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Factors Contributing to Millennial Turnover Rates in Department of Defense
(DOD) Organizations

by

Christine Danielle Schaefer

A dissertation submitted to the Bisk College of Business at
Florida Institute of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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We the undersigned committee hereby recommend that the attached document be accepted as fulfilling in part of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Business Administration.

“Factors Contributing to Millennial Turnover Rates in Department of Defense Organizations,” a dissertation by Christine Danielle Schaefer.

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Abstract

Title: Factors Contributing to Millennial Turnover Rates in Department of Defense Organizations

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According to research, Millennials are becoming the predominant generation in the workforce with only 7% of them working for Department of Defense (DOD) organizations. It is critical for DOD organizations to recognize and understand the strengths and challenges in a multigenerational workplace to maximize performance and reduce turnover. DOD organizations need to be able to attract and retain Millennials to build a strong workforce to prepare for a global, technological, changing, and a connected future. This study examined the factors that contributed to turnover among Millennials in DOD organizations within the Tennessee Valley region. The researcher's intentions were to find out if workplace needs, which previous researchers said are a requirement, are indeed the cause of turnover of Millennials or are there other factors. The two research questions for this study are: What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment? What role do needs of

Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

Keywords: Millennial, Generation Y, DOD organization, turnover, turnover intention, generation theory

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Dedication

The completion of this research marks the beginning, not the end, of a life changing journey, which could not have been accomplished without the steadfast support and inspiration my daughter has provided.

I would like to dedicate this research project to my wonderful daughter, Holly Schaefer, who stood behind me listening, reading, editing, encouraging, and supporting me.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

For the first time, organizations are scrambling to replace the older generations with Millennials because of the impact of generational differences (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000; Venus, 2011; Twenge, 2010; Smith, 2010). Millennials, born between 1980 and 2000, make up the majority of the workforce (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Organizations may require more flexibility to retain Millennials or could face problems with turnover (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Twenge, 2010). Data on Millennial turnover suggests that Millennials are not eager to switch jobs, but may require more flexibility and work-life balance to reduce turnover intentions (Twenge, 2010). Due to the rising number of Millennials, it is important to understand their views, motivations, and preferences to retain them. Not only do organizations need to investigate why Millennials are leaving, they need to investigate the motivations that encourage them to stay (Flowers & Hughes, 1973). If organizations want employees to stay, they need to accept and respect their differing values.

The generations prior to Millennials show preferences regarding monetary rewards, as opposed to the Millennial preferences which are flexibility, work-life balance, transparency and communication, collaboration and teamwork, and challenging and meaningful work (Espinoza C., 2012; Murphy, 2008; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Spiegel, 2013; Tulgan, 2009; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000;

Ng & Schweitzer, 2010). All the generations express unique characteristics, but the non-Millennial generations show similar interactions with employers for organizations to continue the same recruitment and retention methods (Ng & Schweitzer, 2010). In seeking balance, organizations need to review their recruitment and retention methods and make changes as necessary to adapt to people with differing values (Hershatzer & Epstein, 2010; Flowers & Hughes, 1973). Diverse generational differences have caught the attention of organizations and media, generating the need for academic research.

A high turnover rate typically indicates that employees are not satisfied with either their position or their organization (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Flowers & Hughes, 1973; Tett & Meyer, 1993). If an organization concentrates on understanding what satisfies employees and makes them stay, then it can focus on a positive approach to turnover. In other words, organizations should move away from focusing on the negative approach of simply reducing the turnover rate. Knowing why employees stay at an organization seems to be more beneficial than knowing why they are leaving.

Job dissatisfaction can be caused by several factors, which include feeling underpaid, undervalued, or not being challenged enough (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Hammill, 2005; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Twenge, 2010; Venus, 2011; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The employee may also see little opportunity for career growth or advancement (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010;

Hammill, 2005; Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Twenge, 2010; Venus, 2011; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Individuals with low job satisfaction typically do not have the motivation to provide great work performance. That lack of motivation can lead to increased employee turnover intention (Cho & Lewis, 2012; Lucy, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004; Maslow, 1943; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Motivation is satisfied by having the opportunity to meet individual needs (Maslow, 1943; McGregor & Doshi, 2015). Each person is different, so he or she may place their importance on different needs or factors within the workplace (Alsop, 2008; Cruz, 2014; Hammill, 2005; Twenge, 2010; Venus, 2011; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The reason one person may leave a job might be the reason another person will stay (Flowers & Hughes, 1973). Instead of looking at turnover as one sided, organizations should look at what entices employees to stay as well as what causes them to leave.

The percentage of Millennials in Department of Defense (DOD) organizations dropped to seven percent in 2015, which is the lowest number in a decade (Rein, 2015). With the wave of Baby Boomer retirements, top DOD officials are growing increasingly distressed about the decreasing role of Millennials in the workforce (Rein, 2015). Because of federal shutdowns, furloughs, budget cuts, and pay freezes, DOD jobs do not attract Millennials. Before the Baby Boomers retire, there needs to be succession planning for knowledge transfer by mentoring and coaching newer employees to take over their

roles. If leaders refuse to adapt to the Millennial generation and cling to old rules, they are going to find themselves out of the game (Murphy, 2008). If organizations cannot attract Millennials, they will be left with a gap of employees when the Baby Boomers retire. According to Pew Research Center, in 2015, Millennials were predicted to be the largest group of workers, consisting of 75.3 million (Fry, 2015). Millennials were to surpass the Baby Boomers, which would be at 74.9 million (Fry, 2015). Only seven percent of Millennials work for DOD organizations. Therefore, 70 million Millennials are not attracted to or retained by DOD organizations. If DOD organizations do not learn how to retain Millennials, they will be left with the high cost of turnover. These costs include the time and money of advertising, hiring, onboarding, and training. Productivity and services will also be affected while organizations look for new employees. All of these efforts affect the bottom line. “Forward looking organizations have been investing a lot to attract, recruit, motivate, and retain the Millennials” (Ozcelik, 2015). The biggest challenge organizations face is identifying Millennial motivators and preferences and developing new strategies to retain them. Understanding and accommodating the expectations of Millennials will enhance the value of the organization.

Background of the Study

Strauss and Howe (1991) defined a generation as a group of people born over a span of roughly twenty years. Generational cohorts share key historical events and social trends during the same stage of life (Strauss & Howe,

Generations, 1991). Mannheim (1952) makes the key point that the salient historical event has to occur in their young age, thus, shaping their lives. “Generational theory explains that the era in which a person was born affects the development of their view of the world” (Codrington, 2008). Their beliefs and behaviors are developed in relation to the events each generation experiences in their younger years (Strauss & Howe, Generations, 1991). Generational differences often cause tension between employees because choices and decisions are made based on one’s value system (Gentile, Twenge, & Campbell, 2014; Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009). Differing values often lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretation, which affect relationships. This could cause dissatisfaction in the workplace or conflict among co-workers, which are reasons for turnover intention.

There are eighty million Millennials in America, which represents about a fourth of the population (Schawbel D. , 2015). Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials are currently serving in the workplace, each with unique characteristics, values, goals, and attitudes toward work (Ng & Schweitzer, 2010). Unlike the other generations, organizations seem to be challenged with retaining Millennials (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010; Elance-ODesk and Millennial Branding, 2014; Ng & Schweitzer, 2010). In particular DOD organizations are spending time and money trying to recruit and retain Millennials, but they are leaving jobs earlier and more often than previous generations (Meier &

Crocker, 2010; Twenge, 2010; Elance-ODesk and Millennial Branding, 2014).

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2016), the older generation's median tenure is ten years, in comparison to the Millennial generation's median tenure of one to two years. Researchers have found that Millennials intend to leave their current job within two years or less (Elance-ODesk and Millennial Branding, 2014; Twenge, 2010; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Partnership for public service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). This illustrates the current trend in turnover among Millennials, which will leave gaps in the workforce as the older generations retire (Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009). It is also the reason Millennials have the stigma as job hoppers.

Turnover is defined as the termination of an individual's employment with a company (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). In other words, turnover can be described as the rate at which an organization has to replace employees. In 2009, the DOD reported that 22 percent (6,080) of employees resigned within one year of employment (Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2016), in January 2016, it was reported that 74 percent of younger Millennials had a tenure of 12 months or less compared to 10 percent of older workers. A high loss percentage should raise a red flag and be a cause for examination to find out why the turnover is occurring. The loss of employees can impair an organization's performance, capability, and financial success (Cho & Lewis, 2012).

The cost associated with recruiting, training, and retaining Millennials can be very expensive to organizations. For DOD organizations, this also includes security orientation, badging, security clearances, and access to government equipment costs. The average turnover costs have been estimated to range from 33 percent up to 300 percent of the employee's annual salary (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Partnership for public service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010; Schawbel, 2013; Bolman & Deal, 2013). Turnover includes non-monetary losses such as human capital. "It is difficult to place a value on key federal employees like a retiring chief meteorologist at the National Hurricane Center, an experienced claims processor for the Social Security Administration (SSA), a cancer researcher at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), or a cybersecurity expert at the National Security Agency (NSA)" (Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010, p. 1). In a DOD organization, turnover can affect an organization's homeland security mission, the nation's ability to respond to a pandemic influenza outbreak, or the ability to monitor the integrity of our financial markets and economy (Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). The loss of key employees far exceeds financial costs.

Researchers have shown that turnover is a financial burden to DOD organizations and that Millennials have a reputation of job hopping. This study's goal is to provide DOD organizations with an understanding of why Millennials

leave their organizations and how to better develop strategies to retain Millennials and reduce turnover.

Statement of the Problem

Millennials will comprise more than 40% of the U.S. workforce by the year 2020 and 75% by the year 2025 (Toossi, 2012; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Schawbel D. , 2013). Many organizations are not prepared to manage the unique characteristics of Millennials (Hershatte & Epstein, 2010; Hammill, 2005; Wilkie, 2014). Millennials keep their resumes updated and are considered job hoppers (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008; Meier & Crocker, 2010). Job hopping is considered acceptable by Millennials because they are trying to find out what they want to spend their career doing (Becton, Walker, & Farmer, 2014; Tulgan, 2009; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Murphy, 2008). For example, job hopping can be a great way to increase their salary, expand their skill set and expertise, and build networks to improve their career. Meier & Crocker (2010) found that 30% of Millennials, in a study of 500, had three jobs in the first eight years of their career. Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2013) reported a higher turnover intention rate in Millennials than other generations. Turnover intention is defined as an employee's personal intent to leave the organization in the future (Lucy, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004; Watrous, Huffman, & Pritchard, 2006; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Organizations should attract all working generations and may need to make adjustments when new generations require different needs. Failing to recognize the

different needs and concerns of Millennials could lead to turnover. Millennials will leave an organization to find employment where their needs are met (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Murphy, 2008; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Organizations have a strong interest in this topic due to the rapidly changing workforce and distinctive needs of Millennials (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Smith & Cantrell, 2010; Meier & Crocker, 2010). Millennials need to feel like they are making a difference not only in the company they work for, but in the bigger picture as well (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Spiegel, 2013). Members of the Millennial generation have distinctive characteristics. They are quick decision makers, want instant action, expect immediate results, think in the short term, are goal and achievement oriented, are education-focused, are multicultural, want to make an impact on the world, opinionated, seek workplace flexibility, and are optimistic and antiwar (Venus, 2011; Murphy, 2008; Martin, 2006). They are motivated by work-life balance, training and development, social and environmental responsibility, and diversity (Alsop, 2008). With globalization, technology, and on-demand information, Millennials' needs have shifted from the Baby Boomers and Generation Xers.

“With today’s workforce spanning four different generations, it is critical that employers understand the strengths and challenges inherent to a multigenerational workplace” (Cruz, 2014, p. 10). Organizations would benefit by adjusting to the varying needs of different generations. It was the goal of this study

to contribute to the body of knowledge related to the shared experiences of Millennials who have experienced the phenomenon of job hopping and how this generation impacts the turnover rates of DOD organizations (Meier & Crocker, 2010). This will help DOD organizations understand how this generation's perception of workplace needs impacts the current turnover trend observed today.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the factors which contribute to turnover intention among the Millennial generation in DOD organizations. Understanding this relationship will help researchers identify approaches to help DOD organizations improve recruitment and retention programs to reduce turnover. The participants of this study consisted of Millennials from DOD organizations in the Tennessee Valley region. The Tennessee Valley region is one of the world's leading science and technology business areas. It is filled with Fortune 500 companies, high tech enterprises, and US space and DOD agencies (Chamber of Commerce, 2016). Millennials in this area need to be sought after to help the DOD organizations thrive and remain one of the best research parks in the United States.

Understanding the factors of turnover in Millennials was explored using in-depth interviews conducted one-on-one between an individual participant and the researcher. DOD organizations may find more effective ways to recruit and retain Millennials with the results of this study.

Research Questions

This study examined the factors that contribute to turnover among Millennials in DOD organizations. The two research questions for this study are:

1. What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?
2. What role do needs of Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

Significance of the Study

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) estimates that more than 48% of DOD employees will be eligible for retirement by 2015 (Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). As the older, more experienced employees retire, organizations need to attract and train the lesser skilled Millennials (Ertas, 2015). According to Bolman and Deal (2013), turnover can run over 100 percent a year for a company. This poses a significant financial risk to DOD organizations (Chamber of Commerce, 2016). Turnover also decreases productivity because talent and knowhow is lost when people leave an organization. Human Capital is an important resource in an organization's competitive advantage. Employees spend their day contributing to the success of the organization. They can either make or break the organization. When turnover of key employees occurs, the organizations knowledge and skills are walking out the

door. DOD competitors offer the same product or service at similar prices and quality; therefore, a competitive advantage is found less in what a company sells and more in who a company is and how it sells (Codrington, 2008). Organizations have a strong interest in this topic due to the rapidly changing workforce and distinctive needs of Millennials (Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Smith & Cantrell, 2010). Having the ability to attract, retain, nurture, and motivate employees is a critical success factor for any organization (Codrington, 2008). As DOD organizations move deeper into a technology-based economy, human capital will become increasingly important. One can build a robot to replace the human, but the human has to build the robot.

The issue of turnover has been identified by researchers, but thus far, they have not learned why Millennials specifically choose to job hop (Meier & Crocker, 2010; Twenge, 2010). A misperception of organizations is the assumption that Millennials will not impulsively leave their new, stable jobs (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2013). In the past, organizations forced employees to adjust their behavior to match the organization's current culture; however, Millennials are not making those adjustments and are choosing to leave organizations that refuse to make changes in their approaches towards them (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008).

Researchers have not determined a connection between Millennial turnover intention and DOD organizations. In other words, research has not been conducted on DOD Millennials and the causes of their turnover. This study will be used to fill

that gap. Understanding the reasons for turnover and trying to change turnover intention are critical skills for organizations wanting to limit costs associated with turnover (Ertas, 2015). The results of this study show why Millennials choose to leave a DOD organization within the first two years of employment. We also learned why Millennials chose to stay past two years and that Millennial needs play a role in turnover intention.

The significance of this study is to provide DOD organizations with best practices on how to manage Millennials, how to best recruit and retain them, and how to reduce turnover rates. Employers can save time and money by discovering why Millennials specifically choose to leave jobs so quickly (Meier & Crocker, 2010).

Definition of Key Terms

Department of Defense (DOD) – An executive branch department of the federal government of the United States charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government concerned directly with national security and United States Armed Forces (Becker, 2004).

Generation – “A group of individuals born within the same historical and socio-cultural context, who experience the same formative experiences and develop unifying commonalities as a result” (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p. S140).

Millennials – People born between 1980 and 2000 (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000)

Turnover – Termination of an individual's employment with the company (Tett & Meyer, 1993)

Turnover Intention – An employee's conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993)

Outline of the Study

This chapter provides an introduction and overview of the study. Chapter two provides a review of the existing literature related to the Millennial generation and turnover in DOD organizations. The review of the literature introduces the theoretical framework generational theory, generational cohorts, Millennial characteristics, Millennial needs in the workplace, turnover, cost of turnover, and gaps in the current knowledge. Chapter three is an overview of the study's methodology which consists of the research methods and design, population and sample, data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. Chapter four discusses the findings of the study, including a discussion pertaining to analysis of individual profiles as they relate to the turnover of Millennials in DOD organizations. Chapter five summarizes the data, makes recommendations, discusses limitations, and draws conclusions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of the literature review was to gain knowledge and present the research addressing generational differences, specifically turnover among Millennials. As Millennials have developed from childhood to young adulthood, researchers have attempted to define them and prepare organizations for the differences in Millennial workplace behavior from previous generations (Deal, Altman, & Rogelberg, 2010). For this study, generation theory has been utilized to frame the generational differences. Strauss and Howe's (1991) generation theory demonstrates how the collective mentalities of individuals born during the same time period develop distinctive behaviors and perspectives shaped by experiencing the same salient historical events in their formative years. The literature review addresses generational theory, generational cohorts, Millennial characteristics, Millennial needs in the workplace, turnover, cost of turnover, and gaps in knowledge that exist. These themes are important to the study because they set the stage for the research questions.

Theoretical Framework: Generational Theory

The first scholar to investigate the phenomenon of generations and attempt to explain and describe them was Karl Mannheim (1952). Karl Mannheim (1952) theorized that individuals who were born and grew up during the same time period

would share common experiences and therefore, shape the development of their culture and generation (Mannheim, Baruch, & Tal, 1997). He is credited with establishing the core beliefs of the theory of generations and the term age cohort. Generations tend to be 20 years in length, representing the time between an individual's birth and the time of conceiving their first child (Codrington, 2008; Twenge, 2010). According to Mannheim (1952), generations are shaped by the common salient historical experiences that occurred during their childhood and early adulthood.

Strauss and Howe (1991) popularized Mannheim's (1952) theory in their work in the 1990s. They discovered reoccurring cycles in generations dating back to the 1500s. Their theory is slightly different from Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations. Mannheim's (1952) theory of generations suggests generations are developed in response to major historical events. Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational theory focuses on the influence of past generations. They explain their theory as generations turning the corner and compensating for the excesses and mistakes of the generation in charge when they come of age (Galland & Howe, 2009). When the two theories are used together, they help explain how a generation emerges and is developed by previous generations and historical events. For example, Millennials witnessed the attack on September 11, 2001, and saw how other generations reacted to the event. Millennials learned from the event and the

generations around them. Generational theory supports the existence of the Millennial generation and the work related attitude and value differences.

Strauss and Howe (1997) identified four stages of an average life: childhood, young adult, midlife, and elderhood. The first stage, childhood, is estimated to span the individual's life from 0 to 20 years of age. Childhood is an individual's formative phase of life. Childhood is associated with growth, receiving nurture, and acquiring values through social norms and salient historical events (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Strauss & Howe, 1997). The second stage, young adulthood, spans the individual's life between 21 and 41 years of age. Young adulthood is associated with vitality, serving institutions, testing values, starting families, and building careers (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Strauss & Howe, 1997). The third stage, midlife, spans the life of individuals between 42 and 62 years of age and is associated with power, managing institutions, applying values, parenting, and teaching (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Strauss & Howe, 1997). The fourth stage, elderhood, spans the life of individuals between 63 and 83 years of age and is associated with leadership, leading institutions, transferring values, and mentorship (Strauss & Howe, 1991; Strauss & Howe, 1997).

Life stages "relate to physical changes in their bodies (infant, childhood, puberty, teenagers, adulthood, menopause, old age, etc.), their relationships (child, single, married, divorced, widowed, etc.), their economic circumstance (dependant, part-time worker, student, employee, manager, owner, etc.), and a few other factors

normally considered when creating lifestage segmentation models” (Codrington, 2008, p. 11). The stage of life has to do with individual behavior in the workplace and in society. According to Strauss and Howe (1997), generation theory predicts that each new generation entering a life stage will redefine that life stage and change it. Generations usually approach a life stage wanting to correct what they see as errors their parents and elders made (Codrington, 2008). This is helpful as many generations are currently experiencing a life stage shift. Millennials are now moving from the first stage of life, where values were first acquired and shaped by the historical events in their childhood, to the second stage in which they are testing values in the workplace, community, and family. Generation Xers tend to show greater organizational loyalty and stability than they did in their first stage of life because they now have children and commitments (Codrington, 2008). Baby Boomers are not workaholics anymore and are looking for ways to retire.

Generational Cohorts

Mannheim (1952) defined a generation as a group of people who were born and raised in a similar social and historical atmosphere. “A generation can be defined as a group of individuals born within the same historical and socio-cultural context, who experience the same formative experiences and develop unifying commonalities as a result” (Lyons & Kuron, 2014, p. S140). “Generations are a great key for unlocking the history of any society that believes in progress” (Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 363). Generational cohorts are shaped by salient events such as

wars, social movements, and significant technological advancements (Kowske, Rasch, & Wiley, 2013). It is events like these that occur in their first two stages of life that shape their perceptions and expectations of the world. Today's workforce consists of four different generations: the Veterans (1922-1943), Baby Boomers (1943-1960), Generation X (1960-1980), and Generation Y, also known as Millennials, (1980-2000) (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000; SHRM, 2012; Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Grouping the years of generational cohorts is useful for the purpose of research to allow analysis of their differences. "Each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits and motivational buttons" (Hammill, 2005, p. 2). "They also have very different views on how retirement packages, health care, flexible work schedules and other benefits affect their job satisfaction" (Wilkie, 2014, p. 2). It is critical for organizations to recognize and understand the strengths and challenges in a multigenerational workplace to maximize performance and reduce turnover. Organizations need to look at values, motivations, strengths, learning styles, wellness profiles, mobility, life stages, and more (Smith & Cantrell, 2010).

Veterans

Veterans are those born between 1922 and 1943. Their values were shaped by WWII, the Korean War, and The Great Depression (Spiegel, 2013). Their core values are respect for authority, hard work, the thought of living to work, and

discipline. They tend to lean towards a more conservative language and dress.

Veterans have a strong work ethic and a wealth of knowledge and experience that make them invaluable to the organization. “They respond to managers who provide clear direction and definitive performance expectations” (Venus, 2011, p. S7). This generation prefers face-to-face communication rather than electronic

communication because they lack a deep understanding of modern technology.

Veterans believe that no feedback from their managers is good news. The only reward they look for is satisfaction in a job well done. The message that motivates Veterans is, “Your experience is respected” (Hammill, 2005, p. 5). They were committed to an organization and therefore, usually held more than one position at the same organization. Sustaining multiple positions at one organization gave this generation a low turnover rate (Thompson, 2011). The average tenure of a Veteran was at least ten years with a single organization (United States Department of Labor, 2016). There are only a few Veterans left in the workplace. This generation is currently leaving or has already retired. (Spiegel, 2013; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Murphy, 2008)

Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers are those born between 1943 and 1960. Their values were shaped by JFK’s assassination, the Cuban missile crisis, civil rights movement, women’s movement, walk on the moon, Woodstock, The Vietnam War, and The

Cold War (Spiegel, 2013). Their core values are personal fulfillment, quality, optimism, and involvement. Baby Boomers are idealistic and driven, but do not like change. “They value loyalty, financial security, stability and a positive work ethic” (SHRM, 2012, p. 1). This generation looks for financially stable companies with a good standing in the community. They want to contribute to the company and mentor the younger generations. Baby Boomers are loyal and committed to their organizations. They believe hard work pays off and expect a corresponding reward (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008). To retain these employees, companies must show that they care about the employees’ career, their knowledge, and the contributions that they make. Boomers have a strong mentality and may put process ahead of result (Venus, 2011). They tend to stay late, work weekends, and go the extra mile. Baby Boomers live to work and do not value leisure time like other generations (Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009; Lieber, 2010). Their career is the central focus of their lives (Chen & Choi, 2008). This may also be the reason they experience high numbers of divorce and second marriages (Thompson, 2011). They want managers who are consensual and collegial. Baby Boomers are team players and love to have meetings. They prefer in-person communication. “Managers can motivate them with money and overtime, recognize them with praise and position, and expect them to be loyal” (Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009, p. 2). The message that motivates Baby Boomers is, “You are valued, and you are needed”

(Hammill, 2005, p. 5). The average tenure of this generation is ten years (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Baby Boomers are currently leaving the workforce and must share their knowledge with the Millennial generation before they retire. Managers should establish mentor relationships to sustain that knowledge in the workforce.

Generation X

Generation Xers are those born between 1960 and 1980. Their values were shaped by the Challenger disaster, fall of the Berlin wall, MTV, personal computers, the AIDS epidemic, LA riots, recession, and high divorce rates (Spiegel, 2013). “Many Generation Xers were school age children who spent part of their day unsupervised at home while their parents worked” (Becton, Walker, & Farmer, 2014, p. 177). This made Generation X more independent. They are also considered the lazy generation. Their core values are flexibility, skepticism, fun, eliminate the task, self-reliance, independence, and informality (Chen & Choi, 2008). This generation has a good understanding of technology and how it is changing the workplace. They prefer indirect communication and believe that everyone should be treated the same. “Money, stocks, incentive plans, and benefits are what attract this group” (SHRM, 2012, p. 1). A member of Generation X works to live and looks for organizations that promote work-life balance by offering more work schedule flexibility, childcare, and elder care benefits (Crampton & Hodge,

2007). They thrive on flexibility and creativity. They are results-oriented and value quality over quantity (Venus, 2011). Generation Xers will ask for higher pay, hiring bonuses, and better job titles in the recruitment stage. They believe freedom is the best reward and want immediate feedback from managers (Lieber, 2010). The message that motivates Generation Xers is, “Do it your way, forget the rules” (Hammill, 2005, p. 5). Generation Xers prefer rapid advancement and recognition over tenure (Smola & Sutton, 2002). This generation brought flexibility into the workplace, and it will continue to be important to emerging employees. The average tenure for this generation is between five and eight years (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

Generation Y or Millennials

Generation Y, or Millennials, were born between 1980 and 2000. This generation will eventually be the largest in the workforce (Twenge, 2010). Their values were shaped by the Oklahoma bombing, Columbine High School shooting, Enron, 9/11, social networking sites, and globalization (Spiegel, 2013; Tulgan, 2009). Millennials were mostly raised by Baby Boomers: therefore, they share some of the same work ethic as the Baby Boomer generation. Baby Boomers and Millennials both value material and financial success. This generation grew up with overprotective parents who wanted to shield their children from the evils of the world (Thompson, 2011). This is the first generation to grow up having never known life without technology, which makes them tech savvy (Shaw & Fairhurst,

2008). Their core values are being goal-oriented, multi-tasking, having a sense of realism, confidence, extreme fun, and socializing. Millennials are not interested in an authority structure where they are micromanaged. They place value on respect, knowledge, and results, and they value being recognized for their individual contributions to the organization (SHRM, 2012). This generation wants leading edge technology, productive and meaningful work, and continuing education benefits. They want flexibility in work hours, dress, and the opportunity to voice their opinions. Millennials choose companies that give back to the community. They are well traveled and very accepting of multiculturalism (Venus, 2011). The Millennial generation works to live, not vice versa, like the Veterans. They prefer technology over face-to-face interactions and want positive reinforcement and accelerated feedback. Millennials ask for training, job perks, and flexible work hours. The message that motivates them is, “You will work with other bright, creative people” (Hammill, 2005, p. 5). They are team players (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Their average tenure is one to two years (United States Department of Labor, 2016).

There are some shared characteristics between Generation X and Millennials, such as independence and flexibility. Generation X and Millennials have a good understanding of technology and how it is changing the workplace. They both prefer indirect communication and believe that everyone should be treated the same. Both generations also look for organizations that promote work-

life balance by offering more work schedule flexibility, childcare, and elder care benefits (Crampton & Hodge, 2007). They both believe freedom is the best reward and want immediate feedback from managers (Lieber, 2010). Generation X and Millennials prefer rapid advancement and recognition over tenure (Smola & Sutton, 2002).

Millennials are changing the workplace. They keep their resume updated and are considered job hoppers (Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008). Job hopping is now acceptable if it is done by the younger generation because they are trying to find out what they want to spend their career doing (Becton, Walker, & Farmer, 2014; Tulgan, 2009; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Murphy, 2008). Millennial parents have always told their children “they could be anything they wanted to be” (Tulgan, 2009). Therefore, Millennials are figuring out what they want to be. The economy also affects the workforce. Many times Millennials will take any job to make money, but will continue to look for their dream job. The older generations should know how they want to spend their career, so job hopping for them is considered unacceptable. Teachers are also encouraging young students to job hop and learn as much as they can before they settle into a career. Managers have to be very creative when it comes to motivating Millennials. Managers must recognize what Millennials need, listen to what they really want, and determine how to motivate and retain them (Culbert, 2008). If Millennials are not having their needs fulfilled,

they will leave, thus causing high turnover (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Murphy, 2008; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Spiegel, 2013).

Many companies believe in certain myths, or stereotypes, about Millennials that are simply inaccurate (Schawbel D. , 2015). A stereotype is a fixed belief about a particular group or class of people (Cardwell, 1996). Stereotyping assumes that an individual has a variety of characteristics and abilities that we assume all members of that group have (McLeod, 2015). Generalization is making a general statement to include all individuals who belong to a particular group. Generalizing, not stereotyping, offers insights that can be helpful in understanding people and what their needs are (Fenzel, 2013). “Even though a generational cohort is an efficient and useful social categorization, one must be careful not to paint the entire generation with the same brush” (Fenzel, 2013, p. 24). According to Chambers (2016), in the past year, the non-Millennial generations are beginning to see and understand that the concepts and unconventional perspectives that Millennials bring to the table do add value to the company. Generational characteristics are not the only factors influencing an individual’s behavior. Social economic status, geological location, and ethnicity are other factors that can influence one’s behavior (Fenzel, 2013).

Millennial Characteristics

Millennials are also known as Generation Y, GenNext, the Google Generation, the Echo Boom, Tech Generation, and Generation Why (Lancaster &

Stillman, 2010). The alias comes from: Generation Y – Y comes after X; GenNext – The next generation; The Google Generation – Millennials use Google to search everything; The Echo Boom – Demographic echo of their parents; the Baby Boomers; Tech Generation – They were born with technology; and Generation Why – They ask why to everything (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). Millennials is the name that captured the widest usage in both media and academic literature (Strauss & Howe, 2000).

Characteristics of the Millennial generation are: are quick decision makers, want instant action, expect immediate results, think in the short term, are goal and achievement oriented, are education-focused, are multicultural, want to make an impact on the world, are opinionated, seek workplace flexibility and are optimistic and antiwar (Venus, 2011; Murphy, 2008; Martin, 2006). They are motivated by work-life balance, training and development, social and environmental responsibility, and diversity (Alsop, 2008). With globalization, technology, information, and on-demand, Millennials' needs have shifted from the Baby Boomers' and Generation Xers'. The following characteristics are the most common across multiple authors.

Technology Savvy

Millennials are connected 24/7 whether it be by phones, computers, or iPods. They are quick and efficient in finding information (Pew Research Center, 2010). Millennials are the first high tech generation. They have never known life without technology, such as infant computer games, CDs, cell phones, computers, 24-hour cartoon stations, and ATMs (Becton, Walker, & Farmer, 2014; Murphy, 2008; Alsop, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). “Millennials grew up with computers and cell phones the way Baby Boomers and Generation X grew up with typewriters and corded telephones” (Smith W. S., 2010, p. 34). They turn to technology to solve problems, find answers, and keep in touch. They have the ability to influence their younger and older generational cohorts regarding technology usage. Millennials use technology as their connection to the world. For example, they can use one device to make phone calls, take pictures, pay bills, surf the internet, start a car, set alarms, etc. They would be lost without it.

Positive Self-esteem

Millennials were pampered, nurtured, and programmed to believe they were something special to avoid damaging their self-esteem (Murphy, 2008; Alsop, 2008). They depend on their parents and other adults to answer their questions and help guide, direct, and support them through life (Murphy, 2008; Tulgan, 2009). They were rewarded for good behavior and punishment was out. They participated

in multiple sports and activities, and everyone received a trophy for participating (Murphy, 2008; Tulgan, 2009). Millennials often turn entry level jobs down because they think they are over qualified for them. They are risk takers and are not afraid to job hop for better opportunities.

Feedback

Millennials want positive reinforcement and accelerated feedback. They were raised in environments where their parents and other adults gave them a lot of attention; therefore, they became accustomed to coaching, direction, guidance, support, and shared wisdom (Tulgan, 2009). They need constant reassurance from their organizations that their work is appreciated. They want to feel like they are a part of the big picture. If they do not receive feedback from managers, they do not feel connected to the organization or the bigger picture.

Immediacy

Millennials have been given technology tools that have allowed them to do everything faster and more efficiently (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). They are operating on the necessity for speed and expect communication, feedback, and promotions just as fast (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). “Millennials make quick decisions, want instant action, expect immediate results, and think for the short term” (Murphy, 2008, p. 10). Millennials want to stay busy and contribute to the

workplace and community. They need immediate feedback on their work and bigger and better projects. They want fast results from their managers instead of waiting for a yearly performance review or raise.

Communication

Millennials are also known as Generation Why (Spiegel, 2013). This generation wants to know why and wants to know now. Millennials have a strong curiosity and desire to understand why decisions are made, why they should be done in a particular order, and what necessitates a given priority (Spiegel, 2013). They want to know what is occurring and long for the truth (Spiegel, 2013; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010). Communication is key to any organization. Keeping Millennials in touch with expectations and results will make them more engaged in their work.

Teamwork

Millennials worked in teams while in school, sports, and social activities (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Therefore, they expect to build new teams at work. Millennials believe collaboration contributes to a better work product (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Hobart & Sendek, 2009). They do not want to come in and sit in isolation all day. They want to interact with others and feel a connection to their co-workers.

Diversity

Millennials are America's most ethnically diverse generation (Pew Research Center, 2010). They are well traveled and very accepting of multiculturalism (Venus, 2011). Millennials not only see diversity as age, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, or religion but they also think of it as having diversity of thought and diversity of mindset (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). They want to share their opinions and be heard. They think outside the box and feel they can contribute to the organization by giving their opinions and helping others.

Community Involvement

Millennials look at the world as an opportunity for improvement. They see it as their job to clean up the messes made by previous generations (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). It is common to find Millennials volunteering for different events or causes (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Hobart & Sendek, 2009; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). They want to work for organizations that give back to the community.

Achievement

Millennials were raised with standardized testing and are accustomed to working toward a score (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Millennials are fast approaching the most educated generation in American history (Hobart & Sendek,

2009; Pew Research Center, 2010). Millennials are influenced by their Baby Boomer parents that education is the key to their success (Martin, 2006). Baby Boomer parents taught their Millennial children “they can be anything they want to be.” Millennials will work hard for praise. They want to know what they did well. Millennials are continuously looking for more efficient ways to work and are very success driven.

“With today’s workforce spanning four different generations, it is critical that employers understand the strengths and challenges inherent to a multigenerational workplace” (Cruz, 2014, p. 10). DOD organizations would benefit by learning the varying needs of different generations. Job performance and satisfaction are based on how an employee’s needs are met. When an organization learns how to motivate their employees, then job performance, satisfaction, and productivity should increase and turnover decrease (Cantrll & Smith, 2010; Baker, 2009; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000; Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014).

Millennial Needs in the Workplace

Millennials are looking for a leader who will cultivate them and chart a career path for their success, not a manager (Carpenter & Charon, 2014). Companies that offer flexible work schedules, telecommuting, continuing education, career path sessions, and mentoring will attract Millennials to their

workplace (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Murphy, 2008; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000).

Employees have needs that must be met to sustain job performance and decrease turnover intention. If there is a deficiency in meeting their needs, then job performance and productivity levels decrease (Maslow, 1943). Employee productivity affects the bottom line of the organization; therefore, organizations should be aware of what motivates different generations. Millennials have a distinctive set of needs in the workplace (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013; Tulgan, 2009; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The following needs are the most common across multiple authors.

Flexibility

Millennials want more flexibility with their work schedule to balance life and work issues. Millennials desire to do what they want, when they want, have the schedule they want, and not worry about someone micromanaging them (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010). According to PwC (2013), 64% of Millennials would like to work from home and 66% would like to change their work hours. They want time for friends, family, and doing things they enjoy.

Work-life Balance

Millennials work to live. They have a life outside work. Millennials do not define a job by how much it pays, but how well it fits in their lives, the quality of work, and the tone of the environment (Spiegel, 2013). Millennials look for perks such as tuition reimbursement, flexible spending accounts, volunteer time, and telecommuting. Many companies are coming up with more flexible healthcare plans to fit the needs of different generations. The “one size fits all” package does not work anymore.

Transparency and Communication

“Millennials want transparency and to be able to trust others. They want lots of feedback and coaching” (Spiegel, 2013, p. 20). Speed and frequency of communication is critical to Millennials. They want to be kept informed and plugged into the business (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Millennials want clear direction and guidance from managers. Millennials are also known as Generation Why. They want to know how a job has immediate meaning, vision, direction, and purpose. If information cannot be shared with them, tell them why. Instead of doing annual performance evaluations, managers should give more immediate feedback to their employees (Culbert, 2008). They should offer more cross training and career development opportunities. Also, the older generations like to mentor the younger employees, which is a great way to share knowledge.

Collaboration and Teamwork

Millennials are good collaborators and know how to work on a team (Spiegel, 2013). “They combine the teamwork ethic of the Boomers with the can-do attitude of the Veterans and the technological savvy of the Xers” (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000, p. 143). Millennials see the workplace as another place to make friends and develop relationships that will benefit them for the rest of their lives (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). They think of teamwork as having diversity of thought and diversity of mindset (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010).

Challenging and Meaningful Work

Millennials are not just looking for work, they are looking for self-fulfillment. They want learning opportunities and new skills that will help them advance their careers (Murphy, 2008). “Millennials want to be self-directed when it comes to their own learning and personal development, with 68 percent saying they want to initiate most of their own learning and development” (Meister & Willyerd, 2010, p. 50). They want to work for a company that does something they believe in. Millennials become bored easily and therefore require challenging work (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). Since Millennials were always told they could be anything they want, they feel insulted when tasked with meaningless work (Tulgan, 2009). Millennials look for faster career advancement opportunities within the organization than the older generations did.

In the workplace, generational differences can affect recruiting, retention, communication, engagement, employee satisfaction, management, team building, knowledge transfer, organizational culture, creativity, work environment, and increasing productivity (Lyons & Kuron, 2014; Baker, 2009; Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). “Each generation has distinct attitudes, behaviors, expectations, habits and motivational buttons” (Hammill, 2005).

“Millennials want good pay and benefits, fewer rules, more freedom, work-life balance, opportunities for advancement, meaningful work experiences, a nurturing work environment, frequent contact with their leadership, and a diverse workplace that is flexible, fun, and community-minded” (Carpenter & Charon, 2014, p. 72). “The more employees believe in what they do and identify themselves with their work, the more determined they are to contribute to the success of their organization” (Ozcelik, 2015, p. 101).

Organizational Turnover

Retention of high-performing employees is a critical component of success for any organization. Turnover refers to the number of employees that leave an organization for any reason (Meier & Crocker, 2010). Turnover rate for an organization can be calculated as the number of employees that left divided by the number of employees still there (Heneman & Judge, 2006). As DOD prepares for a retirement wave, its focus on improving recruitment and hiring should broaden to

include retention of highly qualified Millennials (Lewis & Park, 1989; Tobias, 2001). Millennials tend to have more flexibility in terms of career choice and financial obligations (Kellough & Osuna, 1995; Lewis, 1991). They usually enter the workforce with lower salaries, which increases the chance that they can find a higher paying job with another organization. They are also less likely to be married or have children, making a job change less disruptive.

Turnover intention is a conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Turnover intention is recognized in the literature as a precursor to turnover and it is referenced as the final phase of withdrawal prior to an employee voluntarily terminating employment (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Generally, researchers study the phenomenon of turnover using the number of terminations in a specific time frame, but this does not address the individual turnover intention. Attempting to differentiate what causes an employee either to decide to leave an employer or to plan only a short employment is the focus of this research.

According to Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman (2010), there are five misconceptions to turnover: managers believe that all turnover is the same and is bad, that most employees quit because of pay, that job dissatisfaction is the primary reason people leave, that managers cannot do anything to affect turnover decisions, and that general best practices are the best way to manage retention. “These misconceptions can be harmful to organizations and to managerial careers because

they may lead managers to enact ineffective retention strategies that fail to reduce turnover, that are not cost-effective, or even that retain the wrong employees while chasing away the most important ones” (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010, p. 49).

The first misconception is that managers believe all turnover is the same and is bad. Turnover is classified into two separate categories: voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary turnover is when employees elect to terminate employment, while involuntary turnover is when employers elect to terminate employment (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). There is also dysfunctional and functional turnover. Dysfunctional turnover is harmful to an organization, such as when key employees, employees with a special skill set, dedicated employees, and high performers leave. The absence of these employees may cause a disruption in productivity and impact employee morale. Functional turnover is not as harmful to the organization because it is when employees that are easy to replace or are low performers exit the company. The exiting of these employees is not usually associated with a loss in productivity or employee morale problems. Retention management typically focuses on dysfunctional, voluntary turnover. Even though organizations focus on the dysfunctional voluntary turnover, some turnover is unavoidable.

A second misconception is that most employees quit because of pay. Compensation does matter for retention but is not the only factor for employees to seek other employment (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). Many turnover

decisions “involve a process in which individuals evaluate their current job against possible alternatives, develop intentions about what to do, and engage in various types of search behavior” (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010, p. 52). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment can initiate the withdrawal process. “The withdrawal process typically involves thoughts of quitting, job search, evaluation and comparison of alternative opportunities, turnover intentions, and eventually turnover behavior” (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010, p. 53). The relationship between an employee and his or her manager plays an important role in turnover decisions (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). The manager can be trained to monitor for key attributes that could lead to turnover. Although pay increases are important, they may not be the most efficient way to address turnover issues.

Misconception number three is that job dissatisfaction is the primary reason people leave. Researchers found that job dissatisfaction only accounts for 50% of turnover decisions (Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel, & Hill, 1999). Lee and Mitchell (1994) consider an event that leads someone to turnover intention as a shock. Shocks can be expected or unexpected, job related or non-job related, and positive or negative (Mitchell, Holtom, & Lee, 2001). Expected shocks could be the completion of a professional certification versus an unexpected shock like being mistreated by a co-worker. An example of a job related shock would exist when an employee is being passed over for a promotion and a non-job related shock would be if a spouse was offered an opportunity in another location. A positive shock

would be receiving a job offer versus receiving a bad performance evaluation, which would be a negative shock. External opportunities may also lead to turnover, for example, if an employee receives an unsolicited job offer with a more attractive package. The employee was not dissatisfied with their work, they were just made an offer they could not refuse.

The fourth misconception is that managers cannot do anything to affect turnover decisions. When it comes to new employees, there are evidence-based practices that managers can employ in terms of recruitment, selection, and socialization (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). Providing applicants with a comprehensive picture of the organization by job previews or referrals can likely reduce turnover. Managers should assess the applicant fit not only with the job but also with the organization as a whole. If they do not seem like an organizational fit, they may contribute to turnover within the first year (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). Managers should also use socialization efforts to connect new employees with other employees to make them feel more committed to the people and to the organization. Also, linking training and development opportunities to tenure helps the organization retain employees. Managers play an important role in turnover decisions; therefore, providing effective leadership training and removing toxic or abusive managers can reduce turnover (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010).

The final misconception of turnover is that general best practices are the best way to manage retention. Designing a strategic approach to remediate turnover

requires the ability to identify the contributing factors to the organization's turnover rate (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). General best practices can help retain some employees, but organization specific turnover factors can help reduce overall turnover rates. General best practices could include retention research, best practices, and benchmarking surveys. Organizations should also look at their own exit interviews, employee surveys, and the external factors that are causing their employees to leave. They can also compare their turnover rates among those of their competitors to determine if they are the only organization having the problem.

Turnover becomes problematic when the wrong people are leaving and the costs are harmful to the organization's competitiveness. Identifying the extent to which turnover is a problem is an ongoing analysis of turnover rates, turnover costs, and determining why employees are leaving (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010).

Cost of Turnover

Turnover rates are important because recruiting, hiring, and training new employees is expensive. The cost of turnover accounts for separation costs, cost of hiring, training costs, learning costs, and lower performance. Turnover also accounts for lower employee morale in an organization. For DOD organizations, the cost of turnover also includes security orientation, badging, security clearances, and access to DOD equipment costs. The average turnover costs have been

estimated to range from 33 percent up to 300 percent of the employee's annual salary (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Partnership for public service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010; Schawbel, 2013; Bolman & Deal, 2013).

According to the Partnership for public service and Booz Allen Hamilton (2010), turnover costs fall into five categories and include: separation costs, replacement costs, new hire training costs, lost productivity, and lost institutional knowledge. The separation costs consist of the time, expense, and resources required to outprocess a departing employee. Replacement costs includes the expense of recruiting candidates, interviewing, hiring, badging, and security clearances. New hire training costs include the onboarding time and expenses, time spent familiarizing new employees with the culture, their new job, and new hire paperwork and training. This would also include security training and special access briefings for DOD employees. Lost productivity or operational costs are associated with the delays and backups in completing tasks. Missed deadlines for products or services could also affect profitability. Turnover costs organizations a loss in institutional knowledge, decreases employee morale, and leaves the organization with a performance gap as the new employee gets up to speed.

Research estimates an average tenure of Millennials as two years. The return on investment to recruit, hire, and train a Millennial leaves little to no room for any organization to break even or make a profit. With the disruption in productivity, loss of institutional knowledge, loss of mentorship, and the other costs

associated with employee turnover, many organizations today are increasingly concerned about how to retain Millennials (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010).

DOD Organizational Turnover

According to Cho and Lewis (2012), turnover is strongly related to experience and age. One quarter of employees in their first year of DOD employment are gone by the next year, 16.5% of those in their second year of employment leave by their third year, and 12.4% of those in their third year of employment are gone by their fourth year (Cho & Lewis, 2012). The turnover rate drops to about 5% by the employee's ninth year of employment (Cho & Lewis, 2012). It stays consistent in the second and third decades of DOD employment and then spikes back up at retirement age. DOD employees in their 20s have exit rates around 24% in comparison to employees in their 30s and 40s, which is at 3.6% (Cho & Lewis, 2012).

There are restrictions written into DOD contracts which could deter Millennials from wanting to work for a DOD organization. Some restrictions include: no flex time, no telecommuting, no job sharing, no cell phones, social media monitoring, and no personal computers – all of which are Millennial needs (Rein, 2015; Clapper, 2016).

As required by the DOD, organizations must implement security controls in facilities, processes, and procedures to protect classified information from leaking

to unauthorized people. Inappropriate conduct with respect to classified information may result in punishment by the DOD organization, depending on severity of infraction (Clapper, 2016). These punishments could lead to time off, job loss, and/or a federal penalty (Tinoco & Arnaud, 2013). These security measures and punishments affect the profitability and productivity of a DOD organization. The costs associated with the infractions and/or punishments affect new hire rates, loss in training, profitability, and productivity. It could also affect morale with the customer. If an employee is pulled from a job, the customer loses productivity and profitability. This could cause the customer to use a competitor to fill the position next time; therefore, the current organization loses the profitability of that position.

DOD organizations are often directed to implement similar management and control procedures in their organizations based on requirements of the customer (Tinoco & Arnaud, 2013). DOD organizations are contractually required to comply with numerous military standards, processes, procedures, and product design regulations, developments, and tests, as well as program management and financial regulations (Augustine, 1983).

Previously, it was unknown if any of these factors contributed to the turnover or turnover intention of Millennials. However, this study uncovered some of the reasons Millennials are leaving DOD organizations at an earlier rate than other generations.

Gaps in Knowledge

When it comes to Millennials in the workplace, a review of the literature suggests they are very different from the other generational cohorts. It is likely that Millennials will eventually make up the majority of the workforce as the other generations retire. Due to the rising number of Millennials, it is important to understand their uniqueness so that organizations can be better at retaining them. The issue of turnover has been identified by researchers, but thus far, they have not learned why Millennials specifically choose to job hop (Meier & Crocker, 2010; Twenge, 2010). While Millennial needs have been well researched, a gap in the relationship between turnover intentions of Millennials in DOD organizations is absent. DOD organizations will need to understand the relationship for sustainability in the workforce. This study contributes to this gap.

This chapter presents literature addressing the theoretical framework: generational theory, the generational cohorts, needs of Millennials in the workplace, turnover, costs of turnover, and turnover in DOD organizations. This study closes the gap in literature that pertains to the factors that contribute to Millennial turnover in DOD organizations. Chapter three addresses the methodology and research design used to answer the research questions.

Chapter 3

Research Method and Design

This study explored the reasons that Millennial employees decide to leave a DOD organization earlier and more frequently than previous generations in the Tennessee Valley region. Through the exploration, factors emerged from the data that will help DOD organizations understand Millennial retention and intent to stay at a place of employment. The research questions are:

1. What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?
2. What role do needs of Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

The goal of this study was to contribute to the body of knowledge related to the shared experiences of Millennials who have experienced the phenomenon of job hopping, and how this generation impacts the turnover rates of DOD organizations (Meier & Crocker, 2010). A phenomenological approach was the most appropriate for this study because turnover in Millennials is best described by those who have experienced it (Giorgi, Barton, & Maes, 1979; Giorgi, 2009; Creswell, 2014; Moustakas, 1994). One-on-one interviews helped discover the personal experiences of the participants with the job hopping phenomenon and assisted with answering the research questions.

Qualitative data was gathered using one-on-one interviews from Millennials currently employed by DOD organizations and Millennials who left their position at a DOD organization within the first two years of employment. A qualitative approach allowed for a more detailed description from participants of why they stayed or left a DOD organization, which was the focus of this study. Open ended questions were asked to receive a more detailed response. This information will be valuable to organizations for recruiting and retaining as well as improving productivity, profitability, and turnover rates.

In the following section, the research method and design, population and sample, data collection and analysis, limitations, and ethical considerations are discussed.

Research Method and Design

Although many different research methods have been used to examine Millennials, a phenomenological research method was chosen for this study because the researcher examined shared experiences and specific reasons for turnover in Millennials (Moustakas, 1994). “Phenomenological research is well suited for studying affective, emotional, and often intense human experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 26). Studying the actual experiences of Millennial turnover intentions was the best approach for this study.

The objective of a phenomenological study is to clarify the meaning, structure, and the lived experiences of a person, or a group of people, around a specific phenomenon (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2010). This qualitative study explored the phenomenon of Millennial turnover intention in DOD organizations. “Phenomenology is the search for the essence of things that cannot be revealed by ordinary observation” (Lin, 2013). Phenomenology studies the unique ways of human behavior through personal experiences. The researcher thought the best way to study Millennial turnover was using one-on-one interviews. A qualitative, phenomenological design was used to conduct interviews to understand what contributes to Millennial turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment. The research design was limited to Millennials in the Tennessee Valley region who had worked at a DOD organization for more than two years and Millennials who had left a DOD organization within two years.

There was no preference of the Millennial’s position, experience, ethnicity, gender, or level of education. There were nine interviews conducted for each of the two groups. According to Creswell (2014), six to eight people is a good amount for interviews (p. 190). The interviews were conducted at a convenient location for the participant. The locations of the interviews included the places of employment of the interviewee, a coffee shop, and the researcher’s place of employment. The interviews were all secluded to just the interviewer and interviewee, except for the

coffee shop interview. The selected participants contributed opinions and responses to the interview protocol (Appendices A and B) that were important to understanding their turnover intentions.

Moustakas (1994) offers an eight step process for conducting phenomenological research. The eight steps are:

1. Discover a topic and formulate a question.
2. Conduct the literature review.
3. Construct criteria to select participants.
4. Obtain participant consent, insure confidentiality, agree to a place and time, and obtain permission to record and publish.
5. Develop interview questions.
6. Collect the data.
7. Organize and analyze the data.
8. Summarize the findings.

The first step was to discover a topic and formulate a question. After considerable thought and research, the researcher landed on the topic of “what factors contribute to Millennial turnover rates in DOD organizations?” This topic was important to the researcher because she works for a DOD organization and is able to see the turnover rates of Millennials. She would like to help the organization

attract and retain the Millennials that are leaving at a high rate. The hope for this study is to help her organization as well as others.

The second step was to conduct the literature review. The researcher conducted the literature review based on the themes she thought were important to the study. Those themes were the theoretical framework: generational theory, generational cohorts, Millennial needs in the workplace, turnover, and cost of turnover. The researcher also included the gap of knowledge discovered as the literature review was conducted. She was able to find literature and research on Millennials, but not specific to Millennials in DOD organizations. Additionally, the researcher was able to find research on turnover intentions, but not specific to Millennials or Millennials in DOD organizations. Therefore, it was concluded that this was a gap of knowledge in literature.

The third step was to develop criteria for selecting participants. The researcher chose to access Millennials through professional and personal networks. She reached out to them by email and social media. The introductory email can be found in Appendix E.

The fourth step was to obtain participant consent, insure confidentiality, agree to a place and time, and obtain permission to record and publish. The researcher sent a follow-up email to the ones who responded that they wanted to participate, which included the consent form (Appendix C), demographics form

(Appendix D), and interview protocol (Appendices A and B). The details are in the data collection section below.

The fifth step was to develop questions for the research process. The researcher developed interview questions for two separate groups of individuals. The first group consisted of Millennials who have worked for a DOD organization for longer than two years within the Tennessee Valley region. The second group consisted of Millennials who had left a DOD organization before two years of continuous employment in the Tennessee Valley region. The interview protocol can be found in Appendices A and B.

Step six was to collect the data. The methods used to collect the data are listed below. After the data was collected, the seventh step was to organize and analyze the data. The researcher used Rev Transcription service to transcribe the interviews. Once they were transcribed, line by line analysis was performed on the transcripts to look for similarities and differences. The detailed process is in the data analysis section below. The final step was to summarize the findings. This section was written once all the data had been analyzed and conclusions had been made.

A qualitative, phenomenological design allowed participants to express the shared experiences of their young careers. The participants have lived the experiences and can speak directly about the reasons they stayed or left a DOD organization. The participant interviews were successful at answering the research

questions and contributing to the body of knowledge. Their experiences determined what factors contribute to turnover intentions and what role needs play in turnover intentions at DOD organizations.

Sample

Millennials are those born between 1980 and 2000 (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The sample for this study included Millennials who had worked for a DOD organization for longer than two years within the Tennessee Valley region. Additionally, the study sought to understand Millennials who had left a DOD organization before two years of continuous employment in the Tennessee Valley region.

The Tennessee Valley region is representative of many in the United States that have experienced a rapid growth in Millennials entering the workforce. This area also has an abundant number of DOD organizations (Chamber of Commerce, 2016). In a recent survey completed by Alabama Media Group, the top three benefits that Alabama Millennials want were: competitive wages, a positive work environment, and work-life balance (Chambers, 2016). They revealed the top three benefits that Alabama Millennials want, but did not discuss if Millennials would actually leave their current organizations if those benefits were not met. They also did not discuss the different industries that Millennials work in, such as DOD organizations. This study could be used to expand the findings from previous research, such as the Alabama Media Group survey.

Access to Millennials was gained through professional and personal networks, social media, and word-of-mouth. The researcher had access to Millennials through her place of employment, which is a DOD organization located in the Tennessee Valley region. She also kept in contact with several Millennials who had left her organization. She reached out to them to ask for participation. Through these contacts and social media, the researcher was able to engage with prospective participants and recruit participants for the study.

The researcher contacted potential participants by email and through social media. She explained the purpose of the study and asked them if they would like to participate. A sample of 16 to 20 participants was the objective. The researcher was able to gather 18 individuals for the study. The nine participants who have stayed at a DOD organization volunteered quicker than the nine participants who had left a DOD organization. One of the limitations discovered was that there were not many Millennials between the age range of 18 to 26 who have worked or currently work for a DOD organization. Most of the participants were in the age range of 27 to 36. Millennials were the target population to collect data from because the study focuses on understanding their generation.

Data Collection

The researcher used social media, email, and word-of-mouth to find a list of potential participants and sent them an email. The introductory email (Appendix E)

explained the purpose of the study, benefits of completing the study, and how confidentiality would be maintained. For the participants who responded and were willing to participate, a follow-up invitation was sent. The invitation included the interview protocol (Appendices A and B), consent form (Appendix C), demographic information form (Appendix D), and time, location, and site details. Demographic information was collected to ensure participants met the criteria established by the researcher. Participants were asked to confirm they were born between the years of 1980 and 2000 and to confirm they had been employed by a DOD organization continuously for two years or had left a DOD organization within two years. If the participant did not meet the criteria of the study or no longer wished to participate in the study, he or she could voluntarily choose to terminate participation. This did not happen in the study. The participants answered all the interview questions asked. The researcher and participant met in a mutually convenient location, where interviews were recorded. Interview data was collected during January 2017.

Pilot Study

A pilot study is a trial run of the full study. A pilot study was conducted to validate the applicability of the methods and interview questions. The advantages of a pilot study are that it might give advance warning about where the study may fail or whether the methods and questions are too complicated (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). This gives the researcher an opportunity to adjust the main study.

For the pilot study, one Millennial who had been with a DOD organization for longer than two years and one who had left within the first two years were selected. The methods of the full scale study were followed. The results from the pilot study were not used in the final report. This left eight participants for each of the two groups. There were no indications from the pilot study that changes needed to be made to the interview protocol.

Full Study

The participants consisted of eight Millennials that had stayed at the same DOD organization for at least two years and eight Millennials who had left a DOD organization within the first two years. Although the two groups had separate questions to answer, the structure of the interviews was the same.

The researcher began each interview by welcoming the participant and reviewing the goals of the meeting. The background of the problem was presented and the research study in question: the factors contributing to Millennial turnover rates in DOD organizations. Each participant was asked to fill out a consent form (Appendix C) and demographic information (Appendix D) before the interview began. After all questions and answers were wrapped up, the interview began.

The researcher asked a question and gave the participant ample time to answer the question. This process was conducted for each of the questions. The in-depth interviews were conducted one-on-one between the individual participant and

the researcher. The open ended questions gave the participants an opportunity to provide in-depth responses. Once the session ended, the researcher thanked each participant and told them they would receive a copy of the final report once it is generated. The interview protocol is located in Appendices A and B.

Data Analysis

The researcher used an online service, Rev Transcription, to transcribe the interviews. The audio files were downloaded from the recording device onto the researcher's computer. One by one, the audio files were uploaded to Rev Transcription for transcribing. The transcriptions were usually returned within a few hours. The transcriptions were sent to the researcher by email. They were then saved to the researcher's computer in participant folders until it was time for data analysis. Once all the interviews were transcribed, the researcher was ready to analyze. Moustakas' (1994) six steps to analyze the transcripts were used.

Moustakas (1994) has six steps to phenomenological analysis (Creswell, 2014). First, the researcher must describe his or her personal experiences with the phenomenon under study. This is an attempt to prevent bias in the research. The researcher currently works for a DOD organization and is able to see the turnover rates of Millennials. Watching multiple Millennials walk out the door intrigued the researcher to find out the reasons why they left. She would like to help the

organization attract and retain the Millennials that are leaving at a high rate. The hope for this study is to help her organization as well as others.

Second, the researcher will find significant statements in the transcripts about how the participants experience the topic. The researcher reviewed the transcripts line by line. Similarities and differences in the transcripts were analyzed to discover themes which describe the phenomenon. The researcher looked for the factors that determined the meaning or themes that described the essence of turnover intentions. The turnover intentions explained the phenomenon of Millennials leaving a DOD organization within two years. The researcher listed these statements, treated each statement equally, and worked to develop a list of non-repetitive, non-overlapping statements (Creswell, 2014). Reoccurrences and patterns were reviewed to make sure they told an accurate story about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The third step was to take the significant statements and group them into larger units of information, called meaning or themes. The researcher organized these by using highlighters and post-it notes. During the initial transcript review, all the statements that were beneficial to the study were highlighted. After all transcripts were initially reviewed, the researcher color coded the statements that were similar in nature. Everything was then typed in Excel to organize the data electronically and create tables by color. Once all of the data was entered, the statements that were not relevant to the study were removed. The color codes were

then organized by factors or workplace needs that cause Millennials to leave an organization. Six different colored codes were left. These six colors formed the main themes. The statements were then organized into subthemes under each color. These main themes and subthemes would be the findings of the research. When the coding was complete, the number of participants that contributed to each theme was identified.

The fourth step was to write a description of what the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). This is called a textural description of the experience (Creswell, 2014). This includes verbatim examples. These statements are transformed into clusters of meaning, tying the general description of the experience together (Creswell, 2014). The researcher wrote about each theme and subtheme. Under each theme and subtheme, the important statements made by the participants were included. These statements describe what the participants in the study experienced with the phenomenon.

Next, the researcher wrote a description of how the experience happened (Creswell, 2014). This is called a structural description. The researcher reflected on the setting and context in which the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell, 2014). Participant profiles were created to validate the themes and to ensure that the essence of the phenomena was captured (Hycner, 1999; Groenewald, 2004). These profiles include what the participants stated their needs were in the workplace, and what needs and factors were revealed to be important to them in the interview.

Finally, the researcher wrote a combined description of the phenomenon incorporating both the textural and structural descriptions (Creswell, 2014). The themes include what the participants experienced with the phenomenon and how they experienced it. This resulted in a meaningful contribution to understanding the data and was used in the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The participant statements and the six themes that were formed help the reader understand the phenomenon of the factors which contributed to Millennials leaving DOD organizations.

Limitations

The scope of the study was limited to Millennials who have worked for, or currently work for, a DOD organization in the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama. Due to the limited scope, findings and conclusions derived from the study may potentially be limited in generalization. The participants consisted of Millennials in the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama who have left a DOD organization within two years, and Millennials who have stayed at a DOD organization longer than two years. Therefore, it is possible the findings and conclusions of this study may not apply to other Millennials based outside of DOD organizations or the Tennessee Valley region.

Another limitation is the difference of ages within the Millennial generation. At the time of the study, the youngest Millennial was 18 years of age

and the oldest Millennial was 37 years of age. The oldest Millennial may have already reached stage two of their life cycle; therefore, their answers may vary from the younger Millennials who are still in the first stage of their life cycle.

The final limitation is the stereotyping of Millennials. Millennials are “portrayed as entitled know-it-alls who want to jump up the corporate ladder without paying their dues; who demand work-life balance but also want a collaborative work environment; who need time off for volunteer efforts (since they want to save the world) but resist putting in extra time at work when it is needed; who are super tech-savvy but oblivious to social norms” (Kriegel, 2015, p. 1). There are some Millennials who may fit this stereotype, but many do not. This research study consisted of Millennials, but the results may not apply to all Millennials. There are other factors that contribute to the diversity of Millennials’ behavior, such as social economic status, geological location, and ethnicity (Fenzel, 2013).

Millennials have higher levels of student loan debt, poverty, and unemployment than other generations (Pew Research Center, 2014). “Two-thirds of recent bachelor’s degree recipients have outstanding student loans, with an average of \$27,000 (Woo, 2013). Many Millennials were entering the workforce just as the economy was sinking into a deep recession (Pew Research Center, 2014). “Millennials face more economic challenges than their elders did when they were

first starting out” (Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 1). Debt can play a factor in why Millennials choose to job hop to a better paying company.

Millennials may be attracted to big cities because of their public transportation systems. Public transportation makes it easy to get to work, meet with friends, run errands, and see the sights (Schafer, 2015). According to Schafer (2015), nearly 500 big employers have moved into a city versus the suburbs since 2010, including 52 Fortune 500 companies. Millennials could have different workplace needs depending on their geological location.

Millennials are the most racially diverse generation in American history (Pew Research Center, 2014). According to Pew Research Center (2014), 43% of Millennials are non-white, and the United States census bureau (2012) projects that the majority of the U.S. population will be non-white by 2043. Millennials are more diverse in ethnicity and show more acceptance to diverse social relationships (Bouie, 2012). They are well traveled and very accepting of multiculturalism (Venus, 2011). Millennials not only see diversity as age, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, or religion but they also think of it as having diversity of thought and diversity of mindset (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Having a diverse background and mindset can contribute to the turnover intentions of Millennials.

Ethical Considerations

The participants were given a consent form prior to starting the interview and were reminded that participation was voluntary. The consent form can be found in Appendix C. The participants had the opportunity to decline participation or stop the interview at any time. All participants were informed the interviews were confidential, and they would not be identified by name or company through the answers they provided. The files that contain notes and audio recordings are kept secure in a password protected file on a password protected computer. Approval was requested and obtained from the institutional review board (IRB) before interviewing any participants.

Summary

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology and design that was used to explore the factors that contribute to Millennial turnover rates in DOD organizations. “Recognizing the benefit of the analysis will enable leaders to develop stronger organizations and make improved hiring decisions that lead to longer employee retention, reduced employment costs, and increased productivity” (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014, p. 70). The results of this study will help researchers identify approaches to help DOD organizations improve recruitment and retention programs to reduce turnover. The interviews used for this study consisted of Millennials in the Tennessee Valley area of Alabama who have left a DOD organization within two years and Millennials who have stayed at a DOD

organization longer than two years. The data collected and analyzed was used to answer the research questions. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study, including discussion pertaining to analysis of individual profiles as they relate to the turnover of Millennials in DOD organizations.

Chapter 4

Findings

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the shared experiences of Millennials to discover the factors that contribute to Millennial turnover rates in DOD organizations. Participants were selected from the Tennessee Valley region. Eighteen participants volunteered to be interviewed. Eight were women and ten were men. Two of the women were used in the pilot study, which left six women and ten men for the full study results.

The interview protocol was based on the two research questions:

1. What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?
2. What role do needs of Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The findings are based on the phenomenological analysis of the lived experiences of Millennials who fit the criteria for this study. Moustakas' (1994) coding and analysis method was used to analyze the data. The findings are a combination of the themes that emerged and the descriptions of the experiences related by the participants (Moustakas, 1994).

Interviews

There were two sets of interview questions (Appendices A and B): one for Millennials who have stayed with a DOD organization for longer than two years and one for Millennials who left a DOD organization within two years. The same interview questions were used in each set of the interviews to guide the questioning, but the participant's answers guided the interviews. All sixteen interviews were conducted in person. The in-person interviews were conducted at locations chosen by the interviewee.

The interviews lasted from 13 to 66 minutes, depending on the amount of information the participant provided. They were conducted during the month of January 2017. Participant numbers were used by the researcher, instead of actual names, to protect the anonymity of the participants.

The interviews were transcribed and reviewed several times by the researcher for emerging themes. After reviewing all of the transcriptions, the researcher coded statements made by the participants. After the initial round of coding, the data was arranged by the codes, and the results were reviewed. The data was then reorganized to mesh similar codes. This step was repeated until the results best reflected the data. The final step was to organize the codes by factors or workplace needs that cause Millennials to leave an organization. When the coding was complete, the number of participants that contributed to each theme was

identified. Eighteen subthemes emerged from the data. From these subthemes, six main themes were developed. The six main themes are challenging and meaningful work, collaboration and teamwork, flexibility, transparency and communication, work-life balance, and other factors that contribute to Millennial turnover intentions.

Description of the Participants

Demographic Data

The study used participants who were born between 1980 and 2000 and have worked at a DOD organization for more than two years or left a DOD organization within the first two years. Six participants were women and ten were men. The average age of the participants was 29. Three participants were between the ages of 18 and 26, twelve were between the ages of 27 and 36, and only one participant was over the age of 36. Six participants had Master's degrees, nine had Bachelor's degrees, and one had a high school diploma. The occupations of the participants were primarily Engineering, Human Resources, Finance and Contracts, Information Technology, Management, and Administration.

Previous researchers stated that Millennials usually leave organizations within the first two years (Murphy, 2008; Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). On average, the participants in this study had 5.2 jobs so far in their young careers. The numbers

per participant ranged from two jobs to eleven jobs. When asked the question about tenure at an organization not meeting their needs, the participants answered that they were willing to stay on for a range of 6 to 36 months before leaving. An average of 16 months is the timeframe they are willing to stay at an organization not meeting their needs. The findings of this study concur with previous research that states Millennials do leave organizations within two years of employment if their needs are not being met.

Participant numbers were assigned by the researcher instead of actual names to protect the anonymity of the participants. Participants were labeled 1A to 8A for those who have stayed at a DOD organization for longer than two years. Those who left within two years were labeled 1B to 8B.

Participant Profiles

Participant 1A

Participant 1A is a 29 year old male who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the Information Technology field. He has held 11 jobs in his lifetime. He described his top needs as wanting a macro-manager and having flexibility in hours. He stated, "I would say the macro-manager is most important, because I feel like as long as I know what I need to do and what needs to be done, I will manage myself." The coding analysis revealed that he talked about career development and

feedback the most. Benefits, career advancement, flexibility in hours, and macro-management all tied for third.

Participant 1B

Participant 1B is a 19 year old male who has a high school degree and is currently in college working on a Bachelor's degree. When he worked for a DOD organization, he was in the administrative field. He has held six jobs in his lifetime. He said the following about his needs in the workplace: "I would rather have a job that I enjoy doing rather than make a lot of money doing a job I hate. Probably the enjoyment of the job would be first, money would be second, vacation time would be third and then just everything else would follow behind that." The coding analysis discovered that he felt passionately about working in a Millennial friendly workplace. This was followed by meaningful work, flexibility in hours, and feedback.

Participant 2A

Participant 2A is a 34 year old male who has a Master's degree and works in the management field. He has only had three jobs in his lifetime. His top need in the workplace is "the ability to know that if I do well in my job and succeed, then I'll be able to have more responsibility, get increased responsibility, and continue to grow within the organization." The coding analysis revealed that career development and career advancement are very important to him. He also discussed

feedback as an important need. He discussed the need for feedback more than compensation throughout the interview.

Participant 2B

Participant 2B is a 36 year old female who has a Master's degree and works in the engineering field. She has had ten jobs in her lifetime. She told me her top need in the workplace was "to feel like I'm contributing to the team. I like to feel like our overall mission is doing good for the society, as well. I like to be a part of that, and I like to feel like I'm not just a number, that I am giving back to the organization, which is a teeny part of the organization's bigger goal of giving back to society in some way, shape, or form." The coding analysis matches her top need as meaningful work. She also discussed how feedback and career advancement are important as well.

Participant 3A

Participant 3A is a 27 year old female who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the administrative field. She has only held two jobs in her lifetime. The top needs she listed in her interview were "money first and then second would be the flexibility of being able to change my work hours or leave, work four-tens, or take off every other Friday." The coding analysis differed from what she mentioned. It showed the needs she discussed more often were career advancement, meaningful work, and career development. Flexibility in hours and dress followed behind those three.

Participant 3B

Participant 3B is a 33 year old male who has a Master's degree and works in the management field. He has held four jobs in his career. When asked about his needs he stated, "I would say that I'm more on the technical side or hardware side of what I want. Most of the things I consider needs are proper lab equipment, proper overhead equipment to fabricate and build in support of engineering. It was really important to me to have all the tools we needed to get our job done, really more so than probably benefits and stuff like that." The coding analysis agreed with his top need being tools needed to get the job done. This was followed by feedback and compensation.

Participant 4A

Participant 4A is a 27 year old female who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the Human Resources field. She has held five jobs in her lifetime. When she described her top needs in the workplace she stated, "Probably right now it would be to do something different to advance my career, then money, then the flexibility for work hours, and then the casual Friday or not having to dress up all the time." The analysis listed flexibility in hours as her top need. She discussed this need more often than any other need. The needs and factors that followed were: feedback, working in a Millennial friendly environment, and career advancement.

Participant 4B

Participant 4B is a 28 year old male who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the finance and contracts field. He has held seven jobs in his lifetime. When talking about his needs in the workplace, he said, "I don't have a long list of needs. I'd probably say just the tools to do my job effectively. The ability to get a question answered every once in a while if need be. An occasional day off. Mostly just a fair opportunity to do my job well and a fair opportunity to do good work." The coding analysis showed that his top need is having the tools needed to get the job done. That was followed by feedback and career advancement.

Participant 5A

Participant 5A is a 35 year old male who has a Master's degree and works in finance and contracts. He has had five jobs in his career. When he was asked to put his needs in order of importance, he stated, "Financially, I need to be able to support my family, so that's pretty important. Having a fulfilling job is important, and it's tough to do that in an organization where you don't feel like you're supported by the levels above you to do what you need to do to get the job done." The coding analysis shows career development, career advancement, meaningful work, and feedback were all discussed more than compensation.

Participant 5B

Participant 5B is a 29 year old female who has a Bachelor's degree and works in Human Resources. She has had seven jobs in her lifetime. She listed her

top needs as “one being the most important: flexibility. Two, opportunity for growth, and then three, good relationships.” The analysis verifies her top needs are flexibility in hours, career advancement, meaningful work, and career development.

Participant 6A

Participant 6A is a 29 year old male who has a Master’s degree and works in the engineering field. He has had three jobs in his lifetime. When discussing his top needs, he said, “I’d say one of the bigger needs is the flexibility to be able to operate with work and family, and opportunity. I can get a little restless doing any one thing. I always want to try new things and be given the opportunity or the responsibility to take on different things. That kind of flexibility and being able to be challenged is important.” The coding analysis showed the importance of his needs are career advancement, career development, and flexibility in hours. Compensation was not discussed as much as the other topics.

Participant 6B

Participant 6B is a 33 year old female who has a Master’s degree and works in the finance and contracts field. She has had three jobs in her career. She listed her needs as “compensation, flexibility, atmosphere, and then benefits.” The analysis revealed that she discussed other needs, such as direction, meaningful work, and career advancement more than she discussed compensation. Flexibility, benefits, and feedback were very close to compensation as well.

Participant 7A

Participant 7A is a 25 year old female who has a Bachelor's degree and works in finance and contracts. She has had three jobs in her lifetime. She listed her top needs as "a non-stress environment, to be well-compensated, to have room for growth, [and] to be respected." The coding analysis showed that she was passionate about working in a Millennial friendly work environment, career advancement, compensation, and then flexibility.

Participant 7B

Participant 7B is a 33 year old male who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the Information Technology field. He has had six jobs in his lifetime. The order of importance of his needs is "salary is number one. I like to be paid market value, what's fair. Then, just opportunities that excite me and get me engaged." The analysis agrees that his top needs are career development, career advancement, meaningful work, and compensation.

Participant 8A

Participant 8A is a 25 year old male who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the engineering field. He has had four jobs in his lifetime. When he was asked what his needs in the workplace were, he stated, "A good work environment is key. I guess an ethically strong work environment. People that do what they're supposed to do and don't slack around. Opportunity to grow. Not necessarily just on my skillsets but in the company as well. Like opportunities to advance." The analysis

agrees with his top needs being career advancement, meaningful work, teamwork, and career development.

Participant 8B

Participant 8B is a 27 year old male who has a Bachelor's degree and works in the engineering field. He has had three jobs in his lifetime. He listed his top needs as "benefits, job security, and then trust." The analysis shows that he feels strongly against micromanaging and wants meaningful work and good benefits.

Emerged Themes

The research questions concerned the experiences of Millennials related to their turnover intention. There were six main themes identified and eighteen subthemes:

1. Challenging and meaningful work
2. Collaboration and teamwork
3. Flexibility
4. Transparency and communication
5. Work-life balance
6. Other factors which contribute to Millennial turnover intentions

The reported findings (Appendix F) were organized by themes (and subthemes) that emerged and are presented in order of frequency.

Theme 1: Challenging and Meaningful Work

Millennials are not just looking for work; they are looking for self-fulfillment. They want learning opportunities and new skills that will help them advance their careers (Murphy, 2008). Millennials become bored easily and therefore require challenging work (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). Since Millennials were always told they could be anything they wanted, they feel insulted when tasked with meaningless work (Tulgan, 2009). All sixteen participants in the study mentioned that challenging and meaningful work was a major need in the workplace. It is a need that keeps Millennials at DOD organizations, and if the need is not met, it causes them to leave DOD organizations. Of the themes mentioned, challenging and meaningful work had four subthemes, which includes career advancement, career development, meaningful work, and long term goals.

Career Advancement

All sixteen participants mentioned that career advancement was a very important need in the workplace. It is the subtheme with the most mentions and the most time spent explaining their situations. It was mentioned 60 times amongst the interviews. All participants mentioned that the ability to advance in the organization was a reason to stay or leave.

Participant 2A's direct words were, "What I need most is the ability to know that if I do well in my job and succeed, then I'll be able to have more

responsibility, get increased responsibility, and continue to grow within the organization.” When participant 2B was asked to describe Millennials, she said, “It’s not necessarily that we’re lazy. We like to work smarter, not harder, and we don’t feel like we have to sit at a company for ten years to climb that corporate ladder. We feel like we can execute a great idea, get noticed, and maybe climb that corporate ladder, untraditional to what our forefathers did.” When asked why she left the DOD organization, she stated, “Just not being able to execute any ideas and feeling stagnant in my career. It was a personal decision, luckily. I want to always grow and evolve and make sure I’m challenged. If I’m not challenged, I get bored, and I don’t like being bored.” Not receiving challenging work and career advancement opportunities caused participant 2B to leave the DOD organization.

Participant 7B stated the reason he left his last organization was; “Well I think in a lot of DOD jobs, I had the feeling of being stuck, like I was just a butt in a seat. I felt like in some cases I was just a vehicle for profit. They had a task, and I was stuck in that task. There was not a lot of opportunity for change or growth and stuff like that.” When participant 6A was asked why he stayed at a DOD organization, he mentioned, “I think that I’ve been given plenty of opportunities to grow and pursue the things that I have said that I’m interested in growing towards and pursuing.” As mentioned before, the reason one person may leave a job might be the reason another person will stay (Flowers & Hughes, 1973).

Career Development

Fifteen of the participants mentioned career development. It was mentioned 49 times amongst the interviews. When participant 1A was questioned about why he stays with his current organization, he stated, "I like that they let you do what you want within reason. If I wanted to learn a skill relevant to my position, they would let me and they would pay for it, which is really great. A lot of places pay 10% of your tuition, but here, they pay all of it. I got some certifications which helped me do my job." He also described how he is given access to and realistic consideration for promotional opportunities. He also stated, "I grew my position into the stuff relevant to my degree, and because those skills were made aware to other people that I could do these things, the work in that direction started to get directed toward me. They put me in charge of more stuff." He described how he developed his career within the organization, by stating, "I've been able to grow my position into other things that I'm interested in and good at. I didn't realize how good I was at math, which I'd forgot about, until I helped out with a data entry project and building macros in Excel and research. That interested me and I got really excited about it and I did a lot of work into that. I do feel like if they ask you to do something and you say 'yes' or if you ask for something that interests you, you could end up using all of your talents by working here." Participant 1A has received a lot of career development at his DOD organization, causing him to remain an employee of that organization for over two years.

Participant 2A said, “The thing I like most about my job is the freedom to be able to experience different things.” His top need is “the ability to know that if I do well in my job and succeed, then I'll be able to have more responsibility, get increased responsibility, and continue to grow within the organization.” In his current job, his view on promotional opportunities is that “if you want to take the initiative to chase and take on additional responsibility, and make this job into something else, or to show that you are better than the job that you're currently doing, you can do that.” Participant 2A has many opportunities to grow his career at his current DOD organization. This keeps him engaged, and therefore, the DOD organization is able to retain him.

Participant 2B was not getting challenged in her last organization, so she decided to leave. “Just not being able to execute any ideas and feeling stagnant in my career. I want to always grow and evolve and make sure I'm challenged.” She said if she was able to implement her skill or be heard, then she would have considered staying. Millennials want learning opportunities and new skills that will help them advance their careers (Murphy, 2008). Participant 2B was not receiving career development at the DOD organization she worked for, causing her to leave before two years of employment.

When describing the management in participant 3A's workplace, she stated, “I just feel like there is a lot of peers that work among me that have no goals set for them, or if they set their own goals, there's no path for it to meet them, and that the

managers are not here to help the employees.” Participant 3A seemed frustrated that she and her coworkers are not provided with a career development plan at her current DOD organization. Millennials are looking for a leader who will cultivate them and chart a career path for their success, not a manager (Carpenter & Charon, 2014). Seeing a path forward to include career development and advancement opportunities are very important to Millennials. When she was asked about having access to the appropriate equipment and resources to perform her job, she responded with, “It’s funny that that specific question is on there, because I’m not given the appropriate access. It actually is very frustrating. I feel it’s because of my age that they think that I’m not mature enough to know people’s information even though my position requires me to know certain information. I can’t know it, and I don’t know why.” It seems that participant 3A’s DOD organization is lacking transparency and trust as well as career development.

Participant 4B discussed the lack of training he was provided and stated, “If they had some type of stable training established, something more concrete to begin with, that would have worked. Sometimes it felt like I was teaching myself karate. It was very hard to get some fairly basic stuff answered when I needed it.” Participant 4B was not provided with training opportunities or the information he needed to get the job done. This eventually led to his turnover decision.

Participant 4A described one of her top needs in the workplace as career development. “I would like to do something different, because I’ve been doing the

same thing for six years, and it's not what I went to school for. Although it was good to learn, I'd like to advance my career and do something else.” Participant 4B said that “some type of plan for where I could go in one year, two years, that sort of thing” would have prevented him from leaving his previous organization.

Participant 5A described how his talents are used in the workplace, saying, “it’s part of the whole process of working with the supervisor to determine what I want to do, what I'm good at, what the company thinks I could or should do, what they think I would be good at. We just talk about all those things, and my skills and abilities, and figure out where they're going to be the best fit and what needs to be done to develop them further.” Good communication, direction, and development opportunities have kept participant 5A at his DOD organization for more than five years.

Participant 5B and 6B mentioned that no training was offered to them or there was no budget for it. Participant 7A was told that she does not need the training she suggests. “There have been a few training opportunities where I've been like, ‘Oh hey, should I do that?’ And I've been told, ‘Nah, you need to wait.’” DOD organizations’ lack of career development opportunities has caused two out of the three participants to leave the organization.

Participant 6A talked about how he needs flexibility in the work he does because “I can get a little restless doing any one thing. I always want to kind of try

new things and be given the opportunity or the responsibility to take on different things. That kind of flexibility and I guess being able to be challenged is important.” When we discussed his long term goals, he talked about people who have worked in the same field for 15 years and expressed, “I don't think that's something that I could do or that I'd necessarily even be happy doing, which is why I've done my Master's and done some certifications and training courses to kind of diversify myself to be able to open myself to the possibility of growing.” He said that his current company requires him to take training. “Your immediate manager requires you and pushes you to go to one or two training courses a year to stay fresh on your skills, pushes you to develop yourself to get new capabilities that the company is completely willing to support, on the principle that employees are their business. The smarter your employees are, the more they're able to do, the better your business, and the better the machine works.” His opinion on how management should interact with their employees was that “You just need to give them the freedom to let them succeed, let them excel. I think from my experience with the two or three managers that I've kind of worked under, that each employee is handled differently. I think that I've been given plenty of opportunities to grow and pursue the things that I have said that I'm interested in growing towards and pursuing.” Millennials become bored easily and therefore require challenging work (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). Challenging work and career development has kept participant 6A at his current DOD organization for ten years.

Participant 7B said that he received some training, “but I was never given opportunities to use those trainings because I was stuck into a position in a certain role. There wasn't any room to actually make valuable use of the training I was provided.” He also mentioned that “I've never felt in the DOD, the way the jobs are structured, that there was an opportunity for promotion.” Even though participant 7B was offered training, he did not get to use the skills he learned. He did not have the opportunity to grow and learn new things, which eventually caused him to leave the DOD organization.

Meaningful Work

All sixteen participants mentioned that meaningful work is important to them. It was mentioned over 48 times, which means it was important to them. When participant 1B was asked what he liked least about his job, he said, “doing stuff that made me feel insignificant.” When he was asked what his needs in the workplace were, he said, “I guess just to feel like I'm a part of something. To be doing something to help other people, but not feel like I'm just doing it to make somebody's day easier. Just to feel like I'm not doing what other people don't want to do. Not doing stuff that other people just put on my plate because they don't want to do it.” At his current company, he mentioned, “I'm a part of a team. We all have to get a job done by the end of the day and I'm a part of that team that helps get the job done. I can visually see my work being done and how much effort I'm putting into it being done. I get immediate feedback. I feel like I'm of importance at my

current job.” One of the reasons he left the DOD organization was because “One of the ladies that works there asked me to do a rather meaningless task. I had to alphabetize her binders for her so I guess she could get work done easier. It just was demeaning. It made me feel like I didn't have any work to do, so they made me go alphabetize some binders for them.” When I asked him if there was anything that would have prevented him from leaving his last organization, he said, “The work that I was doing, maybe if it felt like it was of some kind of importance, which I know it was kind of important, but it just felt like I was just the person that did everything that nobody else wanted to do.” Since Millennials were always told they could be anything they want, they feel insulted when tasked with meaningless work (Tulgan, 2009).

Participant 2A realizes that meaningful work is important and believes his company realizes it too. “There's been times where they've said, ‘we’ve got to do something to recognize this particular person because they're killing it where they're at now. If we don't do something or give them something soon, there's a chance that they may get frustrated and leave.’” Participant 2A’s organization realizes how important feedback and meaningful work is to employees and tries to implement career development opportunities.

Participant 2B thought that at her last organization she was going to be able to share her “expertise and that it was new to the organization in the fact that that position hadn't been there. They just knew that they needed that position within the

organization. I liked that I didn't have shoes to fill and I had a blank canvas, if you will, to execute what I knew needed to be done.” She soon realized that “The reason why I was there was because it was a line in the government contract that called out that they needed [her position], but they really didn't want to implement the practices that stood up [that position]. They were just meeting the need of the contract.” That is when she realized that the organization was not going to meet her needs in the workplace. She stated, “I like to feel like I'm contributing to the team. I like to feel like our overall mission is doing good for the society as well. I like to be a part of that, and I like to feel like I'm not just a number, that I am giving back to the organization, which is a teeny part of the organization's bigger goal of giving back to society in some way, shape, or form.” She does not just want to feel like a “support service,” and that is how they made her feel.

Participant 2B felt her work was meaningful because she supports the warfighter. “In the DOD world, you have your war fighter that needs to be more mobile, and they're younger, so they look like us on the other side of the fence. They want their cell phone apps to be able to use their technology, whatever we're creating in organizations.” Millennials want to work for a company that does something they believe in.

Participant 3A described that she is not given meaningful work or promotional opportunities, just a job title change. ““Hey, we can change your job title if you want, but we still need you to do the same thing. We'll just try to make it

sound a little better so that you don't sound like you're scheduling meetings,' even though I am.” Changing a title without providing meaningful work seems pointless to the Millennials in this study. They care more about the work than the job title.

Participants 4A and 7A described how they believe their work is meaningful and contributes to their organizations. Participant 4A stated, “I know if I'm not here, it's important for someone else to do it. I couldn't just go missing and no one notice.” Participant 7A feels the same way, mentioning, “I don't think a lot of people realize the importance of it. If we were to not do our job, the people would realize, ‘Oh hey, I wish that person was here to do this job, but they're not; maybe I should've appreciated them.’” Millennials want to feel like they are a part of a team and that they are contributing to the success of the organization (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010).

Participant 5A said, “Having a fulfilling job is important and it's tough to do that in an organization where you don't feel like you're supported by the levels above you to do what you need to do to get the job done.” He stated that his current supervisor “does a great job of making sure that I'm happy and satisfied, while still making sure that I feel challenged and I'm still pursuing the things that I want to pursue.” Giving participant 5A meaningful work has kept him at his current DOD organization for over five years.

When participant 7B was describing what he liked least at his job, he explained, “Well I think in a lot of DOD jobs, I had the feeling of being stuck, like I was just a butt in a seat. I felt like in some cases I was just a vehicle for profit. They had a task and I was stuck in that task. There was not a lot of opportunity for change or growth and stuff like that.” What he looks for in an organization is “opportunities that excite me and get me engaged. I want to be in a position where I'm technically challenged, doing technically relevant work that's changing on a day by day basis, so I don't get into a rut of doing the same old thing over and over again.” One of the reasons he left his last DOD organization was that “I wasn't happy with the technical work I was doing. There was no room to do anything else.” If he had an “opportunity for a more fulfilling job,” he would have stayed at the DOD organization.

Participant 8A added that he likes to “work hard but it's hard for me to work hard at something that's very monotonous.” Participant 8B said his talents were not being used in the workplace. “I was like a 1-800-XBOX number. I felt like I was just wasting my engineering knowledge being at that company. Just customer support, really, for a software.” Meaningless work is demeaning to Millennials and caused participant 8B to look for another job.

Long Term Goals

Nine participants talked about their long term goals in the workplace. Participant 1B said his long term goal was to “Have a career that I enjoy being in, a

job that I don't wake up going to and wake up dreading going to, but also a job that has good pay and everything. Just something that I can sustain raising a family on. Something that makes it to where I don't come home every day after work, being angry at my family because of my job is not going the way I want it to be. Just want to have a job where I can come to work and not have to worry about going home, stressing with everything that the workforce can bring on.” Millennials do not define a job by how much it pays but how well it fits in their lives, the quality of work, and the tone of the environment (Spiegel, 2013).

Participant 2A’s long term goal was to be “number one or number two in a company somewhere, running a business somewhere, not necessarily owning one; but running a business, making the decisions, driving the day to day activities both from an operational perspective, but a strategic perspective, and a financial perspective of a company.” Participant 3A’s goal is similar in that she wants to “be in some sort of management. My ultimate goal is to be able to almost run a company, but help them succeed by seeing more in people and realizing that everyone has their different things to offer, and taking advantage of everyone's different abilities rather than just grouping everyone into one pot and saying, ‘You're all engineers,’ or ‘You're all assistants,’ or ‘You're all marketing or human resources,’ looking at each individual as an individual. My ultimate goal is to be able to pull people out and find people like that and help them almost succeed.”

Millennials look for faster career advancement opportunities within the organization than the older generations.

Participant 3B just wants to get “a few advanced degrees and retire early and decide when I want to work.” Participant 4B’s long-term goals also includes “continuing to pursue my education, get a Master's degree. A position with more responsibility here in the near future.” Participant 7A has the same goal, stating, “I need to get my Master's degree. That's my number one goal right now.” Participant 5A wants to “continue to move into a management role.” Millennials are fast approaching the most educated generation in American history (Hobart & Sendek, 2009; Pew Research Center, 2010). They are influenced by their Baby Boomer parents that education is the key to their success (Martin, 2006). This study has proven that education is as important as past researchers have stated.

Theme 2: Transparency and Communication

“Millennials want transparency and to be able to trust others. They want lots of feedback and coaching” (Spiegel, 2013, p. 20). Speed and frequency of communication is critical to Millennials. They want to be kept informed and plugged into the business (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Millennials want clear direction and guidance from managers. This theme had two subthemes: receiving feedback and receiving direction.

Receiving Feedback

Receiving feedback from managers, supervisors, or even other co-workers was mentioned by fifteen participants. It was mentioned 37 times in the transcripts. Receiving feedback was the second most important need for participant 1A. He said that “on the spot recognition means that somebody is paying attention and validating the work I’m doing.” His supervisor once told him that “he didn't have to watch over me and he said he really appreciated that, and he liked that I went above and beyond and took initiative to take care of stuff because that freed up a lot of stuff on his plate.” This feedback made participant 1A feel very appreciated.

Participant 2A said that at his current employer, “they just tell you. I mean they will come to you and tell you that you're doing a great job. To me, it's much better for folks not only at your direct supervisor level but at the executive level if you run into them in the hallway. Hell, sometimes they'll just come find you and be like, ‘Hey, you're from what everything we've heard from your supervisor, hey we just ran into a customer at lunch and they say you're absolutely just knocking the cover off the ball. I just want you to know that we really appreciate that. Just keep up the good work.’” Receiving feedback from participant 2A’s organization is one of the reasons that has kept him there for over 12 years.

Participant 2B did not receive feedback from her supervisor, she said “It wasn't by my supervisor; it was by others. Other people, time and time again, which I think made me stay so long, would say, ‘Because you're here, we now have a

baseline for our products. Because you're here, we've now thought about this. Because you're here, we have logistics which we didn't even think of until you came.' That feedback kept me there longer than maybe I should have stayed." She did receive feedback from other co-workers which made her stay at the company longer than she would have if she had not received that feedback.

Participant 4A put a spin on the feedback by saying she would like to give feedback and have someone listen to her. "I realize you can't change everything for Millennials because we're not the only people that work places, but try to listen to them. You can't do everything that people want, but you can try to make it to where they might stay longer or be happier so they look forward to coming to work every day or it's not dreadful." Communication is key to any organization. Keeping Millennials in touch with expectations and results will make them more engaged in their work.

Participant 5A said his supervisor does a good job at providing feedback. "It can be as simple as a, 'Nice job on task A. Well done.' Execution, whatever." However it is given, participant 5A appreciates it. Participants 6A, 7A, and 7B also appreciated the feedback they received. Participant 6A, stated "As far as acknowledgement and appreciation that can span anywhere from just a conversation saying, 'Hey, I know you did this, and we really appreciate it. Don't stress. Thank you.'" Participant 7B said they "would just send out the equivalent of 'atta boy's' or kudos or whatever via email with no compensation award, but that

was pretty much it.” Participant 7A shared that “Sometimes I get an email, ‘Good job.’ Pat on the back.” Millennials want positive reinforcement and accelerated feedback. They were raised in environments where their parents and other adults gave them a lot of attention; therefore, they became accustomed to coaching, direction, guidance, support, and shared wisdom (Tulgan, 2009).

Participant 5B was confused by the feedback she received from management. “He would give me kudos a lot behind closed doors, like a pat on the back or, ‘Hey, you’re doing a good job.’ He would never let anybody else know that I was doing a good job so that it wouldn’t make anybody else upset. It wasn’t really appreciated because it wasn’t seen by anybody.” Participant 6B said there was no feedback in her last organization. Millennials want to feel like they are a part of the big picture. If they do not receive feedback from managers, they do not feel connected to the organization or the bigger picture.

Receiving Direction

Receiving direction was not mentioned as much as feedback. It was only mentioned by five participants. Participant 4B felt strongly about not receiving direction from a previous DOD organization and expressed his frustration by giving an example. He stated, “The requirements change. Could you please just explain what the new requirements are? Could you please just tell me what I need to do? If I need to go get new information from a new source, can you please just tell me

what that is? I don't mind doing it. If you can't answer my question, can you please just give me a basic guide? Point me in the right direction. I don't mind doing the work. I don't mind looking it up myself and that sort of thing.” He said that from day one, “it felt like I was thrown to the wolves a little bit, but I'd ask for clarification for stuff. It was kind of hard to get.” Millennials have a strong curiosity and desire to understand why decisions are made, why tasks should be done in a particular order, and what necessitates a given priority (Spiegel, 2013). Participant 4B did not receive the direction he needed, and it caused him to leave that DOD organization.

Participant 6A thinks that he does not receive much direction because he works for a DOD organization. “I guess it's not anything about my job in particular; but more about DOD work in general, but in supporting a customer with unclear requirements, or I guess direction, getting that changed last minute or late notice and having to kind of adjust. I think a lot of that's kind of unorganized and it causes a lot of conflicts and problems downstream.” Keeping Millennials in touch with expectations and results will make them more engaged in their work.

Participant 6B said there was “no uniformity” to her job. She continued by saying her “task could be done 12 different ways depending on who you talked to.” She described her working environment as follows: “Not everyone was on the same page and there was really no structure to anything we did. We flew by the seat of our pants every time and you constantly felt like you're putting out a fire.”

Millennials are continuously looking for more efficient ways to work and are very success driven. Participant 6B did not have any structure, direction, or feedback in the work she was doing. It ultimately caused the DOD organization to lose her.

Theme 3: Flexibility

Millennials desire to do what they want, when they want, have the schedule they want, and not worry about someone micromanaging them (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010). According to PwC (2013), 64% of Millennials would like to work from home and 66% would like to change their work hours. Flexibility was included in the most subthemes from the study. They are flexibility in hours, coming to work, micromanaging, dress flexibility, and telecommuting.

Flexibility in Hours

Twelve participants expressed their thoughts on flexibility in hours at their workplace. Each of these participants mentioned that flexibility in hours, the ability to leave work and do something else during the traditional 8:00 am to 5:00 pm workday or to come at their preference (late or early), was a very important factor in whether they stay or leave the organization. There were 37 mentions of it among their transcripts.

Participant 1B stated one of the reasons he left a DOD organization was because “I’ve always told myself that I didn’t want to work in an office. I didn’t want to work a 9:00 am to 5:00 pm job. I wanted to be able to see daylight. That’s

one thing I didn't like about it was I'd go in at 8:00 am in the morning and I'd come out at 5:00 pm and it would be dark outside already. I'd be inside all day working and never see the light of day.” He decided to leave the DOD organization rather than settle for not having flexibility in hours.

Participant 2A was told on his first day, “We expect you to be here at no later than 8:00 am and work until 5:00 pm, five days a week, and this is how you dress. It was extremely straightforward, and I was told there was no wiggle room.” He was told those are the “professional expectations” of the job. He mentioned that it was his first “steady 40 hours a week, 12 months a year” job. He stated, “I'll work here until I decide that it's best for me to work somewhere or they decide when it's best for me to go work somewhere else.” According to his response, flexibility in hours could be a reason that participant 2A eventually looked for a new organization.

Participant 3A's top need in the workplace was flexibility in hours. “I think, yes, flexibility, especially because I have a young child, and so I would like to be able to take off certain times that he is off or spend time with him. I also would like not just to be able to take off when I want, but to be able to work from different locations even if I go out of town, be able to put in some hours if I'm actually working by checking emails and responding, I mean, and not just checking emails but filling out forms and paperwork and things like that. I think I need from the organization more flexibility.” She also said “the flexibility of being able to change

my work hours or leave, work four-tens, or take off every other Friday.” According to PwC (2013), 66% of Millennials would like to change their work hours. They want time for friends, family, and doing things they enjoy.

Participant 4A mentioned flexibility in hours seven times during her interview. She stated, “I can come in early, and I can stay late, and I can work through my lunch, but as far as changing my schedule from the 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, I can’t. Say I’m not a morning person; I would come in at 9:00 am and avoid traffic and stay till 6:00 pm. I’m not allowed to do that. I’m not allowed to come in on weekends just to get a big task done or a project done without the people to distract me and just come one time and get it all done, just knock it out. I’m not allowed to do that, and I wish I was, especially since I’m not going to be paid for it, so why does it matter, really?” She looks forward to a position that might provide more flexibility in the future.

One incident that caused participant 4B to leave his last DOD organization was when he said to his supervisor, “‘Hey, I’m going to go. I’ve got some plans. I need to go do something.’ The time was approaching for me to leave. I let her know in advance. I’d taken care of everything I was supposed to take care of. Then, she kind of just slapped this extra thing on me at the last minute that prevented me from leaving and being able to do what I needed to do on time. That left a bad taste in my mouth.” This started his turnover intentions and led to him leaving that DOD organization.

Participant 5B mentioned the incident that caused her to leave was “I was one minute late and I got written up. That was when I realized that this just wasn't working for me anymore.” When I asked her my question about how she was offered flexibility she stated, “I wasn't because if I was a minute late, I'd get written up, so they had no flexibility unless you had a leave or something that you were going to take, but like if you, if the bus came late for the kids or something, they didn't care.” Flexibility in hours was the number one reason she left that DOD organization.

Participant 6A is offered flexibility in hours at his job, and he stated, “I drop my son off before work three days a week to grandparents, who get to take care of him. Being able to come in right on time or a little bit late for that, and then stay later to get all my work in is really valuable to me. Or to be able to jet out for a doctor's appointment or something like that during the day is really helpful. Flexibility in this position is something that's really important to me and to family.” He also mentioned that if he was not offered flexibility, it would cause him to consider leaving the organization.

When participant 8B was asked about flexibility in the DOD organization he left, he said, “It took us probably about a year for them to be able to implement flex start times, and then alternate work schedules. It took them a little while, but I think everyone fought back against it.” The organization realized flexibility was a need to their employees and implemented it.

The one statement made by participant 4A that reflected the feeling of every participant that listed flexibility in hours as an issue to them was “We just want to be able to support ourselves to live, but we would like more time to actually live.” Millennials work to live. They have a life outside of work.

Micromanaging

Eight participants discussed their thoughts on micromanaging in the work place. Among the eight participants, it was mentioned 19 times. Participant 8B stated, “The micromanagement I don't think was very fair to us. Just constantly checking in. [Asking] ‘What are you working on?’ every hour. We had a breakdown at the end of the day of what we worked on every hour. Then, we had to do the next, which we had to forecast what we were going to work on by the hour. I'm like it's very difficult to do that.” Participant 8B felt like he could not get his job done because he was constantly being micromanaged.

Participant 8B shared his experiences with micromanaging. He stated, “It was, like, five minutes to go in the day. The boss wasn't there. He wasn't there all day. He lives about 30 minutes away. He drives in to make sure we're still there, with five minutes to go in the day, opens up his laptop, closes it, and then leaves and returns home. That really stuck with me, being micromanaged.” Micromanaging was the one incident which caused him to leave the DOD organization.

A non-micromanager was participant 1A's top need. When he was asked what the importance of his needs were, he stated, "I would say the macro-manager is most important because I feel like as long as I know what I need to do and what needs to be done, I will manage myself. That's probably first, and everything else is tied for second." He followed up by stating, "If people are constantly checking what I'm doing every hour, I feel like I don't have the ability to succeed." When participant 1A was asked why he stayed at his current company, he said, "This is the first place I've worked where there weren't strict deadlines on stuff and micromanaging and you had to be there and just to be there." Having a macro-manager has kept participant at his current DOD organization.

Micromanagement was one of the reasons why participant 7B left his last organization. When he was describing the management of his last organization, he said, "Micromanagement. Really overbearing manager that liked to know the little intricate details. There was not a lot of trust and the employees were doing what they should be doing. It wasn't that great." Millennials need to be able to trust others and not feel micromanaged to keep them motivated.

Coming to Work

Most of the participants answered the question "How often do you look forward to another day at work?" the same way. "It's not misery having to get up and come to work, but I'm not jumping for joy coming here either," said participant 3A. They do not look forward to it, but do not dread it either.

Participant 4A answered the question by saying, “I don't know that I ever am just so excited to come to work. If I was petting dogs all day or just eating, I might look forward to that. I do not look forward to coming to work ever, which sounds awful, but I work so I can afford to live. I don't live to work.” Most Millennials, or even workers in general, probably feel this way. Very few people live to work.

Participant 7A said “I would say I don't really look forward to work. I look forward to paychecks and having a roof over my head, and transportation.”

Participant 7B answered similarly stating, “I don't know that I ever really look forward to a day at work. I really work just to support the family and stuff.”

Participants 7A and 7B go to work to get paid, so they can afford to do the things in life they enjoy, which is not working.

Participant 6B said “I'll say I don't dread going to work. Work is work. I'd love to be home with the kids but I enjoy what I do and I don't dread coming here.” She summed up the thoughts of all the participants on the subject of coming to work.

Dress Flexibility

It was surprising that only four participants brought up dress flexibility. Among those four, it was mentioned nine times. Dress flexibility was one of the reasons participant 3A does not like her job. She stated “I also don't like that we

have the rule of dressing professional all the time, because I think that professionals can dress casual and still be taken just as seriously as somebody in a pantsuit.” She continued, by saying, “It's not going to stop me from working, but it does make me feel more uncomfortable, I guess. I like a comfortable work environment. I like to be able to be myself, and I don't dress like this when I'm not here. I have two different wardrobes. I have to have my normal life and then my work life, and I would love for it to be one, but I don't ever see that happening.” Most people probably would love to have a job they look forward to going to every day, but few actually feel that way.

Participant 4A mentions she “would like casual Friday or not having to dress up all the time.” She mentions that dress flexibility is one of her needs not being met in the workplace, but it was low on her list. Money and flexibility in hours came first.

When describing the Millennial stereotype, participant 6A stated “I think there's also some style, stylistic trends, with personal appearance and dress that comes off to maybe older generations as informal. But maybe it's just different.” He adds that the stereotype in appearance might hurt job opportunities because “your appearance is going to affect how they perceive you, what kind of faith they're able to put in you, what kind of responsibility they're comfortable with you having.” No one likes to be stereotyped, especially when it comes to dress. Thinking that

someone who wears a suit is more professional than a person in more casual clothes is an antiquated way of thinking.

Telecommuting

According to PwC (2013), 64% of Millennials would like to work from home. Only three Millennials mentioned telecommuting in their interviews, which is only 19% within this study who want to work from home. Participant 2A believes telecommuting is not allowed at DOD organizations. He said, “As a general rule, it can, especially in a business like government contracting, which is, I would say, is behind the times as a general rule with some of the processes, policies and stuff like that, that we have to adhere to based somewhat on the still traditional way the government as a whole does business. I know with some of the Millennials that have come and gone within the company here, those have been the frustrations, the ability to not work from home, or to not be able to VP into the network, which we can't do because of the sensitivity of the information that we deal with. For us to have more strict firewalls and reduced internet access to social media and stuff like that.” Participant 1A and 3B both believe their organizations do not want employees working from home, and therefore, do not allow it. They did not specify why they thought that was.

Theme 4: Work-life Balance

Millennials work to live. They have a life outside work. Millennials do not define a job by how much it pays, but how well it fits in their lives, the quality of work, and the tone of the environment (Spiegel, 2013). Participant 4A shared, “We just want to be able to support ourselves to live, but we would like more time to actually live.” The “one size fits all” package does not work anymore. The two subthemes listed under work-life balance are benefits and volunteering/community service time.

Benefits

Twelve of sixteen participants mentioned that benefits were a specific reason to desire an organization. The term benefits in this study refers to health benefits and paid time off. There were 21 statements that related to the benefits. Nine participants wish they had better health benefits or left a company that had bad health benefits. Two participants wished they had more paid time off. One participant is happy with his current benefits.

Participants 1B and 3B wish they had more paid time off. Participant 3B said, “When I [was] hired in, I argued for more vacation time, which didn't happen, and it would have been nice if they would have let us roll more vacation over. Not really that we use it, but 80 hours is only two weeks, and two weeks can go by in a flash.” Offering more vacation time could have prevented participant 3B from

leaving the DOD organization. Organizations need to listen to Millennials when they talk about their needs. This Millennial said his need was more vacation time, but it was not granted to him; therefore, he left the DOD organization. This caused more turnover for that company. The cost in turnover was probably more than the cost to give him additional vacation time.

Participant 5B said she did not have any benefits at her last organization. She said, “They didn't, 0%, I mean they didn't provide any benefits unless you were management or higher up.” Participant 7B said in the workplace he left, “The employee benefits were drastically changing to favor company profits over taking care of employees. Without any notice went from really high quality benefits package to really crummy benefits package and really high deductible things. I know personally of several people that were pretty much put in a very bad situation because of such a drastic change in benefits.” It was one of the reasons that caused him to leave the organization. Participant 7B continued, mentioning, “The company went through a pretty drastic change in their healthcare coverage. Basically they stuck it to the working man in the company while the executives in the executive locations kept their really cush PPO insurance. It was a pretty large worldwide company that I think started to favor profits more than taking care of their employees.” Human Capital is an important resource in an organization's competitive advantage. Employees spend their day contributing to the success of the organization. They can either make or break the organization. Organizations

should consider how they are treating their employees and the consequences of their treatment.

Participant 8B stated, “Benefits, something I know I can provide for my family at the end of the day and provide for my future at the same time.” Benefits was his number one need in the workplace.

Volunteering/Community Service Time

Only one participant discussed giving back to the community. This was very surprising since researchers say it is common to find Millennials volunteering for different events or causes (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Hobart & Sendek, 2009; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Participant 7A mentioned that she would like to see “community service” added to her workplace.

Theme 5: Collaboration and Teamwork

Millennials see the workplace as another place to make friends and develop relationships that will benefit them for the rest of their lives (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). The two subthemes formed under this theme are developing relationships and teamwork.

Developing Relationships

Eleven of the participants discussed the importance of developing relationships in the workplace as being important to their continued employment.

They mentioned it 17 times. When they were asked what they like or liked about their jobs, these 11 participants said their coworkers.

Participant 6A described his working environment as follows: “I’ve never even been in any kind of working group that’s been similar, but we’re all friends. We hang out with each; oddly, we hang out with each other outside of work, even though we see each other 40 hours a week. We chat in the evenings, we get our families together on the weekends. I mean, it’s generally really happy, it’s really productive, and we’re very talkative, very supportive, pretty positive and pretty open.” One of the reasons he said he stays at the organization is because “I’m there with my friends. We’re a pretty supportive group, we’re pretty close-knit, and people are pretty caring.” Working in a team environment and developing relationships is an important need to participant 6A.

Teamwork

Teamwork was only mentioned by three participants. This was surprising since researchers have claimed Millennials like to work in teams (Hobart & Sendek, 2009; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). When asked to describe their working environment, participant 1A stated, “there is kind of that team feeling where everyone feels like they’re on the same team.” Participant 8A answered with, “we all pitch in to help each other out. It can get chaotic at times when deadlines come up, but everyone tries to help each other out and everyone does their part, so I’d say it’s very good.”

Participant 1B was one of the participants who mentioned people as one of the reasons they like their job. So when asked if his needs are currently being met in the workplace, he said yes because he considers himself “part of a team.”

Theme 6: Other Factors

The previous five themes focused on the needs that contribute to Millennial turnover intentions at DOD organizations. Theme six focused on the other factors that contribute to Millennials turnover intentions. The subthemes are compensation, not a Millennial friendly environment, and the tools needed to perform the job.

Compensation

Although compensation is not mentioned as a need by most researchers, it was one of the top needs of the participants in this study. Fourteen Millennials mentioned compensation, totaling fifty times. It may not have been their number one need, but it was in their list of needs.

Participant 3A said she feels like she is paid well, but “If I work over, I feel like I'm worth more than somebody else working less hours and getting paid the same that I get.” Money was the number one need for participant 3A.

One of the reasons participant 3B left his DOD organization was because of compensation. He said, “If you go to your current employer and say, ‘Hey, I'm going to go do the exact same job for 40% more, are you guys ripping me off? What's the deal here?’ I don't care so much about compensation. In DOD

organizations, we're all playing the same game. We're all in the same brackets of education, experience, and labor rates. It doesn't make sense to me that one company could offer 40% increase in salary and the other not unless the other company is charging you at that additional rate and doing something with the additional funding.” He followed that up by saying “compensation is one of those things that everything's fine until you realize you're not being paid a comparable salary to other people who are doing a similar job.” After his DOD organization refused to match the increase he was offered by another organization, participant 3B left.

When asked how her compensation compares to the job she is performing, participant 4A said, “I don't think my pay rate matches how much effort I put in and the level of output and correctness that I get out compared to other people.” Everyone wants to be paid what they believe they rightly deserve. Sometimes it is not about tenure, but it is about the effort put into a job. A little extra in pay can go a long way when it comes to keeping employees happy. If an employee feels valued in terms of pay, he or she is more likely to stay. Compensation is a big factor in Millennial retention.

Participant 7A mentioned compensation nine times during her interview. She stated that compensation was her top need “because it pays my bills.” When asked about her long term goals, she mentioned “get a raise, I can pay off some debts. I want to make more, that's the end goal right for everyone. I just want to

make more money. You just want to make more money, and be able to provide for yourself and your family, have what you want and not be living pay-to-pay, or direct deposit to direct deposit, and not be stressed out.” When asked about how her compensation compared to the job she was performing, she responded with, “This is a hard question for me, because I feel like I should be compensated more. That's not me being a negative Millennial. That's just me being aware of my workload compared to other people's workload – that their compensation and my compensation greatly differ.” Debt can play a factor in why Millennials choose to job hop to a better paying company. According to Pew Research Center (2014), Millennials have higher debt than other generations.

Participant 7B also said he “works for money” and “likes to be paid on market value.” He stated, “There were times when I felt like my compensation was okay, but there were several times when I felt like a raise could have been justified. Because of DOD labor categories and salary structures that it just wasn't possible to reward exceptional work.” He does not feel his compensation compared to the job he was performing.

This study contradicts what Allen, Bryant, and Vardaman (2010) said about employees not quitting because of pay.

Not a Millennial Friendly Environment

Nine participants talked about how their experience working for a DOD organization does not or did not have a Millennial friendly environment. An environment that is friendly to Millennials has a relaxed atmosphere, does not stereotype Millennials, and shows a willingness to change (or be flexible) when necessary. It is also an organization in which Millennials are in management and are promoted on work ethic (or accomplishments) and not on tenure.

Participant 1B described the working environment as follows: “It was very professional. Everything had to be done a certain way. You had to dress a certain way and everybody expected you to act in a certain way. You always had to be on your best behavior. I guess it was a little over my head for the age I was. I don't know. I've never been in a job as serious as it was here.” He continued by stating, “There's a lot of different ages but you could tell by the way the older people acted around the younger people that they felt like they knew more. Some of the older people, I should say. Some of the older people were very . . . had open arms and were very cool and were very easy to talk to, but others were not as accepting, I guess, of younger people. They had their nose in the air because you didn't have a degree or you didn't do what they had done, so not as accepting.” When describing how stereotyping a Millennial can hurt them in the workplace, he stated, “They think that you can't do things just because of your age and just because you may be a younger person in the workplace, that you can't accomplish as much as someone

who is older, has more experience than everybody else.” Instead of stereotyping, the non-Millennial generations need to understand that the concepts and unconventional perspectives that Millennials bring to the table do add value to the company.

Participant 2B described her workplace environment: “They knew changes needed to be made, but didn't want to make them because they were scared of that change. Not necessarily that they were unwilling to make those changes. They just didn't know how to execute those changes, so their fear paralyzed them.” Although change may be scary for some organizations, it is inevitable. Those organizations will soon have to face the facts of a higher turnover rate if they continue to resist necessary changes due to fear.

When describing the management at participant 3A's workplace, she said, “I think that we need to add some Millennial management within our company, maybe somebody right underneath the manager that is a Millennial that can give insight on what the future holds.” Participant 4A described the working environment as “a little bit old school.” She followed it up, by saying, “Obviously I have to be professional, but sometimes it just feels a little stiff and like you have to be perfect, and everything you do has to be perfect all the time – not that you want to mess up – but just some things they could do to evolve with the times, especially for younger people that want things to change a little bit and not just do something the way you've always done it because that's the way you've always done it, even

though you could do it a different way or an easier way and come out with the same outcome or possibly a better outcome.” If Millennials felt their workplace was a little less strict or stuffy, productivity and morale would increase tremendously.

Participant 7A feels that “there are people in workplaces that just because they're older, sometimes get opportunities that they don't deserve regardless of whether someone younger has been doing the work for longer and has more experience. Sometimes it's, ‘Oh, if you don't have a family to support, we're just going to pass you right over.’” Discrimination against single workers is becoming more prevalent. Companies should promote based on work ethic, not on tenure.

Tools Needed to Perform Job

Four participants mentioned that one of their top needs was having the tools to get their jobs done. It was mentioned sixteen times among four participants. Participant 4A and 5A mentioned that they do not have access to the reports they need to run data and have to rely on others to provide it.

Participant 3B ranked tools needed to perform his job as his top need in the workplace. “I would say that I'm more on the technical side or hardware side of what I want. Most of the things I consider needs are proper lab equipment, proper overhead equipment to fabricate and build in support of engineering. It was really important to me to have all the tools we needed to get our job done, really more so than probably benefits and stuff like that.” He also stated “they didn't want to give

you a laptop to work from home. Even if you traveled a lot, didn't really want to give you a laptop.” It is important to make employees feel they have all of the necessary tools to perform their job. If it goes against policy, sometimes exceptions should be made in certain circumstances. If an employee travels a lot, they may need permission to have a laptop to still be able to perform all of their job duties while not in the office.

Participant 4B also mentioned that one of his needs in the workplace is “just the tools to do my job effectively.” When he was asked what made him leave his previous company, he stated, “I guess it goes back to the needs I was talking about from your previous question. I didn't really feel like I was given the tools to effectively do my job.” When organizations do not provide the employees with the tools they need, it could cost them turnover.

Evaluation of Findings

The findings of this study were entirely the results of open-ended interviews related to the research questions. The participants had an opportunity to express their thoughts by responding to the last interview question. This allowed them the opportunity to expand on any point that the researcher did not cover or allow for full explanation or clarification.

The criterion used to select participants was that they had to be born between 1980 and 2000 and had to work at a DOD organization for longer than two

years or have left a DOD organization within two years. After the data was collected, the researcher transcribed the interviews by using Rev Transcription service. This resulted in 147 pages of interview transcriptions. Those transcriptions were used to begin the data analysis. The researcher looked for patterns, themes, subthemes, and categories without any assumption (Moustakas, 1994). After substantive review, I began coding the data, eventually resulting in the emerging of six major themes and eighteen subthemes. The data, gathered with phenomenological methods, were the shared, lived experiences of Millennials with regard to turnover intention.

Some results of this study were consistent with previous studies. Achieving challenging and meaningful work was clearly a major concern for Millennials. When Millennials realized that the expectations in this area would not be met, it was a primary reason to consider leaving. This includes career advancement, career development, meaningful work, and meeting long term goals. Compensation was still an important factor for Millennials and was a primary reason to consider turnover intention. Compensation was followed by the needs for feedback and flexibility in hours. Carpenter and Charon (2014) nailed it on the head when they said “Millennials want good pay and benefits, fewer rules, more freedom, work-life balance, opportunities for advancement, meaningful work experiences, a nurturing work environment, frequent contact with their leadership, and a diverse workplace

that is flexible, fun, and community-minded” (p. 72). Without these needs, Millennials begin to have turnover intentions.

The researcher was surprised that dress flexibility, teamwork, telecommuting, and volunteering were not major needs for the Millennials in this study. Prior research list these needs as playing a role in Millennial turnover intentions (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013; Tulgan, 2009; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). It was also a finding that succession planning and retention rates did not affect whether Millennials stay or leave a DOD organization. Participant 4A stated, “I don't really care about a retention rate whether I stay with a company or not. I don't care if other people stay. I'll just stay if I want and not if I don't want.” Participant 7A also supported the conclusion by saying, “I don't really care if people leave or stay, personally. That's their prerogative. I mean, that doesn't really play a role in my life.” Thirteen participants responded that it was not a concern for them.

Employees have needs that must be met to sustain job performance and decrease turnover intention. If there is a deficiency in meeting their needs, then job performance and productivity levels decrease (Maslow, 1943). Employee productivity affects the bottom line of the organization; therefore, organizations should be aware of what motivates different generations.

Theoretically, this research is focused on generation theory. According to Mannheim (1952), generations are shaped by the common salient historical experiences that occurred during their childhood and early adulthood. Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational theory focuses on the influence of past generations. They explain their theory as generations turning the corner and compensating for the excesses and mistakes of the generation in charge when they come of age (Galland & Howe, 2009).

Eleven participants mentioned generation theory in some form. All eleven of them support Strauss and Howe's (1991) generational theory over Mannheim's (1952). Participant 1A said "We've learned a lot from previous generations, and I think the best qualities of other generations came down to us. I guess because my theory is the way we were raised by Baby Boomers. Maybe they didn't get everything they wanted, so the way they were raised affected them and how they raised us, so maybe they felt because they didn't have a lot, they gave us a lot and we learned to have everything." All eleven participants mentioned previous generations.

When participant 2A was talking about Millennial stereotypes, he said, "Most of them, especially the younger ones, have always grown up with internet access, always grown up with cable TV, DISH TV, VCRs, video games. It lends itself to a very fast paced, easily distracted bounce, bounce, bounce type of environment. If you've grown up that way, then logically that's past performance is

the best indicator of future performance, so that's just going to tend to be the case.”

This further proves that generational theory is applicable to Millennials.

Participant 2B mentions previous generations and how they raised Millennials to be how they are today. “The same people that have gripes about Millennials are the people who raised the Millennials, so where did we get that thought from? If you see a generation not doing things the way you have done it, and I mean our forefathers, if you will, they've done it for so many ways and they think it's worked for them, so they think Millennials are not grateful to what has been paved before them.” She makes a good point. Millennials cannot be blamed for how they were raised.

Participant 3A knows there is a “generation gap” and says it is new technology and media that is to blame. “I think the Millennial generation has had more things given to them and also, it's when the media and, to me, electronics have boomed. Everyone has a cellphone now. When my parents were young, they didn't have cellphones. Now we're entitled because we have cellphones. Well, it's just a thing now. I think rather than just embracing the fact that this is how society is, they think it's all the 20-something's fault, because we're the ones that got blamed for this outrage of media, like social media, and all these new products coming out. Older generations think that we think we deserve it. We don't deserve it. It's just always been there.” The older generations should stop holding grudges against Millennials for having technological opportunities that they did not have.

The older generations should be glad their children and grandchildren have the tools to advance their careers.

Participant 6A says, “you tend to use your past experience with an individual or to help you with experiences in the future, with similar types of individuals.” Participant 1B says that older generations “feel that back in their day, they had to do so much more to be where they're at right now. I guess they just stereotype us because we have more advantages than they did growing up. We have more opportunity as far as technology and with college and everything.” This seems to be a common feeling among Millennials.

All the participants mentioned the influence of previous generations and new technology. They did not mention historical experiences that occurred during their childhood and early adulthood. The results of this study does support Strauss and Howe’s (1991) generational theory.

Evaluation of the DOD Restrictions Leading to Turnover

There are restrictions written into DOD contracts that could deter Millennials from wanting to work for a DOD organization. DOD organizations are contractually required to comply with numerous military standards, processes, procedures, and product design regulations, developments, and tests, as well as program management and financial regulations (Augustine, 1983). This study uncovered some of the reasons Millennials are leaving DOD organizations at an

earlier rate than other generations. Some of the reasons conclude that it was because they are in fact a DOD organization. Five participants shared their thoughts on why they have turnover intentions or why their needs are not being met because they work for a DOD organization.

Participant 7B stated the reason he left his last organization was, “Well I think in a lot of DOD jobs, I had the feeling of being stuck, like I was just a butt in a seat. I felt like in some cases I was just a vehicle for profit. They had a task and I was stuck in that task. There was not a lot of opportunity for change or growth and stuff like that.” He also mentioned, “I’ve never felt in the DOD, the way the jobs are structured, that there was an opportunity for promotion.” When asked about how his compensation compared to the job he was performing, he stated, “There were times when I felt like my compensation was okay, but there were several times when I felt like a raise could have been justified. Because of DOD labor categories and salary structures that it just wasn’t possible to reward exceptional work.” Millennials crave the need for more. They want more training, more money, more opportunity for advancement, and more flexibility.

Soon after participant 2B started a new job at a DOD organization, she realized that “The reason why I was there was because it was a line in the government contract that called out that they needed [her position], but they really didn’t want to implement the practices that stood up [that position]. They were just meeting the need of the contract.” Millennials become bored easily and therefore

require challenging work (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). They do not want to just sit in a chair and collect a pay check.

Participant 6A thinks that he does not receive much direction because he works for a DOD organization. “I guess it's not anything about my job in particular, but more about DOD work in general, but in supporting a customer with unclear requirements, or I guess direction, getting that changed last minute or late notice and having to kind of adjust. I think a lot of that's kind of unorganized and it causes a lot of conflicts and problems downstream.” Most Millennials want clear direction and feedback on their performance, which Participant 6A reiterates.

Participant 2A believed telecommuting is not allowed at DOD organizations. He said, “As a general rule, it can, especially in a business like government contracting, which is, I would say, is behind the times as a general rule with some of the processes, policies and stuff like that, that we have to adhere to based somewhat on the still traditional way the government as a whole does business. I know with some of the Millennials that have come and gone within the company here, those have been the frustrations, the ability to not work from home, or to not be able to VP into the network, which we can't do because of the sensitivity of the information that we deal with. For us to have more strict firewalls and reduced internet access to social media and stuff like that.” Telecommuting also ties back to Millennials wanting to have all of the tools necessary to get their job done, no matter where they are located.

One of the reasons participant 3B left his DOD organization was because of compensation. He said, “If you go to your current employer and say, ‘Hey, I’m going to go do the exact same job for 40% more; are you guys ripping me off? What’s the deal here?’ I don’t care so much about compensation. In DOD organizations, we’re all playing the same game. We’re all in the same brackets of education, experience, and labor rates. It doesn’t make sense to me that one company could offer 40% increase in salary and the other not unless the other company is charging you at that additional rate and doing something with the additional funding.” Companies need to be willing to give raises to their high talent Millennials if they are considering leaving for more pay. They have to decide if it is worth losing their talent over a few thousand dollars in pay.

Although these five participants shared their experiences with why DOD organizations lead to turnover intentions, I do not think there is enough evidence to conclude that is it solely because they are a DOD organization. Even out of the five participants above, only three of them left because of the DOD restrictions. That concludes that only 1.6% of the participants actually left the organization because they were affiliated with the DOD.

Summary

The research questions examined the relationship between the workplace needs that do or do not play a role in Millennial turnover intentions and/or other

factors that contribute to Millennial turnover intentions in DOD organizations. The relationship between workplace needs and other factors was found to be significant to the reasons why there are Millennial turnover intentions in DOD organizations. No significant differences were found within groups when analyzed by gender, age, education, or occupation. There was also not enough evidence to conclude that turnover intentions are the results of the organization being affiliated with the DOD. The six themes and eighteen subthemes are interrelated and help shape the understanding of the lived experience of Millennials and turnover intentions in DOD organizations. Chapter five summarizes the data, makes recommendations, discusses limitations, and draws conclusions.

Chapter 5

Recommendations and Conclusions

Employers have struggled to identify how to engage Millennials in a way that will motivate them to stay longer, as 30% of Millennials have already had three jobs in their career (Meier & Crocker, 2010). In this study, 94% of the Millennials have held three or more jobs in their career so far. According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2016), the older generation's median tenure is ten years. This differs from the Millennial generation's median tenure of one to two years. Researchers have found that Millennials intend to leave their current job within two years or less (Elance-ODesk and Millennial Branding, 2014; Twenge, 2010; Sujansky & Ferri-Reed, 2009; Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). By examining the phenomenon of turnover intentions among Millennials, DOD organizations may improve recruitment and retention programs that impact turnover rates. This will also help DOD organizations understand how this generation's perception of workplace needs impacts the current turnover trend observed today.

The significance of this study is to provide DOD organizations with best practices on how to manage Millennials, how to best recruit and retain them, and how to reduce turnover rates. Employers can save time and money by discovering why Millennials specifically choose to leave jobs so quickly (Meier & Crocker, 2010).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The researcher used Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological procedures to acquire six themes from the interview data retained from 16 interview participants. The themes informed the research questions:

1. What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?
2. What role do needs of Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

In this study, the factors that contributed to a Millennial's turnover intention were their workplace needs, compensation, working in a Millennial friendly environment, and receiving the tools needed to get the job done. The study revealed that the workplace needs of Millennials play a significant role in their turnover intention, although all the needs presented by previous researchers were not present in this study. The needs that were found significant to why Millennials leave a DOD organization within the first two years formed the themes: challenging and meaningful work, collaboration and teamwork, flexibility, transparency and communication, and work-life balance. Challenging and meaningful work was mentioned by all of the participants, and therefore, it was the top need of Millennials in this study. The researcher was surprised that telecommuting, flexibility in dress, and volunteering/community service did not play a bigger role

in the needs of Millennials. Previous researchers named these needs as requirements for Millennials to stay at an organization (Espinoza, Ukleja, & Rusch, 2010; Hobart & Sendek, 2009; Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). This study did not find that to be true.

The final theme was the other factors that contribute to Millennial turnover intentions. These factors were not determined to be workplace needs by previous researchers, but were labeled as factors that contributed to a Millennial's turnover intention in this study. The workplace needs and other factors found in this study are all considered factors that contribute to a Millennial's turnover intentions in a DOD organization.

Conclusions

A review of the research data and an examination of the study's key findings led to the following conclusions.

Millennials have high expectations for their organizations, posing a challenge for organizations to accommodate all needs. To keep Millennials engaged on the job, organizations must consider career advancement, compensation, career development, meaningful work, feedback, flexibility in hours, benefits, having a Millennial friendly environment, no micro-managers, and learning Millennials' long-term goals.

Tulgan (2009) supports this conclusion by stating, “If you want high performance out of this generation, you better commit to high maintenance management” (p. 26). He described Millennials as having high expectations for their organizations and themselves. Millennials look to their organizations to meet their basic needs and expectations.

To increase Millennial retention on the job, organizations must ensure opportunities for growth and development. Millennials are not just looking for work, they are looking for self-fulfillment. Spiegel (2013) supports this conclusion by stating continuous learning is part of a Millennial’s mindset.

Concluding the importance of meaningful work to Millennials is in alignment with Espinoza et al. (2010). They agree that Millennials want work that is challenging, yet on their terms. Millennials become bored easily and therefore require challenging work (Murphy, 2008; Spiegel, 2013). Since Millennials were always told they could be anything they want, they feel insulted when tasked with meaningless work (Tulgan, 2009).

Espinoza et al. (2010) also supports the conclusion about flexibility, arguing that Millennials desire to do what they want, when they want, have the schedule they want, and not worry about someone micromanaging them.

Spiegel (2013) supports the conclusion on feedback by stating, “Millennials want transparency and to be able to trust others. They want lots of feedback and

coaching” (p. 20). Millennials were raised in environments where their parents and other adults gave them a lot of attention; therefore, they became accustomed to coaching, direction, guidance, support, and shared wisdom (Tulgan, 2009). If they do not receive feedback from managers, they do not feel connected to the organization or the bigger picture.

Carpenter and Charon (2014) support the conclusions by stating, “Millennials want good pay and benefits, fewer rules, more freedom, work-life balance, opportunities for advancement, meaningful work experiences, a nurturing work environment, frequent contact with their leadership, and a diverse workplace that is flexible, fun, and community-minded” (p. 72).

Recommendations

The findings of this study resulted in recommendations for DOD organizational managers.

There is a lot of research about the multi-generations working together in the workplace. It would be beneficial for DOD organizational managers to understand the different characteristics of each generation, their background, and their work style. Organizational managers can do this by reading the literature review section of this research. Each generation is described in detail. This can help organizations understand the different generations.

It is important for DOD organizational managers to understand the different workplace motivations of each different generation in the workplace. With this understanding, they can direct and lead change in the organization to move towards creating a culture that will attract and retain Millennials. The findings of this research will help organizations understand what motivates Millennials to help attract and retain them.

The following are the recommendations for DOD organizations:

Review the findings of this study regarding workplace needs and factors that contribute to Millennial turnover intention. Using the themes identified, assess what currently occurs to support such needs. Spend time reviewing each theme, as all were cited to be important to Millennials.

Address any gaps found and develop and implement ways to meet the needs found in this study to attract Millennials and to retain them, even if it means stepping outside their comfort zone. Do this by performing a survey or interviewing employees and comparing the results to the findings of this study.

Conduct focus groups with Millennial employees. Ask them what they would like to see implemented to further support them in being successful. Listen to the employees' needs. Work with them to move towards the identified goals. Develop and communicate career development and advancement plans for Millennials. Outline the skills and behaviors necessary to meet the requirements for

the next level in their career. Ensure the work is challenging and meaningful to them.

Provide direction and feedback. Define roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Provide ongoing feedback for guidance and support. Since one of the top needs of participants in this research was receiving feedback and direction, read this section of the research study and implement some new ways to help millennials feel more connected to the workplace.

Review the organization's benefits, and make changes as necessary. Since the “one size fits all” package does not apply anymore, if allowable, tailor benefit packages for employees. If necessary, make adjustments in workplace hours. Make sure to provide employees with adequate paid time off to ensure a work-life balance.

Attainment of zero turnover is not ideal for organizations, but reduced turnover intentions will lower the cost of turnover to the organization. It will also help retain the knowledge and skills of the employees. Organizations can reduce turnover intentions by using the findings of this research.

Limitations

This study was limited by several factors. First, the scope of the study was limited to Millennials who have worked for or currently work for a DOD

organization in the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama. Due to the limited scope, findings and conclusions derived from the study may potentially be limited in generalization. The participants consisted of Millennials in the Tennessee Valley region of Alabama who have left a DOD organization within two years, and Millennials who have stayed at a DOD organization longer than two years. Therefore, it is possible the findings and conclusions of this study may not apply to other Millennials based outside of DOD organizations or the Tennessee Valley region.

Another limitation was the difference of ages within the Millennial generation. The youngest Millennial was 18 years of age and the oldest Millennial was 37 years of age at the time of this study. The oldest Millennial may have already reached stage two of their life cycle; therefore, their answers may vary from the younger Millennials who are still in the first stage of their life cycle. The researcher also found it very difficult to find younger Millennials working for DOD organizations. The majority of the participants of this study were ages 27 to 36.

The final limitation is the stereotyping of Millennials. Millennials are “portrayed as entitled know-it-alls who want to jump up the corporate ladder without paying their dues; who demand work-life balance but also want a collaborative work environment; who need time off for volunteer efforts (since they want to save the world) but resist putting in extra time at work when it is needed; who are super tech-savvy but oblivious to social norms” (Kriegel, 2015, p. 1).

There are some Millennials who may fit this stereotype, but many do not. This research study consists of Millennials, but the results may not apply to all Millennials. There are other factors that contribute to the diversity of Millennials' behavior, such as social economic status, geological location, and ethnicity (Fenzel, 2013).

Millennials have higher levels of student loan debt, poverty, and unemployment than other generations (Pew Research Center, 2014). "Two-thirds of recent bachelor's degree recipients have outstanding student loans, with an average of \$27,000 (Woo, 2013). Many Millennials were entering the workforce just as the economy was sinking into a deep recession (Pew Research Center, 2014). "Millennial's face more economic challenges than their elders did when they were first starting out" (Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 1). Debt can play a factor in why Millennials choose to job hop to a better paying company.

Millennials may be attracted to big cities because of their public transportation systems. Public transportation makes it easy to get to work, meet with friends, run errands, and see the sights (Schafer, 2015). According to Schafer (2015), nearly 500 big employers have moved into a city since 2010, including 52 Fortune 500 companies. Millennials could have different workplace needs depending on their geological location.

Millennials are the most racially diverse generation in American history (Pew Research Center, 2014). According to Pew Research Center (2014), 43% of Millennials are non-white, and the United States census bureau (2012) projects that the majority of the U.S. population will be non-white by 2043. Millennials are more diverse in ethnicity and show more acceptance of diverse social relationships (Bouie, 2012). They are well traveled and very accepting of multiculturalism (Venus, 2011). Millennials not only see diversity as age, gender, ethnicity, country of origin, or religion but they also think of it as having diversity of thought and diversity of mindset (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010). Having a diverse background and mindset can contribute to the turnover intentions of Millennials.

Suggestions for Future Research

Additional research is recommended to expand the scope of this study. Due to this study's limited scope and methodology, the researcher would recommend the following research topics to further develop and verify the findings of the research.

This study could be replicated with increased numbers of participants to compare findings. There were only 18 participants used in this study. A larger sample size would be more representative of the population and could broaden the range of possible data. More participants could also narrow down the main factors of turnover intention for Millennials in DOD organizations. A larger population of

participants may lead to more commonality between answers, instead of having ten participants with ten different answers. For example, if there are 100 participants, there may still be only ten common answers.

The data collection for this study came from one method – interviews. Future studies may benefit from supplementing these interviews with other sources of data, namely online questionnaires. This would also allow for more questions to be asked. The quantity of questions could provide more themes that would be valuable to instruct organizations about the needs of Millennials. Future researchers may want to provide some questions that are not open-ended, like the ones in this study. If participants have to pick between a certain answer set, the answers would be more guided. It would also help them find commonalities in Millennial needs.

The gender of Millennials in this study was not a focus. Comparative studies targeting the perspectives of male or female Millennials would add another dimension to this research. It would be informative to examine how the shared experiences and themes that emerged in this study are affected, if based on gender. For example, if workplace needs or tenure are different based on gender.

The Millennial's ages and years of experience were varied in this study. A future study of Millennials within a certain age range or years of experience may possibly provide different data. Although there were Millennials ranging from 18 to 37 years of age in this study, the researcher found it very difficult to find younger

Millennials working for DOD organizations. The majority of the participants of this study were ages 27 to 36; therefore, the Millennials in this study may have more experience than younger Millennials. Future research could focus on the younger and less experienced Millennials. The results may be different based on the variety of ages and experience. The age range of these Millennials is rather large, which could lead to very different perceptions. The Millennials in this study were possibly raised by completely different generations of parents, and they were shaped by different socio-economical events.

Millennials in this study work in the Tennessee Valley region. Future studies may focus specifically on Millennials from different geological regions. Another focus could be to compare Millennials who work in a big city compared to those working in a small town. According to Schafer (2015), nearly 500 big employers have moved into a city versus the suburbs since 2010, including 52 Fortune 500 companies. Millennials could have different workplace needs depending on their geological location.

Summary

With the wave of Baby Boomer retirements, top DOD officials are growing increasingly distressed about the decreasing role of Millennials in the workforce (Rein, 2015). The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) estimated that more than 48% of DOD employees will be eligible for retirement by 2015 (Partnership

for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, 2010). As DOD organizations continue their search for good talent, more and more Millennials are entering the workforce and moving up the corporate ladder. With an estimated 75 million Millennials, DOD organizations that recognize this incredible opportunity and tap into it early will have the competitive advantage (Fry, 2015). As participant 5B said, “Millennials are really misunderstood. I think that's the big issue. They have a lot to contribute. I think it's by 2020 that more of the workforce will be Millennials, so I think that all the other generations either need to get on board or get out because they will be in charge of everything.” Millennials will comprise more than 40% of the U.S. workforce by the year 2020 and 75% by the year 2025 (Toossi, 2012; Meister & Willyerd, 2010; Schawbel D. , 2013).

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the factors which contribute to turnover intention among the Millennial generation in DOD organizations. Understanding this relationship will help researchers identify approaches to help DOD organizations improve recruitment and retention programs to reduce turnover. Before this study, there was not any research on Millennial turnover intentions in DOD organizations located in the Tennessee Valley region. This study added to the body of knowledge by linking Millennial turnover intentions with DOD organizations. It uncovered some of the reasons Millennials are leaving DOD organizations at an earlier rate than other generations, such as the

fact they work for a DOD organization. It also added detailed experiences from Millennials located in the Tennessee Valley region.

This research provided a hierarchical order of importance of the needs of millennials, which had not be conducted by previous researchers. The level of importance reveals what causes turnover intentions of millennials. This will help DOD organizations with retaining and recruitment strategies.

There were three new factors found to be needs of millennials: compensation, working in a millennial friendly environment, and having the tools to get their jobs done. Compensation was one of the top needs of the participants in this study. Previous researchers do not mention compensation as a need of millennials. Nine participants mentioned that it is important to work in a millennial friendly environment. An environment that is friendly to Millennials has a relaxed atmosphere, does not stereotype Millennials, and shows a willingness to change (or be flexible) when necessary. It is also an organization in which Millennials are in management and are promoted on work ethic (or accomplishments) and not on tenure. Four participants mentioned that one of their top needs were having the tools to get their job done. When organizations do not provide the employees with the tools they need, it could cost them turnover.

As DOD organizations continue to look to Millennials as the workforce of the future, it will be increasingly important for these organizations to understand

and appreciate the needs of this generation. As learned in this research, Millennials need challenging and meaningful work, collaboration and teamwork, flexibility, transparency and communication, work-life balance, compensation, tools necessary to get the job done, in addition to working in a Millennial friendly environment. They also bring confidence to the organization and the belief that they can do it all. Millennials will bring new, fresh ideas and values into DOD organizations. They are motivated and willing to learn at a faster rate than previous generations. Understanding Millennials and being sensitive to their needs will be the key factor in recruiting and retaining them.

Participant 6A sums up the thoughts of this study and of many researchers. “I think from what I've learned from life and what I've learned from some of the managerial concepts that I've studied, every employee is different. Each person is at a different stage of maturation, I guess. They have different needs, they're motivated by different things, and they have different goals. I think each employee needs to be handled differently.”

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Interview questions for Millennials who have stayed longer than 2 years at a DOD organization:

1. What do you like most about your job?
2. What do you like least about your job?
3. What are your needs in the workplace?
 - a. What is the order of importance of these needs to you?
4. Which of these needs are currently being met at your workplace?
 - a. How are they being met?
5. What will you do if your needs are not being met in the workplace?
 - a. How long are you willing to stay at a company if they do not meet your needs?
6. How would you describe the working environment in your workplace?
7. How would you describe the management in your workplace?
8. How is the Millennial generation stereotyped?
 - a. Why do you think people stereotype Millennials?
 - b. How can being stereotyped as a Millennial hurt your job opportunities?
9. What are your long term goals?
10. How many jobs have you had?
 - a. How many have you stayed past two years with?
 - b. How long have you been at your current company?
11. When you were first hired, how long did you see yourself staying with the company?
 - a. How realistic was the job presented to you when you were hired?
12. Why do you stay at your current company?
 - a. What training opportunities are made available to you?

- b. Describe how your current supervisor is or is not fair and reasonable?
 - c. Describe how you are given access to and realistic consideration for promotional opportunities within the organization?
 - d. How is your contribution appreciated by your supervisor and others?
 - e. Describe how you are given access to the appropriate equipment and resources necessary to perform your job?
 - f. How do you feel your compensation compares to the job you are performing?
 - g. How satisfied are you with the employee benefits provided?
 - h. How are you offered flexibility to satisfy a work-life balance?
 - i. How are your talents used in the workplace?
13. How does succession planning or retention strategies play a role in your decision to stay at the organization?
14. How often do you consider leaving your organization?
15. How often do you look forward to another day at work?
16. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Interview questions for Millennials who have left a DOD organization within 2 years:

1. What did you like most about your job?
2. What did you like least about your job?
3. What are your needs in the workplace?
 - a. What is the order of importance of these needs to you?
4. Which of these needs are currently being met at your workplace?
 - a. How are they being met?
5. What will you do if your needs are not being met in the workplace?
 - a. How long are you willing to stay at a company if they do not meet your needs?
6. How would you describe the working environment in the workplace you left?
7. How would you describe the management in the workplace you left?
8. How is the Millennial generation stereotyped?
 - a. Why do you think people stereotype Millennials?
 - b. How can being stereotyped as a Millennial hurt your job opportunities?
9. What are your long term goals?
10. How many jobs have you had?
 - a. How many have you stayed past two years with?
 - b. How long have you been at your current company?
11. When you were first hired, how long did you see yourself staying with the company?
 - a. How realistic was the job presented to you when you were hired?
12. What made you decide to leave your last company?

- a. Can you describe any one incident that prompted you to leave?
 - b. What other training opportunities could have been made available to you?
 - c. Describe how your supervisor was or was not fair and reasonable?
 - d. Describe how you were given access to and realistic consideration for promotional opportunities within the organization?
 - e. How was your contribution appreciated by your supervisor and others?
 - f. Describe how you were given access to the appropriate equipment and resources necessary to perform your job?
 - g. How do you feel your compensation compared to the job you were performing?
 - h. How satisfied were you with the employee benefits provided?
 - i. How were you offered flexibility to satisfy a work-life balance?
 - j. How were your talents used in the workplace?
13. How did succession planning or retention strategies play a role in your decision to leave your previous organization?
14. What changes would have prevented you from leaving your previous organization?
15. How often do you consider leaving your organization?
16. How often do you look forward to another day at work?
17. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix C

Consent Form

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study. The researcher will answer any questions before you sign this form.

Study Title: Factors Contributing to Millennial Turnover Rates in DOD Organizations

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the factors which contribute to turnover intention among the Millennial generation in DOD organizations. Understanding this relationship will help researchers identify approaches to help DOD organizations improve recruitment and retention programs to reduce turnover. The researcher seeks to answer the questions: What factors contribute to a Millennial's turnover intention within a DOD organization in the first two years of employment? What role do needs of Millennials play in turnover intention at a DOD organization in the first two years of employment?

Procedures: For this research project, you have been asked to participate in a single interview which will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. The interview will consist of five demographic questions and twelve to thirteen interview questions.

Audio Recording: For the purpose of accuracy the interview will be audio recorded, if permitted. The files that contain notes and audio recordings will be kept secure in a password protected file on a password protected computer. The audio files will be transcribed by Rev Transcription service into electronic text files which will be stored on a removable storage device and be encrypted when not actively in use. The researcher will have sole access to the audio files. The audio files will be permanently deleted once they have been successfully transcribed to electronic text.

Potential Risks of Participating: The potential risks associated with participation in this study are no more than those which exist within everyday life. All participants will be informed the conversations will be confidential, and they will not be identified by name or company through the answers they provide. Maintaining the confidentiality of participants reduces the likelihood of an adverse event occurring.

Potential Benefits of Participating: Participants will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study. The benefit of the study is to understand the factors

that contribute to Millennial turnover in DOD organizations. This study aims to provide DOD organizations an understanding of generational differences and the impact of turnover intention among the Millennial generation. Participants are encouraged to contact the researcher if they would like more information on the results of the research.

Compensation: Participation in the study is completely voluntary and no compensation is offered.

Confidentiality: The identity of all participants will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. The names of the participants will not be used in this study. All data will be stored in a secure location during the research process. All information collected from participants in this study will be stored on a removable storage device and be encrypted when not actively in use. All removable storage devices used in support of this study will be stored in a locked cabinet with sole access belonging to the researcher. When the study is completed all personally identifiable information will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating. You may also refuse to answer any of the questions asked.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Agreement: I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

Demographics Questionnaire

1. Age: What is your age?
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18 – 26
 - c. 27 – 36
 - d. Over 36

2. Gender: Please indicate your gender.
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

3. Education: Please indicate your highest level of education completed.
 - a. High School Diploma or Equivalent
 - b. Associate degree
 - c. Bachelor's degree
 - d. Master's degree
 - e. Doctorate degree

4. Industry:
 - a. Have you been employed for a Department of Defense (DOD) organization located within the Tennessee valley region continuously for two years?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No
 - b. Have you ever been employed by a Department of Defense (DOD) organization located within the Tennessee valley region in which you left within two years of employment?
 - i. Yes
 - ii. No

5. Department:
 - a. Which department do you work in?
 - b. What is your position in the department?

Appendix E

Email to Participants

Hello,

I am a doctoral student at Florida Institute of Technology who is interested in exploring the factors contributing to Millennial turnover rates in DOD organizations. Because you work at a DOD organization located in the Tennessee valley region, your knowledge and experience are vital in helping me explore the relationships which exist between Millennial turnover intention and DOD organizations. The results of this study will benefit both DOD organizations and researchers. DOD organizations will be able to implement new strategies to help retain Millennials. Researchers will be able to draw from and extend the results of this study to areas where DOD organizations may be impacted by Millennial turnover rates.

Your participation in the study will be greatly appreciated. Participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate. If you choose to participate in the study you may pause or end the interview at any time. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study. Confidentiality will be maintained and your name will not be used in any report.

I would like to discuss the study in more detail and with your approval schedule a convenient time to conduct an interview with you. Please contact me using the email or mobile phone information below and indicate whether you are available to discuss the study or have no interest in participating in the study.

Thank you for your support.

Christine

Appendix F

The Findings

Theme	Subtheme	Participants	Frequency
Challenging and Meaningful Work	Career Advancement	16	60
Other Factor's that Contribute	Compensation	14	50
Challenging and Meaningful Work	Career Development	15	49
Challenging and Meaningful Work	Meaningful Work	16	48
Transparency and Communication	Feedback	15	37
Flexibility	Flexibility in Hours	12	37
Work-life Balance	Benefits	12	21
Other Factor's that Contribute	Not a Millennial Friendly Environment	9	19
Flexibility	Micromanaging	8	19
Collaboration and Teamwork	Develop Relationships	11	17
Other Factor's that Contribute	Tools Needed to get the Job Done	4	16
Challenging and Meaningful Work	Long Term Goals	9	9
Flexibility	Dress Flexibility	4	9
Flexibility	Coming to Work	8	8
Transparency and Communication	Direction	5	7
Collaboration and Teamwork	Teamwork	3	3
Flexibility	Telecommute	3	3
Work-life Balance	Volunteering or Community Service	1	1