people below them do (mentioned three times); the ability to motivate others (mentioned three times); able to handle conflict and mediate (mentioned twice); approachable (mentioned twice); organized and time management skills (mentioned twice); common sense (mentioned twice); and honesty (mentioned twice).

**Table 3.20: Focus Group Categorical Responses to Leadership Qualities**

<i>Leadership Qualities</i>	<i>Number of Times Cited by Each Focus Group</i>
<b>Knowledge of Employees' Work</b>	3
<b>Ability to Motivate</b>	3
<b>Mediator</b>	2
<b>Approachable</b>	2
<b>Organized and Time Management Skills</b>	2
<b>Honesty</b>	2
<b>Common Sense</b>	2

Focus groups transcript is located in Appendix P

Focus groups defined the most commonly cited qualities as follows:

**Table 3.21: Focus Group Responses to Leadership Qualities**

<i>Quality</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Knowledge of Employees' Work</b>	P21: ...I was going to say, this is speaking from experience, like my boss that I had came in after someone who had been there for like ten

years or something, and he didn't know what the people below him did, like he didn't have any idea but yet he was overseeing us.

P21: Understanding the company but also having an understanding of what the people below you do.

P25: Like I was doing stress engineering and my boss was good at stress engineering, you know it wasn't just a guy that was there to lead. He could also do it if he needed to do it. I thought that was important because it's not just another guy who is overseeing everything, but if he can't get down and do it...

P22: Well it's a little different. The thing I do like we sometimes work with computer scientists and they want us to like if it is like website design, usability, but changing it around and things like that. Well, they say if you have a little bit of understanding at least of code or what goes into writing code. I can't write the code but I can at least know what they can and cannot change and that makes me a lot more, you know, that makes them respect me more than just change it like this.

**Ability to Motivate**

P22: I think someone who understands your follower style in a sense. You know, some people need to be micromanaged; some people need to be left alone and go on their way. And a boss needs to be able to understand people.

P25: Understanding his people.

P22: Like knowing ?? understand as a boss, be able to know what you work with, what you work with, and what you work with. Be able to differentiate.

P25: Being able to motivate different people. Like different styles of people.

**Mediator**

P22: You have to be able to confront people who aren't doing their job.

P25: I was going to say that too. You have to be able to have some gall to be able to handle a bad situation. To summarize this, being able to handle conflict.

**Approachable**

P20: I think, some of these have already been said. I but I think someone who is like fun and friendly. Someone who like when...

P19: Personable.

P20: Yeah.

P21: Yeah, like you know they are a leader but they can relate to you...

P20: They can talk to you and have fun and joke around with them. Yeah.

P21: Yeah. Approachable?

**Organized and Time Management Skills**

P29: Organization, time management.

<b>Common Sense</b>	<p>P25: Because I know a lot of people that were really smart at what we were doing but they would have been terrible bosses because they had no common sense, they had to have someone hold their hand.</p> <p>P28: I do like common sense as tact.</p>
<b>Honesty</b>	<p>P18: I think a bunch of them we have kind of tie into this but like just in general, honesty. If your job or company or division was like in a really bad spot. I wouldn't want somebody to like sugar coat it.</p> <p>P20: Like honesty and good morals.</p> <p>P18: ?? these are like dire straits. It doesn't need to be like dooms day but a lot of...</p> <p>P21: Be realistic.</p> <p>P18: of bosses try to sugar coat it because they are worried or just think it's going to pass or whatever it is. Just give me some sense of what is really going on.</p> <p>P19: Kind of related. Integrity.</p>

P#: Participant number; focus groups transcript is located in Appendix P

Although the results of the email interviews and the focus group questions varied, there was a common theme. According to this sample, Generation Y finds leaders to be people-oriented. Having an understanding of follower knowledge/capabilities; being approachable and personable; a mediator of conflict; and the ability to motivate, encourage, empower, and better employees, are essential qualities Generation Y looks for in a leader. These people skills or people-oriented qualities are much more prevalent than task-oriented qualities.

### Interacting with Leaders

Aside from asking participants what qualities they look for in a leader, email interviewees were asked to describe interactions they have encountered with someone they regard as a leader. Two questions were asked, "If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader," and "If you have an

example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader” (Appendix E). Along the same lines as the results for effective communication, participants found that offering guidance, advice, and/or teaching (mentioned five times); informal recognition or praise (mentioned four times); and being open to communication and valuing input (mentioned twice); were the most frequent responses. However, six out of 17 participants either did not respond or wrote they could not think of an example.

**Table 3.22: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Best Interactions with Leaders**

<i>Best Interactions with Leaders</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>No Response, Could Not Think of an Example</b>	6
<b>Guidance, Advice, Teaching</b>	5
<b>Informal Praise or Recognition</b>	4
<b>Open to Communication, Valued Input</b>	2

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix Q

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.23: Email Interview Responses to Best Interactions with Leaders**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Guidance, Advice, Teaching</b>	<p>P3: My training director is a great leader, she not only has to help manage the other faculty to make sure that they are providing us with the best education but she also has to make sure that we as students are meeting certain benchmarks. One student was having problems academically and rather than let her fail she provided additional ways for her to improve her grades.</p> <p>P9: I think my current supervisor is a very effective leader, so I would say my interaction with her daily is positive. Recently she stopped what she was working on to take the time and help me work through a problem I was struggling with on a project. She listened to my issue, told me her opinion and offered suggestions while still encouraging me to strive on.</p> <p>P15: Recently I led a training with a peer of mine. I was sort of taking over her role this year, and she wanted me to direct the training. We worked together to plan the order of activities and she had a number of great ideas that would engage the audience rather than simply present them with information. During the training</p>

she also stepped in a few times to help me answer more difficult questions.

**Informal Praise or Recognition**

- P6: I was having a really bad day at work and I went to the Web Director to discuss some work I had to do. She could sense that I wasn't doing okay and she asked me about it. I told her I was having a rough day and she went on to tell me how wonderful an employee I was and that I should keep doing what I was doing and not let the people in the office get to me. I never felt so appreciated until that moment and it encouraged me to keep working hard even though I got discouraged.
- P14: My best interaction was when I notified the project executive that I was leaving the company to pursue a different career path. Instead of being upset with the decision, he respectfully understood my desire to explore other options. He also made it a point to say that if it did not work out for any reason at any time, that there would always be a position for me if I decided to come back. He closed by wishing me the best and thanking me for my hard work on the project.

**Open to Communication, Valued Input**

- P12: My boss/client asked me to meet with her one-on-one in a leadership offsite. She asked me, as a central member of the office, what feedback I could give her, either my own, or what other staff members thought of her management style. She wanted to hear what others had to say directly, but also wanted to know what, if anything, they were holding back. It meant a lot to know she cared that much to seek out how to improve herself so that others might be more comfortable and have a better work experience.
- P13: The woman who is above my manager has always been straight forward with me. If she has a problem with something that I'm doing, or has a complaint, she contacts me directly and is firm, but still personable enough that I was comfortable in the situation. I can come to her with whatever problems I have and I know she'll approach it objectively and resolve the problem quickly and efficiently.

P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix Q

Similar to the response to the best interaction with someone considered a leader, six out of 17 respondents either had no response or could not think of an example to the question, "What is the worst interaction with someone you consider a leader?" The six

respondents who did not have an answer to the question were slightly different than those who did not have an answer to the best interaction with a leader question. Not surprisingly, the most common response was insulting, mentioned four times. Following insults, gossip and placing blame on others, which was mentioned twice.

**Table 3.24: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Worst Interactions with Leaders**

<i><b>Worst Interactions with Leaders</b></i>	<i><b>Number of Times Observed</b></i>
<b>No Response, Could Not Think of an Example</b>	6
<b>Insulting</b>	4
<b>Gossip, Place Blame on Others</b>	2
<b>Closed Communication</b>	1
<b>Threatening</b>	1
<b>Unorganized</b>	1
<b>Giving Tasks Not Part of Job Description</b>	1
<b>Not Compensating Subordinates/Taking Money from Subordinates</b>	1
<b>Drawing Attention to Everyone for One Person’s Mistake</b>	1

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix R

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.25: Email Interview Responses to Worst Interactions with Leaders**

<i><b>Category</b></i>	<i><b>Participant Responses</b></i>
<b>Insulting</b>	<p>P1: I had a program manager who in a meeting once called all of us software engineers “code pigs.” He wasn’t very well respected after that.</p> <p>P6: My boss gave me an assignment and I completed it and emailed it back to him. After two hours had gone by and he didn’t even look at the assignment, I finally approached him about it. He wasn’t happy with what he saw and went on to insult me and my work. He accused me of putting no thought into my work and spoke to me very disrespectfully.</p> <p>P14: My worst interaction was when I notified the vice president that I was leaving the company to pursue a different career path. Not like the above example, the VP gave me the feeling of indifference to my decision. He then proceeded to go over the negatives (in his opinion) of the new location of my job. After 2 summer internships and 1 full-year of work, I was expecting somewhat</p>

more of a send off. I spoke with another employee who had left the company earlier and he made the statement that this particular leader made you clearly feel that “no matter how much you’ve done for us – you’re easily replaceable.”

**Gossip, Place Blame on Others**

- P2: My worst interaction with a “leader” is when he constantly talks about co-workers and places blame on everyone else but himself. A “gossip” isn’t a true leader.
- P12: My company supervisor talks about all the staff and gossips in our leadership meetings. She manages human capital very poorly and does not filter what she says.

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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix R

Overall, the answers to interactions with leaders was not surprising in that subordinates do not want to be insulted, gossiped about, or have blame unrightfully placed on them. However, a leader as an advisor, giving guidance, and/or teacher was drastically higher than the responses to effective communication. Also, informal praise and recognition from a leader was highly valued among the group, followed by open communication. Again, this sample from Generation Y preferred leaders to interact with them personally and informally. People-oriented or people skills was preferred.

What to Gain from Work

One question that was asked of the focus groups that was not initially addressed by email interviewees was, “What do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?” This question was designed to understand some of the needs in conjunction with Maslow’s Need Hierarchy that Generation Y hopes to fulfill through a job and leaders in the workplace. It was important to add this question because the participants’ needs were not addressed in email interview responses. This focus group question aided

in answering the research inquiries, “What are considered ideal job attributes?” and “How does Generation Y define a leader?”

The category most frequently mentioned was having an impact, contribution, and to help people through the work this group of people does. This category was mentioned nine times. Closely following having an impact, contribution, and helping people was recognition for hard work/college degree earned, and status. Recognition and status was mentioned eight times. The third most commonly mentioned category was monetary compensation and the ability to support a family. Respondents did not particularly say they want to make a lot of money but enough that they could support a family, mentioned seven times. Other categories included were happiness and personal satisfaction (mentioned four times); the opportunity to learn, challenged, and gain personal experience for the next job (mentioned three times); and work-life balance (mentioned twice).

**Table 3.26: Focus Group Categorical Responses to What They Would Like to Gain from a Job**

<i><b>What Participants Would Like to Gain from a Job</b></i>	<i><b>Number of Times Observed</b></i>
<b>Impact, Contribution, Help People</b>	9
<b>Recognition, Status</b>	8
<b>Monetary Compensation</b>	7
<b>Happiness, Personal Satisfaction</b>	4
<b>Opportunity to Learn, Challenged, Gain Personal Experience</b>	3
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	2
<b>Make Personal Relationships</b>	1
<b>Work was Moral or Ethically Right</b>	1
<b>Feeling Work was Worthwhile</b>	1

Focus groups transcript is located in Appendix S

Focus groups defined the most commonly cited categories as follows:

**Table 3.27: Focus Group Responses to What They Would Like to Gain from a Job**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Participant Responses</b>
<b>Impact, Contribution, Help People</b>	<p>P22: I want to be able to feel like I contributed something. This is my own personal thing, but I want to feel like I contributed something like if I were not on this earth that wouldn't have been accomplished otherwise. That's kind of what I look for in my job. It's kind of hard to do.</p> <p>P25: ...you made even a small difference, something you could be proud of doing and you accomplished something then that would be fine. I don't have to change the world. Not like cure cancer but if like at the end of the day I can point to something and be like I help build that or I helped come up with this idea or anything.</p> <p>P28: I think you should be able to walk away at the end of the day feeling that you contributed to your company</p>
<b>Recognition, Status</b>	<p>P18: ...you know like I think all of us would like to have a job that's somewhat valued in society or somewhat sort of...</p> <p>P19: Some level of status.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, you know, I mean I get your answer. Not to stroke your ego all the time. But feel like your job is worthy of your talents and your training or whatever.</p> <p>P21: Yeah, and along the same lines being able to use some of the skills you learned in school.</p> <p>P20: Well I feel like other people would value the fact that you went through all that schooling.</p>
<b>Monetary Compensation</b>	<p>P20: I also think that I don't necessarily want to have like millions of dollars but I would like to be able to support a family.</p> <p>P25: ...you were able to always take care of your family, and that ties into your pay, like you were always able to take care of your family, you know, nobody ever had any needs.</p>
<b>Happiness, Personal Satisfaction</b>	<p>P29: ...it would be really cool if you could just leave work and be happy, like, oh yeah, that was a good day. You know, like, the majority of days. I am scared to go to work and just be miserable. I want it to be good, like, yeah that was awesome.</p>
<b>Opportunity to Learn, Challenged, Gain Personal Experience</b>	<p>P20: ...I want to be able to learn from it [work] that I can either move up at that place or move up somewhere else.</p> <p>P24: Well, I think it is important for it [work] to be challenging.</p> <p>P28: ...also gain a little bit of personal development and experience.</p>
<b>Work-life Balance</b>	<p>P19: Live life and not just finance it.</p>

P#: Participant number; focus groups transcript is located in Appendix S

It is clear based on the results, the sample wanted to have an impact and recognition for their impact on society. Monetary compensation was not the most important thing, nor did they say they wanted to be “millionaires” but as long as they could support a family and fulfill needs they would be satisfied. A common theme that has already been alluded to in the discussion of work and leadership expectations was the opportunity to learn and be challenged in the work they do in order to gain personal experience, presumably to move on to the next job.

### Making Decisions

Thus far, questions asked of email interviewees and focus groups addressed the three research inquiries, which essentially ask about Generation Y’s behaviors and values. The last set of questions asked of email interviewees more directly addressed the research question, “How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?” The questions asked were, “If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked?” and “If you have one, please describe an example of poor decision-making in an organization where you have worked?” These questions directly asked about actions made in the workplace that Generation Y finds most effective.

As expected, the most common effective decisions were made when the situation was evaluated and tasks were prepared (mentioned eight times). Likewise, the most common poor decisions were made when situations were not evaluated and tasks were unprepared (mentioned six times). The second most common effective decision-making

category was collaborating and the opportunity to give input (mentioned four times); and the most common poor decision-making category was not consulting other employees or superiors (mentioned four times).

**Table 3.28: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Effective Decision-Making**

<i>Effective Decision-Making</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Evaluating the Situation, Being Prepared</b>	8
<b>Giving Input, Collaborating</b>	4
<b>No Response, Never Been in a Position to Make a Decision</b>	2
<b>Compromising</b>	1

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix T

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.29: Email Interview Responses to Effective Decision-Making**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Evaluating the Situation, Being Prepared</b>	<p>P3: Recently my specific office in the organization has acquired a new boss. As a result my direct supervisor had many projects taken off her plate. In no way was this a demotion for her or to say that she is not capable of completing the work her staff has, but purely was a decision made because it had been made clear that she while all the projects were getting worked on, none were getting completed to the best of anyone’s ability. It was a simple case of being able to do everything half-assed or fewer things extremely effectively. The decision to cut her tasks down allowed her to be able to concentrate on fewer things and get them done well which helps everyone in the long run.</p> <p>P6: It came time for all of us to get raises at the end of last year, but the budget was a problem. The company wanted to reward the staff, but not affect the budget. They finally decided to give us two-weeks paid vacation. We all got time off that we wouldn’t have any other way, and the company didn’t have to spend too much money.</p> <p>P11: In these current economic times my company as any other is trying to cut back wherever possible. My manager and his business analyst team were able to effectively save money by allowing my team to perform tasks that would otherwise be costly for a vendor to perform.</p>

<b>Effective Decision-Making based on Giving Input, Collaborating</b>	<p>P8: My boss requested feedback for future proposed changes from staff prior to those changes being implemented.</p> <p>P9: The process that has been most effective has been when a group of people sits down to make a collective decision. With a lot of interdepartmental interaction many decisions affect how others do their job, so bringing two or three people together for an hour to discover the correct decision is often the most effective way for us to make decisions, it prevents a lot of back and forth down the road.</p>
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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix T

Categorical responses to poor decision-making are as follows:

**Table 3.30: Email Interview Categorical Responses to Poor Decision-Making**

<i>Poor Decision-Making</i>	<i>Number of Times Observed</i>
<b>Not Evaluating the Situation, Not Being Prepared</b>	6
<b>Not Consulting Other Employees or Superiors</b>	4
<b>Indecisive, Not Making a Decision</b>	2
<b>No Response</b>	2
<b>Not Trusting Lower-Level Employees, Following a Chain of Command</b>	1

Email interviewee responses are located in Appendix U

To gain a better understanding of what each category means, some of the participants provided the following examples:

**Table 3.31: Email Interview Responses to Poor Decision-Making**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<b>Not Evaluating the Situation, Not Being Prepared</b>	<p>P12: Poor Management by CEO and Chief Marketing office - Sales were down in my old office – a private consulting and business support firm. As a result they took an already rigorous marketing structure and regimented it by the minute. We all received strict schedules that were not to be strayed from, indicating that we were to work mandatory overtime with no breaks. Turnover was extremely high already and the term “burn-out” became just a flicker on the surface of this inferno. I quickly left and sales continue to decline. Two years after I left they are now having to lay off many staff members because they attacked too aggressively and did not have the business research and quality resources to back up growing sales/membership.</p> <p>P14: The principal engineer saved an entire report preparation until</p>

the day before it was due. We finished the majority of the report, but had to transmit several appendix documents the following day. After which, the client noticed a few errors in the document which we had to issue in a revised report. It was extremely embarrassing as the errors were minor issues relating to basic grammar or arithmetic. An engineering firm in Demark reviewed it, and with the higher international standard, it really felt like a blow to our professionalism. There are people who believe they can “work best under pressure” but that is an invented statement used by procrastinators to conceal that very trait. Even if someone can churn out documents in a matter of hours, that does not translate to the quality of the actual document.

**Poor Decision-Making based on Not Consulting Other Employees or Superiors**

P8: Purchasing unnecessary equipment when other purchases were needed more. There was no consultation with those who use this equipment daily as to what they needed to do their job more effectively, she just made assumptions.

P15: My job is international and as such, there are a lot of guidelines provided by the higher-ups that we must follow. Recently, a new boss changed a lot of the guidelines to fix what she saw as problems, before really getting to know her new job situation. As such, a lot of my co-workers were very displeased with the new rules and feel like we are being treated like children—having to follow rules that we don’t feel make sense for us in our particular situations. As a result, a lot of my co-workers choose to side-step or knowingly break the rules because they feel they are unfair. [Overlaps with not evaluating category]

P17: An example of a poor decision I had early in my career was due to overconfidence. I felt that I knew the process inside and out and did not need to double-check my accuracy or create a checklist for quality control. Due to this arrogance, I made a costly mistake that inadvertently cost me my job.

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P#: Participant number; email interviewee responses are located in Appendix U

Preparation of tasks and evaluation of situations yielded the most effective decisions made. Multiple times participants cited reassigning tasks after evaluating the situation as a wise decision, which is directly linked to directive communication behavior. Participants also cited consulting with others before decisions are made as an effective form of decision-making. The sample strongly felt actions should be a result of

a collaborative process in which those affected and those with more experience have the opportunity to give input before decisions are made. The desire for collaboration was represented greatly in communication, leadership, and decision-making practices.

The next chapter is the Analysis chapter. The chapter will discuss the findings previously described in this chapter. The Analysis chapter will explore the answer to the final research question, “How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?”

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS

Chapter one presented two theoretical frameworks that structure this study. The first framework discussed how generational identity is developed. Burke's theory on orientations suggests at the individual level, human action is dictated by our "bundle of judgments" we have developed due to past experiences. Mannheim takes Burke's theory a step further and found humans born during the same generation have similar "bundles of judgment" based on their common, lived, historical experiences. Thus, humans of a particular generation's perspectives are more heterogeneous than Burke believed. Maslow agrees with Mannheim, in that humans are more alike than Burke believed. However, Maslow found it was human need that creates this similarity and dictates action to fulfill those needs. Since generations of people experience different historical events, which shape their needs, differences in orientations, "collective memories," and needs, creates generational diversity. A major problem today is generational diversity in the workplace, as there are four generations in the workforce. Particularly, the youngest generation, Generation Y has a high turnover rate. With the Traditionalists and Baby Boomers soon retiring, Generation Y will take over the workforce and be promoted into positions they may not be prepared for. Organizations need to recognize this shift in the workforce, the high turnover rate of Generation Y, and the generational diversity in the workplace. And thus, strong leadership in the workplace is necessary, which was the second theoretical frame this study presented. Leaders need to be aware of the generational diversity, where it comes from according to generational orientations and

needs, and how those orientations and needs dictate workplace expectations and communication practices. By gaining knowledge of Generation Y's orientations, leaders can build a relationship and learn to interact with Generation Y so that organizations can retain these young, talented workers. Leaders in the workplace can then help young workers prepare and reach their potential when Traditionalists and Baby Boomers retire.

This study explored work expectations, communication practices, and the definition of leadership according to Generation Y in order to understand how leaders can effectively communicate with young, emergent workers. Previous leadership communication practices will not be as successful when interacting with this generation. Thus, the second framework in chapter one examined different leadership communication behaviors, and a brief summary of leadership theories that exhibit those certain communication behaviors, such as directive, consultative, participative, negotiative, and delegative.

Chapter two provided the methods of this research study and primary goal to answer the following research inquiries:

1. What are considered ideal job attributes?
2. How does Generation Y prefer to be communicated with?
3. How does Generation Y define a leader?

In order to answer the research question:

1. How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?

The first three research inquiries were answered in the Results chapter and have helped to gain an answer to the research question, “How do leaders effectively communicate to young, emergent workers?” This chapter will discuss the results of the first three inquiries (as presented in chapter three) and come to an understanding of how leaders effectively communicate to Generation Y.

### Job Attributes

When participants were asked what their ideal job attributes were the results were in conjunction with much of the research on generational perspectives according to Mannheim’s social location and Burke’s orientations. The sample desired variety, challenging, and skill-building work. Generation Y is focused on the future, as Strauss and Howe suggest, “Millennials [Generation Y] like to plan, are focused on the future, and believe any work they do today should be planned and preparatory investment for the permanent kind of life they wish to lead tomorrow” (69). The sample repeatedly asked to be challenged in the workplace, most likely so that they will have a strong investment in their own skills and abilities for the future. Also, the sample wished not to be bored at work or have to do “pointless” and “mundane” tasks. Possibly due to their upbringing with technology’s fast paced, ever-changing environment (specifically the internet), this group will get bored easily and find fast and more innovative ways to accomplish tasks. Thus, by providing various, challenging, learning opportunities in the workplace, Generation Y will be more interested and committed to work.

Flexibility was the second most important job attribute to the sample. Flexibility was defined as the ability to create their own hours, telecommute, and working in the

office and in the field/various locations. Generation Y wants to define their own workplaces and flexibility allows for this. According to the focus groups there was a lot of resentment for the traditional work week. Participant 18 stated, “I think there is like this old school mentality where like I [superior in the workplace] had to work 40 hours a week set in stone so you have to do it too even though I know a lot of companies like employ younger people and a lot of younger people a lot of companies you know like there can be a little bit more flexibility there like if you are willing to let go of that like sort of like mindless requirement.” Not only were they resentful toward the 9:00 to 5:00, 40 hour work week, they were very aware of societal changes. Participant 19 said, “Our generation and the flexible work time is big. I know there is a, there is much more expectation ?? rarely do you have a stay at home parent or your family situation, a stay at home person and a working person usually everyone works now so it’s almost impossible to do.” Whereas with the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations, there may have been a stay at home parent to take care of the family, and a 9:00 to 5:00 work week was acceptable. As family structures change it is necessary to have flexibility in the workplace. Changing technology has made flexibility in the workplace possible. Generation Y is keenly aware of this and expects flexibility.

One result of the study was the sample’s need for autonomy. The sample repeatedly stated they did not want to be micromanaged, they wanted to be trusted to do the work they are assigned, and they want to have the autonomy to do it. Whether autonomous work meant working on one’s own, in a team, or telecommuting they did not want “constant oversight” or a “boss looking over your shoulder every second.”

Participants were cited as saying they wanted some form of structure in the workplace but wanted the opportunity to do their work autonomously. The desire to work autonomously conflicted with the participants' need for a directive form of communication. Perhaps the best description of this conflict was Participant 13's response, "structured independence." This conflict aligns with the literature on Generation Y's orientations. Growing up, Generation Y has led extremely structured lifestyles. Whether it was the public school system's No Child Left Behind or the multiple after school activities to get into college, this group was *doing* more things than previous generations at their age (Strauss and Howe 69). Growing up very structured has shaped their perspectives so that they would desire structure in the workplace too. While it is clear Generation Y prefers structure, it is unclear as to their desire for autonomy. Autonomy may be attributed to their sense of entitlement or high education but based on the results only speculation can be made.

Another attribute that was one of the most undesirable job attributes was working in isolation or a cubicle. Not working in isolation also corresponded with much of the literature. It became very clear throughout this study that Generation Y is a social group. From a young age this group has "functioned in groups in school, organized sports, and extracurricular activities" (Arnold and Williams 19). Team mentality and close ties with friends (Cole, Smith, and Lucas) has been a part of the Generation Yer's life and this perspective is no different in the workplace. Working in a cubicle, in isolation, bad bosses, and bad co-workers will make this group, according to Participant 26, "miserable on a given day."

This study has confirmed the theory that the workplace is experiencing a paradigm shift due to their orientations. While the Traditionalist and Baby Boomer generations may have operated under the paradigm, OODA – observe, orient, decide, and act (Bennis and Thomas 83) or COP – control, order, predict (Bennis and Townsend 95), this young generation is shifting those paradigms drastically based on their orientations, perspective, and work expectations. The most recent suggested paradigm in the workplace (which is still a work in progress), as it applies to Generation Y is considered the acronym ACE – acknowledge, create, and empower (Bennis and Townsend 95). *Acknowledge* meaning showing appreciation, giving praise, rewarding good work, and celebrating accomplishments of employees (Bennis and Townsend 96). *Create* meaning giving employees the autonomy to do work without asking permission and allowing employees to take initiative (Bennis and Townsend 96). *Empower* or *empowerment* meaning creating a workplace atmosphere that allows employees to express different views, and leaders who mentor employees to reach beyond their potential (Bennis and Townsend 73-74, 95-96). Participant responses would definitely be categorized as seeking the ACE paradigm, particularly the job attribute responses implied this group wanted the opportunity to create. Empowering and acknowledgment was exhibited in the samples responses to effective communication and leadership interaction. The new ACE paradigm is a direct reflection of Generation Y's orientations and needs. In their formative years, Generation Y was accustomed to praise and acknowledgment, which they expect in the workplace as well. Generation Y craves praise and acknowledgment to

fulfill the higher level esteem needs. Empowering this group also helps fulfill Maslow's highest level need, self-actualization.

The new leadership paradigm in the workplace aids in achieving Generation Y's esteem needs and self-actualization needs, but one unexpected, common result was the sample's desire to fulfill Maslow's safety needs. Two out of three focus groups cited salary and benefits as ideal job attributes. Their major concerns were to be healthy themselves by requesting benefits and to be compensated enough to support a family, despite none of them actually having children to support. Perhaps due to their close ties to family during their formative years, this need to support a family is a major criterion for work.

### Effective Communication

The results indicated the most frequently identified forms of communication were direct and collaborative. Generation Y's communication preferences are indicative of their collective orientations.

The literature does not specifically say why Generation Y would prefer direct communication. However, a strong explanation for this preferred communication is that Generation Y has had extremely structured lives (as discussed earlier) and they are a product of standardized tests from grades K-12. Most classroom curriculum for this age group was structured under what they needed to know for the PSAT, the SAT, the ACT, and AP Exams, among other statewide standardized tests. In 2001, George Bush enacted the No Child Left Behind Act, which made federal funding for schools contingent on standardized test scores (ed.gov). Needing to know what would be on the test was a

common theme in the classroom for this generation. Thus, much of their academic lives were structured in a way where Generation Y was told what to do and what to know.

Collaborative, the opportunity to give and ask for feedback, open communication and discussion was extremely favored among this group. This finding was in conjunction with the literature. Perhaps moving from one-way, “analog, media-bound, and passive” technology switching to “digital, media-free, and interactive” technology in the 1990s (Strauss and Howe 29-30) has altered Generation Y’s perspective of communication from that of older generations. Since technology, for Generation Y, has always allowed them the possibility of two-way communication, they seek this in all aspects of communication. This group seeks the opportunity to give input, which only drives their motivation to innovate for improvements (Zust).

Results of this study also indicated the sample favored informal praise and recognition. The word “informal” was frequently used when describing a moment of praise, recognition, or chats with superiors. Accustomed to growing up with constant feedback, and everyone winning a trophy at the end of the soccer season regardless of a winner or a loser, this group is used to being recognized and acknowledged for their opinions and accomplishments.

The sample also found guidance, advising, and teaching as forms of very effective communication. This could be due to their young age, but mentoring was considered extremely helpful when achieving goals. Participants agreed professional development was essential and those superiors who aided in that were highly regarded. Participant 10 said, “My supervisor advised me how to go about reaching my goals and effectively

answered my questions regarding the company's support toward helping me achieve them." Similarly, Participant 12 described guidance and advice as, "... [My superior] sets goals, listens, helps define and understand professional development goals."

Responses to effective communication agreed with the literature's new leadership paradigm, ACE – acknowledge, create, and empower (Bennis and Townsend 95).

Generation Y has a strong preference to be acknowledged for good performance and empowered to do better through guidance, advice, and teaching.

After analyzing the preferred communication patterns of Generation Y it is very obvious there are major contradictions. As a result of the way Generation Y has been raised in a highly structured environment they want direct communication. Because of technology's influence and growing up with a team mentality, this group prefers collaborative, two-way communication. This generational cohort relishes informal praise and recognition because they are accustomed to it and seek to fulfill their esteem needs. Perhaps due to being young, this group desires a mentor who guides, advises, and teaches. Generation Y wants to be told what to do yet give feedback. They want praise, approval, and mentorship yet want independence and to work autonomously (as discussed previously). While these are major contradictions in communication and work expectations. Leaders in the workplace need to be aware of these conflicting communication patterns and work expectations, and realize the appropriate type of leadership communication for young workers is going to be on a situation-by-situation basis.

## Leadership

The core of this research study was to find the best way for leaders to effectively communicate with Generation Y. By first asking participants to define a leader, this aided in finding the most effective way for leaders to communicate with Generation Y. The results had a strong indication that the sample seeks interpersonal leaders, which are people-oriented as opposed to task-oriented leaders. Interpersonal leadership “emphasizes teamwork, cooperation, and supportive communication”; the primary focus is on the relationship between leader and follower (Hackman and Johnson 44). The sample wanted a leader that understood follower knowledge/capabilities; who was approachable and personable; a mediator of conflict; has the ability to motivate, encourage, empower, and mentor employees; and who was an employee advocate. Leadership as a personal relationship with follower aligns with the literature. Theorists Bennis and Thomas found that to this young generation, “the leaders who work with followers are intimate allies” are the ones that establish trust and support from followers (79, 83).

There is no denying Generation Y wants interpersonal leaders and will thrive when there is a personal relationship with leaders established in trust. However, creating that relationship and trust takes work and good communication. Older generations may thrive under one specific behavioral communication style, whether it is directive, participatory, etc.; but the results from this study suggested there is a distinct conflict in leader behavioral communication styles preferred by Generation Y. When participants were asked about their experiences interacting with leaders and how they would like

tasks assigned to them from a superior, the results were very similar to that of effective communication; however, guidance, advice, and teaching, closely followed by informal praise or recognition were the most highly valued interactions with leaders. Leaders who were open to communication and value input were also mentioned but not as strongly. Based on the results of the effective communication (direct and collaborative communication) and the desire for guidance and informal recognition in the workplace some comparisons to leadership theory and how leaders can effectively communicate to young, emergent workers can be made. By following Bass and Valenzi's Five Leadership Model, some definitions to begin discussing preferred leadership communication behaviors are established. Leadership behavioral communication is described as follows:

**Table 4.1: Leadership Behavioral Styles (adapted from Gill 44; Bass and Valenzi 139)**

<b><i>Leadership style</i></b>	<b><i>Definition</i></b>
<b>Directive</b>	You tell subordinates what to do and how to do it. You initiate action. You tell subordinates, what is expected of them, specifying standards of performance and setting deadlines for completion of prescribed ways of doing things. You also ensure they are working to capacity, reassigning tasks to balance the workload.
<b>Consultative</b>	You tell subordinates what to do, but only after discussing matters with them first and hearing their opinions, feelings, ideas, and suggestions.
<b>Participative</b>	You discuss and analyze problems with your subordinates to reach consensus on what to do and how to do it. Decisions are made by the group as a whole and your subordinates have as much responsibility for decisions as you do. They participate as equals in decision making.
<b>Negotiative (manipulative)</b>	You employ political means and bargaining to gain desired ends, making political alliances, promising subordinates rewards for meeting expectations, releasing information to suit your interests, maintaining social distance, 'bending' the rules, encouraging subordinates to compete, and 'selling' decisions to them.

**Delegative**

You describe the problem or need and the conditions that have to be met, and you make suggestions, but you leave it to subordinates to decide what to do and how to do it.

It is safe to say that the sample's desire for communication that is direct, clear, prepared, and understood expectations and priority, can be classified as Bass and Valenzi's "directive" style of leadership which is, "You tell subordinates what to do and how to do it. You initiate action. You tell subordinates, what is expected of them, specifying standards of performance and setting deadlines for completion of prescribed ways of doing things. You also ensure they are working to capacity, reassigning tasks to balance the workload" (Gill 44). It is also safe to say the sample's definition of communication that is collaborative, offers the opportunity to give and ask for feedback, open communication and discussion can be categorized as Bass and Valenzi's "consultative," which is "You tell subordinates what to do, but only after discussing matters with them first and hearing their opinions, feelings, ideas, and suggestions" (Gill 44).

Directive and consultative behavioral leadership communication was not only preferred in the results of effective communication and leadership interaction but were also confirmed by the email interviewee responses to effective and poor decision-making. Decision-making is an action indicative of behavioral communication. Participants repeatedly said effective decision-making occurred when superiors reassigned tasks after evaluating the situation. Participant 3 responded, "The decision to cut her [the superiors] tasks down allowed her to be able to concentrate on fewer things and get them done well which helps everyone in the long run." Reevaluating the situation is directly connected to directive behavioral communication described as "You also ensure they are working to

capacity, reassigning tasks to balance the workload” (Gill 44). The opportunity to collaborate with those directly affected by a decision or with experts closely followed directive decision-making. When participants were not involved with decisions that affected them they demonstrated frustration. Participant 15 wrote the following about a decision to change rules that was made without consultation with the people it affected, “...a lot of my co-workers were very displeased with the new rules and feel like we are being treated like children—having to follow rules that we don’t feel make sense for us in our particular situations. As a result, a lot of my co-workers choose to side-step or knowingly break the rules because they feel they are unfair.” Participants did not necessarily imply they wanted to be decision-makers but wanted the opportunity to give their input. Decision-making closely resembled consultative behavioral communication, “You [leaders] tell subordinates what to do, but only after discussing matters with them first and hearing their opinions, feelings, ideas, and suggestions” (Gill 44).

The desires for directive and consultative communication are in direct conflict with one another. This conflict is best described by Participant 29, “I just want it to be face-to-face, but if it is just like a menial task, just email it to me. And I guess if you are not happy with what I am doing then I would want you to come and just tell me up front and tell me what to change so I can do what you want to do and then if I don’t agree with you be open to suggestions and other ideas. Just be open.” Participants consistently said they wanted to be told what to do but have the opportunity give feedback and suggestions with no hesitation. According to Generation Y, leaders are expected to have clear, exact tasks and communicate them in a directive manner yet be open and willing to consult

with followers. Leaders have to create a structured work environment yet give employees the autonomy to do work and the opportunity to give input during decision-making, as suggested by the decision-making results.

In order for a leader to be successful he or she must be able to communicate effectively with followers. Most leaders will operate under one particular kind of communication structure, authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire (Hackman and Johnson 34). However, Generation Y wants one leader that will operate under all of these structures at any given time.

Leaders who adopt authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire communication structures will interact with followers very differently. Authoritarian leadership maintains a distance between leaders and followers to create a clear distinction between roles. Authoritarian leaders will keep “strict control over followers by directly regulating policy, procedures, and behavior” (Hackman and Johnson 34). The leadership behavioral communication style of authoritarian leaders would best be described as directive, negotiative (manipulative), and persuasive (Bass 416). Often authoritarian leaders feel without their constant supervision, followers will be unproductive (Hackman and Johnson 34). For those who adopt an authoritarian structure of leadership they can expect “high productivity (particularly when he or she directly supervise followers); increased hostility, aggression, and discontent; and decreased commitment, independence, and creativity among followers” (Hackman and Johnson 41). Participants repeatedly said they want “the expectations, responsibilities laid out for this extended period of time,” “be very specific about what needs to be done,” and “...I would just

want the manager to come to me and tell me exactly what he wants, even like the subtasks that he expects or she expects from me then... I would just want to know what they want at the end and then I can do it.” An authoritarian leader is a desirable leader among Generation Y but they also had a high preference for autonomy and to not be micromanaged. Autonomy and not micromanaging are not part of the authoritarian structure of leadership communication. Thus, participants also desired a laissez-faire communication structure of leadership.

A laissez-faire leadership structure of communication has sometimes been called “non-leadership.” Essentially, laissez-faire leaders withdraw from followers and only provide support and guidance when requested by followers (Hackman and Johnson 35). Laissez-faire leaders do not use any leadership behavioral style of communication. Laissez-faire leaders can expect “decreased productivity and less satisfaction” among followers. However, if followers are highly motivated and experts in the field they will not need direct guidance (Hackman and Johnson 41). The sample often said they wanted “...supervisors [to] trust your judgment and allow you the independence and authority needed to do your job well,” that “You don’t want somebody every 20 minutes walking into your office or whatever it is like, hey, are you sure you know how to do this? Yeah I know how to do this...” and “I don’t like people telling me, standing over me telling me what to do the whole time.” While at times they felt they didn’t need a leader, a laissez-faire leader was acceptable. But at other times when they wanted to be told what to do, an authoritarian leader was acceptable. However, the sample said they also wanted open communication with the opportunity to give and receive feedback. In fact, participants

said they did not want to feel “embarrassed” or “ashamed” to ask questions and wanted “a [work]place where I’m encouraged to share my ideas and am comfortable doing so.”

Generation Y not only wants leaders who are authoritarian and laissez-faire but who are also democratic. Democratic leaders are very much the opposite of authoritarian leaders. Democratic leaders believe their followers are highly capable of accomplishing tasks and making decisions. Democratic leaders encourage suggestions, participation, ideas, and establishing goals and procedures from followers. Contribution is highly valued and is considered to improve decision-making (Hackman and Johnson 35), which the sample agreed with (highly regarded participatory decision-making). The leadership behavioral communication styles used by democratic leaders are participative, consultative, and delegative (Bass 416). Leaders who utilize democratic leadership can expect “relatively high productivity (whether or not the leader directly supervises followers) and to increased satisfaction, commitment, and cohesiveness.” The disadvantages to democratic leadership is that it can be “time consuming and can be cumbersome with larger groups” (Hackman and Johnson 41). Participants wanted leaders who were “open to communication and follow-up questions if necessary,” and “open to new and creative ideas for workforce development and performance improvement.”

Essentially, Generation Y asks leaders to be malleable and adapt to certain situations at all times. The situation will dictate whether leaders have to be authoritarian and use a directive behavioral communication approach; democratic and use a

consultative behavioral communication style; or laissez-faire, allowing employees to work autonomously.

### Leadership Theory to Consider

Generation Y's expectations of leaders are unreasonable. Leaders cannot encompass an authoritarian, laissez-faire, and democratic leader all at once. Generation Y seeks leaders who are directive and consultative in their communication with followers but they also seek leaders who are mentors and give informal recognition and praise. The request for mentors and recognition may not necessarily solely be a generational characteristic, but could be a symptom of youth. Nevertheless, mentoring and recognition are styles of communication that are not addressed in Bass and Valenzi's Five Leadership Model.

It is very clear leading Generation Y must occur on a situation-by-situation basis. Thus, Contingency theories of leadership could be applicable to this study. Contingency theories contend the situation will dictate the behavioral style of leadership used. In reviewing Contingency theories of leadership discussed in chapter one, there is no absolute theory that can be applied to Generation Y. The closest Contingency theory that could be applied to Generation Y is Path-Goal Theory as it is somewhat congruent with the findings from this research. However, there are major limitations to this theory that do not apply to this study.

Path-Goal Theory claims that "a person's motivation (effort) depends on his or her assessment of whether the effort would lead to good performance, the probability of a reward – either material or psychological – as a result of the good performance, and the

‘valence’ (value of the reward to the person)” (Gill 47). In other words, followers will be more motivated and productive if they believe completing a task will place them on a “path to a valuable goal” (Hackman and Johnson 70). The leader’s role is to shape the follower’s perception in a way that clarifies the path to the task and the desirability of the goal (Hackman and Johnson 70). Leaders are responsible for clearly communicating the tasks and rewards, and removing barriers along the way, and thus creating personal satisfaction among followers. To refer to Maslow’s motivation theory, once followers have placed value on a certain goal they have also set their own barriers along the path to that goal. It is the leader’s job to remove those barriers to allow the follower to achieve the goal.

The two situational variables of Path-Goal Theory are the nature of the followers and the nature of the task (Hackman and Johnson 70). In order to fulfill the needs of the followers and the task, leaders need to adopt appropriate leadership communication styles. Theorists House and Mitchell identify four communication styles:

**Table 4.2: Path-Goal Theory Communication Styles (Hackman and Johnson 70)**

<i>Path-Goal Theory Communication Styles</i>	
<b>Directive</b>	Procedure-related communication behavior that includes planning and organizing, task coordination, policy setting, and other forms of guidance.
<b>Supportive</b>	Interpersonal communication focusing on concerns for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction.
<b>Participative</b>	Communication designed to solicit opinions and ideas from followers for the purpose of involving followers in decision-making.
<b>Achievement-oriented</b>	Communication focusing on goal attainment and accomplishment, emphasizing the achievement of excellence by demonstrating confidence in the ability of followers to achieve their goals.

Based on Path-Goal Theory's communication styles, directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented, it was the most appropriate leadership theory that applied to Generation Y's work expectations, and preferred communication and leadership. From Bass and Valenzi's Five Leadership Model Generation Y sought directive and consultative leadership communication. Path-Goal Theory is the one theory discussed from chapter one that describes leadership communication as directive, and participative (which is similar to Bass and Valenzi's consultative). It also addresses Generation Y's need for a leader who is people-oriented and concerned for follower personal development. Path-Goal Theory was the only leadership theory that fully addressed Generation Y's desire for a leader who would mentor and advise through "achievement-oriented" communication. It was also the only leadership theory that explicitly identified "supportive" communication that facilitates "a desirable climate for interaction," which aligns with Generation Y's strong preference for a social workplace that is open to communication. Path-Goal Theory allows for a leader to be authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire, depending on the situation. Also, this theory emphasizes decisions are made collaboratively, which was also strongly recognized in the results of this study.

Ultimately, Path-Goal Theory is comprised of three variables: leader, follower, and task; and focuses on the relationship between the three. Path-Goal Theory provides a basic understanding for how followers define the goals and how leaders can help them achieve those goals through completion of tasks in an organization. Path-Goal Theory also offers leadership communication styles for particular followers and tasks. It is

difficult to say that this theory is a catchall for Generation Y. First, this theory can only be partially applied to this study since the study did not concentrate on a particular task or goal of Generation Y. While Generation Y does have needs they wish to fulfill in the workplace, such as safety, esteem, and self-actualization needs; this study did not solely focus on learning the needs of Generation Y. However, multiple participants cited positive moments of interaction with a superior or leader as discussing future goals in or outside of the organization. Path-Goal Theory would be a leadership theory to consider when working with Generation Y if their particular goals and needs are addressed from the onset.

This study has found that leadership for Generation Y is similar to that of current literature on leadership theory and leadership communication patterns but there is room for reevaluation and adjustments. Generation Y seeks conflicting leadership communication patterns and a paradox in leadership communication behavior. They also want leaders that will guide, advise, and teach, as well as recognize them. Personal interaction with Generation Y is key for leaders to understand. Malleable leaders who adapt to situations will successfully communicate with Generation Y.

#### Visible Leadership

Perhaps even more interesting than the responses to interactions with leaders in the workplace was the *lack* of responses to interactions with leaders in the workplace. Six out of 17 email interviewees had no response to their best interaction with someone they regarded as a leader. Also, six out of 17 participants had no response to their worst interaction with someone they regarded as a leader. Throughout this study, the lack of

responses to interactions with leaders and the contradictory results of how a good leader behaves and communicates, the question arose, is the concept of leadership obsolete?

Obviously, as stated before, leaders can act on a situation-by-situation basis. But if Generation Y cannot recognize leadership in the first place, how are they to be led?

Theorists Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas conducted a project on a cross-generational comparison of leadership. They asked a group of Traditionalists (70-years-old and up) and Generation X and Y (35-years-old and younger) leaders which heroes influenced them during their formative years (Bennis and Thomas 5, 80). The results are as follows:

***Traditionalists***

- Franklin D. Roosevelt (5)
- Gandhi (3)
- Abraham Lincoln (2)
- Nelson Mandela (2)
- John F. Kennedy (2)
- Winston Churchill
- Alan Greenspan
- Eleanor Roosevelt
- Jean Pierre Trudeau
- Harry Truman
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Nelson Rockefeller
- Jimmy Carter
- Adlai Stevenson
- Lao Tzu
- Henry David Thoreau
- Howard Baker
- Beethoven
- Mother Theresa

***Generation X and Y***

- My parents (8)
- Friend or coworker (3)
- My grandfather
- Hunter Thompson
- Jerry Garcia
- Roberto Clemente
- None or not considered relevant (6)

(Bennis and Thomas 80)

In essence, Generation Y is unaccustomed to the idea of a leader and if they are asked to cite a real hero, their parents or people they have close work relationships will most likely be their answer (Bennis and Thomas 83). Generation Y's leadership criteria is intimacy and trust (Bennis and Thomas 83). Bennis and Thomas have found the public figures and larger-than-life heroes of the past do not exist to young people of the present. Young people find the "idolization of individuals a risky business" as every time someone rises to a leadership role in the public eye, the media knocks them down by revealing "a dirty secret" (Bennis and Thomas 80). Thus, Generation Y is skeptical of public figures as leaders. However, leadership is still desired (as shown by the results of this study). Desired leadership is not based on "monumental accomplishments, but [based on] people whose accomplishments [are] tangible" (Bennis and Thomas 80-81).

It is possible Generation Y is a leaderless generation, but that does not mean there is not a *need* or *want* for leaders. When asked, Generation Y cited true heroes as someone they may closely work with, this is crucial for organizations to recognize. Generation Y wants leaders who are available and with whom they can make personal relationships. Visible and available leadership will be essential to lead this group in the workplace. It seems clear that establishing personal, mentoring relationships with Generation Y in the workplace is the best way to create a foundation of leadership within this group.

This study has speculated Path-Goal Theory is an applicable leadership theory that works on a situation-by-situation basis for Generation Y. However, attempting to

find a theory that will blanket an entire generation of emergent workers is impossible. The best explanation to finding effective leadership communication to Generation Y is to consider some of the present findings. Older generations need to reevaluate and revise thinking of previous successful leadership practices because those practices will not work with this generation. There are too many generational characteristics, perspectives, needs, work expectations, and communication preferences that differ from that of older generations. As cliché as it is, the old rules do not apply, and perhaps it is time to consider new ones. Generation Y wants direct and consultative communication, but they also want the opportunity to learn and be mentored by superiors. It is very important that there are visible leaders in the workplace so that they know where to look to gain advice, guidance, and recognition. However, those leaders need to have a personal relationship based in trust with their employees in order to be influential. Work should be challenging, tasks should be autonomous, compensation should be fair, and they want to see a visible impact of the work they do within in the company and their community. The workplace paradigm is shifting and to keep organizational commitment and satisfaction, organizations need to recognize this change in paradigm and workers. Young workers are looking for people-oriented leaders who in a given situation adapt and communicate in an authoritarian, laissez-faire, or democratic way.

While there is still much research to be done on how leadership theory applies to Generation Y as an emergent workforce, it is important to address these issues now as the leadership paradigm shifts. By gaining perspective on generational diversity in the

workplace, leaders may be able to reach their own potential by helping Generation Y perform to its potential.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

While this study has suggested Path-Goal Theory is an applicable theory when leading Generation Y, there are still gaps and room for improvement with this topic of study.

#### Limitations and Future Directions

This study encountered a number of limitations in regard to the methods that could be improved upon. The target population from which to pull participants was Generation Y; however, those participants used were not a random sampling as suggested by Lauer and Asher. There were no funds to conduct this study to recruit participants. Thus email interviewees were limited to available, willing participants who have a personal relationship with the researcher. Also, focus groups were limited to the availability of Clemson University graduate students. These participants were not random. The researcher chose them from various colleges at the University to try to make the sample as diverse as possible. For future studies, a true random sample would be ideal.

Another limitation of the study was the absence of interrater reliability. Due to time constraints multiple coders were not available for this study, as suggested by Lauer and Asher (138). Thus, only having one coder conduct content analysis threatened the reliability of this study. Had there been more time to conduct this study, at least one more coder could have ensured interrater reliability.

Another limitation due to time constraints was the lack of an in-depth interview. It would have been ideal to create more questions based on the content analysis of email interview and focus group responses to further clarify the findings of this study. It would be preferable to conduct an in-depth interview with a participant from the target population to clarify unclear findings (e.g. Generation Y's desire to work autonomously) and to verify results. Perhaps in-depth interviews would be a consideration for future research.

This study sought a general understanding of workplace expectations, communication patterns, and leadership communication preferred by Generation Y. After analyzing the results and finding Path-Goal Theory, a Contingency theory of leadership (meaning situationally based leadership) may be the most applicable theory for Generation Y, there are options for future research in regard to this theory. Path-Goal Theory is based on three factors, the follower, leader, and task. Future research could test Generation Y as followers under a particular communicative behavioral style of leadership (directive, consultative, negotiative, delegative, or participative) or a certain type of leadership communication structure (authoritarian, laissez-faire, or democratic) from which those communication behaviors operate in, to accomplish tasks in order to reach a goal. Testing Path-Goal Theory may indeed find if it is applicable to Generation Y instead of merely speculating it is applicable to Generation Y (as suggested by this study). Also, it may confirm favored communication patterns of Generation Y.

## Implications

Some implications that may result from research of this nature are an establishment of mentoring programs on both ends. Older generations need to learn technology and how to communicate in an intergenerational workplace and gain an understanding of the emergent workforce, while younger generations need mentoring on managing, assimilating to the workplace, and assimilating in a particular organization. Generation Y will respond positively to a leader if he or she feel they are in a reciprocal relationship in which they have input.

Also, training older generations and current leaders in the workplace on the needs of the emerging workforce would be beneficial to those already established in the workplace. However, those leaders need to be present, available, and visible among Generation Y.

And last, at the point of recruitment and stages of interviewing, organizations should discuss the values of the organization and of the recruit to determine if their values align (D. Green 24-25). By aligning goals at the recruitment stage a higher organizational commitment may occur. Generation Y has an attitudinal approach to organizational commitment. The attitudinal approach to organizational commitment consist of three components “(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization” (Zangaro 15). It is essential when hiring emergent workers that their personal goals align with that of the organization. If so, a stronger attitudinal commitment to the organization

will occur. Generation Y seeks the satisfaction of their needs through the work they do. By aligning individual and organizational goals an increase in organizational commitment will occur and organizations will see an increase in organizational retention, an increase in productivity, and a decrease in absenteeism (Zangaro 19). Once goals are addressed or established, appropriate leadership may begin from there.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### Email Interview Informational Letter

#### **Information Concerning Participation in a Research Study**

##### **Clemson University**

##### Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

#### **Description of the research and your participation**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Gayle Ruddick, under the direction of Principle Investigator, Dr. Sean Williams. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs, and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions via email. Participants are required to sign an informed consent form, which will need to be mailed to Gayle Ruddick's address, 811 Berkeley Place Circle, Clemson, SC 29631.

The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately 30 minutes, the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

#### **Risks and discomforts**

There are no known risks associated with this research.

#### **Potential benefits**

There are no known personal benefits to you that would result from your participation in this research. This research may help us to understand how young workers prefer to communicate with superiors or those with more experience in the workplace.

#### **Protection of confidentiality**

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study.

#### **Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

**Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

## Appendix B

### Focus Group Informational Letter

#### **Information Concerning Participation in a Research Study**

##### **Clemson University**

##### Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

#### **Description of the research and your participation**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Gayle Ruddick, under the direction of Principle Investigator, Dr. Sean Williams. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs, and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions within this focus group.

The amount of time required for your participation will be the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

#### **Risks and discomforts**

There are no known risks associated with this research.

#### **Potential benefits**

There are no known personal benefits to you that would result from your participation in this research. This research may help us to understand how young workers prefer to communicate with superiors or those with more experience in the workplace.

#### **Protection of confidentiality**

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study.

#### **Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

#### **Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any

questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

## Appendix C

### Consent Form for Email Interviewee Participants

#### **Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study**

##### **Clemson University**

###### Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

###### **Description of the research and your participation**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Gayle Ruddick, under the direction of Principle Investigator, Dr. Sean Williams. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs, and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions via email. Participants are required to sign this informed consent form, which you will need to mail to Gayle Ruddick's address, 811 Berkeley Place Circle, Clemson, SC 29631.

The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately 30 minutes; the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

###### **Risks and discomforts**

There are no known risks associated with this research.

###### **Potential benefits**

There are no known personal benefits to you that would result from your participation in this research. This research may help us to understand how young workers prefer to communicate with superiors or those with more experience in the workplace.

###### **Protection of confidentiality**

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the Clemson University Institutional Review Board or the federal Office for Human Research Protections, that would require that we share the information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

**Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

**Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

**Consent**

**I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.  
I give my consent to participate in this study.**

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of this consent form should be given to you.

Appendix D

Consent Form for Focus Group Participants

**Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study**

**Clemson University**

Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Sean Williams and Gayle Ruddick. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs, and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions as part of a focus group.

The amount of time required for your participation will be the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

There are no known risks associated with this research.

There are no known personal benefits to you that would result from your participation in this research. This research may help us to understand how young workers prefer to communicate with superiors or those with more experience in the workplace.

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study. We cannot guarantee that focus group participants will maintain the confidentiality of other participants and we request that participants respect the privacy and confidentiality of others who take part in this focus group.

In rare cases, a research study will be evaluated by an oversight agency, such as the Clemson University Institutional Review Board or the federal Office for Human Research Protections, that would require that we share the information we collect from you. If this happens, the information would only be used to determine if we conducted this study properly and adequately protected your rights as a participant.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

This focus group will be audio recorded. The planned use of the recording from today's session is strictly for note taking purposes. Material gathered today via the audio recording and subsequent transcription is only accessible to Co-Investigator, Gayle Ruddick, and Principle Investigator of this research study, Dr. Sean Williams. The members of the research team, Gayle Ruddick and Dr. Sean Williams, will not use the recordings for purposes other than those specified in the consenting process. Participants will not be identified and your responses will not be attributed to you.

The recording and subsequent transcription of this focus group will be destroyed upon completion of the study, approximately within six months from today.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

When asked the following questions by the moderator, please answer as detailed as possible.

1. What year were you born?
2. Please provide a brief summary of jobs you've had since graduating from your undergraduate studies (including your current position) that lists the organization name and the dates you were employed.
3. Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
4. Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
5. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of effectively communicating with your supervisor.
6. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor.
7. What qualities do you look for in a leader?
8. If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader.
9. If you have an example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader
10. If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked.
11. If you have one, please describe an example of poor decision-making in an organization where you have worked.

Thank you for your time.

**Consent**

**I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.**

**I give my consent to participate in this study.**

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of this consent form should be given to you.

## Appendix E

### Email Interviews

#### **Interview Questions sent via Email**

##### **Clemson University**

###### Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

###### **Description of the research and your participation**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Gayle Ruddick, under the direction of Principle Investigator, Dr. Sean Williams. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs, and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions via email. The amount of time required for your participation will be approximately 30 minutes, the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

###### **Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

###### **Interview Questions**

Please respond to the following questions as detailed as possible.

1. What year were you born?
2. Please provide a brief summary of jobs you've had since graduating from your undergraduate studies (including your current position) that lists the organization name and the dates you were employed.
3. Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
4. Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
5. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of effectively communicating with your supervisor.

6. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor.
7. What qualities do you look for in a leader?
8. If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader.
9. If you have an example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader
10. If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked.
11. If you have one, please describe an example of poor decision-making in an organization where you have worked.

## Appendix F

### Focus Group Script with Original Focus Group Questions

#### **Script to be Read to Focus Groups**

##### Intergenerational Leadership Communication in the Workplace

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Sean Williams and Gayle Ruddick. The purpose of this research is to find the correlation between generational characteristics and needs and leadership communication that will effectively lead the emergent workforce.

Your participation will involve you responding to a set of interview questions within this focus group.

The amount of time required for your participation will be the amount of time it may take you to respond to the interview questions.

There are no known risks associated with this research.

There are no known personal benefits to you that would result from your participation in this research. This research may help us to understand how young workers prefer to communicate with superiors or those with more experience in the workplace.

We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that might result from this study. We cannot guarantee that focus group participants will maintain the confidentiality of other participants and we request that participants respect the privacy and confidentiality of others who take part in this focus group.

Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate and you may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you decide not to participate or to withdraw from this study.

This focus group will be audio recorded. The planned use of the recording from today's session is strictly for note taking purposes. Material gathered today via the audio recording and subsequent transcription is only accessible to me, Gayle Ruddick, and principle investigator of this research study, Dr. Sean Williams. The members of the research team, myself and Dr. Sean Williams, will not use the recordings for purposes other than those specified in the consenting process. Participants will not be identified and your responses will not be attributed to you.

The recording and subsequent transcription of this focus group will be destroyed upon completion of the study, approximately within six months from today.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Sean Williams at Clemson University at 864.656.2156. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Clemson University Institutional Review Board at 864.656.6460.

I will now begin the question and answer portion of this focus group. Please answer as detailed as possible.

1. What year were you born?
2. Please provide a brief summary of jobs you've had since graduating from your undergraduate studies (including your current position) that lists the organization name and the dates you were employed.
3. Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
4. Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
5. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of effectively communicating with your supervisor.
6. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor.
7. What qualities do you look for in a leader?
8. If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader.
9. If you have an example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader
10. If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked.
11. If you have one, please describe an example of poor decision-making in an organization where you have worked.

Thank you for your time.

## Appendix G

### Revised Focus Group Questions

Focus groups were asked to write down their responses to the following questions for easier note taking purposes,

What year were you born?

Please provide a brief summary of jobs you've had since graduating from your undergraduate studies (including your current position) that lists the organization name and the dates you were employed.

Focus groups were asked the following questions by the moderator and asked to respond vocally,

1. As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
2. As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.
3. As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.
4. How would you like a high level/difficult task versus a low level/low level of difficulty task communicated to you by a manager?
5. What do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?

Appendix H

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 3

3. Describe the attributes of your ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.

P1	Challenging, cutting-edge, innovative work. Variety.
P2	Flexible hours, ability to work from home/telecommute; job satisfaction via supportive and understanding leadership; recognition for a job well done; challenging but rewarding daily projects.
P3	Professional yet enjoyable, visible opportunities to advance, accessible leadership, respectable/respectful co-workers, rewarded for visible hard work, compensated accurately for work/products.
P4	Open communication between boss and employee, my opinion is valued, no fear of making mistakes cause you can learn from those mistakes, flexible schedule, not stuck in an office all day
P5	Working in a fun, friendly fast paced environment that stays interesting and changes from time to time, with friendly co-workers.
P6	Non-hierarchical, laid-back, deadline driven, buzzing environment, a place where my ideas are acknowledged and considered, a place where I'm encouraged to share my ideas and am comfortable doing so, a team environment, fun, work hard play hard mentality, where money isn't such an issue that it keeps the company from doing anything fun, busy (always something going on/to do), everyone is respected from the trash guy to the CEO, everyone talks to everyone regardless of your title, people can work with a sense of autonomy, a lot of growth potential, a place where everyone respects one another and considers each person's work valuable, frequent team meetings so everyone is on the same page.
P7	My ideal job situation would include conducting research on how to better conserve natural resources on our planet and help protect endangered species. I would also like to spend a considerable amount of time on that research out in the field.
P8	It was differienated, some sitting, standing, and some travel would be ideal. Not

	sitting behind a desk all day. With personable coworkers and good vacation options!
P9	A comfortable and social work environment with a semi-flexible work schedule and a supervisor who encourages and supports the work I do. A workplace that abides by the honor code is very important to me because it shows that your coworkers and supervisors trust your judgment and allow you the independence and authority needed to do you job well. I don't mind working long, extra hours with no overtime as long as I enjoy what I'm doing and find my job fun and enjoyable. I would much rather have job satisfaction than a larger paycheck.
P10	An ideal job situation would have flexibility in terms of work location. The ability to telecommute would be useful. I would want to work in an organization where nearly all information, if possible, is made available to all employees. Clear communication from leadership is essential. Positions should retain as much autonomy as possible. Daily decision making and signature authority should be placed at the lowest levels where the actual work is being performed. There should be constant feedback mechanisms instilled throughout the entire company.
P11	The attributes that I consider part of my ideal job include: a healthy work environment, a quality means of communication between coworkers, a means for contacting management direct or indirect through a supervisor, a clear set of responsibilities, a fair compensation for work done, a personally rewarding experience, a goal driven professional environment.
P12	Empowering management Provides necessary resources Provides inherent knowledge High communication Visibility of leadership and key players Understanding the full scope of the overall mission to better fulfill the task
P13	Structured independence. An hour lunch break. Every other Friday off. No favoritism among employees regardless of how long they've been there.
P14	Stimulating, Purposeful, Challenging, Forefront of Industry, Acknowledgement/Appreciation, Field/Office Balance, Opportunities.
P15	An ideal job for me would be one in which I am continually challenged—each day is different from the next. I would like a job that is meaningful, one that contributes to positive development. I like to work with people and enjoy being a part of a team in which I can learn from more experienced people and share my knowledge and experience. I like having my own space (be it office or classroom) and being in control of my own projects and work rather than working directly for

	someone.
P16	Ability to work from home, flexible hours, team environment, structure, and upward mobility.
P17	My ideal job situation would incorporate the strongest attributes of my personality. Human interaction for me is key. I prefer a group/teamwork scenario over an individually-based position. Within the group environment, it is essential that all members are given an equal voice. I need to have fairly well-defined structure, but not a monotonous day-to-day routine. I also thrive on knowing the impact that my job is having on the success of the company (or in better terms, I like to know that my job is making a positive difference).

P#: Participant number

Appendix I

Focus Group Data – Focus Group Question 1

1. As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.

G1	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P18: Like money or like communication related?</p> <p>P20: Like what top five things you want in a job?</p> <p>M: Any sort of like an attribute. I can't give you an example but you can all come to a consensus of top five things.</p> <p>P21: A friendly atmosphere?</p> <p>P20: Is that an attribute? Okay.</p> <p>P21: Or like business casual dress.</p> <p>??</p> <p>P18: I would have said like really flexible working hours, like really flexible.</p> <p>??</p> <p>M: Yeah, those are all attributes.</p> <p>P18: Like being able to do a lot of work on your own time.</p> <p>P21: That would not fly for me. I'm just saying.</p> <p>P18: Well it would help my golf game a lot.</p> <p>P21: No I need a schedule and I need to stick to it.</p> <p>P20: I like somewhat flexible.</p> <p>P19: Yeah, flex time is good. Flexible work.</p> <p>M: Well, you guys all have to come to a top five.</p> <p>P19: Like brainstorm and narrow it down?</p> <p>M: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: I kind of like not have to depend on other people.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: Because a lot of the time I think group work in the workplace if somebody else sucks then you end up sucking by default. You know like...so unless I was in charge of the other people then I could kind of like place the blame on them but no seriously you don't want to...I have always hated that.</p> <p>P19: That's tough though cause...</p> <p>P20: You have to work with other people.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, I know, I'm saying I wouldn't want that to be like the overwhelming majority of the job to be...</p> <p>P20: Like group assignments.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, yeah, to be able to kind of do my own thing and then have my name on that and then maybe it's part of the rest of the group. ?? I would like to be able to</p>
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have my name on my work.

P21: And then also with that being acknowledged for the work you do.

P18: Yeah, that is part of it at least.

P19: I think it's more of an after the fact thing but looking back on ?? if you can see where your work work influences the company.

P21: Definitely.

P19: I could work 60 hours a week and it does nothing.

P21: Yeah. Or even if you work a normal amount and you don't see what your doing contributes to the company at all its kind of frustrating to be even doing what you are doing. I've had that.

P20: Yeah, I like being able to see.

P19: Which is really tough to do in a larger company. Small companies are much easier to see, much easier.

P20: Let's write down the ones we agree on. Working independently.

P18: At least to an extent.

P19: ?? like independent responsibility.

P18: Yeah, obviously there is group stuff but there are certain things that are just your deal like you do them and then it gets back to everybody else.

P21: Yeah, and this could be completely different but being trusted to do stuff on your own too ??

P18: Yeah, it's part of that too, I think. Are we supposed to focus these comments toward general. Is that your title? Something about generational differences or something is that like what we think or like people of our age group or in general?

M: It's you personally. You guys are a sample from the generation.

P18: Right.

P19: So we represent the generation.

M: Yes, you represent your generation.

P19: Our generation. And the flexible work time is big. I know there is a, there is much more expectation ?? rarely do you have a stay at home parent or your family situation, a stay at home person and a working person usually everyone works now so it's almost impossible to do.

P18: Well the reason I said that in the first place because I know a lot of companies that, people I know, internships I've had, I think there's like, like as a younger person, I think there is like this old school mentality where like I had to work 40 hours a week set in stone so you have to do it too even though I know a lot of companies like employ younger people and a lot of younger people a lot of companies you know like there can be a little bit more flexibility there like if you are willing to let go of that like sort of like mindless requirement that ??

P20: Or like if you want to come in early you can leave early.

P18: Yeah, you know. Or like depending on the type of job you have or the time of the year depending on the situation in the company there is stuff you can do somewhere else or particularly in sales or something where your outside sales or something like that I just feel like that's something one of the things I really like, not being stuck. Your butt better be here from eight to five regardless of if you are

staring at the wall or not.

P20: I think I like being at a job where I can do different stuff every day. Like not work where...

P19: A variety of tasks.

P20: Yeah, something where...

P21: Something where you are challenged

??

P20: Where you're not entering the same information over and over again.

P21: I would agree with that. I think we have about ten.

P19: I guess when you think about levels of management, how much management, how much bureaucracy. Again I think that's more a symptom of the company but...

P18: I think its more, is this an ideal situation?

M: Yeah, an ideal job situation.

P18: You either want to just report to just a couple people ?? or if you had to report to a significant amount of people you know you want to know they are quality people. I feel like sometimes there is that one person you have to send your stuff to even though that person sucks. Ideally ?? if there is going to be a lot of oversight you want ?? to be able to interact with quite a bit and get to know as a person.

P20: Yeah, I think I like when people above you, you don't feel like they are up there somewhere that you don't ever see them.

P21: Yeah, but also that they are not incompetent.

P20: Yeah, you know they are above you.

P21: Yeah...

P18: Incompetent old people? What?

P21: I had an incompetent boss and so I would just have to like go to the next person up because I couldn't deal with him.

P19: It's frustrating.

P18: So are we numbering these off here?

P19: I thought I'd have more things in an ideal job.

??

P18: I would also like to work with playboy playmates but ?? I don't think that ??

P21: Can we get like competent co-workers?

P20: Okay, well right now we have working independently, as in you are responsible for your own work, being able to see that your work is helping the company, being trusted to do your own work, flexible hours, variety of work, and competent boss. So we have six.

P19: Have we addressed anything in a self-employed situation? I feel like all of these were are assuming we are working in a cubicle in an office ??

P20: Well, it says your ideal job. I don't want to work for myself.

P18: I would be okay with the trusting thing. I would put that at the top. The top two or three maybe.

P19: No one wants to be a musician or anything like that?

??

P18: You don't want somebody every 20 minutes walking into your office or

whatever it is like hey are you sure you know how to do this. Yeah I know how to do this..

P21: Right, checking on you.

P18: Or like I'm just going to make it up as I go. That would be a top two or three for me.

P21: Yeah, definitely.

P20: Yeah, I would agree.

P19: Oh realistic job security.

[Laughter]

P21: Mmmk. I mean that certainly is ideal.

P19: I'm not sure how you guarantee that or

P21: But I mean...

P19: If I was working I wouldn't want to be biting my nails every day thinking how am I ?? tomorrow

P21: In our ideal situation can we have realistic job security?

P18: Because in a lot of sales companies if say you are on a sales team and like if you are the bottom percentile then you are month to month basically because I know a lot of people who work in sales and that is kind of how it goes. If you are doing well you've got a lot of job security and if you have a bad month or two you could be next. There are certain types of jobs where it can be a three or four month period of time ??

P19: Well there is a lot of people who are now questioning the whole commission based system because of our ??

P18: Job security relative the industry I think.

P19: Well I will ask the researcher. Are these intended to be very tangible thing or intangibles?

M: It doesn't matter.

P18: What do you mean by intangible? Are you talking about like money versus like feeling good about yourself?

P19: Well, I guess it's like the fulfillment.

M: I think we might get to those questions later.

P18: We are not a very efficient group.

P20: We are not doing very well.

M: You are doing just fine.

P18: So are we picking a number one out of that list we have right there?

P20: Yeah, but can we like because we have like six so we either need to eliminate one or combine like can we say being responsible for your own work and trusted to do your own work is the same thing? ?? okay.

P21: Yeah, I would put that as number one. I mean personally.

P20: I don't like people telling me, standing over me telling me what to do the whole time. Agreed?

P18: Agreed.

P20: Okay.

P21: It makes for an uncomfortable situation.

P18: Particularly if said person is incompetent and you can't tell them they are incompetent.

P20: Okay, so what do we think will be number two? I think that I would say...

P21: I would say a variety of work.

P20: I would say either that or being able to see that your work is helping the company

?? Yeah, I think those are my two and three.

P18: I think there is variety and I think there are different skill sets. They are kind of the same thing but for whatever notes you are taking. Because I think the skill set thing like I want different tasks in the job so that if I go to the next job I can say look I did seven different things instead of one different thing.

P21: Yeah.

P18: I mean they go hand in hand to both break the monotony but also I don't want to sound selfish or whatever

P21: You're getting more experience.

P18: You want to show you can do a lot of different things. At a given company, you know? So they are definitely related.

P21: I agree.

P19: We will vote variety as two?

P18: Sure.

P21: Yeah.

P20: And then we'll put this as three, being able to see your work help the company. Alright do want our competent boss next or flexible hours?

P19: I say flexible hours.

P18: I love the flexible hours but I understand it's like a Type A, Type B personality thing.

P21: No like those are the top three so I am fine with that.

P20: But I mean I don't think we see flexible hours as meaning like you know its chaos you do whatever you want whenever you want.

P21: Yeah.

P20: I mean like...

P21: You have the option to.

P20: For me I meant like you have the option of you know oh I am going to take off early today so I am going to work later during the week.

P18: Like Google, I know Google is like that I mean if you are somebody who likes to come in at 10:00 and stay till 7:00 you can do that or if you want get there at 6:00 and leave at 4:00 you can do that. You know like not necessarily to the extreme of flexible hours of I only feel like working 45 minutes today.

P21: Right.

P18: That would be ideal but some sense of like control over your hours.

P21: Yeah, I would agree with that more.

P19: I think part of that one too, is like the way it is, you have to be there ?? you need to be seen by your manager, you want to be there right before he gets there and you want to leave right after he leaves. That's the way a lot of ??

	<p>P18: Sure.</p> <p>P19: Which is bad.</p> <p>P20: Unless your boss is incompetent and doesn't come to work.</p> <p>P19: Being evaluated for your work and not for that you were at the office for this amount of time.</p> <p>P18: Well that was my original comment. If you have to play this good old boy system where that's the way it was 40 years ago when I started working is kind of what I was thinking. Are we good on one through five?</p> <p>P20: We are good on our list.</p> <p>M: Okay, how about you read one through five. Number one as the top.</p> <p>P20: Read them out loud?</p> <p>M: Yeah.</p> <p>P20: Okay. Number one is being trusted to do your own work and being held responsible for your own work. Number two is having a variety of work and using different skill sets. Number three is being able to see your work helping the company. Number four is having flexible hours. Number five is having a competent boss.</p>
G2	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P23: Do you want us to write them or just share?</p> <p>M: Share and then write them, I guess. Or however you want to do it.</p> <p>P25: I'll write down what we come up with and then we can rank them.</p> <p>P24: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: I would say good pay, location.</p> <p>P25: Benefits.</p> <p>P23: I'd say benefits.</p> <p>P22: Hours in general.</p> <p>P24: Yeah, like flexible, flexibility.</p> <p>P23: Like flexibility in hours...</p> <p>P24: Yeah, hours.</p> <p>P23: or just in general.</p> <p>P22: Hours and days? I think they go...</p> <p>P23: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: together. That's good. I'd say just the atmosphere in general too.</p> <p>P23: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: ?? be more specific.</p> <p>M: Whatever you generate.</p> <p>P25: ?? something that will keep you interested. Something interesting. You don't want to be like totally bored.</p> <p>P23: So like challenging, maybe.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: Opportunity for advancement.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p>

P22: ?? get along with people. You know, when you go into an interview with people you can tell if you match with the company. ?? fit in a sense. ?? well it depends how much you have to work with your co-workers.

P25: Yeah.

P23: Well it depends how much you have to work with your co-workers too. If you have to deal with them every day or if you are just sitting working by yourself you don't have to deal with them as much.

P25: That might be something on its own. If it's a team based atmosphere or if you are pretty much the individual.

P22: Personal preference, I guess.

P23: ?? enjoyment of the job or personal. It seems like a category but I don't know what it would be called.

P25: Personal life enjoyment ??

P22: I guess atmosphere would count as in terms of just physical space. You could be in jobs where it's just cubicles or everyone is open and friendly and stuff like that. It makes a big difference.

??

P25: Well, what do you think is number one? I think number one is pay. There is definitely lots in my job.

P22: I think yeah, I would be willing to take lower pay for certain other things but typically if you are just looking at specifics. Like I know I would take a lower pay for a better atmosphere.

P24: That's what I was going to say. I think atmosphere might be.

P22: It depends on the extreme.

P24: Yeah.

P25: Yeah. ?? rank it one to five.

P23: I guess when you're looking for a job you find out a little bit more about atmosphere and what the job is before you actually know what the pay is.

P24: That's true.

P23: But then before you accept it you know what the pay is.

P25: You probably before you accept the job know what the pay is better than the atmosphere because you get a general idea of the atmosphere but until you are there...

P22: But you can negotiate pay.

P25: Yeah, you can.

P22: You can't negotiate atmosphere. Can we have two number ones?

[Laughter]

P22: I think pay and opportunity for advancement are probably linked as well.

P25: Yeah, the same with benefits. I mean if you put pay and benefits and advancement all together.

P22: I think advancement is separate but I think pay and benefits can be included because ?? you can negotiate more time off if you don't get a certain pay or something like that. I would say it's different though.

P25: Yeah.

P22: And I mean, just physical location of the job too is pretty important. Like some people don't really care where they go but a lot of people do.

P25: I say it's important but I don't say it's as important than the other two.

P23: Well can we figure out for the list exactly what our five things were and then we can rank it.

P25: Yeah.

P22: What do we have so far?

P25: We can take pay and benefits and make that one, like one of the choices correct?

P22: Yeah, sounds good.

P25: Location we said is important. Same with atmosphere. So that is three.

P24: Probably advancement. The opportunity for advancement.

P25: So we have hours, if it is interesting or challenging, company fit, and that is really it. I think out of those like I would rather fit in with the company than... like if you fit into the company you are probably going to stay interested.

P23: Yeah. So we have one left to choose out of...

P22: Location may not be in the top five either.

P25: What's that?

P22: I don't even know if location would be in the top five it seems like there are others that are pretty important too.

P25: I think location was definitely not a factor for me. When I took my job like location and pay and I kind of knew what the company fit and atmosphere was going to be like. But I think for a lot of people location would be in important because a lot of people didn't want to work for the company I work for because of location.

P22: So what did we decide ??

P25: Hours, flexibility in hours, if it is interesting or challenging, and like a company fit like do you fit in with the company. That's what we were talking about like cubicles versus open space.

P22: I would probably go with challenging. I don't know what you guys think. But my argument would be that you kind of have to assume you are going to work 9:00 to 5:00 but if it is flexible it is a bonus in a sense unless you have something that you have to do it.

P25: Yeah.

P24: Yeah.

P25: I definitely agree with that.

P22: And then, I have definitely, I hate the cube thing but I will deal with it for a challenge and for ??

P23: We can pretend it's part of that too.

P22: Yeah. ??

P25: Alright, we have pay, location, atmosphere, if it's challenging, and opportunities for advancement. I think that as group we kind of agree that atmosphere is kind of more important than pay. It seemed like the three of y'all definitely felt that way.

	<p>??</p> <p>P22: I just know personally, if there is a company that I really, really like and they pay a lot lower than the industry standard for my position I just know I would take about a 20K pay cut just to work there. And I mean that is a pretty severe pay cut but I would do it just for the right company.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, I think if you rank those two that would be person to person.</p> <p>P24: What are the ones that are left?</p> <p>P25: Challenging, advancement, and location. I think out of those advancement would be the most important to me but I mean pay and benefits are most important to me too. I mean that's really what I was in it for.</p> <p>P22: I think advancement too because you would hope that as you are advancing it would get more challenging.</p> <p>P25: Absolutely.</p> <p>P22: Whereas ??</p> <p>P23: Yeah. ?? Because a lot of jobs you start out, I know I do editing work, and you start out doing the lamest things imaginable just because that is all they hire for.</p> <p>P22: That's true.</p> <p>P25: We have atmosphere and its challenging. I gotta think atmosphere is more important.</p> <p>P23: I thought it was location.</p> <p>P25: Or, location. Location and challenging.</p> <p>P23: I think location would be more important for me at that point.</p> <p>P25: But you want to be close to home or do you want to be far from home or you know like if you want to travel. Like that fits into location as well. And like all that could be another challenge.</p> <p>P23: Yeah, a long commute could make the job much more challenging.</p> <p>P22: And as much as you want to know what you're doing, I think a lot of time you don't know what the hell you are getting into regardless of the challenge levels. Oh you are going to be doing all this great stuff and then, oh you know, coffee anybody?</p> <p>P25: Yeah, it kind of is hard to tell if it is challenging or not because they are going to make it sound like anything they want to make it sound like. But I'm an engineer so I think I'm like totally different than maybe the three of the rest of you. Like my job are totally different kind of story so I don't know.</p> <p>P22: Well that's good. Different perspective.</p> <p>M: Okay, so why don't you read one through five.</p> <p>P25: Alright, one is atmosphere; two is pay and benefits; three is advancement; four was location; five was if it is interesting or challenging.</p>
G3	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P29: Do you mean like benefits?</p> <p>M: If you attribute benefits to being an attribute.</p> <p>P29: Benefits, for sure.</p>

P27: I'd say location.  
P28: Comfortable work environment.  
P29: Salary.  
P27: Oh yeah.  
P26: I'd say the nature of the work.  
P29: Co-workers because I want to have co-workers that are kind of the same age. At least some.  
P26: Umm we have six right now, if we consider the co-workers are part of the work environment, say comfortable work environment.  
P27: Yeah, that would be the same thing.  
P26: So number one without ranks, so the things we have are benefits, location, comfortable work environment, salary, and the nature of the work.  
P29: Make sure the nature of the work probably...  
P26: Make sure you are doing something that you want to do.  
P29: Yeah, so that you are not miserable at it.  
P27: Yeah.  
P28: Yup. I would say make sure are you are getting ??  
P29: Yeah, comfortable.  
P26: Okay, comfortable or location?  
P28: I say comfortable work environment.  
P26: What is the least important thing out of location, benefits, salary...  
P27: Benefits.  
P29: Are you kidding? Benefits are great.  
P27: I would put salary above benefits.  
P29: If you have to spend all your money on doctor's visits though.  
P26: You are kind of bias though because you just came from the arc of light.  
[Laughter]  
P29: But at the same time you have to think of your teeth and the eyes.  
P27: But with companies now-a-days they just give you standard benefits. You know, teeth, eyes, whatever.  
P29: You just call me when you don't get benefits. Just give me a call then.  
P27: I'm sorry.  
P26: Instead of put them last we could put them second to last.  
P29: Put them last, I don't care. I'm just telling you.  
P26: Do we veto her?  
P29: Veto me. I resign.  
P26: Alright, benefits are last. Location is above benefits?  
P29: Yeah.  
P27: Mmmhmmm.  
P26: Third or fourth? Salary has got to be third, right?  
P29: Yeah.  
P27: Yeah.  
P26: And then do location.  
P28: Then location.

<p>P26: Did you get this? Do you want me to tell them to you?</p> <p>P29: Yeah, if you can read them out loud.</p> <p>P26: Number one nature of the work; number two comfortable work environment; number three salary; number four location; and number five benefits.</p> <p>P29: Benefits includes stock options.</p> <p>M: Are there anymore comments?</p> <p>P28: What was the original question again?</p> <p>M: The original question was, as a group, tell me the top five attributes of an ideal job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P28: Okay, so were you looking for things more like obvious move forward in the work environment?</p> <p>M: If you consider that to be an attribute.</p> <p>P28: Okay, because I was thinking more like physical work location, situation I guess.</p> <p>P29: Not having a jerk boss.</p> <p>M: Those would be considered attributes, yes.</p> <p>P28: Okay. I just wanted to make sure we answered the right question.</p> <p>M: I cannot answer that question.</p> <p>P28: Sure, sure.</p>
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G#: Group number; P#: Participant number; M: Moderator

Appendix J

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 4

4. Describe the attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.

P1	Assembly line -- Doing the same thing every day.
P2	Micro-Managers, tight schedule keepers, lack of support, low staff.
P3	Unnecessarily undesirable working conditions (loud, dirty, cramped), no advancement opportunities, unfocused leadership, not compensated appropriately for work produced in comparison to co-workers
P4	Having a boss who only orders me to do things (one way communication), a cubical.
P5	Sitting in front of a computer all day at a desk, doing monotonous work and having little personal communication.
P6	Hierarchy, quiet, deadlines are not given nor respected, projects are never seen through to the end, a place where one person's ego rules, ideas/suggestions are disregarded, not considered, or solicited, people talk behind other employees' backs, no growth potential, pointless work, one man rules the show and there is not staff input, reckless company spending, where the rules don't apply to everyone, a place where interns are treated as second-hand, rude people with no repercussions for the way they treat others in the work place, boss looking over your shoulder every second, a boss who is absent and never has a clue what you're doing.
P7	I would hate to work any job that requires me to be in a cubicle most of the time, especially anything related to the business field.
P8	Hostile and non-confrontational coworkers who are not approachable and able to resolve conflicts within the workplace. An unapproachable director or supervisor and inflexibility in schedule and poor pay and benefits.
P9	A hostile work environment while a supervisor who micromanages and has no problem throwing me under the bus whenever it's most convenient to him or her. A job with long hours and no overtime pay, no opportunity for internal advancement and a work week which consists of mundane repetitious tasks and no opportunity to

	develop new skills and interests.
P10	Inflexibility to perform functions of a job, constant oversight and micromanagement, poor feedback, closed style of communication, an aversion to new technology.
P11	The attributes I consider part of an undesirable position include the opposite of what was listed in the previous response (3) but in addition also include characteristics whereby the position forces me to act unethically or immorally.
P12	Limitations, Mundane Repetitive Isolation Structural Divisions that impair development and open communication
P13	Coworkers that make their job seem more than what it actually is. 1/2 hour lunch breaks. Inconsistency in everything from managing style to problem solving. Turning the other cheek and allowing someone to get away with certain things in the workplace but reprimanding other employees when they follow suit and do the same thing. The same rules need to apply to everyone regardless of how long they've worked for a company.
P14	Tedious tasks, Unethical, Negative Reinforcement, Inconsiderate of Self, Low Pay, Belittling, Petty Projects, and Poor Organization.
P15	I would not like to work in an office every day. I would not like to be isolated from peers or co-workers. An undesirable job would be one that did not coincide with any of my personal interests. A job focused on money rather than the betterment of the planet and it's current population would not motivate me to succeed.
P16	Stringent work hours, no upward mobility, micro-managing management, and no structure.
P17	An undesirable job for me would be one in which I worked in isolation, staring at a computer screen all day and performing the same repetitive task. Even if all of my other ideal job attributes were met, if the job did not include a reasonable amount of social interaction, it would not be desirable.

P#: Participant number

Appendix K

Focus Group Data – Focus Group Question 2

2. As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.

G1	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>??</p> <p>P20: I would say the thing that I hate is having like bad working environment like just co-workers in general that are like lazy or they don't know what they're doing or like you have to do more work to make up for what they're doing wrong. Do you know what I mean?</p> <p>P18: Yeah, and I think you could draw that out to kind of like bigger sort of like organizational, the culture of the workplace.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: Like if the company is a company that doesn't really promote like interpersonal relationships or they are not trying to set a tone, I think that's where you run into some of those problems like, if your company tells you ahead of time we're very flexible, we're very friendly or you know like you have to basically sit there quietly at your desk or whatever, if there isn't some sense of an established culture there then I think you run into those problems where like you don't really get people or you don't like people or whatever because you don't feel like you're contributing to it, you know?</p> <p>P21: Yeah, I feel like it has to be a good, like you have to have good working relationships but at least tolerable if not good social relationships with your people.</p> <p>P19: So, it may not make a job but it could certainly break it.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P20: Yeah. I think working environment would definitely make me quit a job.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, because there is nothing worse than walking in the morning and you see that one person you don't want to see. There's like eight hours of my life I'm not getting back.</p> <p>P20: Or feeling miserable. You're there all day.</p> <p>P19: Have you guys seen Office Space?</p> <p>[Laughter]</p> <p>[Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]</p> <p>P20: Okay, what else would break a job for you?</p> <p>P19: You don't really get into it, with the likeness, but how well, if there's no alignment between your interests, hobbies or personal goals and the job you're doing. I think that's something that make a job mundane and boring and just hate it. So I don't know, if your, I can't think of any good examples but if you're working in a job where you do one thing</p>
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and you're just not interested in that and it has nothing to do with your hobbies or personal interests or it may even lack some of the training you have. Some people take jobs they weren't trained to ??

P18: Yeah, and that's not a step forward too. If you can't use this job to get your foot in the door for the next job, which is presumably a better job then you're constantly, if you can't beat back that voice that you are wasting your time, then you know, like a paycheck is a paycheck but you want to feel like you're kind of setting the stage for ??

P19: Well and for example some people, I'm not a real big outdoorsy guy, but some people are, if that's all they want to do, they want to go hiking every weekend, they want to be outside all week all weekend they can go work for a company that is REI or one of those outdoors companies. They may still be doing account management or something like but they are still doing ??

P20: Well, I think even too just the industry you are in like I want to do public relations but I wouldn't want to work for a public relations firm that does like financial public relations because I'm not interested in finance. Like I want someone who has clients that I would be interested in working with.

P18: And another thing, it kind of ties into all of these things. I wonder if there are personality types to fit. Because there are some jobs where you have no contact with the outside world. Like you produce whatever it is that you produce and you talk just to those people. And there are some jobs where your position in the company and you talk to however many other people, however many companies, types of people, you know what I mean like, so I wonder if there's like...

P20: I think that also ties into work culture too because even if my job I had this past summer, I didn't talk to people outside the company really but the work atmosphere was so relaxed and everything that like I talked with everyone else.

P18: Yeah.

P20: You know? So that made it like, it was fun for me.

P19: Would location work into this at all? Where a job is located? You know, I want to work in a place that I like.

P21: Yeah, that's a good point.

P20: Yeah.

P19: For instance, I went to school up in Rochester, New York for years and never considered taking a job up there based on weather and winters and stuff so...

P18: You don't like 78 degree March days?

[Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]

P18: I mean location can be viewed as the physical type of office. I guess that's kind of, I don't know how big of a priority that is but in an ideal world, as the question asks, it is a consideration at least.

P21: Yeah, well depending on how long you plan to be there too.

P20: I think location is really a big factor for me. There are places I would never move and I don't care how good the job is.

P18: Not really move, even if you live. For instance, if you live in the suburb of a big city like Atlanta or like D.C. or where ever it is like there are some people who could work in that suburb but there are other people who have to commute into work. Into the busiest

part of the city every day and back out. Like Chicago, the Chicago suburbs are like, you could be on a train an hour each way to get in and out of the city. Personally that's not something I'm doing. I'm not.

P19: ?? I co-oped, it wasn't post graduate but ?? I worked for general dynamics electric boat and it was like an hour away from where I was living. So I was living at home for that winter and was working there and was on a van pool going in and I was there with union guys. Second shift? First shift? There at 5:45, 6:30 in the morning or something ridiculous like that. I was at work and ?? I'd leave at 2:00. And it lead into that situation. Because I was the first one to leave even though I was there, I was there for eight hours, eight and a half hours every day but I was ?? it looked like I was always leaving early but I was the first one there.

P18: Well, there have to be some studies, there has to be a correlation between how long it takes you to get to work and conditions and your mood the second you get to your job, you know? I guarantee there is a study somewhere out there. I mean if you drive an hour ??

P20: I think there is also traffic situation. I mean I drove to Greenville last summer and it wasn't that bad because I mean 123 isn't that bad of traffic ?? But if there was like a wreck or something I was not in a good mood.

P19: Is there a quantified ?? in this. You're saying you can't use this job for any gainful, or even if there's just ??

P20: Well, I said, just not relevant to your interests or career goals. I think that is the same thing.

P18: It can also too be like sense of where you are going in that job even if you don't like it. You can be in a position in the company that you don't like but if they tell you, six months from now or a year from now there is a good chance that you might get promoted, you know like I will stick in a crappy job for a year if I know that there is going to be a lot more money at the other end in a different position. At least I'd be in charge of people at the company.

P21: So maybe no chance for promotion.

P18: A sense of your future with that job.

P21: Yeah.

P19: Can we get a recap?

P21: Bad work culture. ??

P20: Having a job that is not relevant to your interests or career goals. Location, commute, physical office. No chance to move up in the company. So that is four. We need one more.

P19: Does this tie into anything, almost if you are like morally opposed to what the company does.

P21: I was thinking that too.

P18: You don't want to make bombs and stuff, is that what you're saying?

P19: No, say you are working for an advertising portion of a drug company ?? or what if you are the marketing director for a cigarette company. You're like killing children.

P21: Yeah, I agree.

P20: Yeah.

P19: Does that tie into something already or is that...

P20: I think that's good.

P18: That might have been on the other list too, like being able to do something good with your job. If you can do something to help people with your job that would not suck. I've never had a job to be able to do that but...

P19: That's why people want to become firemen ??

P18: It would be nice.

P21: Do we have to rank these as well?

P20: Yeah. Okay, so what do we think is...

P19: Read the first one.

P20: And one is the thing that we would hate the most?

M: Yeah.

P20: Okay, bad work culture; having a job that is not relevant to your interests or career goals; location, commute, physical office; no chance to move up in the company; and morally opposed to what your company does, sells, or promotes.

P19: I think the location and second to last one would be kind of towards the bottom.

P19: I really don't like the job that is not relevant to my career goals.

P21: Yeah.

P20: That's what I was going to say.

??

P18: Life is pretty short.

??

P18: Put that as one.

P21: And I think the morally opposed is up there too.

P19: Yeah, I like that one too.

P20: Yeah.

P19: Vote two on there.

P20: And then I think bad work culture.

P19: Yeah.

P21: Yeah. But having no options to move up sucks too.

P18: Particularly if you are well aware of it. You might think you are running around for a promotion but if they are quite clear that you are that guy until you depart that's never good.

P20: Would you rather have that as three, or bad work culture?

P21: I think they are all tied for one so put four as no chance and five as location.

P20: Okay.

P21: But side note, they are all horrible.

[Laughter]

P20: Side note, we would all probably quit based on all of them.

[Laughter]

M: Okay, why don't you read them again.

P20: Read them again. Okay. Number one is having a job that is not relevant to your interests or career goals. Number two is being morally opposed to something your company does, sells, or promotes. Number three is a bad work culture. Number four is no

	chance to move up in the company. And number five is location, commute, physical office.
G2	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P22: So like the worse things.</p> <p>M: Mmmhmmm.</p> <p>P25: Bad boss.</p> <p>P23: Can we just take that list and add crappy to all the words we came up with?</p> <p>P22: Yeah, that's pretty much really what we are doing. Although, crappy location is way worse than location in general.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, if you are in Saskatchewan, New York, or ??, New York, whatever it is, it would be bad.</p> <p>P22: Detroit, Michigan.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, Detroit.</p> <p>P22: I am from Indiana; I can put that on the list of bad locations.</p> <p>P25: Indiana? I think a bad boss is definitely something too because like I have had a great boss and I have had bad bosses and that make a lot of a difference into whether you want to go into work that day because if your boss is just a pain in your ass then you are not going to enjoy it.</p> <p>P22: I think about what you touched on before, if you think about individual versus team. I think if you are in the opposite of what you're used to that would make it very, some people just can't work in teams and some people hate to work by themselves.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: Like ?? an actuary.</p> <p>P23: I think like too, not being paid enough for what you are doing. Like less about the amount but your own feeling of what your time is worth.</p> <p>P22: That's true. Or if you are putting in a ton of hours above and beyond what they said you would be doing.</p> <p>P23: Right. So ??</p> <p>P25: Maybe like being underpaid.</p> <p>P23: Yeah.</p> <p>P25: And maybe with that underappreciated too. Like I don't know if that would be a separate thing all together or like they kind of link a little bit.</p> <p>P22: Just never getting noticed for your competence.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: But I think that would come into the advancement issue. Not being advanced for what you do. But I think some people get caught up in job titles too. Like if their job title doesn't match what they are doing.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, absolutely. That is definitely true. I don't know how to write that though.</p> <p>P22: I kind of think just mismatch in general with what you thought you would be doing and what you are doing because when you start it makes you really unhappy. Like you will be traveling to all these great places and you will be doing all these great things and then it's like no.</p>

P23: Psyche.

P22: Yeah. In 20 years when you start your own company. Maybe benefits too even if you have crappy benefits.

P25: Yeah. That definitely would be bad because if you are worried about like health insurance or like your overall well being.

P23: Yeah, I think it depends a lot on your age. If you are about to have kids then having crappy benefits would be much more important than somebody who is just starting out. It's cool with going to the dentist once every five years.

[Laughter]

P22: You have to go twice now.

P25: I think that kind of encompasses it for me.

P22: I think so too.

P23: So let's see we have six things.

P25: Yeah, but two of them are almost like similar like working in something you are not used to versus like team and individual like work and like a mismatch between what you are doing and what you thought you would be doing. Like it's kind of a personal mismatch. You could link them. They could be the same you know?

P22: I think so because if you are looking for a job you are looking for something that fits your personality better so that if it was a mismatch then, let's just link them. Good idea.

P25: What do we think is like the absolute worst?

P22: I think the underappreciated thing would piss me off the most.

P23: The mismatch thing or the underpaid thing?

P22: Didn't we have one that you are just not noticed for your accomplishments or not recognized ever.

P25: Yeah, feeling underpaid and underappreciated was all kind of one.

P23: I think that is most people's complaint about their job is.

P25: Yeah, I really do.

P22: So like work too many hours for what you do and things like that.

P23: Yeah.

P25: I think a bad boss is something ?? I know for me like that's like a deal breaker. So I don't know, have you all had bad bosses?

??

P25: Oh it does, it's terrible.

P22: That kind of goes down to, do you want to go to work every day? Like bad boss is tied into that but it's kind of like how you feel. Like when you get up in the morning and you're like oh crap. But I think just boss, and interactions with co-workers and stuff like that.

P25: Yeah.

P23: It's like bad boss and co-workers, a supporting team of crappiness. What is the one after bad boss?

P25: We have the mismatch thing, the lack of benefits, and a bad location.

P23: I would say mismatch would be next.

P22: I agree with you.

P25: Yeah, I could see that.

	<p>P22: If you don't fit in with your job you would be like, I could be doing something else right now.</p> <p>P25: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: A lot of people go to school for a long time and then they get into the workforce and they are like this isn't what I want.</p> <p>P25: Not at all. Absolutely. I think the bad location, personally, it doesn't bother me but that is a personal thing. I think a location is a lot of what you make up of it. If you are with good people. Like I lived in Beaumont, Texas that place sucks but I had great co-workers and boss so like we had fun because of who I was with not really necessarily where I was at.</p> <p>P22: Yeah, I think so because you could be in beautiful place and not enjoy it.</p> <p>P25: It could be terrible. But if you have a lack of benefits you just always have an underlining worry about like what if something happens, that's always going to play in.</p> <p>P22: Yeah, that's true.</p> <p>P23: I don't know if I would quit a job if the benefits were bad. Like I don't know if that would be a deal breaker. But I guess bad location is kind of your own damn fault though because you knew what you were getting into so...</p> <p>P24: For taking it.</p> <p>P23: I could see benefits before location just for that reason.</p> <p>P24: Yeah.</p> <p>P25: Is that cool?</p> <p>P22: And I think with the time wise too thing because like my sister when she was looking for a new job and she knew she wanted to get pregnant about the same time so you might take a job before you think about ahead as to what the maternity policy is and all that stuff.</p> <p>M: Okay, how about you reread them one through five.</p> <p>P25: Reread them?</p> <p>M: Yeah.</p> <p>P25: One is feeling underpaid and underappreciated; two is a bad boss and bad co-workers; three is a mismatch between what you are doing versus what you thought you would be doing; four is the lack of benefits; and five is a bad location.</p>
G3	<p>M: As a group, tell me the top five attributes of an undesirable job situation regardless of the specific job descriptions.</p> <p>P26: Top five of an undesirable job?</p> <p>P29: Cubicle.</p> <p>P26: The worst things?</p> <p>M: Yeah.</p> <p>P26: Okay.</p> <p>P29: Hours. I think if you had to work a lot.</p> <p>P26: Does it mean lots of hours or weird hours?</p> <p>P29: Both.</p> <p>P26: Lots of weird hours.</p> <p>P29: Well I mean either way. If you have to work like 70 hours a week, I would say...</p> <p>P27: Bad hours.</p>

P29: Yeah bad hours.  
P26: Bad hours. Bad boss?  
P28: Yeah.  
P29: Yeah. Menial work tasks.  
P28: I would say a stagnant environment where it feels like you are sitting at a desk all the time. Not getting a chance to go beyond that. Personal interactions.  
P27: A boring location or like a bad location that you don't really want to live.  
P29: Like the Arctic for example.  
??  
P26: What else is bad?  
P28: You're kind of at a dead end position.  
P26: No chance for advancement.  
P28: Yeah, you are just stuck.  
P29: Your co-workers. Maybe we should say like bad co-workers instead of just bad boss because your co-worker can make you pretty miserable.  
P28: Bad customers.  
P29: Yeah, if you have customers.  
P26: What else?  
P29: Maybe like if you are underappreciated. Like if you work really hard.  
P28: If you are working for the man you are just a number.  
P26: Working for the man.  
P27: What if your job is really difficult and you don't have enough resources to complete the tasks that you are supposed to do.  
P26: Enough resources. That's good.  
P28: Being micromanaged too. That's five, right?  
P26: Alright read? Here they go, being micromanaged; working for the man; just a number maybe; under appreciation; bad hours; bad co-workers; menial tasks; stagnant environment; bad geographic location; no chance for advancement; bad customers; not enough resources to do your job.  
P29: I think the bad co-workers.  
P26: That would be the first thing that makes you miserable on a given day. Okay, so bad co-workers.  
P27: I don't know. For me location would be up there because if you get ?? work and you are in the middle of nowhere and there is nothing to do, that would suck.  
P26: I don't know how high I'd have that.  
P28: I would have that towards the middle...  
P29: The middle.  
P28: Instead of that top for me.  
P29: Well you know, I came from that town and we found fun and you have good friends then you are okay.  
P26: I think, let's see, did everyone express in one way or another something about menial, boring tasks.  
P29: We said something about a stagnant environment.  
P26: Stagnant environment.

P29: It does kind of go together.  
P26: Okay, does that also go with no chance for advancement?  
P28: It could.  
P27: Yeah.  
P29: Yeah.  
P28: I think we could roll that into that.  
P29: So how would you?  
P28: Yeah, stagnant could encompass dead end job.  
P26: Stagnant environment, is that the way to phrase it?  
P28: Yeah.  
P29: Yeah, I think so.  
P26: Okay, where is that?  
P28: I would put that higher.  
P29: Yeah, because if you hate your job it's pretty much...  
P27: Yeah.  
P26: Alright.  
P29: Bad hours.  
P26: Bad hours, oh yeah.  
P29: I would hate to work like 90 hours a week.  
P28: Yeah, I think it would mess up your work-life balance.  
P26: Alright, number three bad hours. So we've got being micromanaged; being just a number; being under appreciated; bad geographic location; bad customers; not enough resources to do your job.  
P28: Not enough resources to do your job.  
P27: I'd say resources.  
P26: Okay.  
P27: And we only need five?  
P29: Yeah.  
P26: And then we can throw location in at the bottom.  
P27: Yeah.  
P29: I mean yeah, it would suck if you were in like Idaho and there is nothing there.  
P27: Careful.  
[Laughter]  
P29: You are from Idaho?  
P27: North Dakota.  
P29: No, I understand I am from a little town in ?? Pennsylvania so you know.  
P27: Yeah, I think it would be really hard I think. I have had friends move to the middle of nowhere place where they don't know anybody and that just really sucks...  
P26: Yeah.  
P27: so I just don't want to do that, personally.  
P26: Yeah. Alright, so one through five. Number one bad co-workers; number two stagnant environment; number three bad hours; number four not enough resources to do your job; and number five bad geographic location.  
P27: Sounds good.

	P26: The end.
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G#: Group number; P#: Participant number; M: Moderator

Appendix L

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 5

5. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of effectively communicating with your supervisor.

P1	Asking for a promotion. I gathered my facts in advance and presented a logical, well thought out argument why I should be promoted.
P2	Many positive experiences with my supervisor occur during casual chats during lunch or walking to meetings – the lack of the “structured office” seems to lighten the mood and calm nerves.
P3	While working as the Web Content Manager for the internal and external federal government I was successfully able to communicate to my leadership that we do not have the agency-wide support (writers, editors, “scrubbers”) for the creation of content that we need. Through tangible statistics, examples of out of date content, and verbal descriptions of the issues at hand, he was able to bring these issues to the highest levels of the agency leadership and get funding for hiring additional staff to alleviate the problems.
P4	I had a disagreement with a customer, and rather than going with the customer is always right my supervisor just wanted to ensure that I handled confrontation effectively. When dealing with safety I know what is right however I have to make sure that I am not barking orders at the customers.
P5	I have always had good relationships with me supervisors, and have always been able to communicate with them about my leaving time, since I have been a student for most of my previous life.
P6	This past week, I needed to fill my boss in on a project that I had been working on. I also needed more direction/instruction on something he had given me to do. I told him where I was on the project and what I needed. He told me he understood what I was doing and thought I was doing it well and he also gave me clear direction on what he wanted me to do.
P7	I successfully communicate with my supervisor all the time in my job. I meet with him one on one multiple times a week to go over both old and new data from both of my experiments. We discuss possible ways to improve experimental procedure and ways to remove any bias. He listens to my ideas and, unless he finds any real

	problem with them, gives me a chance to implement them, whether they work or not. If not, we sit down again and try to come up with a better plan.
P8	I have yet to have one.
P9	<p>I effectively communicate with my direct supervisor daily because she allows me to have authority in my current position. So when we converse she talks to me as a coworker not as a subordinate which encourages me to be more effective and to take more ownership of my work and tasks.</p> <p>Recently my organization has been developing a social network for our members, and part of it falls directly on my department and specifically myself. I go to my boss for her opinion on these tasks since she sees things from a ‘big picture’ prospective and she will ask me for my opinion on the plausibility or best practice and approach of something since she considers me the expert on the technical side of things. We both realize that we have two different perspectives and that they can bring a lot to the table and cover more ground together.</p>
P10	I discussed my long-term goals with my direct supervisor. I made it clear what I want for my career and asked how the company can support my goals. My supervisor advised me how to go about reaching my goals and effectively answered my questions regarding the company’s support toward helping me achieve them.
P11	At my current position, I work in the field a lot dealing directly with customers. If I am unsure of a situation, I have direct contact with my supervisor via page or cell phone call.
P12	<p>In general: Communicates regularly, frequent informal praise, informal correction, formal evaluation, formal improvement support; sets goals, listens, helps define and understand professional development goals.</p> <p>Let my supervisor know that I was uncomfortable with doing something she requested. She said she understood, but insisted I act as she requested. I told her I would be willing to provide the support that she needed if I had certain guarantees: that the information would not be used for certain specific purposes and that I would submit the response anonymously.</p> <p>On another occasion I told my supervisor that I was interested in taking the lead in specific projects, but as a contractor I could not officially do them without her permission. She indicated that she had been holding off on assigning them to me because she thought my workload was too high. We discussed shifting some admin work to other personnel and I took on the tasks she had considered me for. I gained more responsibility by offering.</p>
P13	I emailed my boss about a situation that bothered me with another coworker, and she sat down and talked with me before it escalated to something that may have resulted in a more serious situation.

P14	Recently we assessed another engineering firm's project because the actual construction did not perform as designed and was a major failure. During the assessment of the reports, there were several points of interest I found in comparing with the permit documents. I brought these to the attention of the principal engineer. It was effectively communicated because I had prepared several summary documents (bulleted-lists accompanied with graphs or figures) highlighting these items and preemptively answering any of the principal engineer's questions. These became key criticisms with the design and were the main arguments discussed during Town Council meetings.
P15	My supervisor does not often check-in on me so I have found that it is my responsibility to notify her if I require her assistance. If I let her know of something that is going on with my work, whether positive or negative, she usually remembers and follows up with me the next time I see her.
P16	While working with [excerpted for IRB purposes], I created a mini-website for a major station promotion and gave a preview for my supervisor to show how their event could be taken to the next level (internet-wise).
P17	I had effective communication with my last supervisor, much more so than any of my previous supervisors. I am typically shy around supervisors, afraid to speak up for fear of rejection. This supervisor respected my abilities and therefore made me feel more comfortable. I asked my supervisor for some extra help on a task that involved MS Access. The supervisor was more than happy to help.

P#: Participant number

Appendix M

Focus Group Data – Focus Group Question 4

4. How would you like a high level/difficult task versus a low level/low level of difficulty task communicated to you by a manager?

G1	<p>M: How would you like a high level task versus a low level task communicated to you by a manager?</p> <p>P18: First of all you can talk about the amount of time it's going to take for them to communicate it. How you might want to sit down and talk about it for a half an hour or an hour or an afternoon or whatever it takes.</p> <p>P21: To be able to ask questions.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, in a low level task you'd probably expect it to be communicated in a far shorter amount of time you know maybe a five minute phone call or an email or just sitting down for five minutes.</p> <p>P19: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: High level task you almost don't want a finite amount of time to understand it depending on the severity of it like if it takes sitting down all day talking about it then so be it.</p> <p>P20: Well and I want to be able to ask questions and be able to put my ideas and stuff in.</p> <p>P21: And have initial part of it kind of be collaborative whether or not it stays that way.</p> <p>P18: Either one I think you want to know what resources you have available to you. So is it going to be something you will need the company's money for or is something you will need other employee's time or skill set for or any other kind of resource you can think of you are going to need. I know. Like examples of things that have been done like this in the past so like if it something that is within the scope of your job or you need to bring other people in to do or you are the point person or that kind of thing ?? like all of those fall under resources.</p> <p>P20: Well if there are other people I would want them at the meeting.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, true. And you would not want them to be incompetent.</p> <p>P20: Yes.</p> <p>P18: Good point.</p> <p>P19: It seems like with the higher level tasks if you are almost like drafting an informal contract. Here are the expectations, responsibilities laid out for this extended period of time. Whereas the short term tasks, that's when like ?? give it to me, do it.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, the short term tasks or the low level, what do we call it?</p> <p>P19: The low level.</p>
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	<p>P18: The low level, you almost want to know the impact. Is it something you are just going through the motions for, is that the TPS report or does it actually have some sort of impact. You want to know how much you can blow off and you can fake versus...</p> <p>P21: Yeah, level of priority.</p> <p>P18: Yeah.</p>
G2	<p>M: How would you like a high level task or a high level of difficulty task versus a low level or low level of difficulty task communicated to you by a manager?</p> <p>P22: So would you prefer a high level of difficulty or would you prefer a low level of difficulty?</p> <p>M: No, like how would you like it to be communicated to you. Either task.</p> <p>P25: So like if they were going to give you a high level task how would you like it to be communicated to you and if you were a low level task how would you want it to be communicated to you.</p> <p>M: Yes.</p> <p>P23: Is it, now I'm going to try and stump you here. Is it a high level task you were inexperienced or had trouble with or is it something that is just difficult?</p> <p>M: That is up to your own interpretation.</p> <p>P23: Okay.</p> <p>P25: Well I think if it was a low level task, if my boss came to me and said and he said I need somebody to do this right now, you're available, and it is really important that it get done even if it's not difficult like and he made it seem like important or showed the importance or I could see the importance, even if it was a low level task, if I could see the importance of doing it as long as...</p> <p>P22: Can you go to Starbucks?</p> <p>P25: Yeah. Like even something as simple as that like I need you to run and get this for me like everyone else is tied up and you can help me out like I would have no problem with that like at all. As long as every time he wasn't coming to me. And it goes along with what we were talking about earlier. As long as he is challenging me most of the time or the job is interesting, if I got to do something not that difficult maybe it would be nice for a break once in a while like to do something simple then it helps out.</p> <p>P22: Yeah. I think also if it's a type of task where you are on a team and you are dealing with this project and it is something simple within the project, an email is fine. Like, can you do this little thing?</p> <p>P25: Oh yeah, absolutely.</p> <p>P23: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: Like an email or whatever. If it is a personal favor not within the realm of what you're doing then I think like approaching you is best.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, if like ?? drop an email, hey I need this thing done real quick. Like, do you mind getting it done for me, yeah, I'd have no problem with that.</p> <p>P22: Do you mean like all levels? They can chat me through email.</p> <p>M: Yeah, all levels of communication...</p>

P22: Or twitter it to me [Laughter]

M: I guess, more in the sense of the like the behavior. Maybe not necessarily the medium.

P22: Like how they would approach you.

P23: So they shouldn't take longer to explain the task than the as long as the task actually takes. Like that is crucial for me like if it is something simple, don't make it more complicated than it needs to be.

P22: That's a good thing, yeah.

P25: Absolutely.

P23: Because I've, like you said, I wouldn't have a problem going and picking up just as long as it wasn't explained to me like I am only capable of going and picking things up.

P25: Yeah. I mean if my boss came to me and was like hey I need some copies of this real quick do you think you could like...

P22: Take care of that.

P25: Yeah, like go print these coping out. Yeah, no problem. Like 15 minutes later I put everything through the copy machine and then I was back to my work.

P22: Yeah.

P23: Yeah.

P25: Like no problem.

P22: I think with high difficulty tasks, it depends on what my knowledge base is, kind of, ?? because it really annoys me a lot when somebody explains to me something that I already understand, and like, I almost want to like, I just get personally get really like I'm not dumb thanks. You know what I mean? And I know that, that's probably like bad, I probably just need to get over that but I want my boss to understand what I know and what I don't. So that even if it is something difficult, if I understand the task he or she can still explain it to me.

P25: Maybe like actually being able to understand what is high level and what's not high level to me like...

P22: Yeah.

P25: alright I got it.

P22: Or if it is low level and then we need you to press the start, change the number of copies to 15. So I guess like level of your knowledge.

P25: I think it's important maybe, if it's like high level, if it's something they approach me that they're understanding. If it's something that I have never done before, they don't have an unreasonable expectation.

P22: That you are going to understand what to do.

P25: ?? they come to me with something that is high level that I have never seen before and want it done in like a half an hour like they understand it's going to be a little bit challenging. If they are going to bring it to me that they need to be at least be like alright you have some time to do this because I know you have never seen this before. You know, I know you can do it but I know it's going to take you some time.

P22: I think it's just like knowing you skill level.

	<p>P25: Yeah. Expectations.</p> <p>P23: If they say what the expectations are while they are explaining the task, so you don't have to go back re-communicate okay what, when do you want this exactly. Be very specific about what needs to be done and respond to you when you say okay, yes, and not just keep explaining.</p> <p>P22: Yeah, and I think if it is something that you don't know how to do, like accepting questions because you know like sometimes when people explain something, I'm not really sure how they do it. I think they just assume you know what you are doing when you don't but I almost feel like not embarrassed but like...</p> <p>P25: Like when you ask them a question.</p> <p>P22: Like I feel like, I shouldn't, or ashamed almost to ask a question. Like oh, I should know this but I don't.</p> <p>P25: Right.</p> <p>P23: Open to communication and follow-up questions if necessary.</p> <p>P22: Okay, you want me to do this.</p> <p>P23: Know that I have looked at this impossible thing. I'd like to revise what I said.</p>
G3	<p>M: How would you like a high level task or a high level of difficulty task versus a low level or low level of difficulty task communicated to you by a manager?</p> <p>P26: So we are to take each of those...</p> <p>M: Yeah.</p> <p>P26: And figure out how we would like them communicated?</p> <p>P29: For me, I would just want the manager to come to me and tell me exactly what he wants, even like the subtasks that he expects or she expects from me then, sometimes they want you to be very creative so if that is the goal they just want you to be creative and how you approach it and they don't have specific subtasks, I would just want to know what they want at the end and then I can do it. I think it just depends on the manager too, really. Is that what you mean?</p> <p>M: Think more so about how, you caught on to it, like behavior of the communication.</p> <p>P29: I just want it to be face-to-face, but if it is just like a menial task, just email it to me. And I guess if you are not happy with what I am doing then I would want you to come and just tell me up front and tell me what to change so I can do what you want to do and then if I don't agree with you be open to suggestions and other ideas. Just be open.</p> <p>P26: For a high level task, yeah, I would definitely want to have face-to-face communication with the right person in management rather than if it is something that is really high level and has some important specifics to it that aren't going to involve some functional area. I would like that manager in on the communication or to be the one explaining along with my direct report and yet clear expectations in a high level task and understanding of deadlines and who else might need to be involved in my task as they see it. And then I would like an opportunity to make sure I understood what they said correctly. To shoot it back to them or give a summary or something. And with menial tasks, low level tasks, same email would</p>

be fine but hopefully it would be clear that it is a low level task too. Hopefully the level of communication is clear so that I think it is a low level task and whoever is telling me also knows it is a low level task.

P27: I agree with all of that. I am trying to think of what I can add but...

P29: I like that idea about being able to repeat it back because some people don't always hear everything they want or don't say everything that they want.

P27: Yeah, you think you understand and then you go back and you go what did they say? Maybe constant feedback if it's a task that is going to take a long time. I'd like to have check-ups. You know, is this what you want? And then, if you have like a low level task then not have them be breathing down your neck if it is just something that is going to take a long time, it's like what is this? It just needs to run its course and take the time.

G#: Group number; P#: Participant number; M: Moderator

Appendix N

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 6

6. If you have one, please describe one experience you had of poor communication with your supervisor.

P1	I was given a task and worked on it for several weeks. Once I was closing in on completion, I asked my supervisor to review my progress and I had interpreted his instructions completely different from what he expected. All of my work was scrapped and I had to start over.
P2	No response.
P3	After meeting with my supervisor about tasks to be completed, an important question got left unanswered after a plan of action was discussed due to the fact that there was too much going on and it got forgotten about.
P4	At the end of the day the supervisor was walking around telling us what to do what to pick up when she could have been helping us as well, I understood why she did later when I was a supervisor, but she did not effectively communicate her reasons before.
P5	Misunderstanding of an issue with a customer.
P6	My boss is famous for giving me a task, like please send me a list of job listings for veterinarians in zoos and aquariums, and then when I give him what he asks for, he'll come back with 20 more instructions that he didn't give the first time and I end up having to go back and spend more time on it when I should have gotten clear directions (or done a better job of asking what he wanted) in the first place.
P7	I cannot recall any situation when I did not communicate well with my supervisor. □
P8	During confrontation with a coworker, I approached and sought advice from my direct supervisor and was told to 'just deal with it'
P9	During a project, which required group work across several departments, I was tasked with overseeing the development of a website. I gave my boss weekly updates on the progress that my coworkers were having on the development of it and he would ask for an update but rarely ask any questions beyond that during our

	<p>conversations. About two months into the project, he came into work furious because of where we were in the web development stage. It was then that I realized that he had been listening to my weekly updates but not actually hearing what I was telling him.</p>
P10	<p>I have had to act as a mediator between my supervisor and others in the company that are difficult for him to work with or have a strained relationship with him. This has proven to be tough and I've found myself in awkward positions where I have to stand by my supervisor's mode of operation but at the same time I understand the opposing view. During these times I have to assume the responsibility of conveying the most salient and rational points to both parties. There have been instances where the arguments are above my level of understanding and knowledge and I cannot effectively mediate between the two.</p>
P11	<p>I have asked only one question in my current position that has gone unanswered. However the non-response did not hinder my job performance or function because it was directed at an area of my department of which I was not responsible.</p>
P12	<p>Many occasions – my client/boss tends to be brief in all her communications until it is clear that her brevity has led to problems and confusion down the road. Then she is extremely precise, but in a more annoyed way than helpful. I find that I have to communicate with those who are not on such a high level as my boss/client, due to the shortage of time she can commit to instruction.</p> <p>My supervisor called me and whispered that one of my staff members would be needing to find a new position within our office because her support was no longer necessary. Apparently this was a secret – subconsciously communicated by the whispering... Later my supervisor also told my staff member who leaked this information, not knowing it was sensitive. Apparently the situation was dire enough that people's jobs were on the line (luckily not mine). I ended up meeting with my staff member to understand her position and her understanding. I advised her to also share this with our senior supervisor as a courtesy. I also met with her to discuss the situation as I understood it and how to best go about resolving the issue. It still remains to be seen if anyone will lose their job...</p>
P13	<p>I was reprimanded for something that I didn't think was a problem because it wasn't brought to my attention at the time. I was notified several weeks after the fact, when the supervisor above my manager spoke to me.</p>
P14	<p>No response.</p>
P15	<p>I see my supervisor very infrequently. One time I had to send out some documents to my peers and emailed them various times to the supervisor and called her to have her email them. She did not, so I ended up sending the email myself before I had her approval.</p>

P16	While working at [excerpted for IRB purposes], a promotion that was passed down through Corporate to the different Markets wasn't completed because the communication between my supervisor and I was very poor. There were elements of the campaign that were not provided until the close of the campaign and we almost did not have a winner for the campaign.
P17	I had poor communication patterns with one of my supervisors. This supervisor assured me that the training I received did not cover all of the job responsibilities and that questions would arise periodically. I was then reassured that it was OK to ask questions. Every time I mustered the courage to interrupt (this supervisor was always busy during the workday, often on the phone and typing an email simultaneously), I was given a quick explanation and dismissed without my concerns being addressed. In fact a large majority of my interactions with this supervisor were unsuccessful.

P#: Participant number

Appendix O

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 7

7. What qualities do you look for in a leader?

P1	Experience. Confidence. Intelligence. Likeability – someone who I would like and want to follow.
P2	Open door policies, flexibility, understanding of the term “work to live, not live to work”; someone open to new and creative ideas for workforce development and performance improvement.
P3	Stands up for what they think is right, advocates for employees, can multi-task effectively, listens to employees questions/concerns, gets things done, can communicate effectively with their own bosses, understand the workings of the office/staff, treats employees fairly, recognizes when changes need to be made, reprimands staff that are not working effectively, creates a pleasant work environment, works to understand and takes action to fix problems, acknowledges good/hard work.
P4	Someone who knows what the big goal, looks for the best in people and what they all bring to the table, and they help people become the best they can, help people work on improving their weaknesses
P5	Confident, quick thinker, smart, and people oriented
P6	Intelligent, Kind, Wise, Patient, Firm, Respectful, Humble, a Go-Getter, Cares about what his employees think, HAS INTEGRITY, can admit when wrong and apologize, is open to suggestions, thoughtful, keeps his employees informed about what’s going on in the office, gives positive and negative criticism, asks his employees for feedback, can accept criticism from his employees.
P7	A good leader will let you know when you mess up without putting you down and listens to everyone's ideas. A good leader makes himself available as much as possible, whether through email, phone or in person. No question is a dumb question for a good supervisor.
P8	Workplace community oriented and unselfish, someone who strives to better the workplace over advancing themselves.

P9	I look for someone who is willing to invest the time in their staff to nurture their strengths and encourage them to invest themselves in their own jobs. Someone who leads by example and allows their subordinates to carve out their own paths.
P10	Someone who I can relate to and respect. A person who is competent and is willing to teach subordinates. A good leader is someone who is always open to questions and ideas for improvement from their staff.
P11	A leader should be able to understand the current situation and perform the necessary tasks necessary to improve it. This should be achieved by delegating responsibility when necessary in order perform the mentioned tasks in an efficient manner.
P12	<p>Humility  Confidence  Modesty  Fairness  Energy  Sense of humor  Intelligence  Experience  Thoughtful  Sincere  Graceful  Firm  Good listener  Welcoming  Generous  Commitment  Autonomous but able to delegate and share workload efficiently  Communicative  Encouraging  Emphasizes recognition for specific acts  Empowering  Collaborative with other leaders  Exposure and visibility within organization</p>
P13	Someone who is proactive instead of reactive. Someone who makes their employees feel that they can come to them with any problems/questions/concerns without hesitation. Someone who can understand and makes an effort to try to relate to their employees regardless of race/age/gender. Someone who doesn't play favorites to certain employees just because they feel like they have more in common with them. And they are never condescending. That's the worst quality I can think of in a leader. There is nothing more offensive that someone in charge

	being condescending.
P14	Awareness (e.g. differentiate demeanor between clients, subs, & employees), Organizational & Planning Abilities, Composure, Adaptability, Strength (e.g. delegating, negotiating), Charisma, Authority, Driven, and Foresight (obviously to an extent).
P15	Integrity, honesty, someone I can respect, similar values or philosophies of work, someone I trust with a problem, available to help me or give me advice, is more experienced than me
P16	preaches teamwork but also knows how to lead the team tries to solve the root of a problem and the not superficial part of the a situation goes to bat for his or her employees recognizes effort and good work of his or her employees can make the hard decisions that others would fail at works with his or her employees on getting major tasks done
P17	Leaders motivate you to be successful. They not only exemplify the qualities that they seek, but learn how to effectively communicate to everyone. Good leaders do not alienate anyone, but rather find a way to incorporate everyone's abilities for the achievement of success. Leaders earn respect through their commitment to helping others better themselves.

P#: Participant number

Appendix P

Focus Group Data – Focus Group Question 3

3. As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.

G1	<p>M: As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.</p> <p>P20: And they have to be in order?</p> <p>M: Yeah, that would be helpful.</p> <p>P20: Okay.</p> <p>P19: Confidence.</p> <p>P20: Confidence.</p> <p>P21: Well I think, oh I thought he said competence. Well, they should probably be competent too. I was going to say, this is speaking from experience, like my boss that I had came in after someone who had been there for like ten years or something, and he didn't know what the people below him did, like he didn't have any idea but yet he was overseeing us.</p> <p>P20: So like understanding the company?</p> <p>P21: Understanding the company but also having an understanding of what the people below you do.</p> <p>P18: Also, along with that having earned that position of leadership. A lot of people like, if your dad worked for the company...</p> <p>P21: No nepotism.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, like...</p> <p>P19: Is the next question what we hate in a leader?</p> <p>M: No.</p> <p>???</p> <p>P20: Wait, what'd you just say?</p> <p>P18: I said like, having a leader that has earned that position. Like it wasn't handed to them or they didn't sneak in the back door, that sort of thing.</p> <p>P20: Mmmhmmm.</p> <p>P21: Someone who doesn't abuse their power, I think.</p> <p>P18: Is the, can we call it like the nontackiness quotient? Like I wouldn't want a boss or a leader that walks around spouting clichés all day. Like, team work and giving 110 percent, all the inspirational posters all over his office.</p> <p>P20: Especially if that is the only advice they are ?? you know what I mean?</p> <p>P18: Some people are really like that. I've seen some people where their job is just like walking clichés.</p> <p>P21: Substance behind them.</p> <p>P20: Yeah, like that's all they tell you when you ask for help.</p> <p>P19: Like psych management for dummies.</p>
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P20: I don't know what you would call that.

P18: Put your best foot forward, you know what I mean? I guess a sense of genuineness if that is even a word.

P20: We'll just put genuine.

P21: What would that be?

P19: Genuineness.

P18: That's what my gut told me to go with.

P19: What about being, having empathy? What's the...

P21: Being able to relate to your employees, yeah.

P19: On both a general working basis. Oh I understand what your job is, how difficult it can be.

P21: But also understanding what is going on in their personal lives.

P19: A personal situation.

P21: Yeah.

P19: Is that being empathetic?

P18: Yeah.

P19: Look over here and engineer coming up...

P18: Yeah, absolutely.

P19: Big word.

P18: Who says engineers don't have a vocabulary?

??

P19: So these are things we like in managers?

P20: Yeah.

P19: Or like leaders?

P18: Yeah, because a leader is not necessarily your boss.

P21: Yeah, that is true.

P18: It's not necessarily the top guy on the totem poll.

P19: Good organization could be down toward the bottom. We can cross them off later.

P20: I think, some of these have already been said. I but I think someone who like fun and friendly. Someone who like when...

P19: Personable.

P20: Yeah.

P21: Yeah, like you know they are a leader but they can relate to you...

P20: They can talk to you and have fun and joke around with them. Yeah.

P21: Yeah. Approachable?

P20: Yeah, we will add that in there.

P21: Okay, sorry.

P20: Not.

P21: Unapproachable.

P18: Well like...

P21: Or maybe just approachable.

P18: I think a bunch of them we have kind of tie into this but like just in general, honesty. If your job or company or division was like in a really bad spot. I

wouldn't want somebody to like sugar coat it.

P20: Like honesty and good morals.

P18: ?? these are like dire straits. It doesn't need to be like dooms day but a lot of...

P21: Be realistic.

P18: of bosses try to sugar coat it because they are worried or just think it's going to pass or whatever it is. Just give me some sense of what is really going on.

P19: Kind of related. Integrity.

P18: Sure.

P20: Yeah.

P21: Yeah.

P19: How would you say, taking responsibility when things don't go so well and also capitalizing, celebrating when it goes well. Is there a good adjective for the type of person?

P18: Yeah, like they will fall on the grenade, if you will.

P19: Is like, to live up, not to live up, but to take responsibility for any mistakes because if they are leading and it may or may not be their fault but if the group or the people involved if that person doesn't materialize the way they all want it to, not going to point the finger at anyone else.

P18: Yeah. Take ownership of it.

??

P18: The captains got to go down with the ship too. He can't be the first one on the life boat out. That's never any good.

P20: Alright, let's count how many we've got. Alright, we have eleven. Okay, we have competence, not confidence, knowledge of people below you and like what they do, they earned their position, they don't abuse power, they are genuine, they are able to relate to people below them we could probably put that in with knowledge of people below you or personable.

P21: Yeah, we could probably add whatever that was to personable. Alright, so now we have ten. Let me start over. Now we are going to read them, okay.

Alright. Competence; knowledge of people below you and what they do; earned their position; they don't abuse power; they're genuine; they are personable and are able to relate to people below them; they have good organization; they are honest; they have integrity; and they take responsibility.

P19: This would work in any where. Having an obvious passion for what they are trying to achieve.

P21: And with that the ability to motivate people. Either have that same passion or at least, I don't know.

P19: Like I guess you could have all these, have all these traits and qualities but you may not care about you're doing a whole lot whereas all things being equal I think, I genuinely care about achieving this goal, I think that ??

P18: I think it may seem that way when your boss is just using the people for him as just a stepping stone, where all he is trying to do is get the next promotion or get another job.

P21: Yeah.

P19: He wants to succeed but...

P18: But only if it benefits him.

P19: yeah, I know.

P18: And that is one of those things where you could fake it. I mean ??

P20: Then I would say passion would be number one, don't you think?

P21: Yeah, I think we could combine honesty and integrity because that way they are both there.

P20: Okay. Then I would say passion would be the first one, don't you think?

P18: Sure.

P21: Well, they could be passionate but they could be dumb...

P18: Terrible.

P21: or incompetent.

P18: The whole title of this study is going to be don't be dumb at your job.

P20: These are all on our list guys we just need to put them in order.

P19: Okay, name like two or three you would put at the top of the list.

P20: I would say competence needs to be towards the top.

P21: Put that as two.

P19: Competent, technical skills.

P20: I think being personable is important.

P19: I think personable should be up there too because, you work, and you work well with the people that you like. It doesn't matter how good the person is. If you can't stand being around the person...

P21: It makes it a better working environment.

P18: You also don't want to make somebody you don't like look good. You know, I don't want to work my butt off to make the [expletive deleted] look good.

[Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]

P20: I also think ability to motivate is important.

P19: Put that as number four for now and do we have any that we think are nine, tens, eight, nine, ten? Bottom of the...

P21: Doesn't abuse power?

P18: I think that is only relevant to certain situations though.

P21: Alright, so put that as ten.

P20: Okay.

P21: I feel like putting honesty and integrity at the bottom is not appropriate but...

P19: Give it four stars or three stars.

P20: Well I think it's important but...

P21: They all are.

P20: they all are.

P19: He could achieve a goal but be a liar and a cheater.

P21: And that doesn't go with our moral.

P20: Well do you want to say that as five then?

P21: Sure.

P20: Alright, we have knowledge of people below you, earned position, genuine, and takes responsibility...oh and good organization. I don't think that is that

	<p>important...</p> <p>P21: They could have a secretary.</p> <p>P20: Yeah...</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P20: so that is nine. Maybe some people function differently.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P20: Maybe they like a mess. Umm okay, so we have knowledge of people below, earned position, genuine, and takes responsibility.</p> <p>P18: Genuine.</p> <p>P21: Yeah.</p> <p>P18: I hate phony people in the workplace. I don't know about you all but...</p> <p>P20: Yeah, I agree.</p> <p>P21: Let's put...I hate this assignment. I think knowledge in the workplace could be number eight.</p> <p>P18: You can withdraw your participation at any time. You could just storm out. [Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]</p> <p>P20: Okay, we said knowledge of people below you is number eight and then earned position and takes responsibility.</p> <p>P19: What number are we missing?</p> <p>P20: We are missing ??</p> <p>P21: We must have eleven. ?? No we have ten, I mean we have eleven.</p> <p>P20: So we need to delete something.</p> <p>P21: Earned position. I think we can roll that into something else.</p> <p>P19: Not abusing power and taking jobs that are not yours.</p> <p>P21: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Creative thinking, creative thinking. So that leaves seven.</p> <p>P20: Do I have to read this out loud again?</p> <p>M: Sure.</p> <p>P19: Read them and we can say up or down or let them stay where they are.</p> <p>P20: Okay, number one is a passion for your job; two is competence; three is being personable, approachable, and being able to relate to the people below you; four is ability to motivate; five is honesty and integrity; six is being genuine; seven is taking responsibility; eight is knowledge of people below you and what they do; nine is good organization; and ten is doesn't abuse power slash earned their position.</p>
G2	<p>M: As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.</p> <p>P22: Smart in their subject area, at least.</p> <p>P25: I think common sense on top of smart...</p> <p>P23: Yeah, those are two different things.</p> <p>P25: A boss has to have common sense. I think is important to separate them.</p> <p>P23: I totally agree with that.</p> <p>P25: Because I know a lot of people that were really smart at what we were doing but they would have been terrible bosses because they had no common sense, they had to have someone hold their hand.</p>

??

P24: People skills.

P25: Yeah, people skills.

P22: Experience just in general.

P25: Yeah. I think talent maybe. I don't know if when you think of smart you think of talented.

P22: Personal successes in what you are doing or something.

P25: Like I was doing stress engineering and my boss was good at stress engineering, you know it wasn't just guy that was there to lead. He could also do it if he needed to do it. I thought that was important because it's not just another guy who is overseeing everything, but if he can't get down and do it...

P22: Then you are not going to follow them as much.

P25: Yeah.

P23: How is that different from smart in subject area though?

P25: I guess it is kind of like, I don't know if that is a different thing or a same thing.

P23: Well I guess it might be the difference between knowing what everyone does in your company and being able to understand it versus being good at what they have to do.

P25: Yeah.

P23: Is that what you mean?

P25: Yeah, I think that is kind of what I am going for. You can know what it is but can you actually do it yourself. So maybe like actually being able to do the work, be able to actually do what the people you are...

P23: So we got ten, so we can stretch this out.

P22: I think someone who understands your follower style in a sense. You know, some people need to be micromanaged; some people need to be left alone and go on their way. And a boss needs to be able to understand people.

P25: Understanding his people.

P22: Like knowing ?? understand as a boss, be able to know what you work with, what you work with, and what you work with. Be able to differentiate.

P25: Being able to motivate different people. Like different styles of people.

P22: If you don't like to be micromanaged, I don't want to constantly be like did you do this, did you do this, did you do this, you know?

P25: Right.

P22: But some people need to though. Just understanding what works best for you co-workers.

P23: Yeah, I think that is definitely different from people skills. Management skills.

P22: Yeah, managerial skills.

P23: Because you can be friendly and then a total jackass to the next guy.

P22: You have to be able to confront people who aren't doing their job.

P25: I was going to say that too. You have to be able to have some gull to be able to handle a bad situation. To summarize this, being able to handle conflict.

P22: I took a managerial skill class in college and like we went over how to address

body odor. Stuff like that. That's stuff that you don't think about but when you have a co-worker or somebody who needs to be talked to it's like...random class. Just for me personally, like I hate meetings that go on and on with no purpose, so I like it when people have an agenda and get things done. I'm not sure what that would be but...

P23: Efficiency. It's not just in meetings but in how things get done...

P22: General.

P25: Absolutely.

P23: Like how many people have to see something before you can finish it.

P22: Yeah, like how many meetings does it take to get there.

P23: Yeah.

P25: Yeah.

P22: I think it is important that they are able to relate to you.

P23: Yeah, I was just thinking approachable.

P25: Yeah, they seem approachable.

P22: You feel like they hear what you say.

P23: Yeah. They are not like scary.

P22: I think they need to make you feel important.

P25: Yeah.

P22: You are a valuable addition.

P23: Because we want to be valued and paid.

P25: Stroke my ego.

P22: Can you read them one more time?

P25: Yeah, we have smart in their subject area; common sense; people skills; experience; actually being able to do the work that people under them do; understanding personal preferences and how to motivate the people under him or her, which I said managerial skills; being able to handle conflict; efficiency; and if they are approachable.

P22: We can start with one and go higher or lower, let's just do it that way. Put one in the middle.

P25: Like write the first one down and then ?? that's a good idea.

P22: See what happens. Set up a bracket.

P25: Is there anything else we want to add to that for a boss. That is a lot of things for a boss to be really though. Like I think if I had a boss that had all these things I'd be really thrilled.

P23: I'd go for half, you know?

P25: Yeah, my boss liked to buy us tequila shots. That was cool. [Laughter] I think that went into understanding how to motivate people.

[Laughter]

[Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]

P22: So what do we start with?

P25: We said, smart like as in their subject area.

P22: What's next on the list?

P25: Having common sense.

P24: I think that goes above.  
P22: Yeah, I think so too.  
P25: People skills.  
P22: As a boss. Is this leader or boss?  
M: Leader.  
P22: People skills are more important than common sense.  
P24: Yeah.  
P25: I would think it is because you would think a person with common sense generally has good people skills but they are separate. But I do think people skills would be a little bit more important because if you are a jackass no one is going to want to follow you. No matter how good you can do something, no one is going to want to follow you into it. And even if they are like following you they are not going to want to say I am following that person.  
P22: Exactly.  
P25: Because he is a jackass.  
P23: You get smart people to back you up and then as long as the leader as the people skills you manage somebody to come up with the smart stuff if necessary.  
P22: Yeah.  
P25: Yeah. The next one is experience, which I don't think actually is that important. I think it is important but if you are really good at it and you know how to handle the people, you know how to manage. Like if you have only been doing it a year but you are a savant and you can actually, like a lot of times people actually gain all these things through experience but if they happen to be gifted with these things and they don't have the experience they still might be a better boss or be a better leader.  
P23: Somebody with experience might not be because they are less willing to be flexible...  
P25: Yeah, absolutely. Do we actually want to add flexibility to this list?  
??  
P23: We can always cross one out like smart and flexible.  
P25: The next one we have actually being able to do the work the people under them do, which might be more important to me than it might be to another area. Like to me that might be really important.  
P22: Maybe between common sense and smart is kind of where I would put it for some reason but I don't know why.  
P23: I don't know if being able to do and being able to understand I think are slightly different things and even if they could do what I did, if they can at least understand and appreciate then... I don't know it seems like it might be a little bit of an unfair expectation depending on what you do.  
P22: I think understand is very key though. Do we have that on there?  
P25: Yeah, but smart in their subject area would be understanding.  
P22: Well it's a little different. The thing I do like we sometimes work with computer scientists and they want us to like if it is like website design, usability, but changing it around and things like that. Well, they say if you have a little bit of

understanding at least of code or what goes into writing code. I can't write the code but I can at least know what they can and cannot change and that makes me a lot more, you know, that makes them respect me more than just change it like this.

P23: Because if you knew what everybody could do then you might not need all the employees.

P22: You need to at least understand though.

P24: Or you could just change it.

P25: Yeah, I'm cool with changing the word to do the work to being able to understand the work.

P23: Yeah, I think that would be good. So where would we put that?

P22: I think that is pretty key to being a leader.

P23: So do you think between people skills and common sense, common sense and smart.

P25: I don't know.

P22: Probably between people skills and common sense.

P23: Yeah.

P22: Yeah, that constantly comes up in discussions and stuff like that with what we do.

P25: Understanding the personal preferences and how to motivate the different personalities under him or her, or managerial skills. We are kind of abbreviating that.

P22: Maybe between smart and experienced.

P23: I don't know. I think I would put it higher than that.

P25: I don't know if I would though. I mean being smart in their own subject is pretty important and so is common sense. Like I don't think I am necessarily downgrading the managerial skills if I put it under smart. You know, like I would agree everything there is important. So it is kind of like splitting hairs maybe.

P23: But you need all of these skills in order to be a good leader.

P25: I think some of these we are putting at the top are extremely important and some of the other things we named are nice but not as important.

P23: Well what is our difference between people skills and managerial skills? Managerial is more about efficiency? And people skills is more about friendliness? Or is it essentially the same thing?

P22: When you say people skill you kind of brought up are people going to follow what you say. You know what I mean. Like some people you are just like, no I don't believe you. And managerial is then how do you apply that once you have them, then what are you going to do with it?

P25: Maybe like keeping ?? as well.

P23: So it's more about motivation?

P25: Yeah.

P23: Okay.

P25: Motivating could be the word if you want to encompass it all. But like broadening it out, you might be motivating to one person and not motivating at all to the next person if they are totally two different people like two different

personalities.

P23: So are we discussing between smart and experienced, is that it?

P25: Yeah, that's what we are thinking.

P23: Because I think if you have those first four things then the ability to motivate may follow.

P25: Right.

P23: So I could see that going there. You may not need a specialized skill set if you are already smart and have common sense.

P25: Yeah. I might have lied when I said we have ten.

P24: We can add flexibility.

P25: Yeah, we can had flexibility. The next one is being able to handle conflict.

??

P22: Conflicts are always going to arise though.

P25: I think the boss needs to be able to handle a conflict. I think maybe between common sense and like actually being able to understand the work.

P22: But sometimes they can almost delegate that in a sense. Because they can be like you need to handle that amongst yourselves or...

P25: Yeah, that is true too.

P22: I think it is important but I don't think it is as important.

P25: Maybe between common sense and smart because as I said I think it is important but if you have common sense you could probably have the skill set, like develop the skill set.

P22: Do you think there is a difference? Because you can have common sense but still hate conflict.

P25: That's true.

P23: If you can't handle conflict you might not be able to hold a team together. You can have riffs in a way.

P22: And people not be able to trust you as a leader if you can't.

P23: Right, they would go take their conflicts elsewhere.

P24: Maybe under common sense and smart.

P25: I kind of feel that.

P24: Yeah, I think that is important. I think it should be higher.

P22: I guess any time you are going to have a team that is together for any amount of time you are going to have some conflict.

P25: Yeah, absolutely. The next thing is efficiency.

P22: I think that is important. Because especially in business you have to have timelines...

P25: Yeah, I think it is the most important.

P22: You need to get this stuff done.

P25: If you are not efficient as a leader your group is not going to be efficient. So I think efficiency would be number one to me.

P23: I would agree with that. I'd follow someone who is maybe not the best with people but was able to lead in an efficient manner.

P22: Sometimes you can say I hate my boss but they are a leader for a reason.

	<p>P25: Yeah, and like we get it done. Yeah, absolutely. And the last two we have are approachable and friendly and flexible.</p> <p>P22: I think approachable is probably pretty low.</p> <p>P23: I would put that last actually.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, I would put these both under everything. I mean flexible maybe above experience but...</p> <p>P23: I would put flexible ahead of experience.</p> <p>P25: And then approachable last.</p> <p>P23: Yeah.</p> <p>P22: Is that it?</p> <p>P25: That is ten.</p> <p>P22: Yes.</p> <p>P23: We did it.</p> <p>[Excerpt disregarded. Side note not relevant to study.]</p> <p>P25: Would you like me to read all these?</p> <p>M: Yes, one through ten.</p> <p>P25: One is efficiency; two is people skills; three is actually being able to understand the work that the people under them do; four is common sense; five is being able to handle conflict; six is smart; seven is having the ability to motivate; eight is flexible; nine is experience; and ten is approachable.</p>
G3	<p>M: As a group, list the top ten qualities you look for in a leader.</p> <p>P26: Alright, this should be easy. Good communication skills.</p> <p>P29: Yeah. A positive attitude.</p> <p>P28: Motivate people.</p> <p>P27: Good listening skills.</p> <p>P29: That could be under good communication.</p> <p>P26: I think good listening is pretty...</p> <p>P29: Yeah, if they can communicate their ideas but can they listen to somebody else's?</p> <p>P26: Mmmhmm.</p> <p>P29: Organization, time management.</p> <p>P28: Yeah, they should be able to delegate somehow.</p> <p>P27: Common sense.</p> <p>P26: Honest. Encouraging. Give constructive feedback.</p> <p>P29: How many is that?</p> <p>P26: Eleven.</p> <p>??</p> <p>P26: Okay, alright. So now we basically got to rank them, some of them we can lump together. Good communication skills; a positive attitude; the ability to motivate people; good listening skills; organized; good time management skills; can delegate; common sense; honest; encouraging; can give constructive feedback.</p> <p>P29: Maybe also, knowledge of the subject.</p> <p>P27: Yeah, I was just going to say that.</p>

P26: So the practical knowledge.  
P29: Yeah.  
P28: Yes.  
P29: I think that organization and time management can even go together.  
P26: Yeah, I think you are right. Organized.  
P29: Just like organization and time management skills.  
??  
P29: It really fits.  
P26: Alright, so number one?  
P29: I think that knowledge is probably the most important.  
P28: Well, I think communication because anyone can have knowledge.  
P29: Anyone can gain knowledge, okay.  
P28: But to be able to communicate it is what makes him a leader.  
P26: So do we put good listening skills next? Is that all part of that?  
P27: We could lump them.  
P28: That could be lumped in with communication.  
P29: Yeah communication slash...  
P28: It can go both ways.  
P29: Yeah.  
P26: So we might be shy one. Alright, so we still have positive attitude; ability to motivate people; organization; delegating; common sense; honesty; encouraging; constructive feedback; practical knowledge.  
P29: Isn't motivating and encouraging the same thing?  
P27: I would say motivate others would be next.  
P26: Okay, so the ability to motivate.  
P29: I also think, a positive attitude is really important because if you're a leader and he or she is cranky all the time, then you know, not positive, and Debbie Downer, then you are going to reflect that too.  
P26: Are you guys cool with that? Alright, so we got organization; ability to delegate; common sense; honesty; constructive feedback; and practical knowledge.  
P27: I would say honesty.  
P29: Yeah, I would say that too.  
P26: Well we are going to need more. ?? Okay how about organization.  
P29: Yeah, that's important. But what else is there?  
P26: Organization, ability to delegate, common sense, constructive feedback, practical knowledge of area they are leading.  
P29: Yeah, organization.  
P26: Okay, common sense, feedback.  
P29: Practical knowledge?  
P26: Practical knowledge next?  
P29: Sure.  
P26: Should we throw common sense in there?  
P29: Next or with it?  
P26: Next.

	<p>P29: Yeah, because I don't think practical knowledge and common sense is...</p> <p>P28: I do like common sense as tact. I would tact in that too.</p> <p>P29: Well tact is ??</p> <p>??</p> <p>P26: Common sense. Tact. Alright, so we have the ability...we have three spots left, all we have left are can delegate and can give constructive feedback.</p> <p>P29: We need one more.</p> <p>P28: A good mediator.</p> <p>P26: Mediator of conflict or whatever.</p> <p>P28: Yeah.</p> <p>P26: Yeah.</p> <p>P27: Yeah.</p> <p>P26: Alright, so this is what we have. See if you guys agree with this. Number one good communication and listening skills; number two the ability to motivate others; number three a positive attitude; number four honest and sincere; number five organized with good time management skills; number skills practical knowledge of the area they are leading; number seven common sense and tact; number eight the ability to delegate; number nine constructive feedback ability; and number ten mediator.</p> <p>P27: Can you put knowledge a little bit higher?</p> <p>P26: Higher.</p> <p>P27: Because that was like six, right?</p> <p>P26: So maybe put knowledge up to say...up to four and bump everybody down one?</p> <p>P28: Yeah.</p> <p>P27: I would say, yeah.</p> <p>P26: Any other comments before I read it for the recorder? Alright, so officially, number one good communication and listening skills; number two the ability to motivate others; number three a positive attitude; number four practical knowledge of the area they are leading; number five honest and sincere; number six organized with good time management skills; number seven common sense and tact; number eight the ability to delegate; number nine the ability to give constructive feedback; and number ten being a mediator.</p>
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G#: Group number; P#: Participant number; M: Moderator

Appendix Q

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 8

8. If you have an example, please describe your best interaction with someone you regard as a leader.

P1	No response.
P2	My best interaction with someone I consider a great leader was during a high-stress situation when prior methods, or “ways of doing things” didn’t work due to lack of knowledge, staff, and time – his best advice was “don’t re-invent the wheel to improve a proven method of doing things b/c it failed to work once...look at the situation, figure out why it failed and fix the problem, don’t overanalyze the outcome”.
P3	After putting in a very difficult day at work and not being involved in a meeting that directly dealt with a project I was working on (due to pure bureaucracy), the highest director in my office came over to my desk and told me that he knows how much I do and appreciates it immensely. He proceeded to give me a leather-bound notebook that he was given but did not need. I really didn’t give a shit about the actual token, but the fact that he recognized that I was the one carrying out the tasks they had been discussing in the meeting and came over to let me know how much he appreciated the work I do was a wonderful moment of interaction.
P4	My training director is a great leader, she not only has to help manage the other faculty to make sure that they are providing us with the best education but she also has to make sure that we as students are meeting certain benchmarks. One student was having problems academically and rather than let her fail she provided additional ways for here to improve her grades.
P5	Probably becoming close to my dance coaches in high school. We were more like friends and she really valued me input.
P6	I was having a really bad day at work and I went to the Web Director to discuss some work I had to do. She could sense that I wasn’t doing okay and she asked me about it. I told her I was having a rough day and she went on to tell me how wonderful an employee I was and that I should keep doing what I was doing and not let the people in the office get to me. I never felt so appreciated until that moment and it encouraged me to keep working hard even though I got discouraged.

P7	When we were putting together a new fly testing room in the lab, Dr. Phillips took the time to show me how to solder and how electrical connections work to supply power to the magnetic coils in the testing room. I really appreciated him taking the extra time to explain those things to me when it probably would have been faster to just put up the connections with people in the lab that already understood these ideas.
P8	n/a
P9	I think my current supervisor is a very effective leader, so I would say my interaction with her daily is positive. Recently she stopped what she was working on to take the time and help me work through a problem I was struggling with on a project. She listened to my issue, told me her opinion and offered suggestions while still encouraging me to strive on.
P10	No response.
P11	No response for this question comes to mind at the moment.
P12	My boss/client asked me to meet with her one-on-one in a leadership offsite. She asked me, as a central member of the office, what feedback I could give her, either my own, or what other staff members thought of her management style. She wanted to hear what others had to say directly, but also wanted to know what, if anything, they were holding back. It meant a lot to know she cared that much to seek out how to improve herself so that others might be more comfortable and have a better work experience. She also thanks me independently when she can. She is very busy and sometimes thanks only comes when you're the last one in the office on a Friday night taking care of something the boss needs and no one else picked up the task.
P13	The woman who is above my manager has always been straight forward with me. If she has a problem with something that I'm doing, or has a complaint, she contacts me directly and is firm, but still personable enough that I was comfortable in the situation. I can come to her with whatever problems I have and I know she'll approach it objectively and resolve the problem quickly and efficiently.
P14	My best interaction was when I notified the project executive that I was leaving the company to pursue a different career path. Instead of being upset with the decision, he respectfully understood my desire to explore other options. He also made it a point to say that if it did not work out for any reason at any time, that there would always be a position for me if I decided to come back. He closed by wishing me the best and thanking me for my hard work on the project.

P15	Recently I lead a training with a peer of mine. I was sort of taking over her role this year, and she wanted me to direct the training. We worked together to plan the order of activities and she had a number of great ideas that would engage the audience rather than simply present them with information. During the training she also stepped in a few times to help me answer more difficult questions.
P16	No example.
P17	This questionnaire has caused me to reexamine the people in my life that I consider leaders. Unfortunately, nothing comes to mind.

P#: Participant number

## Appendix R

### Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 9

9. If you have an example, please describe your worst interaction with someone you regard as a leader.

P1	I had a program manager who in a meeting once called all of us software engineers “code pigs.” He wasn’t very well respected after that.
P2	My worst interaction with a “leader” is when he constantly talks about co-workers and places blame on everyone else but himself. A “gossip” isn’t a true leader.
P3	On a weekly basis I participate in a staff meeting that is scheduled for one hour. Without fail, this meeting runs 30-40 minutes over. I have a job that does not ever stop and any time I am not at my desk working, is time that I have to spend catching up on things that have piled up. The sole reason for the meetings taking longer than necessary is that my boss cannot facilitate a work meeting properly. She goes off on tangents, she involves all of the staff in things that we do not need to be involved in, there are opinions and ideas shared on things that only a few people are involved in and instead of sticking to the topics relevant to the majority of the staff, employees are indulged in conversations that are not necessary at that time. I understand that fleshing out topics can often lead to solutions, but these meetings are solely informational and not a time for brainstorm, etc.
P4	I can’t really think of one.
P5	n/a
P6	My boss gave me an assignment and I completed it and emailed it back to him. After two hours had gone by and he didn’t even look at the assignment, I finally approached him about it. He wasn’t happy with what he saw and went on to insult me and my work. He accused me of putting no thought into my work and spoke to me very disrespectfully.
P7	I can’t think of an example that would have occurred after my undergrad, but when I was an undergrad working at [excerpted for IRB purposes], I got sick and was told I still had to come into work. I found out from my boyfriend that he had strep throat and I told my supervisor I shouldn’t be working around food if I have strep throat, so I said I was going to go home. He threatened to fire me if I left, but I left anyway.

P8	A recent boss accepted end of fiscal year common bonus funds for herself instead of distributing throughout the staff. Even though the money was a direct result of positive and proactive actions taken by all who worked there.
P9	I had a boss who was never at work, but when she was she only tasked me with projects that were mundane, pointless, and should not have been part of my job (such as dropping off her mortgage payment, or scheduling an appointment with someone to fix a window at her house). Her door was never open, and ignored any suggestions that I made and did things her own way with little regard to her staff who was there to support her. She made it very clear that her employees were workhorses with little intellectual value.
P10	No response.
P11	No response for this question comes to mind at the moment.
P12	My company supervisor talks about all the staff and gossips in our leadership meetings. She manages human capital very poorly and does not filter what she says.
P13	I gave a patient chocolate once, which we're not supposed to do because of possible allergies. Instead of telling me individually, since I was the only person who did it, she emailed all the employees telling us not to give chocolate/food to the patients. If there is a problem with something that an individual did, confront the individual. Don't make it seem like a general issue. Especially if everyone knows your only talking about one person.
P14	My worst interaction was when I notified the vice president that I was leaving the company to pursue a different career path. Not like the above example, the VP gave me the feeling of indifference to my decision. He then proceeded to go over the negatives (in his opinion) of the new location of my job. After 2 summer internships and 1 full-year of work, I was expecting somewhat more of a send off. I spoke with another employee who had left the company earlier and he made the statement that this particular leader made you clearly feel that "no matter how much you've done for us – you're easily replaceable".
P15	No response.
P16	Any situation at [excerpted for IRB purposes]...(seriously).
P17	Nothing comes to mind.

P#: Participant number

Appendix S

Focus Group Data – Focus Group Question 5

5. What do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?

G1	<p>M: What do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?</p> <p>P20: I want something that I am going to like and I want to be able to learn from it that I can either move up at that place or move up somewhere else.</p> <p>P18: I would like to be able to help people on some level without that sounding cheesy.</p> <p>[Laughter]</p> <p>P18: ?? It would be nice. Particularly for somebody that you know, you've got five graduate students here that, you spend that long in college. I would like to have some kind of impact you know.</p> <p>P21: Yeah, a sense of fulfillment.</p> <p>P18: But if I quit the next day I don't want everyone to forget I was ever there and that kind of thing. Like I'm not saying I want to wake up every morning wanting to be Mother Theresa but every once in a while it would be nice.</p> <p>P20: I also think that I don't necessarily want to have like millions of dollars but I would like to be able to support a family.</p> <p>P18: There is an expectation of salary based on the degree.</p> <p>P19: Well any job you want it to fulfill basic needs. ?? Yeah, be able to pay for all of it clothes ??</p> <p>P20: Well I want to be able to have good work and life balance so mean I don't necessarily need like tons of money but I want to be able to like support my family.</p> <p>P18: Also, too maybe like</p> <p>P19: Live life and not just finance it.</p> <p>P20: Yeah.</p> <p>P21: Yes.</p> <p>P18: I think you want, all of us would expect to have this job that is sort of dignified up to the amount of preparation you put in like</p> <p>P21: Yes.</p> <p>P18: I mean I don't want to insult people but if you have like a GED you pretty much have to get like whatever job they are going to give you, you know like I think all of us would like to have a job that's somewhat valued in society or somewhat sort of...</p> <p>P19: Some level of status.</p> <p>P18: Yeah, you know, I mean I get your answer. Not to stroke your ego all the time. But feel like your job is worthy of your talents and your training or whatever.</p> <p>P21: Yeah, and along the same lines being able to use some of the skills you learned in school.</p>
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	<p>P18: Now you are just talking crazy.</p> <p>P21: I mean I'm just saying if we are talking ideally here I would like to ??</p> <p>P20: Well I feel like other people would value the fact that you went through all that schooling.</p>
G2	<p>M: And the last question, what do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?</p> <p>P22: Happiness.</p> <p>P23: Personal satisfaction... through monetary compensation.</p> <p>[Laughter]</p> <p>P22: Yeah, one or the other.</p> <p>P25: I want to ?? out of my job.</p> <p>P22: I want to be able to feel like I contributed something. This is my own personal thing, but I want to feel like contributed something like if I were not on this earth that wouldn't have been accomplished otherwise. That's kind of what I look for in my job. It's kind of hard to do.</p> <p>P23: I think it goes back to the well paid and appreciated thing.</p> <p>P25: I think at the end of the day when you retire when you are 60-years-old, you know you have grandchildren or children whatever you have like if you were able to always take care of your family, and that ties into your pay, like you were always able to take care of your family, you know, nobody ever had any needs, and you made even a small difference, something you could be proud of doing and you accomplished something then that would be fine. I don't have to change the world. Not like cure cancer but if like at the end of the day I can point to something and be like I help build that or I helped come up with this idea or anything...</p> <p>P22: Like it would have just been a little bit different had I not been around.</p> <p>P25: Yeah, something small.</p> <p>P23: Someone noticed.</p> <p>P22: And I think it ties into like I don't want to feel like I did anything ethically inappropriate. ?? What was the question?</p> <p>P23: ?? underpaid drug smuggler. Shoot a little higher.</p> <p>[Laughter]</p> <p>P23: Not serve criminal time.</p> <p>P22: A well paid drug smuggler is another story.</p> <p>P24: Well, I think it is important for it to be challenging. I mean I have heard that from a lot of people. I mean I have never really had a real job so that's why I don't really know. But a lot of my friends who have graduated this past year, like a lot of them are really dissatisfied with their jobs because they are not really challenging so it's important.</p>
G3	<p>M: And the last question, what do you hope to get out of your job regardless of job description?</p> <p>P28: I think you should be able to walk away at the end of the day feeling that you contributed to your company and also gain a little bit of personal development and</p>

experience.

P29: I think that a lot of times you think of a job as like being really kind of a negative thing, like, oh gosh, I have to go work today but it would be really cool if you could just leave work and be happy, like, oh yeah, that was a good day. You know, like, the majority of days. I am scared to go to work and just be miserable. I want it to be good, like, yeah that was awesome.

P27: Yeah, I agree like feeling like the work was worthwhile and gaining experience to get a better job or just advance in the company or whatever if may be.

P26: And to add to that, after spending so many hours at work, I'd like to walk away with good relationships and some kind of satisfaction on that end too.

G#: Group number; P#: Participant number; M: Moderator

Appendix T

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 10

10. If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked?

P1	No response.
P2	My best example of effective decision making was when my supervisor made a pro and con list to decide the best way forward in a tough situation.
P3	Recently my specific office in the organization has acquired a new boss. As a result my direct supervisor had many projects taken off her plate. In no way was this a demotion for her or to say that she is not capable of completing the work her staff has, but purely was a decision made because it had been made clear that she while all the projects were getting worked on, none were getting completed to the best of anyone's ability. It was a simple case of being able to do everything half-assed or fewer things extremely effectively. The decision to cut her tasks down allowed her to be able to concentrate on fewer things and get them done well which helps everyone in the long run.
P4	When you are a pool contractor you have to follow the rules of the county and general safety guidelines, but you also have to cater to the patrons wants. Well one pool was very lax when it can to gates being unlocked by members however these members would fail to lock them back. We as the company were responsible if anyone had come in with or without our knowledge and got hurt. We had to work with the patrons to limit the number of people with keys and ensure that when we left the pool was lock and that we were not responsible if someone unlocked the gate after hours. It was a compromise.
P5	As an intern at GMMB I had to put together a presentation on successful marketing campaigns and offer new ideas on how they could improve their current one. After the presentation I was told how good my ideas were and how they were going to implement them.
P6	It came time for all of us to get raises at the end of last year, but the budget was a problem. The company wanted to reward the staff, but not affect the budget. They finally decided to give us two-weeks paid vacation. We all got time off that we wouldn't have any other way, and the company didn't have to spend too much money.

P7	My supervisor put me in charge of making sure the lab was back in order after there was a fire in late July 2008 that burned one of our main testing rooms. It was huge job and I had never been put in such a leadership role before, but it taught me how to delegate tasks to others in the lab so the lab would be back in shape faster.
P8	My boss requested feedback for future proposed changes from staff prior to those changes being implemented.
P9	The process that has been most effective has been when a group of people sits down to make a collective decision. With a lot of interdepartmental interaction many decisions affect how others do their job, so bringing two or three people together for an hour to discover the correct decision is often the most effective way for us to make decisions, it prevents a lot of back and forth down the road.
P10	When planning for and responding to Government proposals, timelines, due dates and resources are constantly in flux. My manager and I have a flexible relationship in regard to proposals and we have always met our deadlines. There have been a handful of proposals which have come down to the last minute and the leaders in my organization have always found ways to submit a competitive bid for our company, regardless of the circumstances.
P11	In these current economic times my company as any other is trying to cut back wherever possible. My manager and his business analyst team were able to effectively save money by allowing my team to perform tasks that would otherwise be costly for a vendor to perform.
P12	A federal government acquisition office. Decisions are made among groups of many high level SMEs (subject matter experts). There is a high level of insight and communication to help guide decision makers towards the best possible outcome.
P13	Giving the leftover money from a low key Christmas party to an employee who's been out of work due to cancer treatments. If you do it for one, you have to do it, or something similar to someone else if they get sick.
P14	Recently we assessed another engineering firm's project because the actual construction did not perform as designed and was a major failure. During the assessment of the reports, there were several points of interest I found in comparing with the permit documents. I brought these to the attention of the principal engineer. It was effectively communicated because I had prepared several summary documents (bulleted-lists accompanied with graphs or figures) highlighting these items and preemptively answering any of the principal engineer's questions. These became key criticisms with the design and were the main arguments discussed during Town Council meetings.

P15	For a recent training, the staff sought out suggestions from people that had already received the training and actually followed them. More specifically, we who had received the training felt like some of the trainers were not well-qualified in the areas they were supposed to train us in. This year, the trainers were more-experienced and were sought out for their specific areas of expertise.
P16	At [excerpted for IRB purposes], they made the decision to hire me as their web designer and I was able to give the site a much needed facelift and, along with my supervisor, a new revenue stream that had been poorly tapped in the past.
P17	I have not really worked any positions that have put me in a position to be making decisions. Problem-solving often incorporates small-scale decisions, but nothing comes to mind. These decisions are primarily approach method/priority decisions.

P#: Participant number

Appendix U

Email Interview Data – Email Interview Question 11

11. If you have one, please describe an example of effective decision-making in an organization where you have worked?

P1	A team is working on a proposal for a new contract. Every day they change their minds on how they want to implement it. They decided they wanted to use our software, so we worked really hard and got it to them in a couple of days. They never used it and aren't sure if they will yet because they keep changing their minds.
P2	Poor decision making occurs daily in my place of work b/c there all decision must travel through a "chain of command" which is long, cumbersome and takes a great deal of time to travel from one to another. If leaders trusted those directly under them more frequently – decisions would be made quicker.
P3	An extremely simple example. There are three divisions in my office. There are about 30 cubicles in my office space. I sit next to one person in my division and the rest are spread throughout the office. This is the same for all three of the divisions. It was a poor decision not to have people in the same division sit next to each other. On the other hand, maybe it was a good decision if the idea was to make sure we get our exercise!
P4	No response.
P5	When I was younger I didn't always work as hard as I should, but that's knowledge that comes with getting older I guess.
P6	None that I can really think of at the moment.
P7	Unfortunately, my supervisor is somewhat of a hoarder and refuses to throw away anything, so we accumulate so much stuff in the lab that we can barely find room for all of it, let alone room for new things we need. His decision to keep everything makes it harder for people in the lab to find the things we need sometimes.
P8	Purchasing unnecessary equipment when other purchases were needed more. There was no consultation with those who use this equipment daily as to what they needed to do their job more effectively, she just made assumptions.

P9	When someone makes a decision independently and does their own thing without consulting anyone else. While more convenient for that person, it can end up creating a lot of work for other people down the road if they decide there is a better way of doing things.
P10	One of the toughest decisions to make seems to be with personal conflicts in the workplace. On a few occasions I have been a party to these conflicts of personalities between coworkers and when the issue goes higher to the supervisory level and HR the issue seems to die. There usually is no resolution other than one party gets fed up with the situation and decides to leave the group they work in or the organization altogether. This is poor decision-making in my opinion because there is no decision-making. Leadership turns a blind eye to the situation and hopes that the issue goes away.
P11	I believe that in my current position I have seen poor decision making in the area of allowing Paid Annual Leave (PAL). Strong consideration should be taken about the current job environment when allowing time off on short notice. I am referring to a situation where the work load for our team was known to be higher for a given week and personal leave was granted in a non-emergency situation.
P12	Poor Management by CEO and Chief Marketing office - Sales were down in my old office – a private consulting and business support firm. As a result they took an already rigorous marketing structure and regimented it by the minute. We all received strict schedules that were not to be strayed from, indicating that we were to work mandatory overtime with no breaks. Turnover was extremely high already and the term “burn-out” became just a flicker on the surface of this inferno. I quickly left and sales continue to decline. Two years after I left they are now having to lay off many staff members because they attacked too aggressively and did not have the business research and quality resources to back up growing sales/membership.
P13	Giving the leftover money from a low key Christmas party to an employee who’s been out of work due to cancer treatments.
P14	The principal engineer saved an entire report preparation until the day before it was due. We finished the majority of the report, but had to transmit several appendix documents the following day. After which, the client noticed a few errors in the document which we had to issue in a revised report. It was extremely embarrassing as the errors were minor issues relating to basic grammar or arithmetic. An engineering firm in Demark reviewed it, and with the higher international standard, it really felt like a blow to our professionalism. There are people who believe they can “work best under pressure”, but that is an invented statement used by procrastinators to conceal that very trait. Even if someone can churn out documents in a matter of hours, that does not translate to the quality of the actual

	document.
P15	My job is international and as such, there are a lot of guidelines provided by the higher-ups that we must follow. Recently, a new boss changed a lot of the guidelines to fix what she saw as problems, before really getting to know her new job situation. As such, a lot of my co-workers were very displeased with the new rules and feel like we are being treated like children—having to follow rules that we don't feel make sense for us in our particular situations. As a result, a lot of my co-workers choose to side-step or knowingly break the rules because they feel they are unfair.
P16	[Excerpted for IRB purposes] decision to start an Interactive Media department with people who had little experience with interactive media.
P17	An example of a poor decision I had early in my career was due to overconfidence. I felt that I knew the process inside and out and did not need to double-check my accuracy or create a checklist for quality control. Due to this arrogance, I made a costly mistake that inadvertently cost me my job.

P#: Participant number

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