

Increasing Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in the Millennial Workforce

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Abstract

Members of the Millennial Generation have higher rates of turnover compared to other generations. This can represent significant costs to organizations, and therefore is important to minimize. Job satisfaction has been shown to increase motivation and productivity as well as decrease turnover, and can be maximized by adjusting economic factors, fostering interpersonal relationships, and adjusting activities, tasks, and work conditions to the personality of the worker. All three types of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) also decrease turnover rates. Both job satisfaction and organizational commitment depend on a worker's personality, needs, and expectations, which are influenced by the generation they were born into. Implementing mentoring programs and making specific changes in job design and work environment according to Millennials' needs and expectations could increase Millennial satisfaction and commitment.

Increasing Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment in the Millennial Workforce

For the next ten years or more, the workforce will be dominated by three generations: the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and the Millennial Generation (Mencl & Lester, 2014). The Millennial generation is the newest generation to the workforce, and they possess different preferences, expectations, and needs from the previous generations (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). The Millennials are said to have higher turnover rates than the generation before them (Khalid, Nor, Ismail, & Razali, 2013), and high turnover rates can deprive an organization of valuable talent, which can decrease an organization's ability to achieve its goals (Heneman, Judge, & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2014). Thus, organizations must search for ways to mitigate higher turnover rates among Millennials in order to maintain maximum effectiveness.

Because Millennial turnover threatens to increase business costs considerably due to loss of invested time and training, organizations must consider that affecting Millennials' job attitudes may result in decreased turnover. An employee's *overall job attitude* is made up of two factors: job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and these can both have a considerable effect in decreasing employee turnover (McShane & Von Glinow, 2015). When organizations do not consider the differences in Millennials' personalities from other generations, Millennials' job satisfaction can decrease, which can increase their desire to change jobs. Job satisfaction is also important for organizations to cultivate in their employees, as it can affect employees' mental health and productivity at work (Campione, 2015). Additionally, if organizations do not consider how to foster organizational commitment, whether by creating an emotional attachment to the company, the feeling of owing the company loyalty, and/or creating what employees view to be the best work environment for their needs, negative work behaviors, such as absenteeism, can result and can end in turnover (Lambert, Griffin, Hogan, & Kelley, 2015). Thus, it is

important for employers to explore the ways in which generational differences impact both job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and apply this knowledge to implement organizational changes that help cater to the personalities, needs, and expectations of the Millennial generation in order to not only decrease turnover, but maximize their potential in the company as well.

The Multigenerational Workplace

Today's workforce is composed of multiple generations of workers, and the phenomenon of generations must be understood in order to effectively manage human resources. According to Lyons and Kuron (2014), a generation is "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" (p. 160). The personalities, needs, and expectations of a generation can all be influenced by similar childhood experiences of historical events and trends. While members of all generations can experience the same historical events and trends occurring at a point in time, they will each have different responses to the same events due to their various positions in the human life cycle, and these experiences will affect the way each age group expresses themselves. Understanding the differences between generations is important for organizations to consider, as research suggests that personality can create a disposition toward or away from job satisfaction (George, 1992), and researchers have seen links between personality traits and generational trends (Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

Generational Differences in the Workplace

The set of experiences that each generation shares can cause members of that generation to form similar expectations about the workplace, and employees in that generation can experience negative reactions to their work if their expectations are not met (Lyons & Kuron,

2014). According to Kapoor and Solomon (2011), “Generational differences impact communication styles, technology needs, professional development preferences, workplace expectations, compensation and benefits needs, [and] desired leadership styles.... In essence, generational differences impact every aspect of the workplace” (p. 308). The same values, management styles, and job designs do not always have the same level of success across the generational spectrum, and so it is important for organizations to understand and accommodate each generation’s expectations about work in order to prevent unnecessary negative reactions and broken psychological contracts.

Different generations often bring conflicting expectations and attitudes to the workplace, particularly concerning authority and styles of communication (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). This could create workplace conflict, as differences in communication styles and expectations can cause misunderstandings, miscommunication, and division among generations. Generational conflict can “reduce profitability, present hiring challenges, increase turnover rates, and decrease morale” as well as reduce the productivity of collaboration (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 313). It is important for employers to know what each generation has a predisposition to expect not only of their work, but of their fellow employees.

Characteristics of Today’s Working Generations

Two generations embody the majority of today’s workforce apart from the Millennial Generation, and they both bring different thought processes and personalities to the workplace. The oldest are the Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964. Baby Boomers were raised “in an environment where authority and hierarchies were respected,” and are said to characteristically live to work and sacrifice personal life to achieve professional success (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 309). Additionally, Baby Boomers desire a work environment that values

them and recognizes them for their achievements and abilities (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). They are not usually technologically savvy, but are driven, competitive, and loyal workers, and plan on staying in their organizations for the long term (Bennett, Pitt, & Price, 2012; Kapoor & Solomon, 2011; Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010).

Generation X is the next generation currently in the workforce, with birth dates from 1965 to 1980. Unlike Baby Boomers, Gen Xers “learned from seeing their parents laid off that abiding by company rules does not guarantee a job,” and tend to “view employment as a contract, where loyalty is irrelevant” making them more likely to work to live, as opposed to the live to work mindset of the Boomers (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011, p. 310, 312). Gen Xers are also known to be independent, value work/life balance, and be more prone to job hopping (Twenge et al, 2010). Compared to Baby Boomers, Gen Xers are skeptical of authority, more comfortable with change, and more technologically savvy (Zopiatis, Krambia-Kapardis, & Varnavas, 2012). Each generation possesses similarities and differences to each other, but Millennials’ values and preferences differ from previous generations in many ways, and these differences are changing trends regarding how the workplace should be designed in order to improve employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

The Millennial Generation

The Millennial Generation, also known as Generation Y, the Nexters, or Generation Me (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014; Twenge et al, 2010), has been following the Baby Boomers and Generation X into the workforce increasingly since around 2000 (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). The birth years of the Millennial Generation are debated, but many researchers believe Millennials were born between the years 1980-1995, 1980-2000, or 1978-1999 (Marcinkus, 2012; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Young & Hinesly, 2012). Unlike previous

generations, Millennials are the first generation to have never known life without technology. They are currently the most diverse generation in the workforce, indicating that they are more open to diversity and change than the older generations. Because Millennials saw their parents get divorced and be subject to layoffs without respect to their loyalty to their company, they value “making a life” over “making a living” (Ng et al, 2010, p. 282). Millennials are said to value meaningful work, desire continuous learning experiences at work, place a high priority on family life, and work harder than Generation X (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014). Millennials are believed to desire good pay and benefits; however, Ng et al (2010) asserted that this may be an effect of Millennials' desire for frequent feedback and entitlement. Additionally, Millennials are characteristically impatient about seeking promotions while putting forth minimal effort to earn such a reward. They love instant gratification, and they expect to develop close relationships with their workplace superiors; and all of these factors have often been attributed to the coddling their parents gave them as children (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2012). Millennials value the freedom to be creative in solving problems and perform tasks in their own way (Holt, Marques, & Way, 2012; Özçelik, 2015). According to Myers and Sadaghiani (2010), Millennials enjoy collaborating in teams because they perceive that collaborating avoids risk and is more fun than working alone. Tews, Michel, Xu, and Drost (2015) concluded from their study on Millennial job seekers that Millennials are more attracted to workplaces involving fun than attractive compensation packages and promising opportunities for promotion. Additionally, Millennials tend to have less intention to leave their jobs than other generations, but when they become dissatisfied with their jobs, “they move more quickly and more certainly to quit their jobs and move on than previous generations” (Campione, 2015, p. 61). Thus, in order for

organizations to take advantage of the beneficial characteristics the Millennial Generation brings to the workforce, ensuring their job satisfaction should be a priority.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as a person's attitude toward his or her job and work context; it is "an appraisal of perceived job characteristics, work environment, and emotional experiences at work" (McShane & Von Glinow, 2015, p. 103). An employee's satisfaction with his or her job should be important to employers because research shows that attitudes influence behavior (Zeigler, Hagen, & Diehl, 2012, p. 2021), which implies that an employee's attitudes towards his or her job would influence how he or she behaves on the job, which could easily affect employee performance. Organizations who wish to avoid costly turnover and loss of talent must ensure that their employees are satisfied with their jobs because "... job satisfaction is consistently and significantly correlated with [employee] retention" (Campion, 2015, p. 61). Campion (2015) also asserted that when there is low job satisfaction, it decreases employee motivation, overall productivity, and increases absenteeism at work.

Elements of Job Satisfaction

According to Sypniewska (2013), job satisfaction is affected by four main factors: "economic factors, interpersonal relationships, activities and tasks, and working conditions" (p. 58). Economic factors concern all forms of financial reward or compensation, as well as opportunities for development and career progression. Interpersonal relationships concern the employee's relationships with his or her supervisors and coworkers, as well as workplace atmosphere and ability to receive feedback and recognition from managers. Activities and tasks involve the level of responsibility and independence the employee has, as well as the specific tasks and duties involved in his or her work. Working conditions are characterized by the

equipment the employee uses, as well as the general level of workplace safety (Sypniewska, 2013).

When considering these factors in order to maximize job satisfaction, it is also important to consider Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, or motivator-hygiene theory, which was developed in the 1960s. According to Herzberg, job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are not on opposite ends of a spectrum; rather, the factors that produce job satisfaction are different from those that produce dissatisfaction. Additionally, Herzberg believed that *motivating factors* contributed more to job satisfaction, while *hygiene factors* contributed to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction equally. Examples of *motivating factors* include responsibility levels, interesting work, achievement opportunities, recognition, and opportunities to advance in the organization, while *hygiene factors* include working conditions, salary, status, company policies, supervision, and peer relationships (Tillman, Smith, & Tillman, 2010). Thus, in addition to Sypniewska's assertions of the factors that can increase job satisfaction, Herzberg argued that some of the factors that seemingly increase job satisfaction merely decrease dissatisfaction—specifically, economic factors such as salary level and working conditions. However, Tillman et al (2010) asserted that while economic factors, working conditions, and relationships with peers can contribute to job dissatisfaction when they are not handled well, if the worker has an adequate salary, good working conditions, and good relationships with peers, these factors can also contribute to job satisfaction.

Organizational Commitment

Because an employee's overall job attitude is determined by his or her job satisfaction and organizational commitment (McShane & Von Glinow, 2015), it is important for organizations to consider organizational commitment as well as job satisfaction. An employee's

organizational commitment is “a psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee’s relationship with the organization and (b) has implications for the decision to continue or discontinue membership in the organization” (Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993, p. 539).

Commitment and satisfaction both contribute to overall job attitude, but they arise from different aspects of an employee’s relationship with their work. Commitment reflects a general emotional response to the organization, while

“[j]ob satisfaction... reflects one’s response either to one’s job or to certain aspects of one’s job. Hence, commitment emphasizes attachment to the employing organization, including its goals and values, while satisfaction emphasizes the specific task environment where an employee performs his or her duties. In addition, organizational commitment should be somewhat more stable over time than job satisfaction” (Mowday & Steers, 1979, p. 226).

Organizational commitment is equally as important as job satisfaction for organizations to consider because it “has been linked to various significant outcomes, such as increased organizational citizenship behavior (i.e., going beyond what is expected at work), decreased turnover intent and turnover, and lower levels of absenteeism (Lambert et al, 2015, p. 136).

Thus, if employers wish to decrease turnover and absenteeism and increase motivation and productivity, managing job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment is imperative.

Elements of Organizational Commitment

An employee can experience three types of organizational commitment in various degrees at once: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is the emotional attachment or psychological connection an employee has with an organization. Normative commitment describes a moral duty the employee feels to stay with the organization,

as if to repay a debt. Continuance commitment refers to the employee's desire to stay with the organization only because of the high perceived costs of leaving (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Thus, in order to maximize overall organizational commitment, organizations must consider the emotional attachment and sense of indebtedness they are fostering in their employees as well as their competitiveness among other organizations concerning what employees value.

Affective commitment. The goal in maximizing affective commitment (emotional attachment to an organization) is to provide employees with incentives to feel a sense of belonging to the organization, to empathize with the organization's problems, to feel that the organization holds meaning for them, and to feel as if their goals align with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991, Meyer & Herzcovitch, 2001). Personality can affect employees' abilities to develop affective commitment, but when their work experiences fulfill their needs, utilize their talents, and help them express their values, they should generally experience more commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Additionally, "there is some evidence that affective commitment is related to decentralization of decision making" (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 70). Other factors that increase an employee's affective commitment include giving opportunities for advancement, allowing participation in decisions, giving opportunities to express his or herself, and the level to which the employee believes he or she is valuable to the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

Normative commitment. Normative commitment describes the feeling of duty an employee has to remain at an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). To maximize normative commitment, the organization must make the employee feel a moral obligation to remain with the company and as if they owe the company their best work and allegiance (Meyer & Herzcovitch, 2001). Normative commitment can be fostered through receiving benefits such as

tuition reimbursement or training, or if the employee is saturated in a workplace culture that values loyalty to the organization (Meyer et al, 1993). Additionally, normative commitment can be increased if an employee feels an obligation to an employer he or she believes has not broken psychological contracts (Meyer & Herzcovitch, 2001).

Continuance commitment. Continuance commitment is commitment generated only because the employee believes the cost of changing organizations is too great of a sacrifice (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Continuance commitment is maximized when there are high perceived costs of leaving, and the employee is aware of those costs (Meyer & Herzcovitch, 2001). If alternative work options are limited, or when employees recognize that they have numerous investments (related or unrelated to work) made into the organization that would disappear if they left, continuance commitment is fostered (Meyer et al, 1993). In fact, any factor that the employee believes would be a cost of leaving will contribute to continuance commitment. These perceived costs may include "the threat of wasting the time and effort spent acquiring non-transferable skills, of losing attractive benefits, of giving up seniority-based privileges, [or] of having to uproot a family and disrupt personal relationships" (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 71).

Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment of Millennials

Turnover rates among Millennials are posing a concern to today's organizations; in fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found in 2013 that "Millennials age 24-34 are retained on average less than three years" (Campione, 2015, p. 60). High turnover rates are increasing costs for organizations to hire and train employees, only to lose them soon afterwards. Because job satisfaction and organizational commitment have both been linked to decreased turnover in organizations, both are important to consider when engaging with the Millennial generation.

In order to increase Millennial job satisfaction and organizational commitment, organizations must meet the needs of Millennials that impact job satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, and affective, normative, and continuance commitment the most. Three ways organizations could do this is by implementing mentoring programs, making changes in job design, and fostering a workplace culture that encourages the cultivation of interpersonal relationships according to Millennials' personalities, needs, and expectations in regards to work.

Mentoring

Mentoring can play a highly influential role in Millennial job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Mentoring is “a developmental partnership through which one person shares knowledge, skills, information, and perspective to foster personal and professional growth of another individual” (Busacco, 2011, p. 36). Mentoring can occur in multiple forms. Informal mentoring can occur when a senior employee and a less experienced employee share similar values. Mentoring programs are planned organizational programs that bring more experienced employee mentors together with less experienced mentees. Mentors can be paired with one mentee for one-on-one mentoring, or a mentor can be paired with multiple mentees in a group mentoring setting, which is beneficial if the organization lacks enough mentors to do one-on-one mentoring (Noe, 2013).

Mentoring programs can provide many advantages to a workplace, including “socializing new employees, developing managers, and providing opportunities for women and minorities... to gain exposure and skills needed to move into management positions (Noe, 2013, p. 394). Additionally, mentoring is a “two-way relationship,” meaning that both mentors and mentees can benefit from new knowledge and experiences (Bennett et al, 2012, p. 282). For Millennials, mentoring programs can be extremely attractive because mentoring could provide Millennials a

realistic path for career advancement, enhance and encourage continuous learning, and provide frequent feedback and attention; these factors, when handled appropriately, could contribute to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Quick career advancement. It is important for managers to understand that Millennials have characteristically desired and expected to be promoted quickly within their organizations (Ng et al, 2010). This may stem from the common belief that the Millennial generation feels ambitiously entitled to rapid career progression that is not realistic in relation to their skill level and the reality of the workplace. Regardless of the cause, if this expectation is not met, it could lead to dissatisfaction, and Millennials may feel that the organization does not align with their life goals, which could decrease affective commitment. While talent management and succession planning may not be able to banish feelings of entitlement, mentorship programs may help employees develop more realistic expectations in terms of career progression and timing for advancement (Young, Sturts, Ross, & Kim, 2013). Because Millennials' expectations for quick promotion cannot always be met, this type of relationship could help Millennials become a part of important decisions while giving them more realistic expectations and opportunities concerning advancement.

Fostering realistic expectations about promotion through mentoring could help increase Millennial job satisfaction by giving them additional responsibility. It could increase affective commitment by allowing them to perceive their own value to the organization as well as help them form psychological contracts with the company concerning succession, with the feeling that the organization shares their goals. Overall, it is important for the organization to reform Millennials' expectations to recognize that succession is possible, but not immediate, and mentorship is one way to achieve this.

Continuous learning experiences. In terms of workplace goals, many Millennials desire their work to be a continuous learning experience. One reason for this may be because Millennials see the value in combatting the turbulent job market through participating in training programs to develop new skills and increase their marketability (Mencel & Lester, 2014). Employers could accommodate this need by encouraging their companies to become learning organizations, which are companies that embrace continuous sharing of knowledge among all employees (Noe, 2013). Mentoring is one way to foster a multi-generational focus on learning, as it "puts people in the center of their own learning, especially in larger organizations where the needs of individuals can be overlooked" (Short, 2013, p. 10).

Mentoring to provide continuous learning to Millennials could help increase their job satisfaction by preparing them for the promotions they desire through learning and training under knowledgeable superiors. Additionally, pairing Millennials and Baby Boomers or members of Generation X in mentoring relationships could create the opportunity for the older generations to pass on important company knowledge to younger generations (thereby decreasing the *brain-drain* effect that the Baby Boomer retirement trend is bringing to companies);(Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2011). This opportunity to learn through mentoring may cause Millennials to feel in debt to the organization that provided it, thus increasing normative commitment. Also, continuance commitment may be increased if the skills the Millennial learns through mentoring are primarily non-transferrable skills.

Frequent feedback and attention. Millennials desire more frequent feedback and recognition in the workplace than generations before them. This could be because Millennials tend to dislike taking risks and operating with ambiguity, and so they look to their supervisors for clearly communicated expectations and frequent feedback (Campione, 2015). Another cause

for this could be that because Millennials were raised in a high-technology environment, they are used to and expect instant access to information and communication channels (Mencl & Lester, 2014). Millennials' desire for frequent feedback has directly caused organizations to create mentoring programs to receive this feedback and desired attention (Farrell & Hurt, 2014). Mentoring could give Millennials the chance to receive instantaneous feedback in addition to formal performance reviews, making the learning process even more effective in training younger employees. However, the effectiveness of frequent feedback depends on the experience of the learner; according to Casico (2014), "Withholding feedback from more experienced learners can help them think more critically about their own performance, and as a result improve retention and generalization" (p. 124). Thus, while Millennials may desire frequent feedback in order to gauge their performance, it may not be beneficial for their long-term learning in the organization.

Instead of giving overly frequent feedback and thereby inhibiting critical thinking, mentors could choose to adopt a transformational leadership style in their mentoring role, and give some feedback while also working alongside Millennial workers and encouraging them to take risks. A supervisor exhibits transformational leadership when he or she changes a team by "creating, communicating, and modeling a vision... and inspiring employees to strive for that vision;" additionally, transformational leaders encourage employees to experiment (McShane & Von Glinow, 2015, p. 344). Transformational leaders do not delegate tasks; they work with their team members to accomplish goals, and give subordinates individual attention (Holt et al, 2012). These leadership tactics are desired by Millennials, who value mutual respect between themselves and authority figures. While transformational leadership is a concept that has been used for all generations in the workplace, it may have special significance in determining

satisfaction and commitment in Millennials. Holt et al (2012) believe that because Millennials generally have looked up to their parents as their leaders and role models, transformational leadership may have more effectiveness on Millennials because they desire the same honesty and integrity in a workplace supervisor that they saw in their parents. Mentoring programs could give Millennial employees frequent feedback and inspiring leaders that reflect the leadership they have enjoyed growing up. Offering frequent feedback and attention to Millennials through mentoring could increase job satisfaction by giving them recognition and feedback that helps them achieve their goals. It could also increase normative commitment by creating a rich learning experience that causes feelings of indebtedness. Continuance commitment could be increased when the mentoring program creates a workplace dynamic between mentor and mentee that cannot be replicated elsewhere.

Reverse mentoring programs. Mentoring also poses benefits for Millennials when it allows Millennial employees to contribute to the training of other employees. Millennials have much to learn from their superiors, but by also allowing Millennials to be mentors to Baby Boomers, the Baby Boomers could learn more about subjects that younger people tend to know more about, such as technology, marketing, and modern culture. This multi-generational collaboration tool, known as *reverse mentoring*, has been implemented at companies like General Motors, Deloitte & Touche, Unilever, and Procter & Gamble. Besides learning about technology, this relationship could also help Baby Boomers become more aware and accepting of Millennial diversity and gain a more global cultural perspective (Chaudhuri & Ghosh, 2011; Özçelik, 2015).

This is beneficial not only for Baby Boomers, but could also benefit Millennials because it may help satisfy their need to feel a part of company decisions. By reverse mentoring the

Baby Boomers, they may feel a sense of usefulness and earned respect from their superiors while helping bridge generational gaps. This recognition and increased responsibility could increase Millennial job satisfaction. Affective commitment could also be increased, as reverse mentoring could help Millennials perceive the value they add to their organizations, which helps them fulfill their need to utilize their unique talents in their workplace.

Job Design

Activities and tasks have been shown to increase job satisfaction, (Sypniewska, 2013), and so it follows that the design and grouping of activities and tasks must resonate with the worker in order to maximize job satisfaction. Job design is the “[g]eneral scope of a job from the perspective of the employer, including the competencies and personality traits required and the specific sequence of tasks. It reflects a balance between the personal needs of the employee... and the corporate needs of the employer, such as well-defined responsibility, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness” (Kurian, 2013, p. 156). The link between job design and job satisfaction lies in the personality of the worker. According to Mohr and Zoghi (2008), personality “mediate[s] the association between work design and job satisfaction” (p. 276). This reflects Sypniewska's (2013) assertion that activities and tasks can contribute to job satisfaction. Because employees' expectations often correlate with the generation they belong to, organizations must understand the typical characteristics of Millennials' personalities and use that knowledge to design jobs to best fit this generation of employees. Thus, the way employers design jobs could have a critical impact on an employee's person/job fit and overall job satisfaction, and therefore must be examined in order to increase Millennial job satisfaction. Specific characteristics Millennials prefer that are applicable to job design include having meaningful work, a variety of job tasks,

work/life balance, and a supportive work environment with social connections and cooperation (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014).

Meaningful work. Relating to activities and tasks at work, Millennials are said to desire work that is "meaningful and fulfilling" (Ng et al, 2010, p. 283); so much so, in fact, that research indicates Millennials actually value having meaningful work assignments over life-long employment (Özçelik, 2015). Additionally, meaningful work has historically increased performance and employee retention (Nolan, 2015). Thus, this aspect of employees' activities and tasks must be considered by employers in order to increase job satisfaction in Millennial employees.

According to Nolan (2015), meaningfulness in work has "perceived function and purpose in assignments" (p. 72). The definition of *meaningful work* will be different for each person, but generally, Millennials wish for their work to benefit society in some way (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). This implies that Millennials must have line of sight in order for it to increase their job satisfaction. *Line-of-sight* refers to the employee's ability to see how his or her work and others' work advances the organization's objectives, and this is imperative to have in order for employees to derive meaning from their work (Milkovich, Newman, & Gerhart, 2014). Employers can create this line of sight "through openness in management style, egalitarianism and autonomy, immediacy, collaboration with others, and connectedness" (Nolan, 2015, p. 72). Creating line of sight can also include making assignments meaningful by matching the job's tasks, duties, and responsibilities with the goals of the business (Nolan, 2015).

Flexibility, variety, and creativity. According to Sypniewska (2013), the evaluation of how well activities and tasks contribute to job satisfaction is subjective, as each employee must evaluate their satisfaction in relation to activities and tasks based on their own individual

standard. Thus, Millennials' needs in relation to activities and tasks must be considered in order to maximize their job satisfaction. Millennials value the freedom to be creative in solving problems and perform tasks in their own way (Holt et al, 2012, Özçelik, 2015), and also enjoy having variety in their job tasks (Farrell & Hurt, 2014). Additionally, having flexibility, or the "frequently changing task and KSAO [knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics] requirements," (Heneman et al, 2014, p. 155) is another aspect of job design that Millennials are searching for in potential jobs (Bennett, Pitt, & Price, 2012), and if Millennials are allowed to do a job that requires a variety of job tasks, or a set of tasks that changes regularly, it could contribute to their overall job satisfaction. Also, task variety allows Millennials to multitask, which they are characteristically good at (Farrell & Hurt, 2014). All of this research suggests that incorporating flexibility of work tasks into Millennials' work design could maximize their contribution to the organization by allowing them to use a wider variety of their skills, which could also create a better person/job fit and lead to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

In order to allow Millennials to be creative, creativity's relationship with organizational commitment may need to be examined. If organizations foster too much organizational commitment, creativity could be accidentally discouraged. While organizations may believe all kinds of organizational commitment are positive important to cultivate in employees, commitment can negatively impact creativity because increased loyalty to the organization tends to increase conformity, which can suppress creativity (McShane & Von Glinow, 2015). Thus, employers must be careful that they are not discouraging employee creativity in order to foster organizational commitment, especially because Millennials value the ability to be innovative and take risks to bring new results, which could improve job satisfaction.

Work/life balance. According to Holt et al (2012), work/life balance is extremely important to the Millennial generation. This may be due to Millennials seeing their parents (mostly Baby Boomers) working overtime and still being subject to layoffs and high divorce rates (Ng et al, 2010). Work/life balance is the idea of minimizing conflict between an individual's many roles in life in order to achieve maximum satisfaction in every area of life (Devi & Rani, 2012). One form of work/life balance that organizations can offer is flextime, which is "a scheduling arrangement that permits variation in an employee's start and departure times, variations in the length of the workday, and compressed workweeks" (Campion, 2015, p. 65). Other methods used to increase work/life balance could include telecommuting (working from locations outside the office), working from home, working part-time, and scheduling summer and/or holiday hours (Smith, 2010).

According to Smith (2010), work/life balance is necessary for an employee to achieve overall satisfaction with life. Also, flexible work scheduling has been shown to reduce absenteeism, as well as increase productivity and morale (Campion, 2015). Additionally, it corresponds to Sypniewska's (2013) view that economic factors contribute to job satisfaction, as work/life balance can be classified as a form of total compensation (Milkovich et al, 2014). According to Smith (2010), "Millennial job candidates strongly agree that the availability of flexible work arrangements is important to long term job satisfaction" (p. 441). Smith's study (2010) also found that Millennials found special summer and/or holiday hours to be the most attractive work/life balance initiative, followed by flextime, and that 87.3% of Millennials valued flextime or more vacation over higher pay. Thus, while flexible work scheduling may not be possible for all types of jobs, it should definitely be prioritized by employers when considering methods to maximize Millennial job satisfaction. Work/life balance initiatives can also be

beneficial for organizational commitment (Faisal & Al-Esmael, 2013). Affective commitment is fostered by fulfilling employees' needs (Meyer & Allen, 1991), and this may be a need for Millennials who have important roles to fill outside of work. Additionally, because anything can increase continuance commitment if it is perceived to be a sacrifice for leaving (Meyer & Allen, 1991), work/life balance could foster continuance commitment if Millennials cannot find the same level of time customization elsewhere.

Work Environment and Relationships

Interpersonal relationships, which include "an employee's quality of relationships with supervisors and employees, [and] his general workplace atmosphere" can contribute to an employee's job satisfaction (Sypniewska, 2013, p, 58) and continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation proposes that peer relationships can help eliminate job dissatisfaction and "can lead to job satisfaction (Tillman et al, 2010, p. 109). Thus, accommodating Millennials' desires for a culture involving workplace fun and collaboration with coworkers (Tews et al, 2015, Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010) could increase their job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Workplace fun and informality. Research has shown that workplace fun positively impacts job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment, and diminishes emotional exhaustion and desire to leave the organization (Tews, Michel, & Stafford, 2013). Additionally, Tews et al, (2015) concluded from their study on Millennial job seekers that Millennials are more attracted to workplaces involving fun than attractive compensation packages and promising opportunities for promotion. For employers, this research indicates that organizations could have a great impact on increasing job satisfaction by creating an enticing organizational culture that incorporates fun into the workplace.

What does *workplace fun* entail? Workplace fun can include socializing, celebrating, personal freedoms, and global fun. Socializing is the interaction an employee has with coworkers, celebrating involves social events and gatherings, personal freedoms involve “flexibility and autonomy regarding workplace attire, playing music, and playing around at work; and global fun refers to an overall evaluation of whether an organization has a fun work climate” (Tews et al, 2013, p. 371). While scheduled *fun* activities are included in the scope of workplace fun, research shows that they are not as important to employees as socializing with coworkers throughout the day, having fun job tasks, duties, or responsibilities, and having managerial support for these types of fun. The reason for this is because scheduled fun activities happen less often and are generally a break from work, whereas fun job duties and socialization with coworkers can permeate the employee’s work all throughout the day (Tews et al, 2015). Because fostering job satisfaction and organizational commitment depends so much upon perception (Meyer & Allen, 1991, Tillman et al, 2010), it follows that workplace fun could only contribute to job satisfaction and organizational commitment if Millennial employees perceive their job tasks and socialization with coworkers to be fun. While not all work tasks, duties, and responsibilities will be fun, the employees must generally enjoy the field of work they are placed in (Chhabra, 2015). Other generations’ views may make integrating fun into the workplace more difficult. While Generation X is likely to enjoy workplace fun as much as Millennials, the Baby Boomer generation is often known for being competitive and finding self-worth in their careers, making them less likely to enjoy workplace fun as much as the other generations (Lamm & Meeks, 2009). This could pose a problem, especially since Baby Boomers currently hold the top management positions and will be important facilitators of change towards workplace fun.

Collaboration with coworkers. According to Myers and Sadaghiani (2010), Millennials enjoy working in teams because they perceive that collaborating avoids risk as well as being more fun than working alone. Teamwork could also be more likely to increase productivity in teams with Millennial employees because Millennials are historically not intimidated by their lack of experience or other listeners' social/organizational statuses when expressing their thoughts or ideas, and this could help foster an environment of creativity and innovation in discovering ways to accomplish goals (Chou, 2012). Because trust and positive relationships with coworkers and superiors leads to job satisfaction, it follows that instilling opportunities for employees to work in teams would help foster satisfaction as well (Tillman et al, 2010). Because teamwork helps build relationships between employees and their coworkers, it could also contribute to continuance commitment, as the idea of disrupting any relationships could be perceived as a sacrifice of leaving a company. Additionally, the decentralization of decisions may influence affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), meaning that teamwork may contribute to an employee's affective commitment as well.

Conclusion

Organizations have many options to choose from for increasing Millennial job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Mentoring programs could be informal relationships or formal programs that could group a mentor with one or multiple mentees. Mentoring in these ways could increase Millennial satisfaction when mentors help Millennials form realistic career goals in contrast to their expectations of quick advancement, and thus help Millennials create psychological contracts that the organization is less likely to break. Additionally, mentoring could increase Millennials' affective commitment by giving them more responsibility. The goal of mentoring is to increase learning, and so Millennials' need for

continuous learning experiences could be satisfied through mentoring programs and could increase their continuance commitment through the training on non-transferrable skills. Millennials' need for feedback and attention could be satisfied through mentoring, and the recognition mentoring offers could increase satisfaction. Additionally, since the mentoring relationship may become hard to duplicate, mentoring could foster continuance commitment. Reverse mentoring could also foster Millennial job satisfaction and affective commitment through giving Millennials recognition for their skills and the ability to utilize their unique talents.

Because job satisfaction and organizational commitment are so affected by personality, changes in job design could help increase job satisfaction and commitment for Millennials. Showing Millennials that their work is meaningful by creating line of sight in their work through the grouping of tasks could increase job satisfaction. Giving Millennials flexibility and variety in their job tasks as well as allowing them to be creative in accomplishing those tasks could allow them to maximize their contribution to the organization, which could increase their job satisfaction. Work/life balance is an economic factor that could increase Millennial job satisfaction the most if employers offer flextime or summer/holiday hours; this can fulfill Millennials' needs outside the workplace, which could foster affective organizational commitment. Work/life balance could also foster continuance commitment if the organization is unique in how it offers this benefit to its employees.

An organization's work environment and the ability of Millennials to collaborate with coworkers could also increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Allowing Millennials to socialize with coworkers regularly could increase their perception that their workplace is fun, which could increase their job satisfaction and affective commitment.

Additionally, giving Millennials the opportunity to collaborate with their coworkers in teams could increase their trust in their coworkers, which increases job satisfaction. Additionally, teamwork opportunities could increase affective commitment through the decentralization of decisions, and continuance commitment by fostering relationships that will be perceived as a cost of leaving the organization. If organizations implement mentoring programs or any of these changes to their job designs and work environment, Millennial job satisfaction and organizational commitment could be increased, which could decrease their desire to change jobs and maximize their contributions to their workplace.

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