I Think,
You Think,
We All Think,
Differently

Leadership Skills for Millennials & Gen Z
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Foreword

Ross Kirwin, MBA
VP & Investment Professional

I was on the front end of the millennial generation entering the workforce, and many managers at that time didn't exactly know "what" we were all about. This book gives so much attention to learning about my generation. It's great to see how much research went into this book.

As opposed to being told, "get a job," the section that encourages folks to ask themselves questions to determine what they want to do, was enlightening. How to choose a fulfilling career is not taught or discussed enough. My dad used to joke that whatever industry you started in would most likely be the industry you will be in for your entire career, so pick wisely. However, I've heard other folks say, "get a job to get experience." Asking these questions throughout your career and life, will be helpful. Doing some soul-searching along the way will help keep you from finding yourself stuck in a job or industry you don't like. Asking these questions after significant life events (getting married, having children) could help identify needed changes.

Something else important I learned from the book, is the reasoning behind how older generations have developed their way of thinking. Having a better understanding could have helped me when I asked for my first raise (just because I was there for a year, I thought I "deserved" it). My manager at that time acknowledged my hard work, and that they were pleased with me. He then asked me if I would like him

to ask *his* boss if he should give me a raise, even though the company was not doing well at that time. He got his point across without beating me up. I think back and realize he didn't say what he probably wanted to say. If he did, I would have been depressed and had less productivity. The discussion on how and when Millennials should approach conversations with their superiors about advancement and compensation was helpful.

I am very excited to be a part of a generation that values a balanced work/life balance! The workplace, unfortunately, sometimes looks down on that phrase. The book discusses how Millennials can approach this topic in interviews and gives some options on how to use words that other generations will respond to positively. I feel like the minute a Traditionalist or Boomer hears the phrase "work-life balance," they prejudge what is about to be said or discussed, or possibly the person. What Millennials are saying is, "we as Millennials have experienced first-hand, as children and young adults, what happens when work becomes more of a focus than having a healthy personal life."

Lastly, the info to help Millennials who are currently in organizations that are managed in an authoritarian manner by a Boomer or Traditionalist was helpful. Lots of people will benefit from the advice on what to do if their firm continues to be successful with this approach, thereby never seeing a need to change. Do you get out sooner rather than later? If your firm mainly motivates by money, how do leaders learn there are other ways to reward and get intended behavior, beyond money?

Ross

Jenna Lewis de Ruibal
Marketing Project Manager

I've always been fascinated by the people others seem to want to follow. I wondered what their secret was until I eventually dismissed my curiosity and decided the big man upstairs must have just molded them to be natural-born leaders. I had this one particular boss who was such a spectacular leader. Her followers were always motivated to go above and beyond for her, many times without them even realizing it! In the section where Greg teaches about servant-based leadership, I immediately tuned in to some of the primary reasons my former boss had been so successful — she had been implementing these very principles herself! That gave me a lot of hope that leadership CAN be learned. From reading this book, I learned there is something to the adage "leaders aren't born, they're made."

I also found the story illustrations that shed light on our differing generational paradigms and their impact in the workplace to be particularly insightful. As a Millennial who has reported to both Gen X and Boomer bosses, I only wish I had had this book in my hands at those times. The concepts and truths in this book will most assuredly help you communicate across the generational divide, which can only prove useful when having those conversations about career advancement, raises, and other opportunities. Communication and knowing your audience are vital in becoming an effective leader, and this book empowers you to do just that.

Jenna

Brent Sucher, CMP
Marketing Director

All of this is great. Seriously, I learned a lot from the book. From my perspective, one of the most significant issues the book addressed was, "Why any Millennial or Gen Z might even care about leadership in the first place?!" Be it what others think about it, or the way they currently do things.

"Why should I care? And if I do, what now?" The answer is simple; If you understand and apply the book's content in your communications with others, you will unlock the door to promotions, better income, and happiness in your field while gaining the respect of other generations. The book is bigger than any one of us. It helps people see not just generational differences, but also cultural differences, something that Millennials and Gen Z care about profoundly: sensitivity to identity! Different generations, by default, don't engage on a personal level. Understanding people's personalities and management styles is like acquiring the ability to speak another language. The book's real-life examples and contexts are priceless, "context is power."

One of my most eye-opening takeaways from this book was seeing the side-by-side comparisons of how each generation might handle the same problem or situation, and then discuss how each other generation should manage them. If we as a generation are going to strive to be catalysts of change, to create work environments that value people, which are fulfilling, it's our responsibility to HELP management to identify the value and return we bring to the table. Building multi-generational teams that want to help

one another succeed produces a positive winning environment. There are plenty of stats to back that up, and this book is full of practical "how to's."

The wording is conversational, "big picture," and purpose-driven. The book takes the time to paint a picture for Millennials and Gen Z about how old work environments used to be, and it gives the context of each generation's tendencies and their "why." It uses short comparisons of crucial differences that provide meaning to readers who are new to leadership and who might not even know that generations think differently. The section on professional advancement and the human resources lingo used when hiring leaders and managers is a HUGE value. The advice will help you earn respect in the interview process and with seasoned peers. This book matters. It matters to help win the respect of people from other generations, and prove we don't suck, because our generation is awesome and great!

Brent

Preface

I love working with Millennials and Gen Z. Maybe that's because my children are a part of the Millennial and Gen Z generations. I love them deeply and don't want them to have to enter a workforce led by Gen Xers and Baby Boomers who don't get the flow of our modern society. You may be asking yourself, "Why should you care about what others think, and why should others care about the way you do things?" Millennials and Gen Z want to be "real."

The struggle is real; the first step in making a positive difference in this world, and your life, is to become a leader. All leaders must have followers for nothing great happens without a team. Becoming a great leader that can grow an organization or lead a movement requires a leader that can develop and lead other leaders. "Great" doesn't come just because a person has years of experience. It takes training and applying the art and science of leadership to experience. Open your mind to knowledge and understand that you don't know what you don't know.

Introduction

Welcome!

Thanks for joining with me in learning the art and science of effective leadership. Whether you are a Millennial, Gen Z, Gen X, Baby Boomer, or Traditionalist, you're reading this because of a desire to lead well. Organizations need competent positive leaders! America and the world need you!

Generation Age Group Definitions

There has been much debate on when each generation's birth years begin and end. Pew research is one of the most trusted research sites, so I am using their definitions.

- Traditionalist: Born 1928-1945.
- Baby Boomers: Born 1946-1964.
- Gen X: Born 1965 – 1980.
- Millennials: Born 1981-1996.
- Gen Z: Born 1997 – 2012.[1]

A Note to Gen Z and Millennials

If you're a Millennial or in Gen Z, this book shows you how to win the confidence of Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. You will learn how to prove you don't suck and how to succeed as a leader in a workplace dominated by Gen X and Baby Boomers.

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[1] (Dimock, 2019)

A Note to Gen X and Baby Boomers

If you're a Gen Xer, this book will help you flourish in a multi-generational workforce and prepare to take the reins as Boomers begin retiring in large numbers. If you're a Boomer, this book provides useful advice on how to mitigate the risk of business interruptions due to the retirement tsunami that is coming, as well as recoup some of the over $550 billion disengaged employees are estimated to cost American corporations.[2]

While this book intends to transfer knowledge to help you become a better leader, its wording has a less formal feel. It's more of a conversation, a book of real-life stories from various business people and places, and it's big-picture and purpose-driven. As you read each story, think about each generation's life experiences, where they are coming from, and why?

A key to unlocking relationships is understanding the other person's "why." Why do they think, act, and react the way they do? When you know, you'll be better positioned to motivate others to follow you no matter what their age.

My greatest wish for the Millennial and Gen Z generations is that they learn how to lead our society and economy to new heights, without all the hang-ups of past generational transitions. Remember, every generation "sucked" to the ones that came before them. As long as we're all in the same boat, let's grow together and improve our workplaces and lives.

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[2] (Gallup, 2017)

What is Etymology and Why Should I Care?

In the 1970s, when I was in elementary school, we had a teacher who would punish us for using the phrase 'aw shucks.' He told us it was a curse word. WTH, a curse word? Sure enough, at one time, it meant 'oh sh⋆t' and was considered profanity! Now it is a term that expresses shy embarrassment. [3] The Stack Exchange is a great place to read about a word's past, mainstream, and modern meaning or etymology. Etymology is the study of word origins. As society changes, the essence of words can change or take on more than one meaning. Their use and acceptance may diversify as well.[4] Not only can word meanings change, but each generation adds new words. For example, if you search for terms such as; adulting, woke, salty, kiki, no cap, etc., you can find lots of articles on Millennial and Gen Z lingo.[5] Communication is a two-sided process; make sure to participate effectively.[6] **Ask yourself, "do I practice active listening when talking with members of different generations?"**

In the back of our minds, we know that words and word meanings change over time. Traditionalists, Boomers, and Gen Xers consider the words you got in trouble for saying when you were young. How many of those words, like 'aw-shucks' mean something different now? Never has the essence or meaning behind words changed so quickly as it does today. The digital and Internet age has unleashed society's ability to form new lingo, propagate slang, and modify word meaning. Try reading a Gen Z's text string,

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[3] (Stack Exchange, n.d.)
[4] (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2019)
[5] (Borge, 2019)
[6] (Pearce, 2007)

good luck if you are over 40! On the flip side, some changes add richness to our life and business experiences. **Either way, we must all realize that what we hear may not be what another person is saying.** If you don't understand something, don't judge, ask for clarification, and practice active listening.

Chapter 1: Getting Your "Why" On

A Dead Leader Walking

In 2017, while in the Caribbean, I met a young American leader who was 28 years old. He had cultivated a following of 15,000 Millennials and paid for his trip by leasing his list of followers to marketing departments. His primary clients were liquor distributors who paid him $5000 every few months to throw flash parties and another $5000-$15,000 to show them how to market their products to Millennials better.

He did a magnificent job of promoting himself through social media, and his parties were epic. The liquor distributors rented the venues, hired bands, set up tasting tables and beer stands, food trucks, etc. His average gathering drew 2000-3000 people. As we talked, I shared some of my corporate leadership experiences, and he asked me some questions. He wanted my opinion on why he hadn't been able to keep a corporate job or obtain promotions. "Why do I keep getting fired," he asked. **"Why don't leaders at work listen to me, I get so frustrated with them, I end up just quitting. Now no one trusts me enough to hire me into a position with responsibility."**

I asked him to explain each situation, and the bottom line was he had no idea how corporations promote people, how HR operates, and that there are measures of employee value. Nor did he respect or relate to other generations. This talented young man thought that he was already a leader because he was able to gather a following on social media. He was right to a degree; he had followers, but for how long?

He understood how to lead a group of young, energetic, party-going peers, and he was great at it, but he had no idea how to be a leader of leaders, produce leaders, or be a leader in any other context. Because he refused to embrace the fact that 50% of leadership is a natural ability, and 50% is a learned science, he never progressed past his current state. He chose not to learn how to expand his reach or sustain his success. **He became a dead leader walking.**

Leadership and Organizational Growth

Here was a talented, smart young person, who could talk to his peers, but had no idea how to interact with or lead his parents' or grandparents' generations. He was bitter because life was more complicated than what his mother had taught him. His mom was always saying, "do the right thing, get good grades, pay attention in school, and you'll get a good job and life will be good." **However, in today's competitive world and economy, doing the basics right doesn't guarantee life will work out the right way.** You must gain specific knowledge and skills to succeed.

He didn't know or understand the five pillars of organization leadership for growth or what it takes to be successful at each one:

- Challenging the status quo with positive innovation.
- Inspiring a vision and set of goals that result in mutual commitment from all employees.
- Building teams that are empowered and are interdependent upon one another to succeed.
- Modeling the behaviors you espouse to others.

- Encouraging the hearts of employees so that they work through difficult times, striving to achieve the mutual vision and goals set before them.[7]

All five pillars of organization leadership for growth require an understanding of how and why each generation thinks the way they do. Gaining an understanding of the assumptions, beliefs, and norms of those you are trying to lead is critical in motivating today's multi-generational, multi-cultural workforce.

How things work out is up to you. There is no magic wand; it takes smarts, hard work, time, education, and wisdom. The dead leader walking's career was severely limited because he didn't know what he didn't know. Don't make the same mistake; choose to learn to lead.

Millennials Don't Suck; They're Awesome

It seems that all I hear from my Gen X and Baby Boomer friends is how Millennials suck. They suck in their work ethic, feel entitled, their attitudes suck, and they don't respect us. "They suck, they suck, they suck." Do you hear the same?

There is a misconception that Millennials are oversensitive, lazy, and uncommitted. Instead, data shows they are passionate, hard workers, and active in social causes. Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, and Brown's study set out to separate the myths from reality and how the generational differences affect the workplace. Millennials make learning a priority and find happiness in their families.[8] While Millennials may

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[7] (Johnson & Johnson, 2013)

[8] (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007)

not be as independent as Gen Xers, they are full of confidence and sensitivity.[9]   Another study done by social scientists, Leuenberger and Klüver, also found that the younger generations desire more frequent feedback than what is provided in annual evaluations.[10]   They want feedback so they can improve their performance. In our diverse workforce, values will differ among the generations based on "beliefs, values, goals, work attitudes, world views, and attitudes toward leadership," which develop throughout our lifetimes.[11]   These values shape our attitudes and willingness to adapt to change.

Emerging leaders, take note! If you, as an emerging leader, bring positive and definite answers to workplace challenges, you will have the chance to establish yourself as a prospective leader and begin building positive relationships with those who can promote you.

Every Generation's Characteristics are Different

Every generation has its own set of characteristics. Gen Z thinks one way, younger Millennials another, older Millennials still another, Gen Xers another, and Baby Boomers, yes…still another. It seems a million books are advising Gen Xers and Baby Boomers on how to lead Millennials, but few, if any, focus on helping Millennials and Gen Z understand how to become leaders.

The analog world in which Boomers and Traditionalists learned to lead, no longer exists. It's time for the Millennial generation to step into leadership roles and lead our

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[9] (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011)

[10] (Green & Roberts, 2012)

[11] (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, & Brown, 2007)

Why Keep Reading this Book?

If you're a Millennial or in Gen Z, and you want to lead, especially if you're going to lead Gen X and Boomers, you're going to have to embrace the struggle and learn how to communicate with the older generations. Understanding why they learned to lead in specific ways and how they view leadership roles is critical. It's time to start building trusted relationships with other generations.

If you're a Gen Xer or Boomer, and you want to raise the next generation of leaders and grow your business, "deal with it," the world has changed. Our economy is no longer based on manufacturing. Leadership styles, like command and control, are no longer respected or effective. Machiavellian principled leadership styles are offensive to today's workers, and qualified talent will not stay if led that way. We must learn how to communicate, have relationships, and build strong trust bonds with our children's generation. It's our responsibility to lead by example and bring positive change, bettering everyone's work-life balance while maintaining workplace effectiveness.

Chapter 2: Leaders Are Dropping Like Flies

A Tsunami is Forming

On August 13, 1868, in New Zealand, business leaders and workers were going about their daily routines, mothers were preparing their children for school, and planning the day's activities and chores. No one expected that shortly their lives and the lives of their countrymen would be changed forever. Thousands of miles away, one of the most massive earthquakes in modern history struck South America. It was approximately 9.0 on the Richter scale. The quake's shock wave started a wave in the Pacific Ocean. As it traveled across the ocean, the swell grew larger and larger, forming a massive tsunami. Hours later, without warning, 25,000 souls passed into the afterlife, hundreds of businesses were devastated, and damages totaled $300 million.[15]

When unprepared, tsunamis can be a devastating event. This same type of event repeated itself over and over until modern-age communication and meteorological technology began to predict and warn people of these events. Even so, on March 11, 2011. Thirty-three-foot waves traveling 500 miles per hour struck a nuclear power plant in Japan, creating one of the most significant nuclear disasters of our lifetime. At that time, the World Bank estimated that it would take five years to recover from the $235 billion in financial devastation and the 452,000 displaced people resulting from the tsunami.[16] The results were stress on the global supply chain for more than two years.

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[15] (eCoast, 2018)
[16] (Phillips, 2011)

The generational shift in the workforce is swelling. **The U.S. Department of Labor predicts a significant shift in the makeup of the workforce.**[17]   The resulting tsunami of change will open leadership doors for Millennial and Gen Z employees to advance into leadership faster than earlier generations. The question is, will they (you) be ready to fill the tens of thousands of vacant leadership roles that are coming? If we, as current leaders, do not help support this transition, what will happen? What will be the cost?

Current leaders, we must prepare and grow emergent leaders by learning to communicate with and value each other and our differences. Emerging leaders need to engage in leadership training. If we do our parts, we'll help ensure smooth leadership transitions and avoid business disruptions due to lackluster leadership benches.

We Need a New Wave of Leaders

As our nation's workforce ages at an alarming rate, the warning signals are telling us to prepare, but will we do so? If we are to weather the coming generational shift and retirement storm, we must begin to create new leaders from the younger generations, pass on our leadership wisdom, and prepare the way for them. To accomplish this task, corporate leaders will need to understand and sponsor:

- Millennial and Gen Z team work ethics.
- Mentor and reverse mentor emerging leaders.
- Re-invigorate disengaged employees.
- Attract and retain top talent.

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[17] (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019)

- How to modernize and expand communication channels.
- Win the hearts of emerging leaders through sustainable leadership.
- Incorporate transformational and servant-based leadership ideals.
- Identify potential leaders.
- Manage a kaleidoscope of assumptions, beliefs, and norms.
- Build trust and relationships with multiple generations.
- Re-evaluate their team's generational diversity.

The U.S. Department of Labor reports that younger generations are entering the workforce later, and portions of the older generations are working longer. Those who are working later in life are filling jobs normally filled by 16 to 24-year-old workers. The younger generations are taking longer to graduate from college and therefore enter the workforce later. **Teams are becoming more diverse in their generational makeup.** Leaders will have to know how to relate, motivate, and lead people from all generations. The Department of Labor predicts this trend to continue until 2028.[18]

We must take this opportunity to ready ourselves and our businesses to avoid the devastating effects of having a shallow pool of leaders. No one should expect new and emerging leaders to navigate the coming turbulent waters unless we train and support them.

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[18] (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019)

Catch the Vibe, Ride the Wave

In 2001, I was living in Atlanta, but working for our Scottsdale, AZ, division. Every other week I flew into Scottsdale and then back home to manage the Atlanta facility. For the past year, there had been changes happening in the human resources and marketing divisions, and the company hired a new senior vice president of marketing (SVP). The first project she gave our team was to start documenting our knowledge. Writing down our learned knowledge threw up red flags for me. Once we wrote down our intellectual property (IP), stored it on our hard drives, and uploaded it into the shared enterprise content management (ECM) system, the vast majority of us would no longer be needed. (BTW - at the time, the storage technology was cutting edge, using "the cloud," impressive, huh?!). I tried to warn my colleagues that a reduction in force (RIF) was coming, but they laughed me off. They thought, "after all, the company still needs people, right?"

While they sat comfortably at their desks, working on the documentation project, I reached out to another company in our industry. One that we beat all the time using the marketing and sales strategies I had created. I figured they would jump at the chance to hire the person who was authoring the approach to which they were losing, and I was right. They thought I would bring a lot of value to their team and could help them turn their sales revenue around, and I did!

As we negotiated my employment package, I continued to give 110% to my current employer and finished the documentation project. A few weeks later, I flew into Scottsdale, AZ, as usual, only to walk into a building with the oddest, somber atmosphere I had ever experienced.

Chapter 3: Differences in Value Systems

The Priority Difference in Values

In one of my entrepreneurial ventures, I developed a "three-legged stool" business plan for myself and two close friends. All three of us were from different generations and had the same values. The business plan would only work if each of us executed our part as written. Each of us was an expert in our respective areas, and the venture was a smashing success at first, but as time progressed, a fracture opened and became very apparent to two of us. The third person was utterly blind to the issue. The problem was, although we valued the same things, we ranked them differently.

For the younger two of us, family, friendship, loyalty, and integrity come before money and business. The older of us valued his legacy and finances first, then family, loyalty, and integrity. In the end, when it came time for the third person to contribute to the business, he saw how critical his input was, and he refused to work unless we provided additional remuneration in advance, which was beyond our original agreement. In essence, he held us hostage. You can imagine the pain we felt! Here was someone we had known for years holding our families hostage over money!

After we parted ways, I sought advice on how to avoid this situation in the future. Another friend pointed out that the third person was a Traditionalist, based on his life experiences; his values were not in the same priority as a Gen Xer or Millennial. To the Traditionalist, he was "doing" business; to the rest of us, he was betraying our trust and hurting our families. To this day, the gentleman has no idea

how much his actions hurt us, how damaging they were to the venture, or how wrong they were to our generations.

Why did the older of us put money and business before our friendship? He was a Traditionalist. He had gone through the depression, WWII, and knew what it was like to see soup lines and be homeless. His life experiences imprinted his mind to value money and business as his top priorities. Traditionalists and Boomers have the need and importance of material goods high on their list of priorities. Why? It is a product of the society in which they grew up.

The Value of Finding Acceptance in Workgroups

It's a typical day in the office, and an 11:00 am Monday morning team meeting has just started. The department's director Sue, who is a long-term employee and Gen Xer, is facilitating the meeting. Attending are four first-level managers: Bob, a Boomer; Bill, a Gen Xer; Arden, a Millennial who just got promoted into management; and Amber, a Millennial who is two years into her management position; and their teams. Sue wants ideas for new strategies on how to best approach several interoffice operational issues. During the meeting, Arden and his team dominate the conversations. The meeting ends at noon, and Bob and Bill, grab lunch in the building's cafeteria, they buy today's special and sit down. Bob starts the conversation…

"Bill, what was that?! These damn Millennials are so arrogant it's unbelievable, can you believe that Arden just let his team run off at the mouth. Does he think he can come in here and take over, tell us what to do like we've been idiots all these years?" Bill responds, "Bob, I hear you. He's the FNG and came in spouting out ideas like he's a tenured member of the team! Who does he think he is? His momma

probably pampered and rescued him from failing too. They think they're entitled to everything. What kind of name is Arden anyway?!" Bob says, "Classic CLM! He's gotta learn around here; it's ETR baby, ETR!"

Note to Millennials and Gen Z: ETR (Earn the right), FNG (F'n New Guy/Girl), and CLM (Career Limiting Move).

At the same time, Arden and Amber walk a half block down from the office to a great coffee and tea café' where they have shared workspaces. Arden is having a cup of kava and Amber, a shaken black tea, iced with three pumps. Arden starts the conversation…

"I felt Bob personally attacked me in our meeting today. My team and I tried our best to offer up ideas, and all he did was make us feel like our ideas sucked. I'm not sure if I want to continue being a manager here. Maybe I should go where I'm appreciated." Amber responds, "I hear you, Arden, I felt the same way when I got promoted. Every time I tried to give input, Sue always cut me off, like I was some plebe. I felt like the woman in the commercial who's presenting to a workgroup of monkeys." Arden, "I bet they couldn't even download the presentation to their iPhones…idiots. I can't wait until they retire; of course, I'll probably be long gone by then." Amber laughs and then retorts, "Actually Sue and I talked, I told her how I felt, and she was shocked. She didn't mean to make me feel rejected or unappreciated. I think we get each other now."

A Note to Xers, Boomers and Traditionalists: Kava (nature's Xanax) is a drink that looks muddy and relaxes you without dulling mental sharpness. A shared workspace is a place from

which people can work outside the office and can help release innovative, creative flow.

One of the areas affecting team building is when and how new team members find acceptance and a voice within workgroups; this is called team membership negotiation. No matter the generation, this process takes place over time. However, Millennials, in general, have grown up with a sense of self-worth and acceptance due to hovering or helicoptering parenting techniques, which focus on self-esteem, coaching without allowing consequences, and the belief that everyone has value. These ideas and parenting styles are different than those of older generations. Some of these aspects were good, but the application of them was not. One failure was that self-esteem is different from self-respect. Psychologists have found that it is self-respect that builds strong interpersonal skills.[31] Having been raised with an emphasis on self-esteem has caused Millennials to believe they have automatic acceptance within a group. However, their elder peers require a person to ETR. As time progresses, this assumed acceptance can cause friction with older members and stifle the acceptance process.[32]

Research shows that there are differences in perceived work ethic, as well. These differences may create additional barriers to being accepted within new workgroups. As different work norm beliefs surface, disparities in accepted practices may make older group members marginalize younger newcomers. The marginalization intensifies with lower-level communication skills, which lack understanding of each generation's preferred communication methods.

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[31] (Langer, 2016)
[32] (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010)

Gen Xers notoriously dislike group work and meetings, yet Millennials have grown up in workgroup environments and meeting in groups from grade school through university studies.

Group and team environments have a great deal of importance in acceptance in the workplace. Millennials grew up as the center of attention. Mid-career Gen Xers in middle management don't see as much need for group work; they desire to work autonomously.[33] Millennials also want to know detailed knowledge of strategic information, generally reserved for upper managers. They tend to reject the idea that information is provided on a "need to know" basis.[34] This drive to see private or privileged information can cause trust issues with older leaders.

A marked commonality is that the generations are equally concerned about success and money.[35] Regarding a positive impact on workplace performance and team building, Millennials want frequent, open, detailed, and positive support from their managers. Growing up in an environment in which parents, teachers, and coaches sent recurring, positive re-enforcement messages to help Millennials learn, these same children, now adults, expect the same in the workplace. The challenge is that most middle managers, who are typically Gen Xers, do not want to answer their frequent questions or coach them. As a result, middle managers see Millennials as needy, and without the ability to stand on their own two feet. Being aware of these differences will help you choose when to ask for assistance and do it wisely. Leaders love it when people

[33] (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010)

[34] (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010)

[35] (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010)

Chapter 4: What is Leadership

Managing is not Enough

An RVP is consulting with his regional manager (RM) and a director. The RVP has an opening on his staff and wants their advice on a couple of internal candidates. Both candidates are performing well in their positions, which, of course, is an essential requirement. They both have the industry knowledge and have proven that they can lead their teams successfully, so this is going to be a tough decision. Both candidates' skills, education, and performance are equivalent. The RVP asks, "If you had to report to one or the other, who would you choose and why?" The regional manager answered, "Candidate A, because not only does she already have good relationships with our leadership team, she has a strong voice." The director asked, "What do you mean by a strong voice?" The RM responded, "She can stand on her own two feet, doesn't allow others to bully her, when she states her opinion it's based on fact, not emotion, and it's defendable. She also doesn't provoke or point fingers at other leaders. If the group goes with her idea, that's great, and if they don't, she accepts the decision and then executes the leadership team's plan. As I said, she has a strong voice, and her 360-degree review reflects that". The director chimed in, "I get it, and you're right; she has the respect of everyone around her, and candidate B doesn't have her kind of voice. He hasn't shown the confidence to lead at this level in challenging situations without buckling under pressure." The RVP thanked them and hired Candidate A.

For years organizations have tried to answer these questions:

- What are the differences between a leader and a manager?
- Can managers be leaders?
- If so, what qualities would make them a leader? If not, why?
- What traits, characteristics, and behaviors make a good leader, and why is this so important?

Being able to identify and hire leaders can make the difference between thriving as a business, barely making a profit, or going out of business. Managers are put in place to manage a preexisting process. Managers manage a process or people to meet the status quo, industry averages, or a current target. It is their job to ensure that tasks get done. However, getting tasks done doesn't always mean a manager is doing the right things. Many managers can be completely disengaged from the workplace yet manage their team to a number or goal. However, they may have no drive to excel or find better ways of doing business. Finding ways to excel and doing business better are examples of doing the right things. Leaders work and think in ways that help prepare and position their companies for long-term growth and success. They must be innovators and forward thinkers.

What is Leadership?

First, let's define leadership. **Leadership is a process by which an individual influences a group or team to accomplish a set of goals.**[67] The person doing the influencing is, of course, the leader. However, there are two other elements to

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[67] (Hughes & Ginnett, 2015)

Chapter 8: Servant-Based Leadership

What is Servant-Based Leadership?

This past year I have talked with a couple of hundred people from all generations. When I ask Traditionalists and Baby Boomers about servant-based leadership, most of them scoff. When I ask Gen X about it, they say they've heard about it, think for the most part it has good qualities, and wish that their bosses afforded them the personal appreciation that comes along with it.

When I ask Millennials and Gen Z, the first thing they do is ask what it is. I explain it this way, it's a method of leadership, where leaders appreciate the efforts of those who work for them and see their leadership role as one that mentors and equips their followers for success. The company provides the tools, training, coaching, and creates a positive business environment resulting in employee satisfaction and gratitude. In helping their staff succeed, they ensure their success. This positive work environment enhances team cohesion and promotes genuine communication and care for one another as individuals.[109] Millennials and Gen Z's overwhelming response was, "What other kinds of leadership are there?!"

Scholarly researchers have found that Millennials perform better as individuals and in workgroups when led by servant-based leadership.[110]   Servant-based leadership cultivates followers who want to follow the leader. I recommend all leaders incorporate servant leadership methods into their skillset. This chapter explores aspects of servant leadership.

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[109] (Center for Servant Based Leadership, 2016).
[110] (VanMeter, Grisaffe, Chonko, & Roberts, 2013)

Chapter 9: Unlocking Team Power

A Steaming Cup of Komodo Dragon

Over a steaming cup of Komodo Dragon with whole milk, three Splendas, and a dusting of nutmeg and cinnamon, a friend of mine told me about her rise to senior leadership. Years earlier, she had taken over a workgroup made up of tenured employees who were all older than she. The average seniority of the group was 25 years. Her role was to help them engage current and new customers to buy a new scan-and-pay technology her company had developed. The team was known for chewing up and spitting out new managers, and she had to overcome the team's years of negativity. The group was disengaged, below performance goals, and rumors were some of them worked side jobs while pretending to be at client sites!

She could have gone in and "ripped them a new one" like others had in the past and failed and continued the corporate insanity. BTW - Have you ever experienced this? Senior management hires the same type of person repeatedly, and the new hires fail every time. Yet management can't figure out why the company isn't growing?! Sorry, I got sidetracked thinking about leadership insanity…back to the story. Instead, my friend chose a different, creative route.

To reinvigorate the team, she focused on their strengths and didn't tell them how bad they were. She also didn't give them performance reviews to document why she should fire them, or to put them on a performance plan. NO! She focused on strengths, gained their trust, and won their hearts and minds. The same lagging team went on to work for her

with passion and dedication, and she became a senior enterprise account manager.

Note to All: If you haven't been through training on emotional intelligence or cultural intelligence, do so. They are critical success factors for today's leaders. They are foundational for understanding how to coach and lead employees in our complex, modern workplace.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

Appreciative Inquiry's (AI) roots are in positive psychology. AI is a practice that requires Emotional Intelligence (EI) or Cultural Intelligence (CI). **By exercising AI principles, and using in EI and CI skills, leaders can unlock their team's power.** Six key factors in unlocking the potential of your existing staff and emerging leaders revolve around freedom. America's culture of freedom is what made our economy the greatest on earth. Liberating the latent power that already exists in our current workforce costs little but may win the future. In the "*Change Handbook*," Cooperrider and Whitney list the six freedom factors for Appreciative Inquiry, (AI) as:

- The freedom to be known in respected work relationships.
- The freedom to be heard.
- The freedom to dream in community.
- The freedom to choose to contribute.
- The freedom to act with support.
- The freedom to be positive.[120]

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[120] (Brown, Homer, & Isaacs, 2007)

Chapter 10: Leadership for Growth

In Chapter 1, I mentioned the five pillars of organization leadership for growth:

- Challenging the status quo with positive innovation.
- Inspiring a vision and set of goals that result in mutual commitment from all employees.
- Building teams that are empowered and are interdependent upon one other to succeed.
- Modeling the behaviors you espouse to others.
- Encouraging the hearts of employees so that they work through difficult times, striving to achieve the mutual vision and goals set before them.[141]

Throughout the book, I have touched on each of these areas. I hope that you are enjoying the journey and have gleaned useful tips on the art and science of leadership.

As the world's best leaders develop strategies and business models to ensure growth in the VUCA world, leadership itself is evolving. Leaders are designing organizations strategically to create autopoietic systems (auto-poy-etic systems: life-sustaining systems that reproduce and perpetuate themselves automatically).[142] When designed well, they cut waste and weed out unhealthy processes. Creating and maintaining autopoietic systems keeps organizations vital, full of life, and promotes growth and the revitalization of stalled initiatives.[143] In this chapter, we will

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[141] (Johnson & Johnson, 2013)

[142] (Seidi, 2004)

[143] (Morgan, 2006)

explore four strategic tools that encourage autopoietic system creation.

The four strategic tools are:

- System Thinking
- Positive People Management
- Creative Problem Solving
- Continuous Process Improvement

These tools unlock leadership and workforce creativity and innovation. The global supply chain is looking for higher-level leaders who understand these strategies.[144]

System Thinking

Let's revisit my first national role. My task was to help lead a corporate cultural change, which would result in revitalizing the company. Before joining the company, its history was one of fast growth and massive profits over its first couple of decades. Because the corporation was so successful and outpacing the competition, its founder/CEO, board of directors, and leadership developed an attitude. They thought, "We are so successful, no one else knows more about what we do than we do. Why do we need to ask for outside opinions?" As a result, the company closed itself off to outside influences and advice. However, while the leaders were busy looking inward, the business environment was changing, and new technologies were coming to market. Many of the new technologies were from outside their industry and entered their marketspace. They had no idea how drastically the advancements would affect their industry.

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[144] (Livingston, 2014)

Reflections

Take five minutes and reflect on what you've learned. Write down at least three takeaways. At the end of the book you will have 30+ key ideas to review that will help mold your thinking, build bridges, and bolster your leadership skills.

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<u>How I help:</u>
I coach leaders and organizations on how to unlock their leadership potential and the power of the multi-generational/multi-cultural workforce. I lead them through a series of step-by-step leadership development strategies. The focus is on producing positive people behaviors, positive work environments, and positive business outcomes. Following these proven strategies, leaders are better able to guide teams to meet or exceed expectations while improving their work-life experiences.

<u>Expertise:</u>
Multi-generational & Multi-cultural Leadership | Speaking | Advising | Leadership Coaching | Change Management | Organizational Development | Revitalization | Education

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