

A LEADERSHIP PROFILE OF ENTREPRENEURS
ACROSS THE GENERATIONS:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

A LEADERSHIP PROFILE OF ENTREPRENEURS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

Lisa M. Aldisert

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify leadership characteristics of entrepreneurs and to determine how these traits differ, if at all, across societal generations. A sample of 76 entrepreneurs participated by completing an assessment that measured their behavioral style, motivators, and professional and personal competencies. From this sample, 14 entrepreneurs were selected for semi-structured interviews in order to understand (1) their values and beliefs, (2) how they approach employee engagement, and (3) how they self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams. Each of these areas considered differences in generational perspectives. This exploratory study utilized mixed methods, combining the assessment results, demographic information, and the qualitative interviews, which added depth to the survey results.

The study yielded a consistent leadership profile of entrepreneurs; however, the generational differences were less significant because the entrepreneurial characteristics dominated the generational characteristics. The entrepreneurial leaders self-identified more with being entrepreneurs than with being leaders, even though they demonstrated strong leadership acumen. Many of the entrepreneurial leaders experience a dichotomy between being fiercely proud of their staff and frustration over

managerial challenges. An understanding and application of entrepreneurial leadership characteristics will help drive results in high-performing organizations.

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DEDICATION

With gratitude, to Bill J. Bonnstetter

– mentor, colleague, and friend –

since our first conversation at the picnic table.

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Many people contributed to the accomplishment and creation of this study. Thank you, Dr. Lyle Yorks, for your intellect, curiosity, and support during this entire process. I also thank Dr. Victoria Marsick for your rigor and contributions, and Dr. Jeanne Bitterman for your insights and feedback as this research took shape.

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L. M. A.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.”
- Albert Einstein

“You won’t get anything unless you have the vision to imagine it.”
- John Lennon

Successful entrepreneurs have been drivers of the U.S. economy in spite of the hardship brought on by the global recession in 2008 (Schramm, 2010). In fact, many hopes have been placed on burgeoning entrepreneurs to take the U.S. out of the doldrums into more robust economic times. When we think of entrepreneurs, they range from icons such as Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos to the thousands of independent entrepreneurs who create products and services to make our lives more efficient and productive.

The smaller, established, independent entrepreneurs are the focus of this study. They are the unsung heroes of our economy, having imagined, created, operated, and sold thousands of businesses. These entrepreneurs come from as many backgrounds as one can imagine. Some have high school educations; others have advanced degrees. Some worked in corporate America before launching their businesses; others never set foot in a building that required wearing a tie. Some have a legacy of parents and grandparents as entrepreneurs or business owners; others are the children of teachers.

Regardless of the background of these individuals, the ones who know how to envision and create successful enterprises are the focus of this exploratory study. Unlike their large corporate brethren, the prototypical entrepreneur/CEO has typically learned

through trial and error. They make a good living, raise and provide a good life for their families, and, in some instances, have accumulated wealth from the successful operation and eventual sale of their businesses.

The purpose of this exploratory study is to learn about these entrepreneurs' leadership characteristics and determine how these traits differ, if at all, across the generations. Understanding their leadership profile, comprised of specific behaviors, attitudes, and professional skills, will add to our understanding of entrepreneurial leadership. A generational overlay potentially adds the dimension of the entrepreneurial leader's worldview, which influences how he or she leads the organization.

There are different ways to define successful entrepreneurs, but for purposes of this study, they are people who have an idea for a business and the vision to carry it to fruition. They take the plunge, which involves meaningful personal risk, and engage others to help them in the fulfillment of that vision. The size of the enterprise doesn't matter, but those who have spirit and passion and engage their employees and customers to create sustainable, profitable businesses are the heart of this entrepreneurial story.

Sexton and Bowman (1985) summarize research on characteristics of entrepreneurs, which include: "1) moderate risk-taking propensity; 2) ability to tolerate ambiguity; 3) an internal locus of control; 4) high need for autonomy, dominance, independence, and self-esteem; and 5) a low need for conformity and support" (p. 131). They conclude that entrepreneurs possess psychological and sociological skills that differentiate them from "ordinary" managers.

In today's uncertain economic environment, we can benefit from learning more about how successful entrepreneurs lead their enterprises. By understanding their core attributes, we can identify implications for leadership development in entrepreneurial organizations.

The complexity of the workplace is heightened by the fact that for the first time in history, four generations are working side by side. Issues related to managing a

multigenerational workforce have been widely discussed in the business and human resource development (HRD) press. As demographics shift, multiple generations will participate in leadership roles as well. Studying entrepreneurial leaders and identifying what, if any, differences appear in their leadership characteristics based on their generation will inform our understanding of multigenerational leadership.

Currently, there is a migration in leadership from Veterans and older Baby Boomers, who are retiring, to younger Baby Boomers and members of Generation X. As these individuals transition to retirement, the new, younger leaders are likely to espouse different values and beliefs (Erickson, 2010).

The leading edge of the Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) began to turn 65 in January 2011. Much of the discussion around the phenomenon of retiring Baby Boomers has centered on an impending talent gap in the workplace (Athey & Burnside, 2007; Dorset, 2008; Eldridge, 2008; Fink, 2008; Piktialis, 2007). Little discussion has focused on the eventuality that as the older Baby Boomer leaders retire, members of different generations, in particular younger Baby Boomers and Generation X (born 1965-1979), increasingly will assume their positions. As societal generations are defined largely by their values, the impact of this leadership shift is relevant. People tend to reflect the values and beliefs of their generational cohort, so it is likely that newer leaders will reflect values and beliefs different from those of their predecessors (Smith & Clurman, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). Entrepreneurial firms are run by people of different generations, so their unique experiences may lend insights to what conventional corporate and non-profit organizations are facing as leaders from different generations work side by side.

Much of the literature on generational cohorts has described general characteristics from sociological and behavioral perspectives (Mannheim, 1923, 1958; Smith & Clurman, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al., 2000). Considerably less information and insight exist, however, about generational differences in leadership style.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of background and context of the generations in the workplace. Next, the specific issue of leadership characteristics of successful entrepreneurs will be discussed. Following this, the purpose for this study will be identified. Next, the approach and related research questions will be introduced. A brief introduction to the researcher's perspective will follow, along with assumptions for the study. Finally, the chapter will end with the rationale and significance of this study.

Background and Context

Some 78 million Baby Boomers¹ ("Boomers") were born in the United States between 1946 and 1964. Business authors, journalists, and academicians have been bracing for what will happen as Baby Boomers exit the workplace beginning in 2011 when the oldest members of this cohort began to turn 65 years old. The demographics are compelling in that the Baby Boomer cohort is significantly larger than its successor, Generation X ("Gen X") (some 48 million in the U.S. born between 1965 and 1979). It was not until the "Millennials" ("Generation Y," "Gen Y," or "Echo Boom," born since 1980) that another population swell occurred.

It is important to note that since the Baby Boomer generation spans 18 years, the oldest and the youngest bear little resemblance to each other in terms of worldview. Three subdivisions actually exist within this generation, and we may observe different perspectives based on these age differences. For purposes of this study, the researcher will divide the Baby Boomer generation into three cohorts: Leading Boomers, Core Boomers, and Trailing Boomers, following the model described in the *Yankelovich Monitor* (Wellner, 2000). It is likely, incidentally, that eventually we will see the need to subdivide Generation Y, as it spans approximately 20 years.

¹As of the 2000 census, there were 72 million surviving Baby Boomers in the U.S.

The popular and business press has written much about generational characteristics. These journalists, as well as organizational development writers, have tended to focus on the impending talent gap because Generation X is a much smaller population that will replace retiring Boomers (Athey & Burnside, 2007; Dorset, 2008; Eldridge, 2008; Fink, 2008; Piktialis, 2007).

Although younger Boomers will assume responsibility for many of the leadership positions of retiring Boomers, it is a demographic eventuality that members of Generation X will increasingly step into these positions. Therefore, in the coming years, we will witness the beginning of multigenerational leadership as older and younger Baby Boomers and Generation X will sit side by side as leaders. How will these differences in worldview be experienced by the leaders and employees alike? Understanding these differences is a key underpinning of this study.

Business writers have addressed these issues to varying degrees. Erickson (2010) reviewed how Generation X will bring a different perspective on leadership, particularly with its propensity to create its own definitions of success. Bennis and Thomas (2002) conducted interviews with 20 “geezers,” aged 70-82 and 20 “geeks,” aged 21-34 about leadership styles.² Their research model centers on “crucibles,” transformational experiences or critical incidents that make or break people as leaders. These crucibles range from having an influential mentor to mastering a form of martial arts to coping with the death of a child (pp. 14-15). Crucibles are important because they help leaders make meaning of their experiences, to wit, “Leaders create meaning out of events and relationships that devastate nonleaders” (p. 17).

²At the time this book was written, the geezers roughly correspond to the Veteran generation and the geeks align with Generation X. The Veteran generation is the generation prior to the Baby Boomer generation, that is, people born 1945 and earlier. It is also referred to as the World War II generation, the “matures,” and the “greatest generation.”

In any organization, a transition in leadership is a complex undertaking. Although new leaders may share the organizational vision and mission of their predecessors, they still enter the new roles potentially holding different worldviews. Day and Lord (1988) identify that over 45% of an organization's performance is attributable to the role of executive leadership, so the worldview of the leader certainly influences strategy and decision-making.

Although leadership succession is not the focus of this research, there are many workplace implications as Veterans and older Baby Boomers retire. Experienced executives have expressed concern that these younger leaders do not have the depth of leadership to fill these roles within their organizations. For example, some of the industries that raised the issue include: education (Fink & Brayman, 2004), public sector (Green, 2008), nursing (Bolton & Roy, 2004; Duchscher & Cowin, 2004; Swenson, 2008), public utilities (Bridgers & Johnson, 2006; Stowe, 2008), accounting (Cignoranelli, 2009; Nilsen, 2008; Ottinger & Strassler, 2008; Putney & Sinkin, 2009; Weinstein, 2004), and law (Haserot, 2007). The diversity of industries and concerns speaks to the extent of the dialogue about what to do when current leaders retire.

Discussion of this topic is not exclusive to the United States, as it is also being examined in other countries. Yu and Miller (2005) studied generational succession in Taiwanese educational institutions and manufacturing companies. Busine and Watt (2005) researched succession management trends with a goal of identifying improved practices in Australian companies. Although the focus of this research is on organizations in the United States, it is noteworthy that these issues are being discussed globally.

One component of generational literature reveals characteristics of different generations (Smith & Clurman, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al., 2000). A smaller portion of generational literature discusses generational differences in leadership styles and approaches (Arsenault, 2004; Seaton & Boyd, 2007). As workplace demographics shift, it will be important to understand differences in leadership

characteristics across the generations, which have a direct impact on how these leaders influence their organizations.

As an example, a law firm with which I am familiar recently has undergone a multigenerational shift in leadership. The previous managing partner was a younger member of the Veteran generation, while the current one is from Generation X. Both men were tasked with the same goals and objectives for the firm: to increase revenue, to diversify the client base, to enhance the firm's reputation in its marketplace, and to hire the best and brightest who will appropriately represent the firm. Part of the culture of the "old guard," however, was to do whatever it took to get the job done, including sacrificing family activities for the sake of meeting client objectives. Professional demands took precedence over family activities. The new managing partner, however, has an entirely different perspective. He believes that participating in family activities is not just something that is important in concept, but also in practice.

From a generational perspective, this makes sense: having grown up as "the latchkey generation," and now as parents, Generation X values a more engaged family unit (Smith & Clurman, 1997; Zemke, et al., 2000). On this basis alone, how the work is handled at the firm is in the process of changing. Both older and younger generations work hard; the *way* they get the job done is different. The older generations, however, may be resentful and perceive that the younger generations are not as dedicated or committed. In this case, the new managing partner needs to exert influence that makes the attorneys understand and become comfortable with *both* of these different worldviews.

This vignette is representative of what is occurring in many workplaces, and concerns about how to manage and simply deal with these changes add a layer of complexity to an already baffling workplace where change is ubiquitous.

Entrepreneurs exhibit certain leadership characteristics that contribute to their accomplishments running profitable enterprises. Research on "serial entrepreneurs" reveals that, in addition to higher than average leadership skills, these entrepreneurs

exhibit high levels of competency in areas such as persuasiveness, personal accountability, goal orientation, and interpersonal skills. These traits are predictive of an entrepreneurial success-oriented mindset (Bonnstetter, Bonnstetter, & Preston, 2010).

Van Praag and Versloot (2007) researched the relative contribution of entrepreneurs to the economy based on four factors. One of these four factors is “the role of entrepreneurship in increasing individuals’ utility levels” (p. 351). Stangler (2009) analyzed the demographics of entrepreneurial activity and concluded that “we may be about to enter a highly entrepreneurial period” (p. 6).

Research Problem

The way people lead has a direct impact on organizational effectiveness. These characteristics reflect the leaders’ attitudes, beliefs, and values; how they approach employee engagement; and how they influence their organizations or teams. Generational cohorts are brought together not just by age, but also by shared common experiences, which, at least in part, are reflected in their attitudes, beliefs, and values. We can anticipate, then, that leaders from different generations will reflect those differences in worldview; therefore, having a clearer understanding about these characteristics will enhance workplace dynamics.

A change in leader, *de facto*, causes organizational change. This may not be as dramatic as during a restructuring, a merger, or a downsizing, but still it represents change. A new leader from a different generation adds complexity to an already complex environment of change. For example, when a retiring Baby Boomer leader is replaced by someone from Generation X, Baby Boomer employees may be uncomfortable reporting to someone who they feel is too young. On the other hand, Generation X employees may rejoice at the change because they may conclude that the new Generation X leader will “get it” about who they are. Millennial employees might have yet another reaction as they

may be more comfortable reporting to Baby Boomers, given the attachments they have to their parents. And then, a cadre of employees will be indifferent to the generational change.

Generations organize around a collective identity, particularly connected to those events that occurred in their formative adult years in their late teens or early twenties (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Meredith, Schewe, & Hiam, 2002; Smith & Clurman, 1997; Strauss & Howe, 1991; Zemke et al., 2000). Although demographers bracket the generations through broad descriptors, nuances occur and individual experiences differ, and it is important not to stereotype. For example, a leading-edge Baby Boomer born in 1946 turned 17 at the time that the youngest of the Baby Boomers were born in 1964. The events they remember from their formative years will be significantly different. On a peer-to-peer basis, a Baby Boomer who served in Vietnam, for example, has a different perspective than a peer who was in college at the same time. As another example, a member of Generation X who grew up in a household with both parents (including one parent who was home after school) experienced life differently than the latchkey children more typically described in this generation.

This exploratory study is significant in that the research may provide insights into how entrepreneurial leaders can be more effective navigating economic environments that demand more creativity and innovation, managing change, responding to new market opportunities with speed to the market, and, in some cases, revitalizing stagnant organizations that have existed by the mantra of “we’ve always done it this way.” Obviously, not all entrepreneurs are alike, but leadership characteristics derived from this study provide new perspective on leadership development in a wider range of organizations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study is to identify implications for multigenerational and entrepreneurial leadership development by better understanding leadership characteristics of entrepreneurs who are from different generations. The leadership lens of entrepreneurial leadership informs the study, which explores how, if at all, leadership characteristics differ with respect to generational bias. Through a mixed methods study comprised of qualitative interviews and an assessment, the study will identify those factors that differentiate the leaders' styles.

Approach and Research Questions

Entrepreneurs were selected as the research subjects based on their ability to handle risk, manage change, and deal with ambiguous circumstances. Although personality differences certainly arise among entrepreneurs, what makes this focus especially intriguing is the overlay of the generational values and beliefs. The central question that will be researched in this exploratory study is: *In what ways, if at all, do entrepreneurs exhibit a leadership profile based on their generation?* The following questions are derived from the central research question:

- In what ways do the entrepreneurs' leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?
- In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation?
- How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

Research Design Overview

This research was conducted within the pragmatist worldview. The study examined specific contexts of how entrepreneurs exhibit leadership characteristics based on their generations. This worldview will provide the foundation to understand their assessment results, how entrepreneurs lead, engage on the job, and construct meaning.

Seventy-six people participated in the initial study by responding to an assessment that measured three different dimensions. The researcher then interviewed 14 people to better understand them as entrepreneurial leaders. The interview research provided insights about differences that may occur based on generation. This study can help organizations better understand what to anticipate in terms of intergenerational leadership styles, as well as the implications for leadership development in such environments.

This strategy informed the research through data collection of multiple sources of information. First, the assessment was administered on-line to nominated entrepreneurs. The survey included the collection of demographic and generational information. The assessment, the TTI TriMetrix[®] DNA talent survey, provides information on the respondents' behavior, attitudes, and professional skills. After reviewing these results, 14 entrepreneurs were selected across generations to participate in semi-structured interviews.

The researcher's role was to evaluate the data from the assessment and select candidates for the interviews. The interview process was important in terms of extracting meaning from the participants. Selecting the specific entrepreneurs for interviews was critical to the success of the research. The selection criteria resulted in a diverse group of entrepreneurs across the generations.

Data collection occurred through the assessment and the interviews. Results from the data analysis were compared to a larger population from the assessment provider, Target Training International, Ltd. (TTI). Demographic data were gathered to determine

baseline generational data. Analyzing data from different sources enriched the research and allowed for triangulation to increase reliability.

Rationale and Significance

The topic of multigenerational leadership is being discussed at senior levels of organizations in virtually all industries, suggesting that it is an area that merits further research and understanding in order to develop ideas for implementing successful leadership development. Although many organizations recognize leadership as an important and necessary subject of focus generically, the reality is that a more in-depth understanding of multigenerational aspects will help, particularly during times of rapid change.

When the multigenerational aspect is layered over other leadership issues, such as succession planning, the complexity increases, creating an even more difficult challenge if the subject is not addressed until it becomes urgent, that is, when a different generation takes over for someone who is retiring or moving on. Scholars and practitioners alike can help organizations be better prepared to handle organizational change through additional research, establishment of learning protocols, and sharing successful case studies that can be modeled by companies in different industries. Having a better understanding of entrepreneurs' experiences as leaders will provide insights about how successful leaders manage through change.

Researcher Perspective

The researcher's point of view on this topic has developed from several perspectives. Her background bridges entrepreneurship and leadership. First, she has been an entrepreneur for over 20 years, having founded and grown four different

businesses. Second, she had personal experiences as a Baby Boomer when she took over leadership responsibility from members of the Veteran generation during her earlier corporate career in banking. These insights provide personal experience, as her direct reports adjusted from command and control styles to her more collaborative and interactive style.

Third, she has managed teams whose members have spanned different generations and has experienced, first hand, the differences in worldview by generation. Fourth, she has studied and written about intergenerational workplace dynamics for over ten years (for example, Aldisert, 2002). Finally, as a consultant, she has observed that clients are discussing the subject of intergenerational leadership with some frequency. These clients often say that they know they need to understand this better but don't know what to do about it.

To summarize, the researcher's 20+ year entrepreneurial experience and her leadership experience as a corporate leader in the banking industry, as well as her various experiences in with multigenerational workplace issues, inform her perspective. Being an entrepreneur, collaborating with other entrepreneurs, and having entrepreneurs as clients have provided her with insights that influence her perspective.

Many of her clients have expressed concern – even bewilderment – about what will happen as Baby Boomers retire, so this topic has “real world” implications for management consulting and executive development. Moreover, corporate clients know that they need to be more proactive as leaders and are looking for insights that will help their leadership development efforts be both practical and effective. They know they need to manage change more effectively, and the leadership characteristics of successful entrepreneurs may provide a blueprint for action.

Assumptions

Several assumptions underlie the context of this research. First, the researcher believes that we can identify leadership characteristics of successful entrepreneurs through a profile derived from the assessment that will be used in this study. Second, we can see how, if at all, this leadership profile differs across the generations. Even though the researcher assumed that differences in generational worldview may result in differences in entrepreneurial leadership characteristics, she did not know what, if any, these would actually be until the research had been conducted.

Third, organizations may understand intergenerational *talent* shifts, but not necessarily the impact of a multigenerational *leadership* team. The management and HRD fields have contributed much to the understanding about talent migration. As the Baby Boomers age and younger Boomers and Generation X take over, the way in which leadership occurs is likely to be reflected.

Finally, successful leaders will be more effective if they are mindful of generational differences. Communication is at the heart of this discussion, and there is a great deal of knowledge around the issue that people will be more productive in the workplace if they feel more understood. This research should enhance this understanding and provide greater clarity about how leaders can approach challenges in the workplace, particularly through understanding generational worldviews.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

“True scholarship consists in knowing not what things exist, but what they mean; it is not memory, but judgment.”
- James Russell Lowell

Introduction

This review of literature was conducted within the context of the leadership lens of entrepreneurial leadership. The literature reviewed is categorized in four areas. The first area is generational theory (also known as generational cohort theory). This theory, used mainly by historians and social scientists, provides background and perspective about different societal generations, that is, about the shared experiences and worldviews of people in similar age groups.

The second area considers intergenerational leadership characteristics, bridging generational and leadership issues. The third area considers entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, from the context of the traits and characteristics of entrepreneurs. The objective was to review literature that tied to the assessment instrument used in this research. The final area is entrepreneurial leadership, which targets the intersection of entrepreneurs and leadership. The chapter ends with a conceptual framework of the literature.

The literature was gathered from various databases and key word searches. The key word and phrase combinations included *generations, intergenerational leadership, multigenerational leadership, generational theory, entrepreneurship, entrepreneur*

characteristics, entrepreneurial traits, entrepreneurial leadership, and psychodynamic leadership traits. In most cases, searching with one expression resulted in thousands of search results. Using combinations of two and three expressions, however, narrowed the results to between 90 and 350 results for each search.

The sources of the literature included: ProQuest, JSTOR, ERIC, Digital Dissertations, Google Scholar, the Columbia University libraries, and the research libraries of the New York Public Library.

Generational Theory Literature

Mannheim's 1923 essay, "The Problem of Generations" (1952), is often cited as the first influential attempt to view generations as a sociological phenomenon. Mannheim identified two analytical frameworks for looking at generations: the positivist view and the romantic-historical perspective (p. 278). The positivist perspective applies quantitative methods to study generations, such as demographic and actuarial data. In contrast, Mannheim's romantic-historic approach is qualitative, and "the time interval separating generations becomes subjectively experienced time" (p. 282). Mannheim studied and synthesized the perspectives of the natural and social scientists who had previously examined the concept of generational change. "Every moment of time is therefore in reality more than a point-like event – it is a temporal volume having more than one dimension, because it is always experienced by several generations at various stages of development" (p. 283). Mannheim's primary contribution was to set forth the concept of a generational cohort based on common events, or a socio-historic concept. "Individuals who belong to the same generation, who share the same year of birth, are endowed, to that extent, with a common location in the historical dimension of the social process" (p. 290).

More recently, generational theory was brought into the research mainstream by the work of Strauss and Howe (1991). They identified 18 “generational biographies” throughout the history of the U.S., based on four lifestyle segments from childhood to old age, “the generational diagonal,” with four recurrent “peer personalities” (p. 8). Strauss and Howe describe the core of the issue: “Much of the stress in cross-generational relationships arises when people of different ages expect others to behave in ways their peer personalities won’t allow” (p.13). A peer personality is defined as “a generational persona recognized and determined by (1) common age location; (2) common beliefs and behavior; and (3) perceived membership in a common generation” (p. 64).

Members of a generation are linked by the experiences they share in the early, formative years of their lives. Indeed, each generation “responds to these life stages and circumstances in ways determined by ... the early shared experiences that helped form the values and life skills of their generational cohort” (Smith & Clurman, 1997, p. 6). Furthermore, “each generation is shaped by different markers; you must walk with them in their shoes, not walk on them in your shoes” (p. 8).

The mere existence of the Baby Boomer generation steered generational issues into the forefront. More people were born in the United States in the first third of the Boomer years than in the prior 30 years. Because the birth rate was unprecedented, the impact of the Boomers on society has been more pronounced simply by virtue of the sheer size of its population. The prior generation – known as the Veterans, the World War II generation, the “silent” generation, the “matures,” “traditionalists,” and most recently “the greatest generation” (Brokaw, 2004) – essentially includes everyone born before 1946 who is alive today. For purposes of this research, this generation will be referred to as the Veterans.

In the 1990s, much discussion arose about Baby Boomers entering leadership positions. President Bill Clinton was the first Boomer president and received a considerable amount of attention about his youth. Some of the first management research

about generations addressed the different leadership characteristics of the Veterans and the Baby Boomers (Halliman, 1998). Halliman points out that much of the generational literature prior to this time focused on age differences, not shared experiences and values.

Currently, four generations co-exist in the workplace: Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y, also known as the Millennials. This in itself is historic because it is the first time that this circumstance has occurred in the United States. Although the Veterans have retired in large part, they are still represented in the workplace. These four generations “have unique work ethics, different perspectives on work, distinct and preferred ways of managing and being managed, idiosyncratic styles, and unique ways of viewing such work-world issues as quality, service, and well ... just showing up for work” (Zemke et al., 2000, p. 25).

It is important to note that scholars name and define generational boundaries somewhat differently. The following table describes some of the most often cited generational descriptions.

Table 2.1. Examples of Generational Labels and Timeframes

Strauss and Howe (1991)	Silent Born 1925-1942	Boomer Born 1943-1960	13er Born 1961-1981	Millennial ¹ Born from 1982
Lancaster and Stillman (2003)	Traditionalist Born 1900-1945	Baby Boomer Born 1946-1964	Generation X Born 1965-1980	Millienials Born 1981-1999
Zemke et al. (2002)	Veterans Born 1922-1943	Baby Boomer Born 1943-1960	Xers Born 1961-1980	Nexters Born 1981-2000
Smith and Clurman (1997)	Matures Born 1909-1945	Baby Boomer Born 1946-1964	Generation X Born 1965-1979	
Meredith et al. (2002)	Postwar Born 1928-1945	Leading Baby Boomer Born 1946-1954 Trailing Baby Boomer Born 1955-1965	Generation X Born 1965-1976	N Generation Born from 1977

¹This book predates Generation Y coming of age in the workplace, so is not named here. In later works, Strauss and Howe use the term “Millennial”.

As seen from the table, Meredith et al. (2002) divide the Baby Boomers into two cohorts. Research reported in the *Yankelovich Monitor* also divided the Baby Boomer cohort. In its 2000 study, “Dissecting Boomers,” it defined three Boomer segments: “23 percent of Boomers fall into the ‘Leading Boomer’ category, born 1946-1950; 49 percent are ‘Core Boomers,’ born 1951 to 1959; and 28 percent are ‘Trailing Boomers,’ born 1960-1964” (Wellner, 2000, p. 55).

This division makes sense, given the fact that 78 million Baby Boomers span 18 years. For purposes of this study, the researcher has adopted the Yankelovich Monitor’s terminology and has evaluated the Baby Boomers in these three segments. The researcher’s generational definitions for this study are as follows:

- Veterans, born 1900-1945
- Leading Boomers, born 1946-1950
- Core Boomers, born 1951-1959
- Trailing Boomers, born 1960-1964
- Generation X, born 1965-1978
- Generation Y/Millennials, born from 1979

The reader should keep in mind that generational boundaries are somewhat artificial so that people who are born “on the cusp” of a generation are likely to have characteristics of both generations.

Lancaster and Stillman (2003) identify a key word that is descriptive of each of these generations. Traditionalists (Veterans) are loyal. They work to a common goal and were influenced by World War II, the Great Depression, and the GI Bill. Baby Boomers are optimistic. In the post-World War II era, they grew up believing anything is possible. Idealism and education are hallmarks of the Baby Boomers, and based on the sheer size of this category, they are competitive. Generation X is skeptical. They came of age with the decline of many institutions and the tripling of the divorce rate in the U.S. Finally, Generation Y is realistic. They have been proactively involved in their family dynamic since they were young and bring that element into the workplace (pp. 18-32).

It is important to note that given the long span of years of the various generations (for example, the Baby Boomer cohort spans 18 years and Generation Y spans over 20 years), it is impossible to generalize that all members of a generational cohort have the same shared experiences. A 67-year-old Baby Boomer (born in 1946) and a 49-year-old Baby Boomer (born in 1964) do not have the same shared experiences from their earlier years. In fact, the younger person may have characteristics of Generation X, and the older one may have characteristics of Veterans. Nonetheless, demographers agree that there are some key characteristics identified as shared experiences of each generation, and Table 2.2 captures some of these traits.

World events and popular culture are memorable generational markers. When people go to a class reunion, for example, music from their “era” is featured. Films, sporting events, and notable celebrities are memorable from generational viewpoints.

This analysis extends to the workplace as well. Distinct generational workplace values and attitudes exist, as summarized in Table 2.3. Understanding these attributes across generations helps to understand the worldviews and values of members of the various generations, how they interact at work, and considerations for promotion and succession.

When one considers these unique perspectives on work, managing, and being managed, it is not difficult to envision differences in leadership styles. The leading edge of Generation X, for example, graduated from college during the recession of the early 1990s. Many were unable to procure jobs, so their perspective on the merits of college education along with early experiences in the workplace is considerably different from those of the leading edge of the Baby Boomers, who were the first generation to eagerly go to college *en masse* and were welcomed into a plentiful workplace with newly created white-collar positions.

Table 2.2. Popular Culture and Defining Events of Generations

Generation	Veterans	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Also known as...	Traditionalists GIs, Matures WW II generation Silent generation Seniors	Boomers	Xers Thirteener Baby Busters Post-Boomers	Millennials Nexters Nintendo generation Generation Net Internet generation
Popular names	George, Dorothy	Tom, Linda	Devon, Li	Brandon, Crystal
Birth years	1922-1943	1943-1960	1960-1980	1980-2000
Defining events and trends	Patriotism Families The Great Depression WW II The New Deal Korean War Golden age of radio Silver screen Rise of labor unions	Prosperity Children in the spotlight Television Suburbia Assassinations Vietnam Civil rights movement Cold War Women's liberation The space race	Watergate, Nixon resigns Latchkey kids Stagflation Single-parent homes MTV AIDS Computers Challenger disaster Fall of Berlin Wall Wall Street frenzy Persian Gulf Glasnost, Perestroika	Computers Schoolyard violence Oklahoma City bombing <i>It Takes a Village</i> TV talk shows Multiculturalism Girls' movement McGwire and Sosa
Visible members	Harry Belafonte George Bush Jimmy Carter Geraldine Ferraro Phil Donahue Sidney Poitier Lee Iacocca Gloria Steinem John Glenn	Bill Clinton Hillary Clinton David Letterman Oprah Winfrey Jane Pauley Bill Gates Rush Limbaugh P. J. O'Rourke Mick Jagger	George Stephanopoulos Douglas Coupland Kurt Cobain Jewel Brad Pitt Michael Jordan Matt Groening Neil Stephenson Michael Dell Adam Werbach Meredith Bagby	Kerri Strug Macaulay Culkin Chelsea Clinton Tara Lipinski LeAnn Rimes

Table 2.2 (continued)

Generation	Veterans	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Music of their early years	Swing	Rock 'n roll	Disco	Alternative rap
	Big band	Acid rock	Rap	SKA
	Glenn Miller	Elvis	Reggae	Remix
	Duke Ellington	The Beatles	Elton John	Jewel
	Benny Goodman	Rolling Stones	Bruce Springsteen	Puff Daddy
	Tommy Dorsey	Grateful Dead	Tina Turner	Alanis Morissette
	Bing Crosby	Beach Boys	Bon Jovi	Toni Braxton
	Kate Smith	Jimi Hendrix	Michael Jackson	Will Smith
	Ella Fitzgerald	Janis Joplin	Guns 'n Roes	Savage Garden
	Frank Sinatra	Bob Dylan	U2	Spice Girls
		Supremes	Prince	Hanson
		Temptations		Garth Brooks
			Backstreet Boys	

Adapted from Zemke et al., 2000, p. 24.

Table 2.3. Work-Related Characteristics of Generations

	Veterans	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y
Dominant values	Benevolence Loyalty Conformity Custom	Tolerance Power/authority Achievement Stimulation	Stimulation Self-direction Achievement Hedonism	Stimulation Self-direction Hedonism
Stereotypes	Old-fashioned Autocratic Not interested in new ways	Workaholic Political Self-centered	Cynical Lazy Selfish	Spoiled Technology-dependent Scatterbrained
Work ethic	Disciplined Duty before play Adhere to rules	Efficient Logical Do what it takes	Task-oriented Self-reliant Independent	Multitasking Group-oriented Explain why
Communication	Formal Written Chain of command	Face time One-on-one In- person	Direct As needed	E-mail/voice mail Instant messaging Lots of ccs
Feedback	Avoid conflict No news is good news	“Show me the money” Promotion/title	Direct: “Tell me how I’m doing”	Instantaneous Seek approval/praise
Leadership	Command and control Take charge Authoritative	Collaborative Team player	Entrepreneurial Participative Wants to know why	N/A
Authority	Follow authority figure Hierarchical Chain-of-command	Question authority	Skeptical of authority	Lines are blurred Why must I follow?
Family and work	Family and work are separate	Work takes priority over all else	Work/life balance	Work/life balance If must choose, will choose family/friends
Rewards	Appreciate recognition for job well done Opportunity to mentor	Appreciate promotion, title, money Build consensus	Appreciate autonomy and flexibility	Appreciate opportunity to provide input Technical wiz

Adapted from Crumpacker and Crumpacker, 2007, p. 355.

With this background on generational theory as a backdrop, it is relevant to explore how leaders from different generations exhibit leadership characteristics differently. Considering Table 2.3, for example, the descriptors for communication, feedback, and leadership imply potentially meaningful differences in leadership style. The combination of Generation X characteristics of “direct,” “how am I doing,” and “why” are stylistically different from the equivalent Baby Boomer characteristics of “face time,” “show me the money,” and “team player.” Certainly, employees are accustomed to adapting and adjusting to new managers. Restructuring, reorganizations, reengineering, downsizing, mergers and acquisitions have become the norm, not the exception, in corporate America. From a higher level leadership perspective, however, these differences may be more subtle, yet more substantive.

Schuman and Scott (1989) studied generational and collective memories by conducting a national sample of adults, who were asked in 1985 to identify national or world events they thought were memorable or important. They employed a probability sample of 1,140 Americans, age 18 and older, to identify one or two events, and why these occurrences were important to them (p. 362). World War II and Vietnam were the events cited most frequently (at 29% and 22%, respectively), followed by space exploration, the Kennedy assassination, civil rights, the threat of nuclear war, communication/transportation, the Depression, computers, terrorism, moral decline, and women’s rights (pp. 362-363).

Schuman and Scott (1989) use the expression “generational imprinting” to distinguish what a person absorbs from “normal individual development, just as differences in generational perspectives on the ‘same’ event can be seen to be a consequence of varying locations in historical time” (p. 378). They differentiate between an individual and a collective memory. Leading Boomers may have a collective memory of Vietnam, while someone who served in the war – or waited for a loved one to return – has an individual memory.

The authors make the point that people of different age groups who mention the same event (such as World War II) look at the event from different perspectives (Schuman & Scott, 1989, p. 371). The daughter of a World War II veteran may have a unique perspective based on her father's experience, while her father's perspective is entirely different. A historical perspective, in combination with an individual or collective memory, shapes how people remember these events.

Twenge and Campbell (2008) conducted a cross-generational meta-analysis on generational differences in psychological traits of 1.4 million college students who completed a psychological scale, such as the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory or the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, from 1930 on. "For most traits, generational change is steadily moving in one direction and not reversing. This might occur partially because parents pass on their values to their children" (p. 864). Table 2.4 summarizes findings from their research.

Table 2.4. Generational Changes Evident in the Workplace

Trait Change	Evidence in Workplace	Change in Employee Needs/Values	Organizational Change; Accommodation	Organizational Change; Counter Pressure
Need for social approval down	Casual dress, less formality	"Do what's right for you."	First name basis, casual dress	Dress codes
Self-esteem and narcissism up	Higher expectations; fulfillment	"It's all about me"; ethics problems	Praise programs, ethics training	No self-evaluations
<i>Locus</i> of control more external	Not taking responsibilities for successes or failures	Need push by organization to produce	More work in teams	Accountability for performance
Anxiety and depression up	Stress levels up	More mental health services needed	Provide mental health services	Releasing employees stressed by job environment
Women more agentic and assertive	More female workers in powerful positions	Gender equality; child care needs	Child care, flex time, promotion of women	Rewarding longer working hours

Adapted from Twenge and Campbell, 2008, p. 25.

Results of the study reveal an increase in narcissism and self-esteem among college students. “The average college student in 2006 scored higher in narcissism than 65% of students in the early 1980s, more likely to agree with items such as ‘If I ruled the world it would be a better place,’ ‘I think I am a special person,’ and ‘I can live my life any way I want to’” (Twenge & Campbell, 2008, p. 865). Increases in these characteristics correlate to younger employees’ expectations in the workplace. The desire to rule the world in just a few short years is not an unusual expectation.

Wyld (1996) discusses the implications of generational theory as applied to the discipline of management:

Specifically in light of the generational concept, researchers in management must be even more cognizant than ever of age location as a variable in the development of both individual management thinkers and in the collective of management thought. Biographers must address what it means for someone to have lived through a secular crisis or spiritual awakening question and how that event influenced their ideas on management due to their age at the time of the event. Those who look into the development of concepts in the management discipline should examine how the age location of the originators of the concept might have been influenced by the historical events of their lifetime. (p. 51)

As a leader’s generational perspective has an impact throughout an organization, leading across the generations implies that employees will realign to some extent when responding to leaders from different generations.

Finally, it is important to be mindful of the difference between generalizing about generational characteristics and stereotyping. Stereotyping generational issues can lead to ageism (Blauth, McDaniel, Perrin, & Perrin, 2011). The authors identified five best practices “to help employees combat age stereotypes and improve cross-generational collaboration” (p. 8): (1) challenge stereotypes; (2) find common ground; (3) find the talents in everyone; (4) mix it up (collaborate across generations); and (5) expect a lot (raise the bar and breakthrough stereotypes).

To summarize this section on generational literature, we know that generations are linked by shared experiences from their early adulthood. Unique work ethics, perspectives on the workplace, and perceptions contribute to why they are considered generations. It is important to remember, however, that even though generational characteristics are based on broad constructs, we need to be mindful to not stereotype from these general characterizations. We know more about the leadership styles of the Veterans and Baby Boomers, and less literature exists about Generation X's and Generation Y's leadership styles simply because they are younger and have had fewer leadership experiences. Our assumptions about how these generations lead are based on significantly sparser data, so we have less certainty about the leadership aspects of these generations.

Intergenerational Leadership Literature

Moving from the broader issues of generational literature, this next segment bridges generational and leadership issues. Crumpacker and Crumpacker (2007) explore “issues relating to a generational perspective of age-based values, attitudes and norms with a multigenerational workforce and potential implications for HR in shaping organizational culture through the succession planning process” (p. 349). They describe the changes that are likely to occur as leadership transitions occur. As mentioned in the previous section (Table 2.3), their overview of generational descriptors provides insight to how generations may exhibit leadership characteristics differently.

Leonard (2003) conducted a review of contemporary leadership development literature to identify the needs for organizations in the postindustrial, postmodern information age. One of his key findings is that previous literature focused on leadership development from the organization's perspective, while a contemporary approach

provides benefits by focusing on the individual leader as well. Leonard refers to the necessity to break down cultural “grand narratives” into “mini” narratives:

A postmodern approach to leadership is necessarily situationally based. The implication for leadership development programming is that it is important to include elements that help participants examine their grand narratives, assumptions, and metaphors that may obscure more creative and adaptive solution and sense-making. (pp. 12-13)

This is relevant generationally, as members of a generation will make meaning, at least in part, from the perspective of their generational worldview.

Organizational discourse may be a rich source for leaders to understand differences among generations. Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) discuss “discursive pragmatism,” while Barrett, Thomas, and Hocevar (1995) believe that discourse is central to the change process. “We have used the constructionist perspective to demonstrate how the accounts people generate and the words people use are not a matter of accurately reflecting the world, but rather are a matter of coordinating social relations” (p. 366). It has already been established that different generational characteristics are reflected in language, so this point is especially interesting.

Barrett et al. draw on Lewin’s (1947) three-stage change model of unfreeze, change, and refreeze, offering another interesting application for leaders to understand generational similarities and differences. It is important that leaders understand the underlying organizational narratives, and this literature on organizational discourse represents a way to approach it. Importantly for this research, the organizational narratives may differ depending on the generational perspective of the leader’s values as well as how she or he communicates and expresses these narratives.

Papenhausen (2006) argues that generational theory could complement strategic decision-making research. His four prototypical propositions based on generational theory are summarized:

Proposition 1: Boomer top managers are more idealistic and less materialistic than either GI¹ or Xer top managers.

Proposition 2: Top managers from the Silent generation are the most process-oriented, while top managers from the Xer generation are the most outcome oriented.

Proposition 3: Top managers from the Xer generation will be more risk-taking than top managers from the Silent generation.

Proposition 4: GI top managers make decisions and build organizational systems more rationally than do Boomer top managers. (pp. 164-165)

Because strategic decision-making is an important element of leadership, these propositions imply how managers from different generations would tend to lead. The author does not address succession topics.

Upper echelon theory posits that upper management's decision-making process is based on the cumulative experiences that have led to their current positions (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Therefore, as Baby Boomers retire and Generations X and Y take over, the values of these newer generations are likely to be reflected in their leadership styles.

Seaton and Boyd (2007) use upper echelon theory to explain ethical and entrepreneurial perspectives that are relevant to the newer generations of 21st century leaders, describing how Generation X and Y continue to evolve away from the ways of the Baby Boomer generation. A key outcome is the shift from a higher commitment and loyalty to work and organizations (characteristic of the earlier generations) toward a commitment to a higher quality of life.

As the Baby Boomers retire out of upper management positions and more Generation X and Y come on board, we can expect to see decisions that are based on interest and meaningfulness of the decision and less on opportunities to make profits. Also, the decisions will be grounded in the search for quicker returns that may require less consideration of ethical standards. (p. 75)

¹Another term for the Veteran generation.

One study addressed issues pertaining to intergenerational leadership. In a quantitative study of 413 small businesses in the Baltimore area, Walker (2010) used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to determine the prevalent leadership style of different generations of small business owners. The results revealed that “different generations of entrepreneurs have natural tendencies to use different leadership styles” and that the transformative leadership style produced the most positive results for the organizations (pp. 83-84).

Chou (2012) studied Millennials’ leadership and followership styles in the workplace. Citing various studies, Chou identified characteristics such as extending the integration of technology in their lives to the workplace. It was suggested that the Millennials tend to mirror their own need for immediate feedback by providing feedback using an inclusive management style. Chou concludes that “one can expect that Millennials, as leaders, will utilize a two way communication approach and emphasize the importance of having reciprocal relationships with subordinates” (p. 75). He concludes, “When linking Millennials’ workplace attitudes, beliefs, values and communication style with leadership styles, it is expected that Millennials will demonstrate high levels of participative leadership” (p. 75).

Andert (2011) posits a theory identified as “alternating leadership,” which acknowledges “the duality of leader/follower within each individual” (p. 67). This was derived based on an assumption that Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials prefer “a spontaneous, self-initiated interaction” among leaders and followers, in contrast to the more hierarchical leadership styles of old. This particular research diverged from much of the literature in that Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Millennials were aggregated as to having one point of view, rather than differentiating leadership needs and preferences on a generation-by-generation basis.

Two other studies are somewhat interrelated in that they are research studies that evaluate generational perspectives on leadership attributes. Arsenault (2004) studied

generational differences in the ranking of ten leadership characteristics. Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal, and Brown (2007) studied what different generational cohorts value in leaders.

Arsenault (2004) began by defining generations, the differences in values, and leadership differences prior to describing the study. The study considered four generations, described as Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Nexters (Generation Y). The two research questions were: “Do generations form a different persona by recalling different national or world events, cultural events and leaders? Do generations view admired leadership characteristics differently?” (p. 130). Two instruments were used in the study. The first was a survey that asked respondents five open-ended questions, the answers to which create a picture of generational preferences. These questions were:

- (1) What three national and/or world events over the last 75 years were especially important to you?
- (2) What are your favorite movies over the same period of time?
- (3) What are your favorite television shows over the same time period?
- (4) What are your favorite all time musical individuals or groups?
- (5) Who are your favorite leaders? (p. 131)

The second research instrument asked respondents to rank-order 10 characteristics that they most admire in leaders (ambitious, caring, competent, determined, forward-looking, honest, imaginative, inspiring, loyal, self-controlled).

Some 790 respondents participated, with a fairly balanced number across the four generations. As most participants gave more than one answer to the open-ended questions, responses to those questions approximated 2,500. The results revealed that there are “distinct collective memories for each generation” (p. 132).

Although there were differences in the rankings among the ten leadership characteristics, important similarities emerged; for example, honesty was ranked the most important across the four generations. Arsenault (2004) concluded that leadership development must be made more relevant to the Xers and Nexters, emphasizing a change in how the leadership development is planned and executed. “Xers and especially Nexters

prefer action learning which does not happen in the classroom but working on future-oriented scenarios and team-based learning” (p. 138).

This study provides important data that validate a number of generational differences. Although the study did not specifically focus on the CEO’s leadership style, its findings support the premise that leadership transition among generations must always consider generational preferences. The researcher adapted some of this data in her interview protocol.

As an extension of this research, Salahuddin (2010) researched the impact of generational differences among leaders within organizations. She interviewed four individuals from a community college in the Southwest, each representing one generation. Through open-ended questions, the participants’ responses were consistent with their generation. Using the Arsenault (2004) checklist of admired leaders, the following results were identified (Salahuddin, 2010, p. 5):

Table 2.5. Summary of Salahuddin Research

Ranking of Admired Leaders by Interviewees				
Characteristics	Veteran	Baby Boomer	Generation X	Nexter
Ambitious	2	10	10	8
Caring	4	4	3	10
Competent	1	1	4	1
Determined	9	9	5	2
Forward-looking	10	2	5	5
Honest	3	5	1	4
Imaginative	6	6	7	9
Inspiring	8	3	9	7
Loyal	7	7	2	6
Self-controlled	5	8	6	3

One curiosity is that the veteran ranked “ambitious” as number 2, while the Baby Boomer, Gen Xer, and Millennial (“Nexter”) ranked this factor between 8 and 10. The

limitations of this study lie in the small sample size; however, it demonstrates an application of Arsenault's original research.

Sessa et al. (2007), using two large databases, describe generational cohort theory, summarize research on generational cohort differences in organizations, and explore the differences in how generations value leadership attributes. "Differences in attitudes, values, and beliefs of the several generational cohorts are believed to influence how each generational cohort views leadership, which then manifests itself in use of different preferred leadership styles" (Zemke et al., 2000, as cited in Sessa et al., 2007, p. 53).

Sessa et al. (2007) tested several hypotheses by sampling U.S. managers and professionals in two databases and conducted two separate studies. The first study sought to answer the following question: "Are there generational differences in today's U.S. managers and professionals in terms of attributes perceived to be most important for leaders?" (p. 56). A sample of 447 individuals was selected from a Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) database of 4,810 who had been recruited to participate in another study on emerging leaders. These individuals filled out the Leadership Descriptives Sort, a CCL survey that provides 40 leadership attributes for selection in a systematized selection process involving several iterations.

The results of this study substantiated the hypothesis that there are generational differences in today's U.S. managers in terms of attributes perceived to be most important for leaders. The details are too substantial to enumerate here, but in short, 6 of the 12 top rankings were significantly different due to generational differences. Notably, the Millennials differed from other generations by ranking "dedicated" as most important and "credible" as less important. This outcome seems somewhat contradictory with the results of Arsenault's (2004) study, which found that honesty ranked first across the generations.

The second study asked whether there are "generational differences in today's U.S. managers in terms of leadership behaviors as perceived by selves? As perceived by

others?” (p. 61). Two thousand six hundred forty participants were sampled from a database maintained by the Management Research Group of more than 6,000 North American companies. These participants had taken a behaviorally oriented 360° survey that provides feedback on 22 dimensions of leadership behavior in six functional areas.

The raw scores were subjected to a canonical discriminant analysis using the four generations as the outcome variables and the 22 dimensions of leadership behavior as the predictor variables, with self, boss, and direct report data evaluated separately. The hypotheses associated with this study were partially supported, with the differences suggesting a maturational effect rather than generational cohort effect (p. 66).

As with the Arsenault study, all cohorts valued honesty in their leaders.

Furthermore:

They all valued knowledge about the organization’s core activities. They all valued listening, and they all valued helping others to achieve more than they thought they were capable of. However, there were also differences. The Veterans valued the attribute of delegation more than the other groups. The Millennials valued such attributes as focus, dedication, and optimism more highly and such attributes as honesty, big-picture orientation, and cultural sensitivity less than other generations. (Sessa et al, 2007, p. 66)

In summary, this study provides rich statistical data that will provide insights into the phenomenon of intergenerational leadership characteristics.

To summarize this section, as successors assume leadership, an understanding of the differences in perspective of the different generational cohorts will undoubtedly help their leadership focus. Although this is clearly not the only issue of importance, future research may reveal that understanding generational issues represents a key success factor for successor leaders. Although we don’t know this from the literature, the research studies by Arsenault and Sessa et al. are important in that they integrate generational and leadership factors. The researcher adapted some questions from this research and used them in her interviews.

Literature on Entrepreneurial Traits

As previously mentioned, there is a plethora of literature pertaining to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial traits. The literature reviewed in this section is specifically related to traits that tie to this research, in particular the assessment instrument.

Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) review six schools of thought on entrepreneurship. The first, the “great person” school of entrepreneurship, believes that entrepreneurs are born. “The picture presented is usually one of power, success, and wealth, the image of our business elite. To be inspirational, these individuals must be able to present ideas, concepts, and beliefs that others find interesting, intriguing, or stimulating” (p. 46).

The “psychological characteristics school” puts forth that entrepreneurs have unique attitudes, beliefs, and values that drive them. “Three personality characteristics have received considerable attention in the research: (1) the personal values such as honesty, duty, responsibility, and ethical behavior; (2) risk-taking propensity; and (3) the need for achievement” (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991, p. 48). This school generally believes that entrepreneurs cannot be taught; rather, their behavior is the result of their experiences, values, and personality.

The next school described is the “classic” school of entrepreneurship, where an individual assumes some risk and creates an enterprise that has an element of creativity associated with it. The “management” school suggests that entrepreneurs manage a business undertaking for profit. The “leadership” school focuses on the idea that the entrepreneur needs to engage other people in order to accomplish his or her business objectives. One aspect of the leadership school reverts to the “great person” school, where leaders are powerful, charismatic individuals who naturally create the followership needed to be successful. Another aspect involves concern for the people working for the

leader, where the leader responds situationally to specific circumstances. Finally, the “intrapreneurship” school focuses on developing entrepreneurial thinking within larger organizations, where the individual does not assume the risk that conventional entrepreneurs assume (pp. 50-54).

Carland, Hoy, Boulton, and Carland (1984) conducted a literature review to differentiate between entrepreneurs and small business owners. They concluded that the major differentiator is innovation (p. 357). A small business owner is “an individual who establishes and manages a business for the principal purpose of furthering personal goals” (p. 358). In contrast, an entrepreneur is “an individual who establishes and manages a business for the principal purposes of profit and growth. The entrepreneur is characterized principally by innovative behavior and will employ strategic management practices in the business” (p. 358).

Begley and Boyd (1987) conducted a survey of 239 members of the New England Small Business Association, in which they examined five psychological traits that occur commonly among entrepreneurs. These include: (1) a need for achievement, (2) locus of control, (3) risk-taking propensity, (4) tolerance of ambiguity, and (5) Type A behavior (p. 79). The research results indicate that the means for all five variables were high, with achievement, locus of control, and Type A being on the high side of the means (p. 87). This article examined differences between founders (entrepreneurs) and non-founders (small business managers) of entrepreneurial firms. The founders scored higher on achievement, risk-taking, and tolerance of ambiguity (p. 89).

Around the same time, Sexton and Bowman (1987) identified similar characteristics of entrepreneurs: “1) moderate risk-taking propensity; 2) ability to tolerate ambiguity; 3) an internal locus of control; 4) high need for autonomy, dominance, independence, and self-esteem; and 5) a low need for conformity and support” (p. 131). They also distinguished between entrepreneurs and independent business owners:

In essence, the entrepreneur is different from street hawkers, independent operators, and small business owners with regard to a planned approach towards growth and profit. The planned approach towards growth and profit is essentially strategic management practices coupled with innovative approaches to the marketplace and the firm. Thus the entrepreneur must of course, be a capable executive. (p.136)

Many researchers tackle the subject of traits of “successful” entrepreneurs, a term that is indeed difficult to define and agree on. Bhattacharyya (2006) makes a representative observation by offering the following description:

Successful entrepreneurs, whatever their individual motivation - be it money, power, curiosity or a great desire for fame and recognition – try to create value and make a tangible contribution. It is true that successful entrepreneurs aim high. They are not content simply to improve on what already exists or to modify it. They try to create new and different value propositions to convert “material” into a “resource,” or to combine the existing resources in a new or more productive configuration. (p. 108)

van Praag and Versloot (2007) completed a literature review of 57 studies containing 87 different analyses and concluded that entrepreneurs “engender relatively much employment creation, productivity growth and produce and commercialize high quality innovations. They are more satisfied than employees. More importantly, recent studies show that entrepreneurial firms produce important spillovers that affect regional employment growth rates of all companies in the region in the long-run” (p. 351). The results of their analysis concluded that entrepreneurial firms contribute, on a relative basis, greater outcomes than larger firms located in the same region.

Plehn-dujowich (2010) studied issues related to serial entrepreneurship, which he feels is an increasingly important area of entrepreneurship to study. He noted that 18-30% of entrepreneurs in Europe and about 18 of US entrepreneurs are serial entrepreneurs. He observed:

A high-skill entrepreneur maintains his business in operation if it is sufficiently profitable. If the business is of low quality, then he becomes a serial entrepreneur, launching and subsequently closing firms until the businesses found it is sufficiently profitable. By contrast a low-skill entrepreneur shuts down a business of low quality to enter the labor market, never to become serial. (p. 391)

Research on serial entrepreneurs by Bonnstetter et al. (2010) is consistent with this research. They identified the top behaviors, attitudes, and professional skills of serial entrepreneurs. The top behaviors are competitiveness and high trust. The top motivators are utilitarian (the drive for a practical return on time or money) and theoretical (the desire for knowledge, discovery, and continuous learning). The top professional skills include: leadership, goal orientation, presenting, employee development/coaching, and interpersonal skills (pp. 3-7).

Mitchelmore and Rowley (2010) conducted a literature review on entrepreneurial competence. “Competencies are not seen as the task of the job, but rather that which enables people to do the task. These can be described in terms of essential personal traits, skills, knowledge and motives of the employee that leads to superior managerial performance” (p. 94). They concluded that “entrepreneurial competencies [are] comprise[d] of components that are deeply rooted in a person’s background (traits, personality, attitudes, social role and self-image) as well as those that can be acquired at work or through training and education” (p. 104).

McCleary, Rivers, and Schneller (2006) applied Miner’s psychological typology (1996, 1997, 2000) to their research on health care entrepreneurs. This typology introduces five types of entrepreneurs: “(1) the personal achiever, (2) the real manager, (3) the expert generator, and (4) the empathic super salesperson, and (5) the complex entrepreneur, as an individual who combines two or more psychological types” (McCleary et al., 2006, p. 558). These “types” are driven by different characteristics. The personal achiever is achievement oriented and tends to be Type A, and the real manager wants to compete and exercise power. The idea generator is motivated by innovating, and the super salesperson is driven by helping others (p. 559).

A new approach to entrepreneurship theory and practice was offered by Betta and Latham (2010). They put forth the idea that the changes entrepreneurs go through in the

process of being entrepreneurs are not simply business focused; rather, they take into account the full person. Exploring the concept of change from within, they argued that

the individual who recombines given resources in order to become someone else goes through two faces of creative destruction, with all its implicit appeals to audacious and enthusiastic actions, and creative construction, with its separate appeals to planning, design, and efficacy. At the end of the change process there will be a new personal order, originating from the old one, as a development in a private life. (p. 240)

This is consistent with Cope's (2003) research on entrepreneurial learning, in which he observed that opportunities or crises can be the triggers for entrepreneurial learning (p. 431). He concluded that "non-routine events represent a key entrepreneurial learning mechanism" (p. 445).

Stewart, Watson, Carland, and Carland (1998) surveyed 767 small business owners in the southeastern U.S. to study whether certain psychological constructs led to a predilection for entrepreneurship. They used the Achievement Scale of the Personality Research Form (PRF) to measure achievement motivation and the Risk-Taking and Innovation Scales of the Jack Personality Inventory (JPI) to measure risk-taking propensity and innovation (p. 198).

Stewart et al.'s (1998) hypotheses were supported "that entrepreneurs would exhibit higher scores on the need for achievement, risk-taking propensity and preference for innovation, respective, than would corporate managers" (p. 202). They concluded that "entrepreneurs exhibit the psychological profile that is consistent with their goals of growth and profit, and with the use of systematic planning. It is intuitively appealing that relatively high achievement motivation, risk-taking propensity and preference for innovation are coupled with an emphasis on profit and growth" (p. 204).

To summarize the literature on entrepreneurial traits, researchers have approached this subject from different analytical perspectives, but common themes relate to describing entrepreneurial traits from personality, psychological, and motivational perspectives. Some are more focused on the connection between the entrepreneur and the

enterprise; others take a more individual approach and identify personal characteristics that drive the entrepreneur, and therefore the entrepreneurial business.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Literature

This final section in the literature review focuses on entrepreneurial leadership, the leadership lens through which this research has been conducted. Entrepreneurial leadership is a relatively nascent category, and as such, much new literature is emerging. That said, the entrepreneurial leadership literature that was considered for this review focuses on leadership traits and characteristics that drive and define entrepreneurial leaders.

Roomi and Harrison (2011) conducted a literature review of entrepreneurial leadership with the objective of how best to teach it. They define entrepreneurial leadership as “having and communicating the vision to engage teams to identify, develop and take advantage of opportunity in order to gain competitive advantage” (p. 184).

An exploratory study on the relationship between CEOs’ leadership style and organizations’ entrepreneurial strategic posture was conducted by Tarabishy, Solomon, Fernald, and Saskin (2005). They examined different leadership styles, including transactional and transformational. Results of the study show that there is a need for both types of leadership characteristics and behaviors, and they described this as entrepreneurial leadership. They utilized the Colvin and Slevin (1989) Entrepreneurial Orientation Questionnaire to assess the organizational profile and Saskin’s (1997) Transformational Leadership Profile to assess the leader’s profile (Tarabishy et al., 2005, p. 23).

The results of the study show a relationship between the organization’s entrepreneurial strategic posture and the CEO’s leadership style for both transactional and transformational. If researchers and practitioners are stating that organizations need to have an “entrepreneurial leader” to lead such organizations in today’s dynamic markets, then one can argue that these

“entrepreneurial leaders” are leaders that exhibit both transformational and transactional leadership characteristics and behaviors.

These leaders or “entrepreneurial leaders” can help organizations by creating and implementing an organizational strategy that is entrepreneurially oriented, which therefore exhibits proactiveness, innovation, and risktaking. As research has shown, organizations that exhibit an entrepreneurial strategic posture have performed better in dynamic markets. (p. 25)

Transformational leadership characteristics include high self-confidence and a visionary approach, and the key transformational leadership behaviors include creative, credible, and principle-centered leadership.

Jones and Crompton (2009) blended entrepreneurship with leadership by expressing that “entrepreneurship is primarily based on the individual’s personality and their upbringing. Similarly, leadership is also seen as strongly linked to trait theory with focus on key characteristics such as: vision, problem-solving, decision-making, risk-taking and strategic initiatives” (p. 331). They created a model of entrepreneurial leadership based on a literature review. “The owner-manager’s human capital creates opportunities and shapes key internal factors such as communication strategies, organizational structure, people management and vision/enactment” (p. 337). Combined, these factors lead to innovation. They also included institutional influences, such as the market or competition, and personal influences, such as mentors or family members. They conducted in-depth interviews with eight small manufacturing companies (that were part of a larger study of 90 SMEs) to test for congruence and determined that there was congruence in approach.

Soriano and Martinez (2007) studied leadership of entrepreneurial teams in a random sample of firms in Valencia, Spain. Five hundred firms were contacted, and 114 agreed to be interviewed (p. 1105). “We believe that the team leader affects the attitudes and behaviour of other team members, creating the necessary conditions for relations of collective entrepreneurship and, therefore, enabling the transmission of the entrepreneurial spirit to the work team” (p. 1104). Entrepreneurial leaders with a more

relationship-oriented leadership style had a higher incidence of imbuing the entrepreneurial spirit to the work team.

Prieto (2010) identified the importance of “looking at proactive personality, organizational identification, and political skill in the context of entrepreneurship leadership. Individual differences such as personality may be useful in predicting entrepreneurial leadership” (pp. 115-116). His discussion of proactive individuals is consistent with the literature described in the previous section. He feels that they may be more successful as entrepreneurial leaders and may make more contributions. “Proactive personality, which is the tendency to show initiative and take action in one’s environment in order to affect meaningful change, may be more specifically tailored to predicting entrepreneurial leadership” (p. 116).

Darling, Gabriellson, and Seristö (2007) observed that successful leadership for entrepreneurs exists when the leader transmits a culture of purpose within the organizational context (p. 6). “In achieving organizational excellence, an entrepreneurial leader is thereby a person who inspires, by appropriate means, sufficient competence to influence a group of individuals to become willing participants in the fulfillment of innovational goals” (p. 9).

Gupta, McMillan, and Surie (2004) extensively discussed the challenges of entrepreneurial leaders. They focused on two interrelated challenges. The first, “scenario enactment,” is identifying scenarios that can shake up the status quo. The second is “cast enactment,” where the leader “creates a cast of characters,” people who can take an idea and execute it, creating the change envisioned by the scenarios (pp. 246-247). They further observed that entrepreneurial leaders have a role where they “absorb uncertainty.” From this perspective,

the entrepreneurial leader formulates vision of the future state to be enacted by the followers and, then, shoulders the burden of responsibility for being wrong about the future. By absorbing the paralyzing effects of uncertainty

for followers, the entrepreneurial leader builds their confidence enabling them to act as if it is possible to realize the vision. (p. 247)

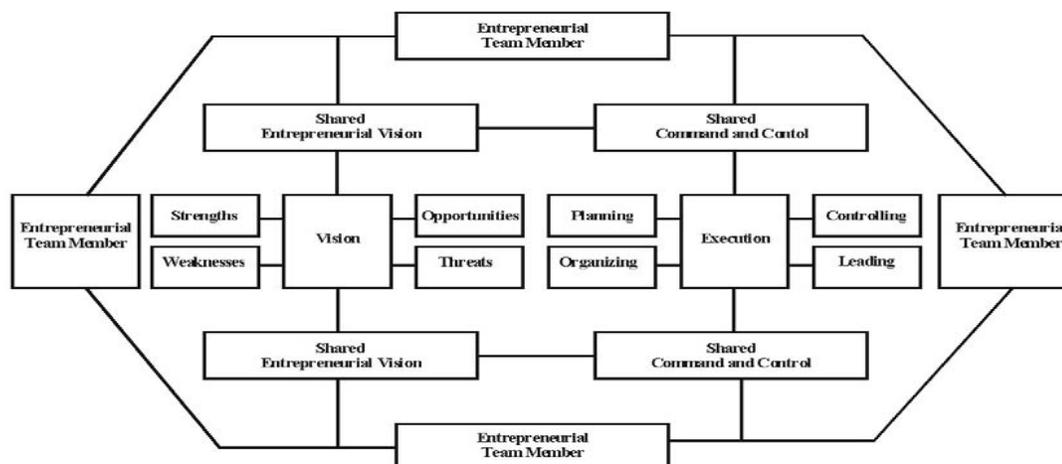
The dynamic between taking responsibility for the risk and empowering followers to be successful is the essence of entrepreneurial leadership. In essence, entrepreneurial leaders communicate their vision and convince others to help them execute a plan to achieve the vision.

Carland and Carland (2012) believe that “teams are more often involved in the creation of high growth potential entrepreneurial ventures, than the apocryphal solo entrepreneur” (p. 71). Their belief is that shared leadership in entrepreneurial enterprises will result in more successful outcomes. The elimination of the traditional hierarchical leadership construct is replaced by a more integrated and collaborative environment.

In our view, shared leadership in an entrepreneurial venture is a function of the desire in the minds of entrepreneurs and members of the entrepreneurial team to share the vision development and maturation process and/or to share the command and control process of the venture. The people involved in these ventures may not recognize that they are engaged in shared visioning or shared leading. (p. 76)

What they describe is more of a mindset than a philosophy. Figure 2.1 depicts their concept of shared team leadership in an entrepreneurial venture.

Figure 2.1. Carland and Carland's Model of Shared Team Leadership



From Carland and Carland (2012), p. 78.

In examining Figure 2.1, we see the dynamic between the elements of vision and execution, encompassed by shared entrepreneurial vision and shared command and control.

In a review of the intersection of the fields of entrepreneurship and leadership, Cogliser and Brigham (2004) explored the primary themes of vision, influence, leading innovative/creative people, and planning. Vision needs to be communicated and in an inspirational fashion so that followers are motivated to enact and implement the vision (p. 778). Vision ties with influencing, which is the ability to persuade people to follow a common goal. With regard to planning,

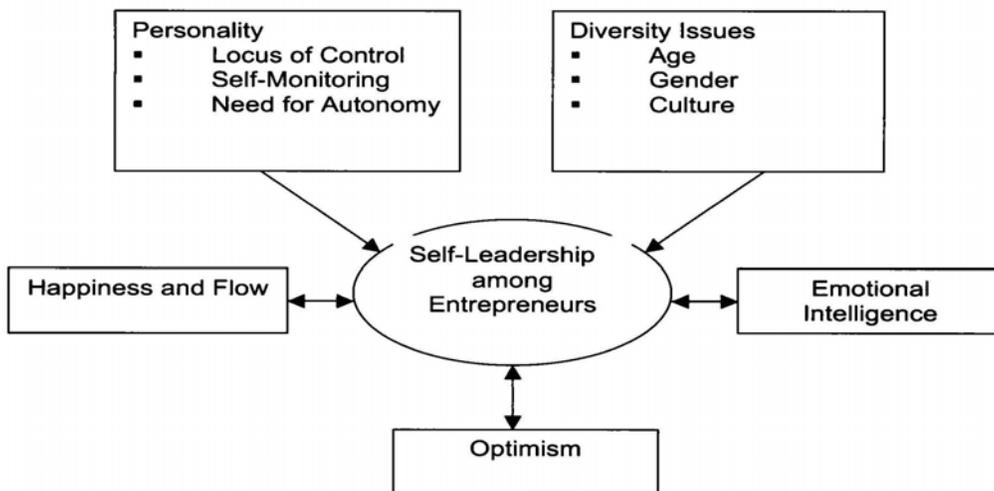
what is complex about entrepreneurial process is that it involves simultaneous opportunity seeking and advantage seeking behaviors to result in superior firm performance. Yet success in developing the competitive advantage to appropriate value from opportunities is more elusive in small, entrepreneurial ventures as compared with large, established organizations. (p. 780)

The article concludes by commenting, “One perspective that has been gaining support in entrepreneurship research is the cognitive approach. Research based on this perspective focuses on how individuals think, process information, and ultimately make decisions in uncertain and often chaotic environments” (p. 78). This observation ties into this researcher’s study, in which behaviors, attitudes and values, and professional skills are evaluated through the assessment.

Innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness were three factors examined by Darling and Beebe (2007) in their study on the importance of effective communication styles in entrepreneurial firms. They pointed out four entrepreneurial leadership strategies: “attention through vision, meaning through communication, trust through positioning, and confidence through respect” (p. 80). Solidifying the vision creates the central focus for the organization. The leader’s ability to communicate effectively and enthusiastically results in a contagious positive environment within the firm. Meaning through communication is vital; “a successful entrepreneurial organization depends on the creation of *shared* meanings and *mutual* interpretations of reality, which facilitates coordinated action.” Moreover, “the unique role of entrepreneurial leadership is the quest for placing communication-based *knowing-why* ahead of *knowing-how*” (p. 82).

The importance of self-leadership was explored by D’Intino, Goldsby, Houghton, and Neck (2007). “The goal of increased self-leadership for entrepreneurs is for these individuals to more effectively lead themselves by learning and applying specific behavioral and cognitive strategies to improve their lives and their entrepreneurial business ventures” (p. 105). Figure 2.2 summarizes the different dimensions explored by the authors.

Figure 2.2. D'Intino et al.'s Model of Self-Leadership



From D'Intino et al. (2007), p. 116.

For purposes of this researcher's study, the importance of this article points out that self-leadership can help an entrepreneur create some balance that will be important to his or her well-being, especially during the challenging times that occur during business growth. These interrelationships are reciprocal; therefore, an entrepreneurial leader who is aware of these dynamics will be well positioned to manage the challenging times.

Fernald, Solomon, and Tarabishy (2005) also conducted a literature review of the intersection between entrepreneurial and leadership literature. They observed that effective entrepreneurial leaders possess certain key characteristics:

- (1) drive, which includes achievement motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative;
- (2) leadership motivation;
- (3) honesty and integrity;
- (4) self-confidence;
- (5) cognitive ability; and
- (6) knowledge of the business.

The authors pointed out that in contrast to other researchers' beliefs that entrepreneurial leadership deals with issues related to the enterprise, "instead, they tend to be individual

characteristics or behaviors. These include vision, problem solving, decision-making, risk taking, and strategic initiatives” (p. 3).

Speaking to the influence the entrepreneurial leadership has on business in general, Kuratako (2007) observed, “Entrepreneurship has become the symbol of business tenacity and achievement. Entrepreneurs’ sense of opportunity, their drive to innovate, and their capacity for accomplishment have become the standard by which free enterprise is measured” (p. 1). Entrepreneurship is a function of the entrepreneur; therefore, the qualities of the entrepreneurial leader are relevant in evaluating any such enterprise.

Kempster and Cope (2009) suggest that entrepreneurial leadership is “a social process of becoming located in particular contexts and communities” (p. 5). They interviewed nine entrepreneurs in order to explore how they learned to lead using qualitative phenomenological techniques and interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Among their conclusions:

First, for the participants leadership was much less personally salient and not an aspired identity. In essence, they had no great desire to become leaders. Second, there were strikingly few references to significant individuals as influences on leadership learning. Third, the sample of entrepreneurs had limited prior organizational experience and career pathways with associated leadership roles and responsibilities. (p. 20)

The entrepreneurs in this study did not self-identify with being leaders as much as they did by being entrepreneurs. In fact, the authors concluded by commenting, “This article demonstrates that leadership is not an activity that entrepreneurs necessarily associate with or view as a necessary and ‘normal’ part of their activities” (p. 25).

To summarize this section on the literature of entrepreneurial leadership, various leadership styles and theories were examined, from transactional and transformational to an approach where the team shares the entrepreneurial vision and shared command and control. The literature identified various roles that entrepreneurial leaders assume, as well as a range of behavioral and cognitive characteristics that these leaders possess. Finally,

several researchers distinguished between characteristics that are enterprise-focused in contrast to individually oriented characteristics that drive the organization.

Summary of the Literature

This chapter has reviewed four categories of literature: generational theory, intergenerational leadership, entrepreneurial traits, and entrepreneurial leadership.

This review began with generational cohort literature. Generations are linked by shared experiences from their youth. Unique work ethics, perspectives on the workplace, and perceptions contribute to why they are considered generations, and it is important to remember not to stereotype from these general characterizations.

From the broad generational literature, the chapter continued with a narrower focus, that is, literature that focused on generational leadership characteristics. The research by Arsenault (2004) and Sessa et al. (2007) is an important starting point that integrates generational and leadership factors.

Shifting to the entrepreneurial literature, entrepreneurial traits were identified, ranging from personality to psychological to motivational perspectives. These traits were reinforced in the literature on entrepreneurial leadership, where each body of literature revealed the connection between the entrepreneur and the enterprise, while other literature took a more individual approach and identified personal characteristics that drive the entrepreneur, and therefore the entrepreneurial business.

Entrepreneurial leadership is a relatively new field of study, with new literature emerging regularly. It is clear that leadership style is an evolution and hybrid of leadership styles utilized in other types of organizations accented by the unique traits and characteristics that entrepreneurs possess.

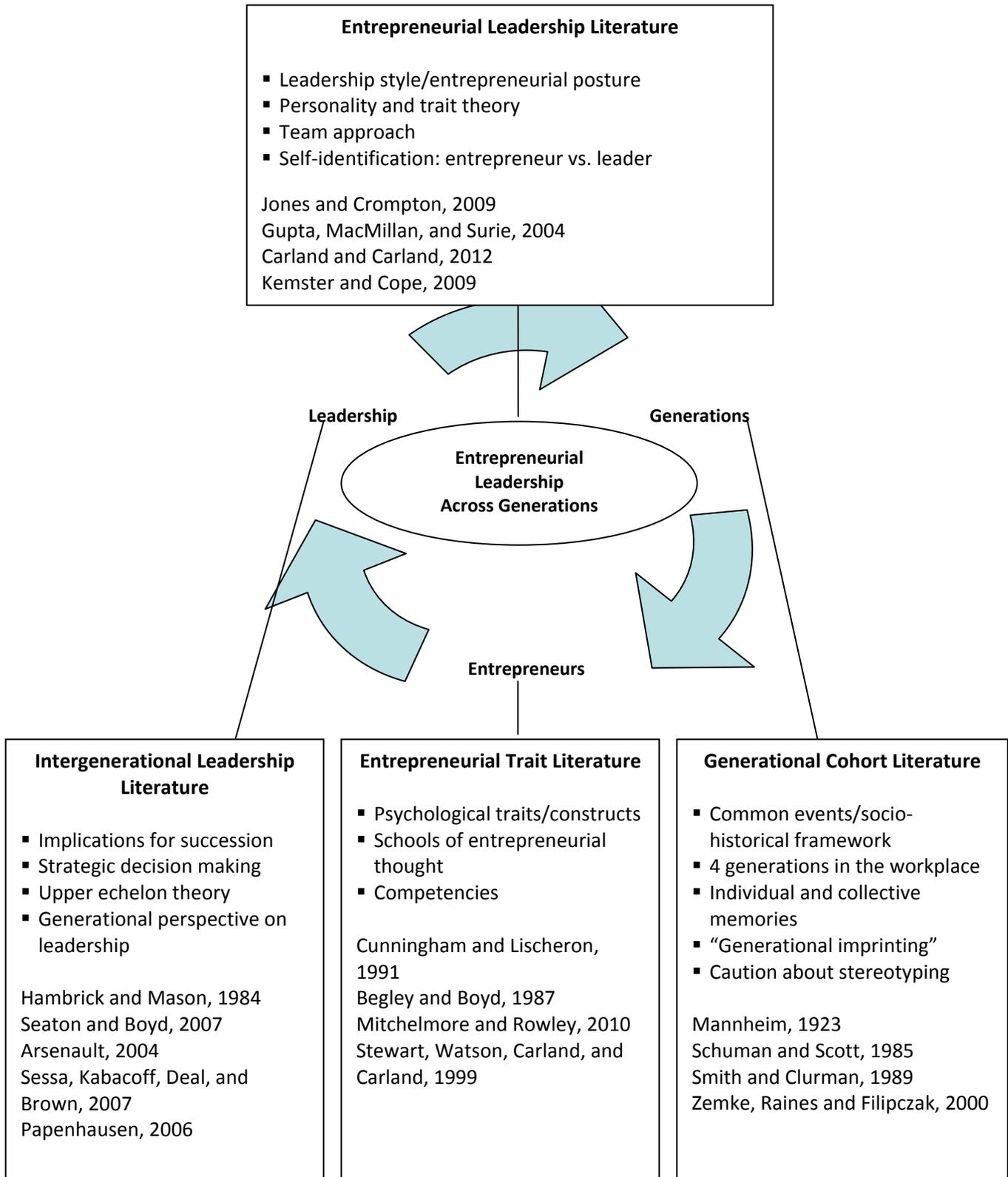
Finally, to end this chapter, a conceptual framework for this research is found in Figure 2.3 on the following page. The central graphic depicts the flow among the factors

of generations, leaders, and entrepreneurs, which revolves around the concept of entrepreneurial leadership among generations.

Entrepreneurial leadership literature is the leadership lens through which this study was conducted. This literature covers concepts such as leadership style/entrepreneurial posture, personality and trait theory, team approaches to entrepreneurial leadership, and identity issues of entrepreneur vs. leader.

Generational literature includes how cohorts share common events through a socio-historical framework. It includes the concepts of individual and collective memories and describes the four generations in the workplace. Entrepreneurial trait literature includes psychological traits, schools of entrepreneurial thought, and competencies. Finally, intergenerational leadership literature reflects implications for succession, strategic decision-making, upper echelon theory, and generational perspectives on leadership.

Figure 2.3. Conceptual Framework



Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

*“Research is to see what everyone else has seen,
and to think what nobody else has thought.”
- Albert Szent-Gyorgyi*

The central question of this research is: *In what ways, if at all, do entrepreneurs exhibit a leadership profile based on their generation?* The questions derived from this central research question are: (1) In what ways do the entrepreneurs’ leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation? (2) In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation? (3) How do the entrepreneurs self-report how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

This chapter begins with an overview of the methodology and study design, and then covers the information needed and sources of data, an overview of steps for data collection and analysis, the plans and methods for collecting the data, the plans and methods for analyzing the data, rationale for methods selection, and validity testing. The chapter ends with a comment about limitations.

Methodology and Study Design Overview

A paradigm is defined as a framework of understanding, in effect, a generally accepted view. Guba (1990) generically defines paradigm as “a basic set of beliefs that guides action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with

a disciplined inquire” (p. 17). In designing research, Creswell (2009) recommends that researchers “make explicit the larger philosophical ideas they espouse” (p. 5). Therefore, the lens of the paradigm we select for our research has a ripple effect on the various aspects of the research, from the methodology or strategies that we utilize to the ways we collect and interpret data. In fact, the basic research question itself is affected by the lens of the paradigm.

This research study is framed within the paradigm of *pragmatism*. Pragmatism has become increasingly embraced as the paradigm of choice for mixed methods research, as supported by many mixed methods experts (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Greene, 2008; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006, 2009). The advantages of pragmatism are evident:

- It supports singular and multiple realities, such as survey research and illustrations through interview quotations.
- It is practical, as the researcher collects data by what works best.
- It integrates unbiased and biased stances.
- It can combine inductive and deductive reasoning.
- It can utilize formal and informal styles in reporting (adapted from Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 42).

This worldview provided the foundation to flexibly evaluate and understand the leaders’ assessment results and how they construct meaning as entrepreneurial leaders. As this research process revealed the entrepreneurs’ experiences and perspectives of being members of different generational cohorts, in effect, the researcher learned to what degree the meaning they attached to things included or emphasized generational differences. To summarize, Greene (2007) articulates the benefits of this worldview as follows:

The attractiveness of pragmatism as a paradigm for mixed methods social inquiry is evident in its rejection of historical dualisms, its acceptance of

both realist and constructivist strands of knowledge, and its practical, consequential character.... [A] pragmatic paradigm signals attention to transactions and interactions; to the consequential, contextual, and dynamic nature of character of knowledge; to knowledge as action; to the intertwinement of values with inquiry; and so forth. (pp. 84-85)

A mixed methods study is the strategy used for this inquiry. This was selected because the combination of analyzing survey data using descriptive statistics and interviews to learn more about the experiences of selected entrepreneurs results in complementarity. This is one of five benefits that supports using mixed methods as articulated by Greene et al. (1989) and refers to the interrelation of the two methods, the ability for each method to clarify and enhance the results of the other. Although the study was designed so that the respondents first answered the assessment, the interviews that followed provided more information that informed and enhanced the survey data collection.

The process began by inviting a nominated group of entrepreneurs to respond to the assessment. This approach was selected as a way to objectively compare respondents' results of a validated instrument that has been used by thousands of people. The researcher has used this particular instrument in her consulting practice for over 5 years, and two of the three components of the instrument for over 20 years.

The assessment was made available online through a link provided to the nominated participants. Participants also responded to certain demographic questions in order to aid in analyzing the results across generations. The actual assessment, the TTI TriMetrix[®] DNA Talent Survey, reveals the how, what, and why – or behavior, motivators, and personal skills – of individual performance. It assesses the behaviors a person brings to the job, the motivators that move people to do the job, and professional skills mastery. (Please refer to the actual intake questionnaire in Appendix D.)

After responding to the assessment questionnaire, respondents also provided demographic and generational information that was collected to see the breadth of generational and industry participation:

- What will your age be on your birthday this year? _____
- Do you consider yourself to be part of a generation? ____yes ____ no
- If yes, which one? ___ Veteran ___ Baby Boomer ___ Generation X ___
Generation Y ___ Other _____
- Approximately how many people work in your company (employees and contractors)? _____
- In what industry is your business? _____
- You may be selected for a short follow-up interview by phone. If you are willing to do so, please indicate: ____ yes ____ no

Respondents were asked their age so that they could be tagged to a generation. They were asked if they saw themselves as part of a generation and to which one they self-identified so the researcher could determine generational awareness.

The questions regarding employees and industry were related to identifying candidates for the follow-up interviews. The request for a participant's willingness to participate in an interview was to give them the opportunity to opt out ahead of time if they did not wish to be called.

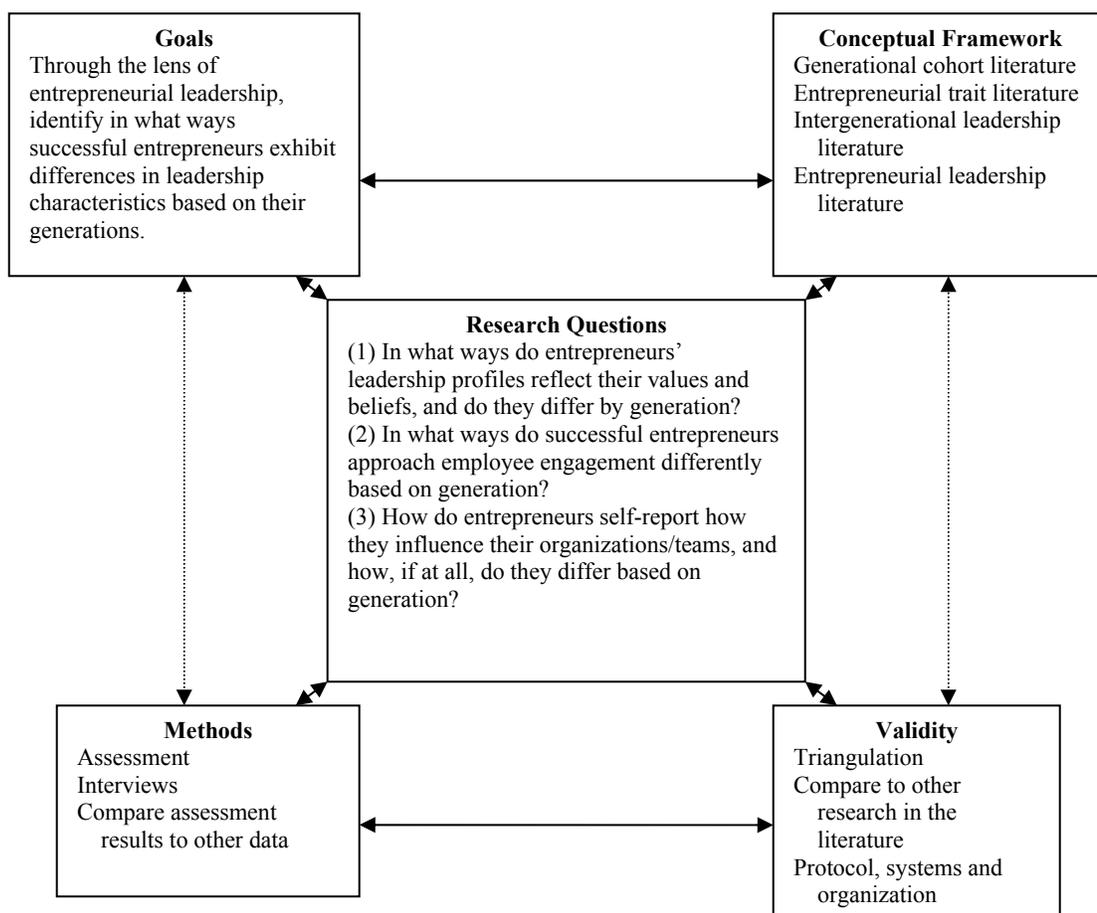
The researcher evaluated the collective results of assessment participants and selected 14 people, across generations, for follow-up interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to dig deeper into the data, but also to explore around the data. The researcher was committed to learning more about the respondents as entrepreneurs. The interviews revealed more insights and provided a richness that survey data alone could have never provided. Further information about how the interviewees were selected is forthcoming in the discussion on the sample.

Understanding the leadership characteristics of successful entrepreneurs adds to the understanding of how other organizations may select and develop future leaders. The researcher interviewed the selected participants using semi-structured interviews that covered their background and experience as entrepreneurs, their perspectives about their

leadership styles, their impressions of how their staff viewed them as leaders, generational questions, and questions that tied back to two or three aspects of their assessment results.

The design foundation of this study – the research questions, the methods, the goals, validity, and the conceptual framework (as depicted in Figure 3.1) – was established. The research design provided a solid workable structure to maintain focus during the research process. The design also had flexibility for minor modifications that may occur as the study proceeded (Marshall & Rossman, 2007, p. 52).

Figure 3.1. Design of This Dissertation Research



Adapted from Maxwell, 2005, p. 9.

Information Needed and Sources of Data

The primary sources of information needed included the literature reviewed and the various data that were collected through surveys/assessments and interviews. A summary of the information needed and sources is contained in the Data Planning Matrix in Table 3.1. The categorization of information in this matrix is a useful organizing tool to help the researcher summarize the information needed, why the information is important, and the sources of the data. The question of why the information is important is a key one for the researcher to focus on. In order to stay on task and not digress into extraneous information, it was important to be diligent to make sure that the information sought was relevant for the study.

Information from the assessment and the interviews answered the questions. The data were acquired in February and March 2013.

Table 3.1. Information Needed – Data Planning Matrix

What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Where can I find the data?
Entrepreneur's generation	To understand leader's context	Assessment
Generational mix in the organization	To understand the workplace generational context	Interviews
Communication styles of the entrepreneur	To identify behavioral style and generational implications	Assessment Interviews
Challenges/successes entrepreneurs have experienced.	To determine how success is defined and to see how values/beliefs are reflected	Assessment Interviews
Influential mentors admired by the entrepreneur	Determine values/beliefs; influences; generational tracking	Assessment Interviews
Leadership characteristics which the entrepreneur thinks s/he employs	Determine consistency with values/beliefs; compare perception with assessment results	Assessment Interviews
Perceptions of the leader's most important functions	Determine values/beliefs; generational tracking	Assessment Interviews
How (if at all) leadership style changed/evolved compared to prior leadership roles	To determine self-perception; compare with assessment results	Assessment Interviews

Table 3.1 (continued)

What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	Where can I find the data?
Determine staff perspective of the entrepreneur's leadership effectiveness.	To determine self-perception; attitude towards staff; identify gaps.	Interviews
How did they learn to lead their organizations?	To understand how learning occurs.	Interviews
How does their vision influence their behavior?	To determine self-perception; compare with assessment results	Interviews
Demographic information	General data collection	Assessment Interviews
Managerial/leadership history	General data collection	Interviews Literature review
When/where learning occurred	To understand context and how learning occurs	Interviews
Identify how entrepreneurs make meaning.	To understand how they made sense of their experience	Interviews
Unknown information	Don't know what I don't know; will arise during research process	Assessment Interviews

The Sample

Maxwell (2005) speaks of four selection criteria that should be considered when selecting case sites: (1) representativeness of settings; (2) heterogeneity; (3) specific cases that speak to the theory in the study; and (4) enough variety to achieve a good comparative analysis (pp. 89-90). This study sample has defined criteria considered to balance the four selection criteria, and in order to help situate the study, the balance among the four criteria is important.

Selecting interviewees from the results of the assessment supports the importance of these criteria. For example, representativeness of settings results in greater consistency, which will lead to more uniform and reliable interview outcomes. On the other hand, heterogeneity can also be achieved by examining the results of the assessment data and ensuring that a range of participants is reviewed. The generational overlay, in fact, supports both representativeness and homogeneity.

Examining the assessment data also afforded the opportunity to interview certain entrepreneurs who, on first glance, may have appeared to be “perfect” for the study, and yet the interview may yield entirely different results. Similarly, selecting an outlier whose characteristics seem inconsistent yielded some interesting and unexpected results through the interview process. Finally, the combination of evaluating the data from the assessment and the generational cross-section represented in the interviews resulted in a study that reflected similarities and differences among the entrepreneur participants.

Eighty-eight people responded to the survey, and of that number, 12 were eliminated because they did not fit the criteria. Therefore, 76 people comprised the database for the survey research.

As previously mentioned, 14 people, across generations, were selected to be interviewed. These people had demonstrated a proven record of accomplishment based on two or more of the following characteristics:

- The entrepreneur started current business from an idea and has grown it to its present state (*i.e.*, didn’t inherit, buy it from someone else, etc.);
- The company has been in business for longer than five years;
- The entrepreneur has started more than one business;
- The entrepreneur intends to sell the current business or has sold prior businesses; and
- The entrepreneur has a staff that takes direction from him or her.

It is difficult to consider whether/how a business is “successful,” considering the number of intangible factors that are involved in evaluating the performance of a business and the degree to which people self-report accurately.

These particular characteristics merit some additional comment. First, a business that is started “from scratch” requires more entrepreneurial skills than an established business that is purchased, whether as a stand-alone business or as a franchise. Taking an idea and turning it into an actual business is something that is unique to entrepreneurship.

This is in contrast to purchasing a franchise, for example, where the purchaser is buying a turnkey operation that has systems in place, marketing strategies, and in many cases brand recognition to support the franchisee.

The length of time in business is also important to consider, as companies that have been in business for longer than five years have demonstrated sustainability and in many cases have weathered one or more economic cycles, whether strong or weak. In the case of this particular research, all but two of the businesses are greater than five years old, and those two businesses are relatively recent startups by younger entrepreneurs. The reason the duration of these businesses is particularly important is that the economic environment since 2008 has been especially challenging for entrepreneurs and business owners. The fact that these businesses have survived and thrived through the “great recession” is significant.

It has been demonstrated that entrepreneurs who start more than one business are those who thrive on the concept of building something from scratch, growing it, and continuing to run it, hiring someone else to run it, or exiting through sale or dissolution. They then do it again (Plehn-dujowich, 2010). Twelve of the 14 people interviewed started more than one business, and some fit the description of the “serial entrepreneur.”

Hand-in-hand with those who have started more than one business is the aspect of selling a business. Entrepreneurs who grow their businesses with the intention of selling them are those who understand the creation of a sustainable business model that can survive their individual efforts. About half of the people interviewed have sold businesses, demonstrating that they know how to create a business that is “bigger than they are.”

Finally, the entrepreneurs interviewed for this research are those who have staff who report to and take direction from them. This factor is important because, although there are many successful solopreneurs, entrepreneurs who essentially operate independently with no or minimal support staff, in order to grasp the entrepreneurs’

actual leadership style, they need to have the opportunity to exercise that leadership with people, not just ideas. The ability to develop a productive and energized staff may be one of the key factors that distinguish successful businesses from those that cannot easily get off the ground. One of the negative aspects of entrepreneurship occurs when the owner/entrepreneurs cannot let go, want to do everything themselves, and micromanage their staff members, who then become frustrated working in such an environment.

Generationally, the survey was comprised of a good cross-section: 9 veterans, 37 Baby Boomers, 22 Generation X, and 8 Millennials. As mentioned in Chapters I and II, the researcher chose to evaluate the Baby Boomer cohort in three subdivisions:

Baby Boomer Cohort	Age in 2013	Number of Participants
Leading Boomer	63-67	7
Core Boomer	54-62	17
Trailing Boomer	49-53	13
Total		37

These people were interviewed by telephone, and then the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded. The researcher was mindful of the time commitment that people were making on her behalf. The assessment itself took between 30 and 45 minutes to complete, and the interviews took the same amount of time. Therefore, those who participated in the interviews were offering a total of up to an hour and 30 minutes.

The interview protocol is available in Appendix A. Questions were clustered in several areas. The first area was a description of the person's current business, prior businesses, and the age when they first received an entrepreneurial urge. The second group of questions related to a self-description of their leadership style and what they learned from mentors. The third group of questions related to how their people would describe their leadership style. The fourth group of questions was designed to be individually specific to the person's assessment results, representing yet another way to triangulate the information they were self-reporting. The fifth group of questions focused

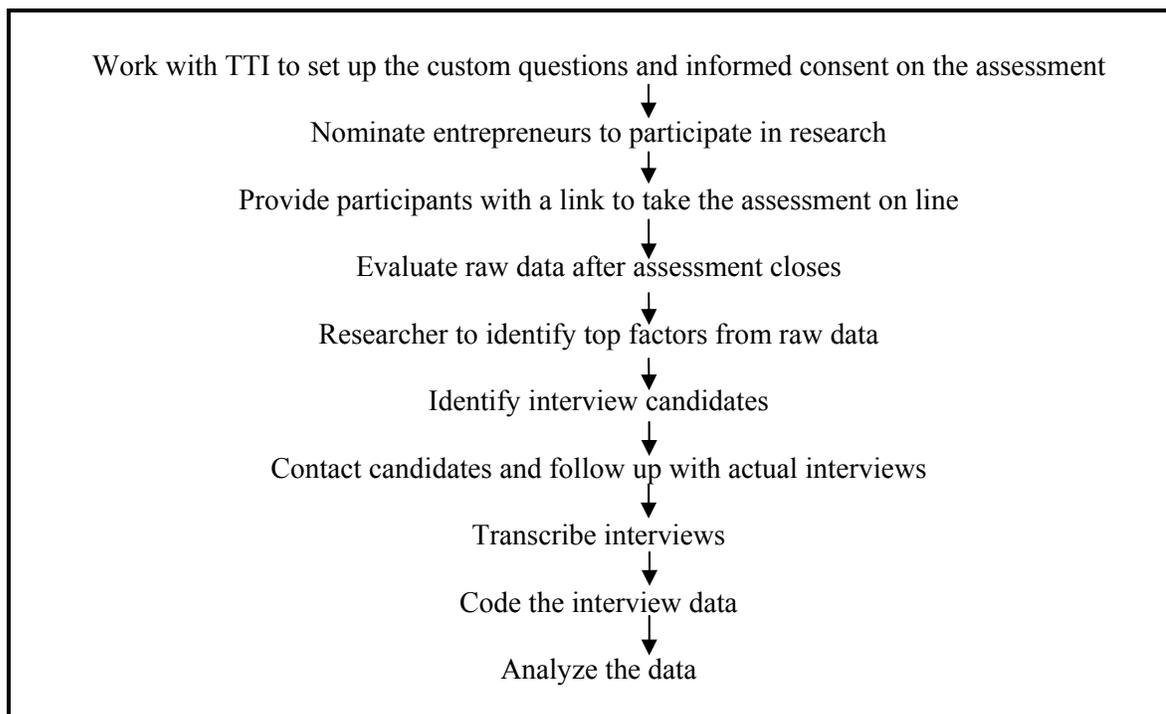
on generational issues. The last question was a catchall, where the interviewee had the opportunity to add any additional information about their style as an entrepreneur or an entrepreneurial leader.

It is important to consider the researcher's role with the participants. The researcher knows some of the entrepreneurs, but in other cases, she interacted with people whom she had not previously met. By evaluating their assessment results, she had a vast amount of information that could enhance communication and help to establish a meaningful connection. The interviewees had voluntarily consented to participate in the research by virtue of the assessment and were given the opportunity to opt into the interview process (approximately 15 people opted out of the interviews from the beginning). These participants answered questions about their successes as entrepreneurs, thereby being engaged in a subject near and dear to them. Although it was extremely unlikely that the interviews would cause any personal discomfort to the interviewees, the researcher had been prepared to offer a counseling resource, if necessary.

Overview of Steps for Data Collection and Analysis

Figure 3.2 depicts the process the researcher followed for data collection and analysis on a step-by-step basis.

Figure 3.2. Flowchart of Data Collection and Analysis Process



To begin, the researcher worked with her assessment partner, Target Training International, Ltd. (TTI), to set up the demographic and generational questions along with the informed consent for the assessment link. Next, TTI announced the research on leadership characteristics of successful entrepreneurs and invited qualified nominees to participate in the assessment. TTI announces research opportunities regularly to its network of associates, so this was a typical request, not an unusual one. In addition to nominees who participated through TTI's outreach, the researcher nominated people to participate through her network of professional and personal contacts. She also asked five trusted contacts for names to include in the outreach, thereby enlarging the sample via "snowball" sampling.

TTI provided a link for the assessment, which was distributed to the nominated participants. The survey remained open for three weeks, and once closed, the researcher began to evaluate the raw data from the results. The raw data were downloaded from

TTI's server to a spreadsheet, from which the researcher reviewed the results on a factor-by-factor basis. She identified the top two behavioral factors, the top two motivational factors, and the top five professional skills for each person. Using descriptive statistics, she determined the top factors for the group as a whole.

As previously mentioned, 12 of the 88 people who responded to the survey did not fit the criteria and were eliminated from the sample. The researcher personally evaluated each name to make sure that each person fit the selection criteria, and when there was an aberration, their record was removed from the data analysis.

TTI has done previous research on "proven leaders" and "serial entrepreneurs" using the same assessment. The data collected from this study were informally compared to this previous research, which is described more fully in Chapter VII.

After the data were reviewed, the researcher identified candidates to interview based on generation and other criteria as previously described (such as years in business, the type of business, etc.) collected in the assessment.

Interviews were conducted by appointment on the phone, recorded, and transcribed as they occurred.

Plan and Methods for Data Collection

An important issue to consider is the sheer volume of data that were collected in this study, so the importance of being organized cannot be underestimated. Using Creswell's (2007) categories of data collection (p. 130), the researcher will describe next how data were collected for this study.

Assessment

This included background, demographic, and generational information. The TTI TriMetrix[®] DNA Talent Survey assesses the behaviors a person brings to the job, the

motivators that move people to do the job, and professional skills mastery. The raw data that were evaluated included the following factors:

Behavioral characteristics (how they do their jobs)

- Very competitive (high dominance)
- Not very competitive (low dominance)
- High trust (high influencing)
- Low trust (low influencing)
- Slow to change (high steadiness)
- Quick to change (low steadiness)
- Rule follower (high compliance)
- Rule breaker (low compliance)

Motivators (why, or what motivates their actions)

- Theoretical
- Utilitarian
- Aesthetic
- Social
- Individualistic
- Traditional

Personal skills (what they bring to the job)

Twenty-three personal skills were ranked into four levels, based on means and standard deviations: Well Developed, Developed, Moderately Developed, and Needs Development. The following is an alphabetized list:

Analytical problem solving	Interpersonal skills
Conflict management	Leadership
Continuous learning	Management
Creativity/innovation	Negotiation
Customer service	Personal effectiveness
Decision making	Persuasion
Diplomacy	Planning/organizing
Empathy	Presenting
Employee development/coaching	Self-management
Flexibility	Teamwork
Futuristic thinking	Written communication
Goal orientation	

The researcher evaluated the mean results for each of these factors and then identified the top two behaviors, the top two motivators, and the top five professional skills. From these results, the researcher selected candidates to be interviewed.

Interviews

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews, with the interview questions designed to answer the research questions (please refer to the interview protocol in Appendix A). Although this protocol was piloted, participant responses sometimes led to follow-up questions that were not considered in advance. With permission of the participants, the interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The interviews were scheduled in advance and arranged at the convenience of the interviewee. The researcher was mindful that successful entrepreneurs carefully guard their time, and she endeavored to conduct the interviews in as time-efficient a manner as possible. In fact, this was a potential obstacle to the study. As previously mentioned, responding to the assessment took 30-45 minutes, and the interviews took the same amount of time. Some people did not agree to being considered for interviews because their schedules simply could not accommodate the time.

The interviews began with a general question about their background, how they became entrepreneurs, what inspired them, etc. The purpose was to establish rapport and for the interviewees to talk about what they know best. Once rapport was established, the researcher moved into questions about leadership, including some reflective questions, such as how their current leadership role may be different from previous ones, who were their mentors, etc. The discussion included challenges they faced; what had puzzled them; some triumphs and frustrations. The idea was to learn about what and who influenced them and, from these questions, learn more about them both as entrepreneurs *and* as leaders.

The interviews also covered generational factors. For example, do they think of themselves as being part of a generation? What does being part of a generation mean to them? Are there defining factors about their generation that affect their attitudes and beliefs? Managerial issues were discussed, such as how they influence their people to get results, how they approach goal achievement, and descriptions of their leadership styles.

Researcher Journal

The researcher maintained a journal on a current basis as the research was conducted so that she could refer to it during the duration of the study. The reflections in the journal were helpful as she entered the more analytical phase of the process.

Interviews, by definition, study human subjects in current, “live” situations. As a result, researchers need to ensure several things as part of their study design: receive informed consent, protect the participants from harm, protect the participants’ privacy and confidentiality, and take special care for sensitive subjects, such as children or people with medical challenges (summarized from Yin, 2009, p. 73). A human subject consent form was administered at the beginning of the assessment to protect the participants in the study (please refer to Appendix B).

Overall, the researcher established a data collection protocol that included each of these areas in a systematized manner. She used a protocol summary form to note the scheduled time for each step as well as the actual time completed. This form also captured the location of the various data components, such as transcripts, mp3 files, assessment and survey results, researcher notes and reflections, etc.

Plan and Methods of Data Analysis

Creswell (2007) summarizes the data analysis process into three key steps: (1) prepare and organize the data; (2) code the data; and (3) present the data in charts and

narrative for discussion (p. 148). As will be detailed later, the researcher maintained a case study database (both electronic in computer files as well as selected hard copy files) for the purpose of organizing the data. The researcher selected to use Atlas ti coding software.

Research theorists agree that immersion in the data is an important element of the analytical phase. It was unrealistic for the researcher to expect to read through the data once, rush through the coding, and quickly write up reports. Rather, it was important to review the transcripts and other documents several times, make notations in the margins, add notes in the researcher journal, and allow impressions to begin to form and evolve.

Maxwell (2005) points out the importance of beginning the process of data analysis after the first interview has occurred. If researchers let the data accumulate, it can become an overwhelming task to sort through and remember the circumstances behind the interviews and other data collected (p. 95). As an overview, the researcher's process involved reading each interview to capture the respondent's perspective and general themes. Next, the interview was coded based on a general framework established in advance. Additional codes were added based on what emerged from the interviews. Following this, the researcher summarized what was learned from this part of the process. After this process was completed for each interview, a cross-analysis was conducted and information synthesized in preparation to report the findings.

These various steps helped the researcher keep track of how the research progressed and provided the opportunity to check assumptions, identify surprising information, or consider implications previously not examined. The researcher found this tracking process valuable, because it lent itself to an evolving research study rather than a static one.

The process of coding the collected data is "the formal representation of analytical thinking" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 160). As the coding process began, it was important that the researcher returned to the conceptual framework and stay focused on

those elements previously identified. The process of coding is not to categorize words *per se*, but to assign meaning to those words (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56).

Six code families were used in the analysis: entrepreneurship, leadership style, behaviors, motivators, personal/job skills, and generations. These code families were selected based on the research questions, the literature, the assessment, and the interviews. Initially, approximately 40 codes were used, and as the coding progressed, additional codes were included.

Examples of the coding scheme within the six code families follows:

- Entrepreneurship
 - Vision/visionary
 - Passion
 - Fun
 - More than one business
 - More than two businesses
 - First business in 20s
 - First business as teenager
 - First business as child
 - Make money
 - Sell business
 - Intrapreneur
- Leadership style
 - Visionary
 - Charismatic
 - By example
 - Hands on
 - Hands off
 - Engaged/engaging
 - Practical
 - Cautious
 - Micromanaging
 - Great team
 - People challenges
 - “My people”
 - Direct
 - Authoritative
 - Laid back
 - Fast paced
 - Mentors
- Behaviors
 - Dominant/bold
 - Direct
 - Friendly
 - Team oriented
 - Loyal
 - Careful
 - Patience
 - Detailed
 - Urgency
- Motivators
 - Theoretical
 - Knowledge oriented
 - Research
 - Data/information
 - Utilitarian
 - ROI/return on investment
 - Make money
 - Pragmatic
 - Harmony/harmonious workplace
 - Self-actualization
 - Social/altruistic
 - Help/serve others
 - In charge/in control
 - Power/control
 - Rule-bound
 - Do the right thing

- Personal/job skills
 - Continuous learning
 - Creativity/innovation
 - Decision making
 - Employee development
 - Flexibility
 - Futuristic thinking
 - Goal oriented
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Leadership
 - Management
 - Negotiation
 - Personal effectiveness
 - Persuasion
- Generations
 - Veteran
 - World War II
 - Work ethic
 - Work hard
 - Patriotism
 - “Me” oriented
 - Slacker
 - Baby Boomer
 - Gen X
 - Gen Y
 - Millennials
 - Trophy generation
 - Entitlement
 - underdog
 - cultural references
 - Music/popular culture

Specific codes within these broad topical areas emerged from the data collected. The researcher asked other doctoral students to code unmarked transcripts to ensure that she was on track with her analysis, and this inter-rater reliability was helpful.

Rationale for Methods Selection

Fundamentally, “mixed methods are useful if they provide better opportunities for answering our research questions” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p. 14). Greene (2007) commented, “The overall broad purpose for mixing methods in social inquiry is to develop a *better understanding* of the phenomena being studied. The fundamental claim being made here is that a mix of methods will generate a better understanding than will a single method alone” (p. 98).

This study involved evaluating survey data and conducting interviews as a way of better understanding the phenomenon of differences in leadership characteristics among entrepreneurs based on their generation. The assessment provided an overall leadership profile, and the interviews added depth and insights that would not have emerged from the assessment data alone. By evaluating the assessment results and the content from the

interviews, we will better understand how the leaders' values, beliefs, and attitudes are reflected, how they engage their people, and how they influence their people.

Validation

Validation in a mixed methods study involves validating both the quantitative and qualitative data being analyzed. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) define validity in mixed methods research as “employing strategies that address potential issues in data collection, data analysis, and the interpretations that might compromise the merging or connecting of the quantitative and qualitative strands of the study and the conclusions drawn from the combination” (p. 239). The following table illustrates the possible validity threats and their mitigations for this research study where the data are connected.

Table 3.2. Validity Threats and Mitigations

<i>Data collection issues</i>	<i>Mitigations</i>
Select inappropriate people for quantitative and qualitative data collection	People were selected in nominated study based on specific criteria
Use inappropriate sample size	Sample size is appropriate for convenience sample
Choosing inadequate participants for follow up	Participants for interviews were vetted in advance based on survey results and generational mix
Not designing an instrument with sound psychometric properties	TTI TriMetrix® DNA is a valid and reliable instrument.
<i>Data analysis issues</i>	
Choosing weak quantitative results to follow up on qualitatively	Quantitative results provided specific, solid information that the researcher could further explore through qualitative interviews
Choosing weak qualitative finds to follow up on quantitatively	n/a
<i>Interpretation issues</i>	
Comparing two data sets when they are intended to build rather than merge	n/a
Interpreting two databases in reverse sequence	n/a
Not relating the stages or projects in a multiphase study to each other	Entrepreneurial leadership theory provides a means to connect the data sets throughout the research

The researcher was mindful of threats to the validity of this research during the data collection phase. Bias was a key consideration in the qualitative/interview portion; for example, she understood the importance of being rigorous in how she phrased questions so that the respondents would answer authentically. As the researcher, she could not “slant” the questions in such a way that leads the respondent to a particular answer. Inter-rater reliability was established by having her sponsor and a doctoral colleague review transcripts of several of the interviews. Another threat would have occurred if the respondents were reluctant to be open in their responses. This did not occur, and her commitment to creating an open, conversational environment during the interview negated interviewee reluctance.

Validity of Assessment

Validity helps to answer the question of whether the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, as well as how well the instrument makes these measures. TTI Performance Systems considers three types of validity: content, criterion-related, and construct validity. The TTI TriMetrix[®] DNA is comprised of three separate assessments: (1) Style Insights[®], the behavioral component, (2) Motivation Insights[®], the motivators component, and (3) the Personal Soft Skills Indicator (PSSI), the professional skills/competencies.

The Style Insights[®], the behavioral component, and Motivation Insights[®], the motivators component, were screened for content validity, which determines whether the instrument covers the behavioral topic being measured. Next, criterion-related validity refers to the ability of an instrument to predict a participant’s behavior in certain future situations. TTI Performance Systems has linked this instrument to specific scores and patterns of scores to job success in specific, well-defined areas. Finally, construct validity is built from a pattern of evidence and multiple measures across a variety of sources.

Some constructs explored in behavioral trait analysis include developmental changes of participants responding to the instrument at different ages and stages of their lives or under different response focus points. Correlation with other tests is a form of construct validation.... [Factor analysis] is a technique that “refines” an instrument by comparing and analyzing the interrelationships of data. In this process the interrelationships are examined and “distilled” from all initial combinations, to a smaller number of factors or common traits. The Style Insights instrument has been refined through the factor analysis process and has made subtle scoring changes that increase both the overall validity and reliability of the instrument. (TTI Technical Reports Compendium, 2013, pp. 15-16)

Finally, the validity of the PSSI was derived as follows:

In a variance study conducted in May of 2012 with over 7,000 respondents, the Personal Soft Skills Indicator had total variance. Meaning each question had a response range from minimum to maximum choice. Conducting a 360-degree feedback survey to assess perception of others on an individual’s evidence-based competencies is recommended. 360-degree feedback surveys utilize the variance method to determine validity of individual questions. If at any time a specific question does not have total variance, the question is deemed “bad”. Due to the 360-degree feedback nature of the Personal Soft Skills Indicator, TTI utilizes the same method for validating the questions contained in this questionnaire. (TTI Technical Reports Compendium, 2013, p. 58)

The following summarizes the reliability information for each of the three assessments.

Style Insights[®]: Scale reliabilities were calculated using Cronbach’s alpha (α). Cronbach’s α is considered the most appropriate statistical test for calculating reliability. The statistic models internal consistency, based on the average inter-item correlation. These evaluations are a more rigorous approach than a traditional split-half statistic. Cronbach’s α is a statistic bounded by 0 to 1. In general, an α equal to or greater than .6 is considered a minimum acceptable level, although some authorities argue for a stronger standard of at least .7. Based on n=16,950, the eight factors of the *Style Insights*[®] instrument had an α ranging from .826 to .885. These findings document the *Style Insights 2011.i* as an instrument with solid scale construction and reliability (TTI Technical Reports Compendium, 2013, p. 17).

Motivational Insights[®]: These assessments of the *Motivational Insights*[®] instrument utilize 38,314 responses that were collected during 2010 and 2011. These data contained responses from 57.8% males and 42.2% females. Results from these assessments indicate trustworthy reliability for all six scales, with Cronbach's α ranging from .7 to .8. Correlations among the six scales indicate that they are substantially independent as measurements. Scores on the scales are distributed across the scales, leading to meaningful comparisons and interpretation. The *Motivational Insights*[®] instrument is a strong, reliable instrument applicable across a variety of populations (TTI Technical Reports Compendium, 2013, p. 42).

The *PSSI* is a 360-type instrument, and for purposes of validity, each question is evaluated on a variance basis. In a variance study conducted in May of 2012 with over 7,000 respondents, the Personal Soft Skills Indicator had total variance, meaning each question had a response range from minimum to maximum choice (TTI Technical Reports Compendium, 2013, p. 58).

Limitations

Although this research was designed to have validation at all stages, it is unrealistic to think that we can generalize about leadership characteristics of all entrepreneurs across generations from this study. Elements of the study will certainly be replicable, and if the study is viewed with interest by other scholars who are interested in the topic, additional research may be conducted to expand on the original research. The rigor of research design will enhance the applicability of this research for future research potential.

Another limitation is that the entrepreneurs chosen for this study will be recounting their experiences as they remember them, without any corroborating data from other people in their organizations. This is why the researcher interviewed 15 entrepreneurs from different organizations. She also had the option of selecting additional interviewees

from the pool of participants who took the assessment. Data gathered from that instrument also provided another source of information that minimized this limitation. The multiple sources of data collection were useful for this research in order to minimize possible biases expressed by the entrepreneurs.

There is a potential limitation that every qualitative researcher faces in being both researcher and participant. It is important that the researcher observe, analyze, evaluate, and interpret the data using her intellect and intuition, while not becoming too drawn in or caught up in the narratives of the participants.

Next, there was a possibility that the assumptions that underlay this research study may be challenged. The researcher needed to be open to the fact that certain information or data might cause her to rethink her assumptions. It was important to be mindful of this important consideration as she proceeded with this study.

Finally, the information gathered from these interviews represents unique, individual stories, and although sufficient for purposes of this study, are limited in number. This limits the ability to generalize from this study.

Chapter IV

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT ON INTERVIEWEES

*"Words mean more than what is set down on paper.
It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning."
- Maya Angelou*

The purpose of this chapter is to provide background and context on the 14 entrepreneurial leaders who were interviewed for this study. Understanding who these people are and their worldviews provides enriched perspective when reviewing the findings and analysis in the chapters ahead. A review of the assessment follows in Chapter V. The findings will then be addressed in Chapter VI, followed by the analysis of the findings in Chapter VII.

The chapter begins with a review of the selection criteria for the interviewees. Brief vignettes of each interviewee follow, which will contextualize each person in the framework of this study. The chapter concludes with a summary of information about these entrepreneurial leaders.

Selection Criteria for Interviewees

Fourteen people were selected to be interviewed from the 76 who completed the assessment. As described in Chapter III, the people selected for the interviews were entrepreneurs who had demonstrated a proven track record based on two or more of the following characteristics:

- The entrepreneur started his or her current business from an idea, and it has grown through the entrepreneur's leadership efforts (i.e., did not inherit the business, buy it from someone else, etc.);
- The company has been in business for longer than five years;
- The entrepreneur has started more than one business;
- The entrepreneur has built and sold prior businesses or intends to sell the current business;
- The entrepreneur has a staff that takes direction from him or her.

In addition, the entrepreneur either fit the predominant leadership profile that emerged from the assessment (as described further in Chapter V), or the entrepreneur had an interesting anomaly in his or her assessment results that the researcher wanted to understand better as part of the study. Finally, as the researcher wanted to achieve generational diversity among the interviewees, respondents were also considered based on their generation.

The identities of the interviewees have been protected throughout this document by using pseudonyms.

Overview of the Interviewees

Monique

At 75 years old, Monique was the oldest participant in this research, representing the Veteran generation. Monique started her business 35 years ago, providing behind-the-scenes production and management for designers' fashion shows. Having been a model earlier in her career and having worked with a prominent fashion magazine, she came up with the idea for her business as a result of identifying a need while attending fashion shows. She jumped on the opportunity, and her business was created.

Presently, Monique's business is the leader in this industry in the U.S. She manages seasonal employees due to the nature of the business. During the two times of the year when the major designer fashion shows occur, she has hundreds of part-time people who perform myriad tasks, following the instructions of seasoned managers who are present at each of the shows. The vast majority of these part-time employees are young people interested in fashion, so she has worked consistently with younger generations over the years in her business.

Monique's story is also interesting given her African American heritage. She entered a business environment dominated by Caucasians and carved a successful niche. Although gender and race are not specific elements examined in this research, this is still noteworthy to place Monique in context. She has enormous pride about what she created, the people she has had the opportunity to meet and influence, and the hundreds of young people she has mentored over the years.

Fred

Fred is a Leading Boomer at 67 years old, having been born during the first month when Baby Boomer statistics were compiled. This is important to note, because being "on the cusp," Fred possesses characteristics of both leading-edge Baby Boomers and members of the Veteran generation. Fred is a serial entrepreneur, with roots of entrepreneurialism beginning in his childhood when he found various ways to make money to help support his family. A U.S. Marine Vietnam veteran, Fred's work ethic was established at a young age. He fits the Baby Boomer description of having a strong work ethic, doing whatever needs to be done in order to complete the job. He worked in corporate America for a short time in his early 20s and quickly realized that he had the talent to do the same things in his own business as he was doing for others and be able to control his future as a result.

More discussion about these businesses will be described in Chapter VI; however, one important characteristic to mention about Fred is that he is always open to taking action on the next “big” idea. His current business, a marketing consultancy for entrepreneurs, has evolved as the market has changed, and his current vision is to make a huge impact on small business owners and entrepreneurs in his state. He doesn’t have any interest in retiring and will likely engage in another business opportunity when the current one is no longer fun, profitable, or rewarding.

Paul

Paul is a Core Boomer who grew up in an entrepreneurial family. He commented that no one in his family ever had a “real job,” as family members were either entrepreneurs or worked for a family business. He worked in various family businesses as he grew up and was intrigued by the “entrepreneurial dinner table” where he learned how some entrepreneurs became wildly successful and others were not.

His current business is a consultancy that provides systems and tools for midsize companies that seek strategic and sustainable growth. His business is an outgrowth of a previous 25-year consulting practice, which he reinvented into its current focus. He has also owned a health business for the past 10 years, which markets natural nutritional supplements.

Paul is passionate about his business, his people, and about helping others. He receives inspiration from many sources, including the unexpected. He is proud about the various accomplishments he has experienced over the years, including a crisis management process for a company that lost 62 people at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Rob

Rob, a Core Boomer, has worked in the same business for nearly 35 years, which is back-office operations for financial services firms. During the first part of his career, he

worked in this arena for a large financial institution and then for smaller boutique firms. After an interim stint in a family business, he started his business in his living room 10 years ago. It has grown it to a multi-million dollar business employing some 93 employees.

Rob's inspiration to start his business was motivated by the fact that he felt the larger companies did not provide good customer service. He felt that by taking the basic business he had managed for many years in the corporate world and adding a strong customer service component, it would be successful. Ten years later, he has a global business, blue chip clients, and an excellent reputation. Rob's interest in entrepreneurship dates to high school, when he and some friends formed a business to make silkscreened greeting cards.

Rob feels that mentorship is important, and over the years he has mentored or taught many people who showed interest in advancing professionally. He feels that to successfully engage people, you need to take them on the journey with you. He has compensated his employees at or above market levels, including during the recession years, and has created a program in which every employee is an owner in the business through a shadow stock offering. He feels it is important for owner/entrepreneurs to be generous and not greedy and that this results in a more motivated staff and more positive work environment.

Luis

Luis, a Core Boomer, started working in his current area of expertise while employed by a corporation earlier in his career. He started his information technology consulting business at the age of 26, and he has a systematic and detailed approach to the business. Luis was selected as an interviewee because his approach and leadership profile (from the assessment) were different from those of others participating in the research.

He is not interested in “bigger and better” for his company. Rather, he is interested in keeping it small and manageable.

Luis is a service zealot and, similar to Rob, has taken a business idea that is fairly widespread and adapted it with outstanding customer service. His style is more methodical and deliberate than the other interviewees; however, his experience and persistence have resulted in a solid business that is sustainable with an excellent reputation. Luis does not see himself as a leader and, in fact, is challenged by the “power” implications of the word. He commented that he has difficulty seeing himself as the boss, or even as someone’s employer.

Like many practitioners who develop a business from a core area of expertise, Luis has been challenged by letting go of doing day-to-day operations and focusing more on overall direction and strategy. He has a stable staff of technicians, with little turnover, and is committed to leading by example. That said, one of his core challenges is managing his staff, which is his least favorite aspect of the business.

Frank

Frank is a confident, enthusiastic, forward-thinking entrepreneur who has worked in and owned different businesses throughout his career. A Core Boomer, his current business in staffing was started three years ago during the recession, when he figured he would have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

Frank is very proud of his entrepreneurial history, that he has successfully built companies, sold some of them, and has continued to personally grow and develop. He has worked in his current area periodically throughout his career. The first company he started became an *Inc.* 500 company and grew to over 75 people from inception. In that company he was involved in hiring many of the people, and that is what triggered his interest in hiring and staffing.

Like his fellow Core Boomers, Paul, Rob, and Luis, Frank is committed to excellence and is zealous about providing outstanding service to his clients. Frank was not entrepreneurially oriented as a teenager or college student; rather, he studied business in college and tried to get a job in accounting upon graduation. He hated it, but through a sequence of serendipitous events, learned that he was good at and loved to sell. That changed his direction and was able to apply those excellent selling skills to the various businesses he owned over the years.

Frank was open in talking about some failures that occurred in some of his businesses. He believes risk-taking is an essential part of being an entrepreneur and that some of the best learning comes from the failures. He lost one business during the Internet bubble and never thought he'd start another business. But he did, in 2010 during a bleak economic environment, and hasn't looked back.

Jim

Another Core Boomer, Jim's assessment results revealed an anomaly in terms of his leadership profile. This is particularly interesting to the researcher, because his success as an entrepreneur is more pronounced than most of the people interviewed for this research. Jim has been involved in the area of real estate and community development, in particular, with an objective of improving the communities he has worked in. He began his career as an attorney with a private law practice, which morphed into a real estate development business by his late 20s.

Jim was influenced by an entrepreneurial family, in particular his grandfather, who taught him the basics of business. Having lost his business during the Depression, his grandfather made a very strong impression on Jim at a young age. Jim ended up as an entrepreneur not because he loved business, but because business could serve his objectives related to community development. He learned to function within the system and, as a result, has achieved extraordinary results over the years.

Jim sees himself more as an entrepreneur than as a leader and, simply put, doesn't think he is good at the leadership aspects of his work. He is studied and practiced, and does extensive, calculated homework and research before pursuing any new venture. Jim has a passion to make the world a better place more than he does to make money as an entrepreneur.

Mary

Mary is a Trailing Boomer, having gotten involved in her business of educational services after working for a large publishing firm for a number of years. While working in the corporate world, she had the opportunity to develop her entrepreneurial activities first by writing a book that taught life skills for high school-aged young people. She also worked as an intrapreneur for her publishing company, developing an Internet business prior to going out on her own.

Mary has established a meaningful niche and is growing the business strategically. Her business is an outgrowth of that initial book project, and it is growing at a pace that is greater than she had anticipated. Mary did not see herself as an entrepreneur earlier in her life; however, she has embraced the entrepreneurial life and is excited by the opportunities it has afforded her. She realized that her employer made considerable money from her projects, and she finally decided that she wanted to exit corporate America and establish her own business.

Mary admitted that she had fear about the idea of going out on her own but took the plunge after being downsized and receiving a severance package. This afforded her the opportunity to try an offshoot of her corporate job as her own business. Mary has a huge vision for where she wants to take the business and has the persistence and passion to offset the naysayers.

Elaine

Another Trailing Boomer, Elaine would have been characterized as Generation X had she been born two months later. Like Fred, she is on the “cusp” of her generation. Like Mary, she fell into entrepreneurship as a result of being downsized from her job. She loved her corporate life and the work she did, but made a shift because she was expecting her first child at the time of the layoff. She was concerned about looking for a comparable job, which would have started around the time her child was born.

Elaine used the opportunity to start on her own and used the skills and expertise she had enjoyed in the corporate world to fuel her business. She has been involved in several businesses since she became an entrepreneur, and the core business has evolved in a somewhat different direction from where she started. She is in a service business that has a focus in information marketing, meaning that she sells “how to” information, primarily through channels on the Internet.

Elaine is a passionate entrepreneur and loves the aspect of developing and leading teams to accomplish her goals. In some respects, Elaine has created a “lifestyle” business in that she has the flexibility to do her business around the demands of her family. This flexibility is important to her, and she would not be comfortable if she felt in any way like a slave to her business.

Calvin

A proud member of Generation X, Calvin is a serial entrepreneur at his young age. He has already grown and sold several businesses and is passionate about being an entrepreneur. His current business is in technology services, and at the time of our interview, he was exploring various options as to how to scale the business so that his product would have geometrically greater distribution. Unbeknownst to the researcher when selecting him as an interviewee, Calvin has a strong professional interest in Generation X from a marketing perspective. As a result, he is a passionate spokesperson for the contributions Gen X provides to the business world.

One of the intriguing aspects of our interview was that Calvin feels strongly about employee engagement and development, in particular, a specific responsibility to mentor members of the generation after him (the Millennials). He thinks that Millennials have received bad PR and feels it is incumbent on his peers to pave the way so that they have every opportunity for success.

Jeff

Generation X member Jeff is the managing partner of a law practice. He went into this business initially working for his father-in-law and became managing partner upon his father-in-law's retirement about 10 years ago. Jeff straddles the world between practitioner and practice leader. He was honest in expressing areas where he needed to improve as a leader and described his leadership style as a work in progress.

Jeff's vision is to grow his practice into a national law services business, specializing in the area of law that has a federal (national) component. He has also taken the initiative to start an information marketing business, where he and a colleague who practices the same type of law in a different area of the country have created an educational self-study course to teach practitioners in their field of law how to establish and implement operating and marketing systems into their practices. Jeff is always looking for new opportunities to grow or expand his business but is learning not to be distracted by the latest and greatest idea that crosses his desk.

Jeff was selected to participate in the interviews because his behavioral style is somewhat of an anomaly to the classic entrepreneurial leadership style. Like the others who had some degree of anomaly (Jim and Luis), his experience has overridden any potential style challenges that come with a more laid-back style.

Samuel

Samuel, also representing Generation X, is a partner in a public relations firm, having worked for large PR firms earlier in his career. Confident, somewhat brash, and

passionate, Samuel is deeply enthusiastic about the work he does. Similar to Jeff, Samuel straddles the world of practitioner and practice leader and seems to demand a great deal from the people who work for him. He and his partner have pursued several entrepreneurial ventures; they own two other businesses and are about to close on a third opportunity. These businesses, on the surface, do not seem to have points of commonality, but Samuel sees the future as having a portfolio of business opportunities.

Samuel is developing his talent as a people leader and admits that he does not do well working with people who are unmotivated or lazy. He expects people to keep up with his fast pace and quick mind. I asked about his partner and learned that, though they are opposite in style and approach, they work together well.

Nate

Nate and his partner run an Internet marketing business that educates small business owners about Internet marketing. Leading-edge Millennials, they have been in business for three years and have learned on the job. Nate sees himself as an entrepreneur, not as a leader. He is inexperienced in leadership responsibilities, so his is definitely a work in progress. His responsibility is to focus on strategy and business development, while his partner handles operations and customer service.

Nate started this business after serving as an “entrepreneur’s apprentice” for an entrepreneurial venture in Internet marketing. He hired his now-partner while working in that capacity. After working there for a few years, Nate felt that he learned enough from that employer, so he and his partner set off on their own. They had the benefit of hiring their former employer as their first client, giving them a running start in their new business.

Heather

Heather, also a leading-edge Millennial, grew up in family businesses since she was a child. The *de facto* daughter of the founder/owner, she has worked at this human

resources solutions business since she was 17 years old, or half of her life. She has served in the capacity of President for the past two years.

Heather sees herself as entrepreneurial. Also, she does not like the association with the Millennials, because she feels they have such a bad reputation that she does not want to be associated with the cohort. She has grown professionally in the role of running this business, overcoming obstacles such as having peers now reporting to her. She is one of the few interviewees in this study who identifies more with being a leader than as an entrepreneur.

Creative and innovative, Heather is filled with enthusiasm about maintaining the legacy of the founders' family while growing the business strategically. She is still coming into her own as an entrepreneurial leader and has much clarity and self-awareness as an emerging leader.

Summary

As can be seen from the thumbnail sketches of the various interviewees, the entrepreneurial leaders are each unique, while having certain things in common, such as passion for the business and openness to new ideas. As will be seen in Chapter VI on findings, the interviews were rich with content and texture, representing the core of the research. Table 4.1 summarizes these entrepreneurial snapshots.

Table 4.1. Overview of Interviewees

Name	Generation	Industry
Monique	Veteran	Fashion management/production
Fred	Leading-edge Boomer (Veteran)	Professional services
Paul	Core Boomer	Consulting
Rob	Core Boomer	Financial services/operations
Luis	Core Boomer	Information Technology
Frank	Core Boomer	Staffing
Jim	Core Boomer	Community development/Real estate
Mary	Trailing Boomer	Education services
Elaine	Trailing Boomer (Gen X)	Information Marketing
Calvin	Gen X	Technology
Jeff	Gen X	Law; professional services
Samuel	Gen X	Professional services/PR
Nate	Gen Y (Gen X)	Internet marketing
Heather	Gen Y (Gen X)	Human resources solutions

The interviewees span the generations from Veteran through Generation Y and represent a range of service and technology companies. They come from different backgrounds, with valuable insights that were contributed to the research, as will be seen in Chapter VI, Findings. The generations identified in the parentheses represent those participants who were born on the “cusp” of another generation.

The purpose of this chapter was to contextualize the interviewees within the framework of this research study. In Chapter V, the focus will shift to an overview of the assessment, followed by the findings and analysis of the findings in Chapters VI and VII, respectively.

Chapter V
OVERVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT

*“Let the data talk to you.”
- Bill J. Bonnstetter*

In Chapter IV, the interviewees were contextualized within the framework of this research. This exploratory study seeks to understand *in what ways, if at all, do entrepreneurs exhibit a leadership profile based on their generation?* The following questions are derived from the central research question:

- In what ways do the entrepreneurs’ leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?
- In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation?
- How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

As described in Chapter III, this exploratory study included the administration of an assessment. Seventy-six eligible participants completed the survey, which was available online during February 2013. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the assessment, the results, and preliminary findings prior to considering the interview findings and analysis. The inclusion of all three dimensions results in an entrepreneurial profile that is more robust than any one dimension portrays individually.

The assessment, the TriMetrix[®] DNA, was selected based on the broad scope of characteristics measured. It reveals the how, why, and what of individual performance. It assesses the behaviors people bring to the job, the values that motivate them to do their job, and professional/personal competency mastery.

Behaviors

The behavioral aspect is based on DISC theory, which measures behavior in four dimensions: dominance, influence, steadiness, and compliance. The assessment ranks responses from 1 to 4 for 24 questions.

- *Dominance* measures how a person responds to challenges. A person with high dominance is decisive, results-oriented, and fast-paced. Someone with low dominance is more methodical in making decisions and slower-paced.
- *Influence* measures how people influence others to their point of view. High influencing reflects an optimistic, high trust, enthusiastic person who uses emotion as part of the persuasion process. Someone with low influencing is pessimistic, has low trust, and persuades through facts and logic.
- *Steadiness* shows how people handle the pace of their environment. A person with high steadiness demonstrates slower pace and a need to methodically approach tasks, while someone with low steadiness thrives in a fast-paced environment with a variety of different activities taking place.
- *Compliance* reflects how people respond to rules set by others. Someone with high compliance follows rules and procedures, and a person with low compliance is a rule breaker.

This assessment is based on the work of Dr. William Moulton Marston (1928), who authored *Emotions of Normal People*. Marston was Harvard-educated (J.D. and PhD in

psychology), and prior to conceptualizing DISC, he created the theory and groundwork for what would become the polygraph.¹

Marston (1928) created the categorizations for DISC as an outgrowth of his interest in human behavior. His work tied to physical nature as he described, “One of the most striking aspects of human behaviour throughout the series of observations seemed to me to be a close resemblance between certain human reaction tendencies and the general principles observable in the behaviour of the physical forces of nature” (p. 116). The fieldwork that led to this categorization was initially based on systolic blood pressure tests that captured the subjects’ reactions to everyday occurrences.

The highest score on this part of the assessment reflects one’s core behavior style. This score works in tandem with the other factors, so it is inappropriate to generalize “he’s a high D” (dominance), for example. Analysis of a person’s behavioral profile, then, includes understanding the composite of the dimensions. The wheel, depicted in Figure 5.1, provides an overview of characteristics of this behavioral model. Please note that the letters D, I, S, and C located in the corners correspond to dominance, influence, steadiness, and compliance. The words around the outside of the wheel are alternative descriptors for these factors. A person’s score on the wheel measures natural and adapted style. As will be seen later, a score that is closer to the outer rings represents a score that is truer to the descriptors around the wheel, while a score that is located closer to the center represents more of a blending of different factors.

¹In 1938, Marston’s second book, *The Lie Detector Test*, was published. It included his research on the systolic blood pressure test that was the predecessor of today’s polygraph.

- *Theoretical*: This drive characterizes people who are driven by knowledge or continuous learning. They are interested in and driven by research, understanding the underlying factors that comprise an event, an idea, etc.
- *Utilitarian*: People who score high in this value are those who seek a return on investment of time, talent, and resources.
- *Aesthetic*: These people look for form harmony and beauty, in the workplace, for example, they seek a harmonious work environment.
- *Social/altruistic*: Those who have high scores in social/altruistic are those who are looking to make the world a better place. They are people who are others-oriented, help others, and serve others.
- *Individualistic*: People who have high individualistic scores are those who like to be in control of their destiny and/or the destiny of others.
- *Traditional*: Finally those with a high traditional are people who live by a certain standard and have a personal rulebook that drives their behavior (Source: TTI Technical Report, 2012).

In this part of the assessment, the highest scores represent the driving force for the respondents' approach to their work. Specifically, the scores for the highest two motivators reflect the primary drivers; the next two are situational, meaning that they are important sometimes, but not always; and the two lowest scores are negative/indifferent.

As the filter of someone's worldview, this part of the assessment helps one understand a person's underlying motivation. Unlike the behavioral component, which is observable, one cannot "guess" someone's core motivators through observation. Moreover, if people work in jobs that do not fulfill their underlying motivation, they will not feel a sense of fulfillment. A person's top two motivators represent their driving forces.

Professional/Personal Competencies

Finally, the third component of the assessment measures personal and professional competencies. It measures what a person has done in 23 research-based capacities (also referred to as personal or professional skills or competencies). It measures each capacity on four levels: well developed, developed, somewhat developed, and not developed. Questions are presented on a Likert scale of 1 to 6.

Based on its research, Target Training International, Ltd. has proven that these competencies cannot be taught; rather, they are practice-based: “Most competencies are developed over time by doing, participating in team activities, presenting, persuading, etc.” (TTI Technical Report, 2012). In this context, then, the respondents’ results are experiential rather than theoretical.

The assessment results depict the skills that individuals have exhibited in their life experience by ranking them on a 10-point scale that reveals their biggest strengths on the job. The top skills outlined in the report highlight individuals’ well-developed capabilities and reveal the areas where they are most effective. Table 5.1 summarizes and defines the 23 competencies.

Table 5.1. Definitions of 23 Professional/Personal Competencies

Analytical problem solving – Anticipating, analyzing, diagnosing, and resolving problems.

Conflict management – Addressing and resolving conflict constructively.

Continuous learning – Taking initiative in learning and implementing new concepts, technologies and/or methods.

Creativity/innovation – Adapting traditional or developing new approaches, concepts, methods, models, designs, processes, technologies and/or systems.

Customer service – anticipating meeting and/or exceeding customer needs, wants and expectations.

Decision making – Utilizing effective processes to make decisions.

Diplomacy – Effectively handling difficult or sensitive issues by utilizing tact, diplomacy and an understanding of organizational culture, climate and/or politics.

Empathy – Identifying with and caring about others.

Table 5.1 (continued)

Employee development/coaching – Facilitating and supporting the professional growth of others.

Flexibility – Agility in adapting to change.

Futuristic thinking – Imagining, envisioning, projecting and/or predicting what has not yet been realized.

Goal orientation – Energetically focusing efforts on meeting a goal, mission or objective.

Interpersonal skills – Effectively communicating, building rapport and relating well to all kinds of people.

Leadership – Achieving extraordinary business results through people.

Management – Achieving extraordinary results through effective management of resources, systems and processes.

Negotiation – Facilitating agreements between two or more parties.

Personal effectiveness – Demonstrating initiative, self-confidence, resiliency and a willingness to take responsibility for personal actions.

Persuasion – Convincing others to change the way they think, believe or behave.

Planning/organizing – Using logical, systematic and orderly procedures to meet objectives.

Presenting – Communicating effectively to groups.

Self-management (time and priorities) – Demonstrating self control and an ability to manage time and priorities.

Teamwork – Working effectively and productively with others.

Written communication - Writing clearly, succinctly and understandably.

Source: TTI TriMetrix™ DNA Talent Report

Summary of Respondents' Assessment Results

The assessment results of the 76 participants reveal a profile of an entrepreneurial leader. The *behavioral* style reflects high trust, competitiveness, quickness to change, and optimism. These leaders are predominantly *motivated* by making money, practicality, efficiency, and receiving a return on investment of time, talent, and resources, as reflected by the utilitarian value. The second highest value is *individualistic*, reflecting a desire to be in control and to lead.

Their top seven *professional skills/competencies* are: leadership, goal orientation, employee development/coaching, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication. The segments that follow further explain these findings.

Behaviors

The assessment measures behaviors in both the respondent's natural and adapted styles. The natural style is the one that people express when they are "being themselves," when they are in the company of friends and family. The adapted style represents how people adapt their behavior on the job. Although both aspects are relevant to describe, for purposes of this analysis, the natural style is the more appropriate one to highlight because the job environment is changeable.

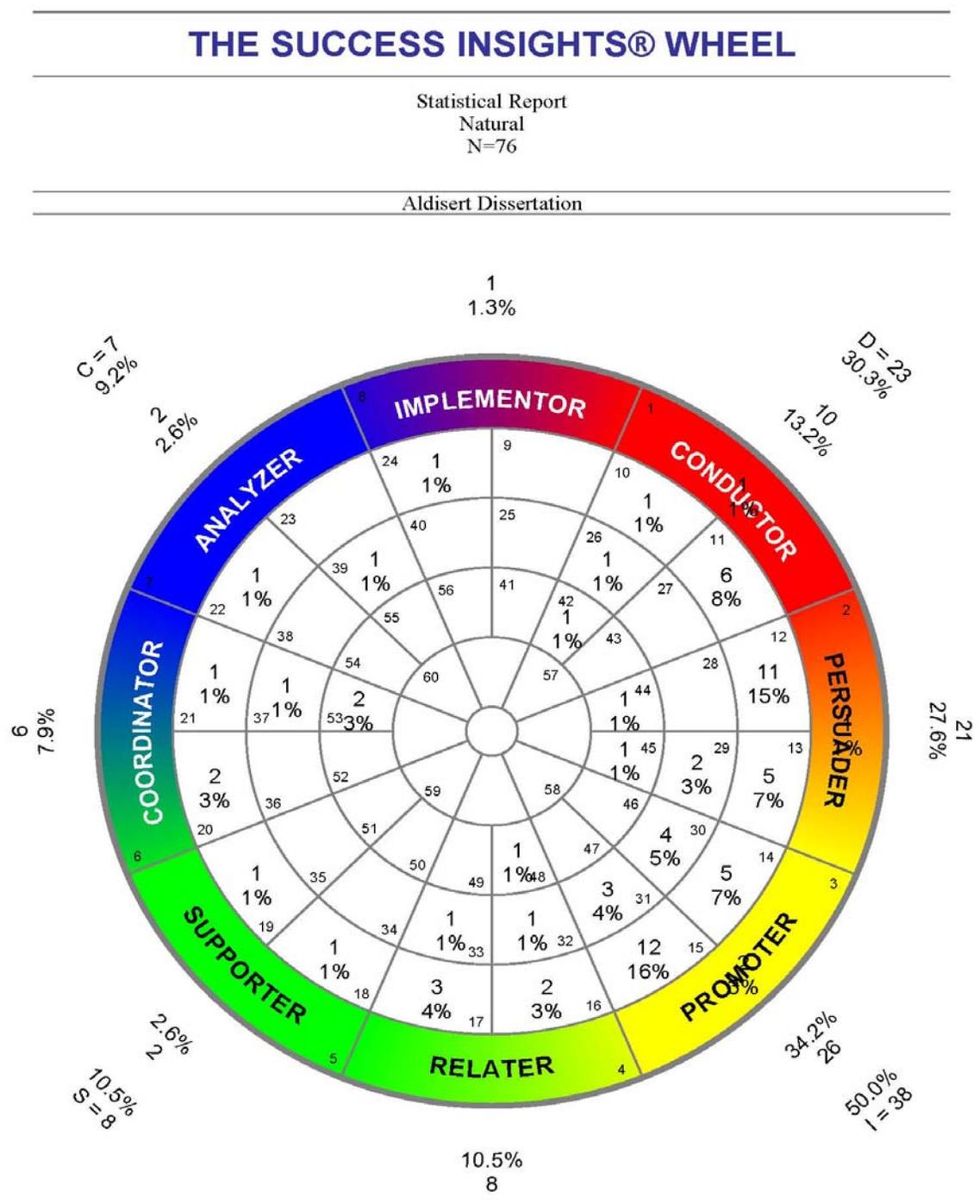
Figure 5.2, on page 98, depicts the results of the study sample for the behavioral component of the assessment. When reviewing this wheel, the outer notations of D=23, I=38, S=8, and C=7 correspond to the number of people whose primary style is dominance, influencing, steadiness, and compliance. Note that 61 respondents, or 80%, have high dominance or high influencing as their core behavioral style. If you draw a vertical line from implementor to relater, a more pronounced visual can be observed, showing that the majority of the respondents have outgoing behavioral styles, while 20% have more introspective natures.

Motivators

Fifty-two respondents, or 68%, have utilitarian as their number one motivator, indicating that they desire to make money, receive a return on investment on what they do, and take a practical approach to achieving results. The number two motivator is the individualistic, reflective of 25 people, or 33%. These respondents are driven by helping others in their entrepreneurial pursuits. Finally, the third highest motivator is theoretical, which reflects a desire to cognitively approach work, problems, and their businesses. Twenty-four respondents, or 32%, chose theoretical as their third highest score.

This means that the respondents to the assessment are motivated first by making money, practicality, and efficiency; second, by being in charge; and third, by garnering knowledge.

Figure 5.2. Behavioral Results of the Study Sample



A visual depiction of the motivators is shown on the Motivators Wheel (Figure 5.3). In analyzing this wheel, the outer ring represents the number one motivator selected by the respondents. The second ring represents the respondents' second motivator selected, and the inner ring represents the third motivator selected.

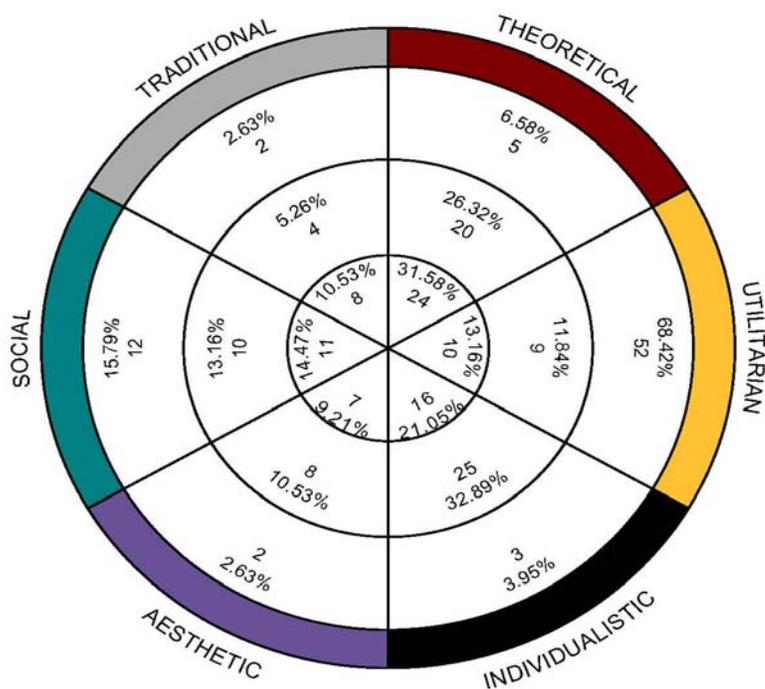
Figure 5.3. Motivator Results of the Sample Study



MOTIVATORS WHEEL™

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N=76



Outside ring = #1 attitude
 Middle ring = #2 attitude
 Inside ring = #3 attitude

Professional Competencies

The top seven professional competencies scored by this group were: leadership, goal orientation, employee development/coaching, persuasiveness, presenting, interpersonal skills, and written communication. A list of the competencies, ranked in order from highest to lowest means, follows in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. Summary of Professional Competencies, Ranked by Mean

Competency	Rank	Mean
Leadership	1	7.48
Goal orientation	2	7.48
Employee development	3	7.08
Presenting	4	7.01
Persuasion	5	6.98
Interpersonal skills	6	6.96
Written communication	7	6.53
Creativity/innovation	8	6.43
Personal effectiveness	9	6.36
Continuous learning	10	6.26
Teamwork	11	6.05
Management	12	6.01
Customer service	13	5.61
Flexibility	14	5.23
Decision making	15	5.21
Conflict management	16	5.06
Diplomacy	17	5.04
Negotiation	18	4.47
Analytical problem solving	19	4.21
Planning/organizing	20	3.95
Self-management	21	3.91
Futuristic Thinking	22	3.78
Empathy	23	3.59

A more in-depth discussion of these competencies will be conveyed in Chapter VII.

Summary of Assessment Overview

This chapter provided an overview of the TriMetrix® DNA assessment and examined the three components: behaviors, motivators, and competencies. Next, a summary of the results of the study sample was presented, indicating that a specific entrepreneurial profile had emerged. This, in fact, is the first finding that will be discussed in Chapter VI, and more analytical commentary will be provided in Chapter VII.

Like the contextualization of the interviewees in Chapter IV, this chapter served to put in perspective the three dimensions of the assessment – the behaviors, motivators, and competencies – and to provide an overview of the results of the respondents. In Chapter VI, we turn to the findings, followed by the analysis and interpretation of findings in Chapter VII.

Chapter VI

FINDINGS

“Well, if storytelling is important, then your narrative ability, or your ability to put into words or use what someone else has put into words effectively, is important too.”
- Howard Gardner

The findings blend together the data received from the assessment and the content that emerged from the interviews. The data yielded specific results from which analytical conclusions could be deduced. The interviews, however, added the dimension and texture that brought the data to life in robust and fascinating ways. This chapter begins with Howard Gardner’s quotation to underpin the importance of effectively making meaning and conveying the interviewees’ words. They added richness to the findings that would not have been identified through the survey research alone. The interviews provided a wealth of information, while reinforcing the specific assessment results of the individuals involved.

In Chapter IV, background on the interviewees was provided to contextualize their contribution to the study. Then, in Chapter V, an overview of the assessment was provided in order to understand its three dimensions and to frame the results prior to reviewing the findings.

Five key findings emerged from this research: (1) The assessment results produced an entrepreneurial profile of behaviors, motivators, and professional skills. (2) The interviewees are passionate about being entrepreneurs, regardless of their professions of origin. (3) The interviewees self-identified more as entrepreneurs than as leaders; however, they demonstrate high levels of leadership acumen. (4) The leaders self-

reported perceptions of how their staff view their leadership style, revealing both strengths and weaknesses. (5) Generational differences among entrepreneurial leaders are nuanced rather than overt. An in-depth discussion of each of these findings follows.

Finding Number One

The assessment results produced an entrepreneurial profile of behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies/skills.

As described in Chapters III and V, the instrument used in collecting the survey data comprises three areas that together create a profile of an individual's style: (1) behaviors, (2) motivators, and (3) professional soft skills or competencies. The composite assessment measures 37 different factors, including 8 behavioral factors, 6 motivators, and 23 professional competencies/skills. The results of the assessment yield a profile of the entrepreneurial leader. For purposes of the findings, the aggregate entrepreneurial leadership style is comprised of the top 2 behaviors, the top 2 motivators, and the top 7 competencies. This provides the greatest breadth and captures 11 factors that we evaluate.

After a brief review of the assessment findings, this section will examine behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies in the context of the interviews. The researcher will provide examples of the core findings in each of these three areas. In addition, where appropriate, anomalies to the overall profile will be identified and discussed.

Review of Assessment Findings

As described in Chapter V, the assessment results of the 76 participants reveal a snapshot of the entrepreneurial leader. The *behavioral* style reflects high trust, competitiveness, fast pace, and a propensity to break the rules. These leaders are primarily *motivated* by making money and receiving a return on investment of time,

talent, and resources, as reflected by the utilitarian drive, and secondarily by the individualistic drive, or the desire to be in control. Their top seven *professional skills/competencies* are: leadership, goal orientation, employee development/coaching, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication.

The 14 interviewees' results reflect the profile as described above. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 show the behaviors and motivators for the interviewees only. These wheels show that the interviewees' behaviors and motivators are consistent with the overall leadership profiles described in Chapter V. On the behavioral side, 5 have a high dominance, 6 have a high influencing, 2 have high steadiness, and 1 has high compliance as their core behavioral styles. These percentages are consistent with the overall sample. Similarly, 10 of the 14 interviewees have utilitarian as their #1 motivator, and 5 of the 14 have individualistic as their second highest motivator.

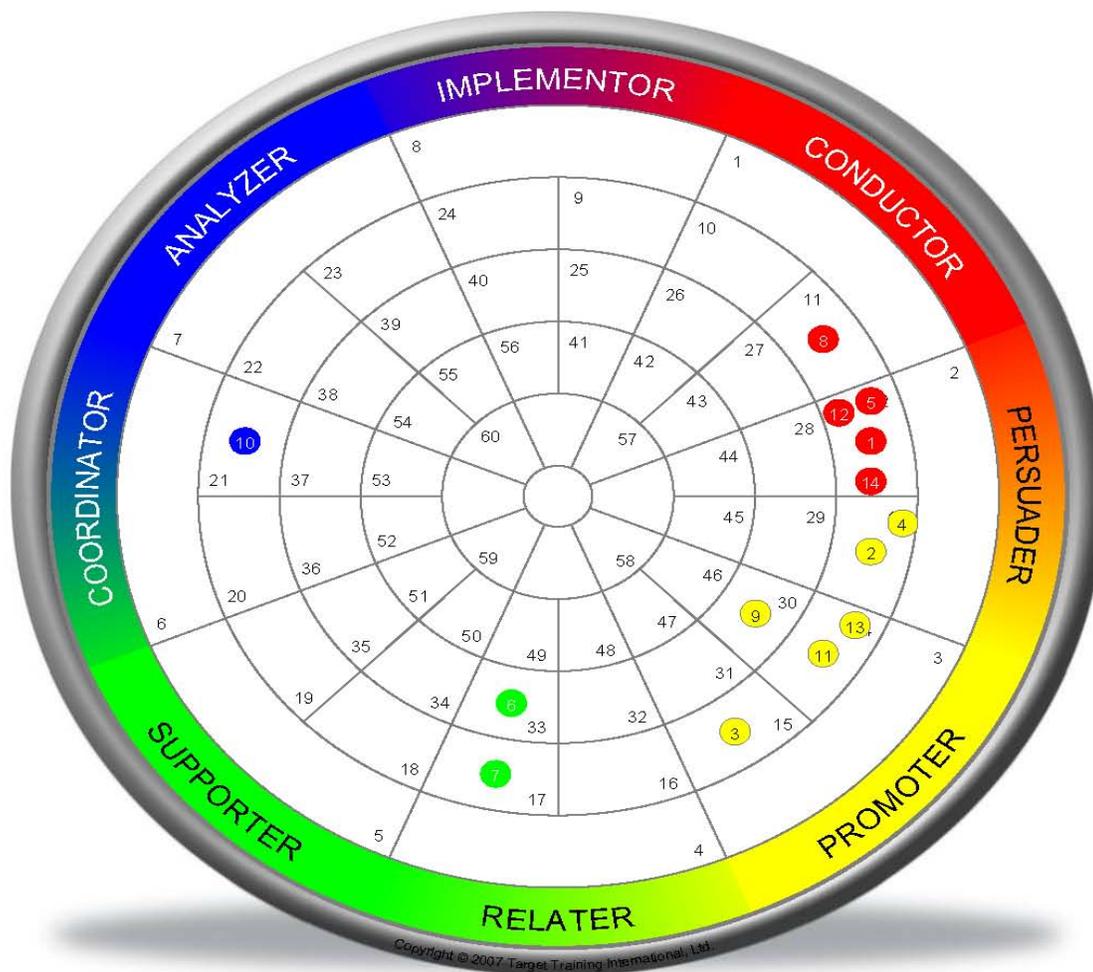
It is notable that 4 of the 14 interviewees had social/altruistic as their #1 motivator. This drive is about helping others or making the world a better place. It is a relatively high proportion of respondents, and more about this will be revealed as the findings unfold.

Finally, three entrepreneurs had one professional competency in the top 5 for the group as a whole, and the remaining 11 had between two and four of the top five competencies, as seen in Table 6.1.

Figure 6.1. Behavioral Results for Interviewees

THE SUCCESS INSIGHTS® WHEEL

Aldisert Dissertation
Interviewees, N=14



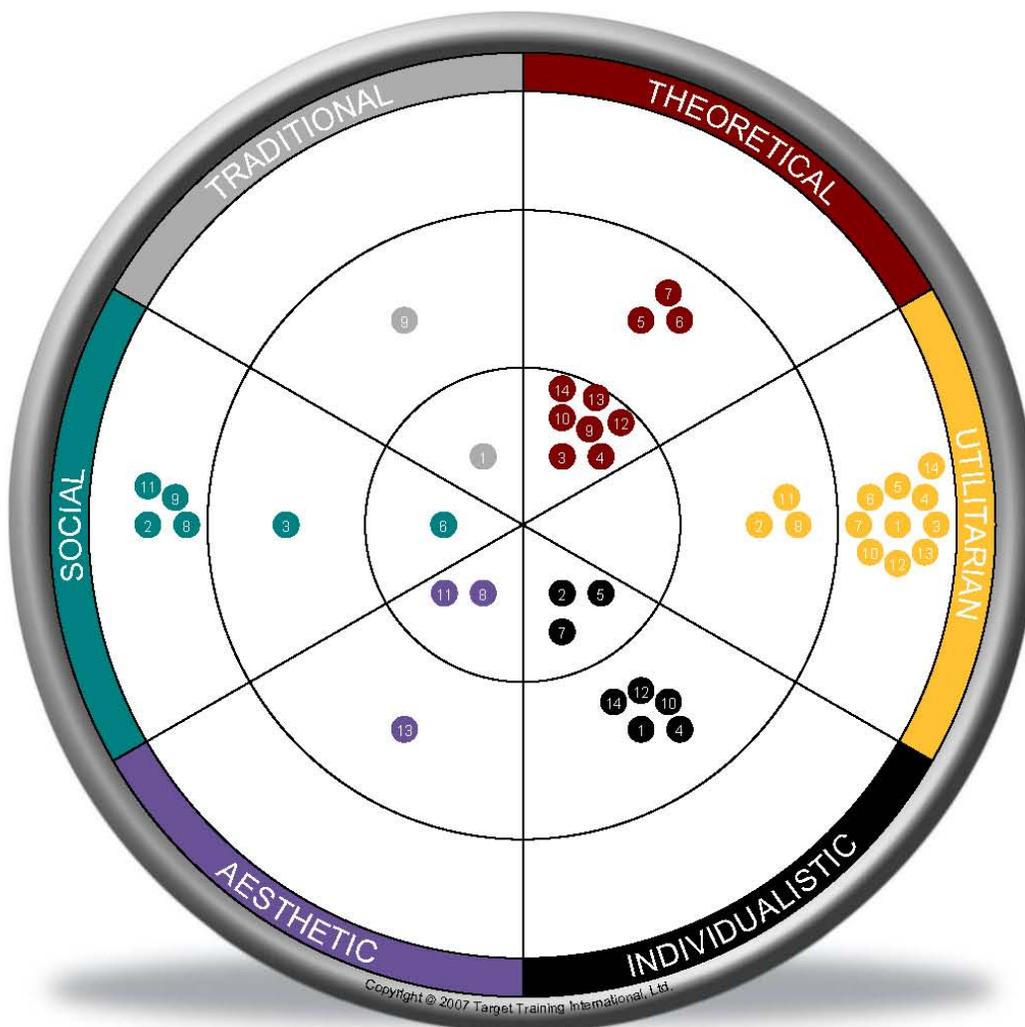
● Natural

1- Heather	8- Paul
2- Mary	9- Jim
3- Elaine	10- Luis
4- Samuel	11- Monique
5- Calvin	12- Fred
6- Nate	13- Rob
7- Jeff	14- Frank

Figure 6.2. Motivator Results for Interviewees

MOTIVATORS WHEEL™

Aldisert Dissertation
Interviewees, N=14



Outside ring = #1 attitude Middle ring = #2 attitude Inside ring = #3 attitude

1- Heather	8- Paul
2- Mary	9- Jim
3- Elaine	10- Luis
4- Samuel	11- Monique
5- Calvin	12- Fred
6- Nate	13- Rob
7- Jeff	14- Frank

Table 6.1. Top 5 Competencies of Interviewees

Name	Generation	Top 5 Competencies
Monique	Veteran	Interpersonal skills, Presenting, Leadership, Customer Service, Persuasion
Fred	Leading Boomer (Veteran)	Goal orientation, Leadership, Management, Decision making, Presenting
Paul	Core Boomer	Presenting, continuous learning, conflict management, Creativity/innovation, Empathy
Rob	Core Boomer	Employee development, Teamwork, Leadership, Customer Service, Creativity/Innovation
Luis	Core Boomer	Presenting, Written communication, Customer service, Goal oriented, Leadership
Frank	Core Boomer	Personal effectiveness, Goal oriented, Creativity/innovation, Leadership, Persuasion
Jim	Core Boomer	Persuasion, Creativity/Innovation, Personal effectiveness, Empathy, Futuristic thinking
Mary	Trailing Boomer	Creativity/innovation, Goal Oriented, Leadership, Presenting, Persuasion
Elaine	Trailing Boomer (Gen X)	Goal oriented, Teamwork, Decision making, Flexibility, Presenting
Calvin	Gen X	Goal oriented, leadership, Persuasion, Creativity/Innovation, Management
Jeff	Gen X	Employee development, Creativity/ innovation, Continuous learning, Analytical problem solving, Management
Samuel	Gen X	Goal oriented, Teamwork, Decision making, Flexibility, Presenting
Nate	Gen Y	Written communication, Personal effectiveness, Planning/organ., Interpersonal skills, Persuasion
Heather	Gen Y	Personal effectiveness, Persuasion, Negotiation, Teamwork, Presenting

Behavioral Style

The respondents expressed their behavioral styles in how they responded to the questions in the interviews. People with a high influencing style, for example, were eager and enthusiastic, especially when they discussed what they liked or what excited them. People with high dominance were direct and to the point in responding.

The researcher posed a question to the interviewees who had a combination high dominance/high influencing style, which was about how people react to their direct and confident styles. Each of the respondents had self-awareness about their impact on others. Heather responded that her style could be intimidating to employees. Samuel replied, “Some people react well; some people don’t.” Similarly, Mary said, “I think that is ... an individual thing and right now I have individuals who respond very well to that.” Mary also commented that in the past, she had employees who didn’t respond well to her style, and that it is much better now because people understand her style.

Monique said, “They react; they take it in. And, in fact, some of the people who worked for me for a long time, they know to tell me when I’m wrong.” She embraces the opportunity when someone tells her that she’s wrong. “Don’t be afraid of me. I love being wrong sometimes, and that’s where I make it right. We all make mistakes.” Paul made a distinction between newer- and longer-term employees, “Some of the younger employees who are new to the company would probably see me as much more directive than some of the people who have been with us for a longer time ... [who] would say I’m much less directive.”

Although the responses were unique to their individual situations, the interviewees who shared the high dominance/high influencing style reflected self-awareness about how their style affects others. They didn’t apologize for or try to diminish their directness; rather, they saw it as a necessary strength for entrepreneurial leaders. A comment from Calvin encapsulates this:

What I’ve learned is that if you are decisive and you deliver, people respect that, and really there is a tremendous amount of people out there that really like the clarity and decisiveness that comes with that. It’s just a matter of building teams that respond well to that style of leadership.

Calvin has confidence in his direct and clear communication style and has learned to develop teams that understand and respond to this style of leadership.

Two of the interviewees diverged from the primary behavioral style of high dominance/high influencing and had high steadiness or high compliance as their core behavioral style. Jeff (high steadiness) commented on how he reacts when keeping a calm, steady work environment might stymie getting the work done:

I hate always focusing on the negative, but sometimes it's tolerating too much when things should be pushed forward. I don't want to shake the harmony, but if we don't move certain things forward – even when people are doing a good job – but some stuff sometimes ... isn't being done well, it's causing problems elsewhere. So I think it slows down the decision-making process sometimes that can greatly affect what goes on.

One of the characteristics of the person with a high steadiness behavioral style is staying at a certain pace and working on fewer things concurrently. Jeff's comment reflects a reticence to push things forward if people are doing a good job overall, because he's a "good guy," his employees are nice and likeable, and he hesitates rocking the boat.

Luis, whose primary style is high compliance/high steadiness, is aware that he can lose momentum if he gets too immersed in the details of decision making.

I think I'm actually very aware of the needs to maintain momentum. So I think that I do try to get as much information as I can and get information from different perspectives before making a decision, but I am also aware that I can't ponder over decisions for days, and sometimes can't even ponder over for more than a few minutes. I think I'm actually fairly efficient at respecting that momentum. There are some times when I consciously slow things down, and in my sense, it's not so much about needing more information or having trouble making a decision as much as it is that I think there's a value in the decision, including the delay as part of it. So I'm very conscious about momentum when I'm doing things.

Luis values being methodical and is aware that he needs to stay on task. Contrast his perspective to previous comments of those who are more direct and quicker to decide.

To summarize this section on behavioral style, the interviewees were self-aware about their individual styles and the impact they have on others. They were not as self-aware about the benefit of adapting their styles to communicate more effectively with people of different styles. Mary's and Calvin's comments, in particular, suggest that they

build teams around their styles, rather than hiring the best people for the job and adapting accordingly.

Motivators

As has been indicated, the dominant motivator among the respondents is “utilitarian,” reflecting a person who seeks utility, practicality, and a high return on investment of time, talent, and resources. People who have a high utilitarian drive value efficiency and are good at problem solving. Entrepreneurs with high utilitarian are driven to make money and, as a result, have a sense of urgency to achieve results.

As a whole, the interviewees understand that people are motivated by different things, but if their employees don’t understand their sense of urgency, they may not be long-term employees. Nate was explicit about this: “When I’m on a team with other people and they don’t share the same sense of urgency ... I try to basically get the person off of the project.... I have a pretty low tolerance for people with lack of urgency.” Fred presented it somewhat differently:

If they are working for me, that is a struggle, and they would never get to a high level in my company. But I do realize that to do the mid- and lower level jobs, it takes all kinds of people, so I would just think that that’s why they are doing those jobs, and that’s where I’m trying to lead my company where I want to go.

The motivators drive behavior, so it is important to remember that the desire for practicality and efficiency of the high utilitarian is at the core of how these entrepreneurs build their businesses.

It was interesting to hear comments from the interviewees who had both high utilitarian and high social/altruistic. This presents an inherent “me-me” conflict that can be simplistically described as “I want to make a lot of money” (utilitarian) and “I want to give it away” (social/altruistic). The researcher probed directly about this. Elaine gave an honest account of how this presents a conflict for her:

Sometimes I do wonder if I've got my mix of the way I'm doing things right. Because it does it does frustrate me that I'm as smart as I am, as dedicated as I am, and a lot of things that I am, and not making the money that I should be making, so I tend to question kind of the mix of that puzzle a little bit.

Paul observed that this utilitarian/social pull was more of an issue in the short term, rather than the long term:

And I believe in the long run, there isn't necessarily conflict between doing the right thing and the money, but in the short term there is, and sometimes you've got to just say to yourself, you know what, you do the right thing just because it's the right thing and go to believe that in the long run, you will be able to be rewarded by the revenue, and that may not be something that you get right away.

Note that Paul equates doing well for others as "doing the right thing." He commented at length in response to this probe, somewhat struggling with whether making money was more or less important than doing well for others. That is the essence of the "me-me" conflict.

Jim's highest motivators were anomalous, with utilitarian being extremely low and social and traditional being high. Social focuses on doing well for others, while traditional focuses on a seeking a system of living, that is, a set of rules to live by. The researcher asked questions related to contradictions around these factors, and Jim's responses were illuminating.

I was as a philosophy major; I studied political theory and philosophical systems, trying to find what would work best. I came to the conclusion that a capitalist system actually does have the potential of creating the most productive and enriching environment for society, plus that the market system is profoundly flawed by its lack of humanity and consideration of the losers in a winner and loser environment....

So I've used capital formation. I think I'm really good at putting capital together. I'm probably good enough to be an investment banker, but my motive is precisely the opposite of investment bankers. I think I am a pretty good lawyer, but my consideration as a lawyer was really how to establish a mission based in organizations that gave it a defensible position in the event of a fight.

Jim elaborated on this answer, and this small excerpt embodies his high motivators (social and traditional) and how he intellectually compensated for lack of high utilitarian to be successful.

To summarize this section, motivators drive behaviors, and the examples illustrate the complexity of each person's situation. These responses continue to reflect a high sense of self-awareness about who they are and what motivates them to achieve the results in their businesses.

Competencies

This section focuses on two specific factors: (1) how the entrepreneurs evaluate unexpected opportunities for their businesses, and (2) how they handle the needs and motivations of their staff. These were selected because they tie to two of the highly ranked competencies in the overall assessment results: goal achievement and employee development/coaching. They also relate to the research questions, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Goal achievement was previously defined as “Energetically focusing efforts on meeting a goal, mission, or objective.” Evaluating new situations can result in either major distractions or windows of opportunity. The interviewees linked their responses to new opportunities with their overall goals, but they differ in how they approach reaching those goals. Jeff and Frank appear to evaluate these situations by impression, rather than systematically. Jeff, for example, admitted that he used to jump at almost anything:

I used to jump and tell almost everyone right away. I've definitely gotten better at asking myself a few questions in terms of “Is this an opportunity?” I try with every opportunity to see if it really fits into my ultimate vision and goal. I can't say I have three specific questions I ask, but lately I have made sure that I ask some questions of myself right away and then make a decision and move forward with it.

Frank had a similar response:

I think the real answer to the question is I'm an opportunist and I'm flexible. The hardest thing to do is the opposite of what you said. What happens when there's an opportunity that is an interesting opportunity – but really is not reflective of getting you to your goal – but it's an interesting opportunity and it got my attention diverted, and sadly the answer is yes, but I've learned over time to try to allow that to happen less frequently.

Heather makes an initial evaluation as to whether their plan should be disrupted by examining an unexpected opportunity. She engages her staff to evaluate the situation; however, she ultimately makes the decision. “If I’ve gone as far to say that I’m willing to have the meeting to say, 'We need to disrupt the plan,' then I’m usually pretty committed to the objective at that point. Prior to operating that way, I was disrupting the plan every day.”

Calvin and Fred responded in terms of speed to action. Calvin believes that evaluating opportunities requires a fast response. “We respond quickly. With a start-up – particularly in the software space – we have to pivot very fast, and we’ve done that a number of times. You’ve got to jump on it right away as long as it aligns with goals.” Fred had a similar reaction: “Quickly. I make decisions very quickly, and probably some would say that that could even be a negative trait of mine – not thinking everything through as best as they might. But I’ve always believed that my gut is right 90% of the time, or ‘my gut has a high IQ.’”

Luis, Paul, and Jim use their own scoring systems to evaluate new opportunities, and in each case, the evaluation ties to company goals. Jim researches everything: “I try to map out what I think the challenge is, and then I do research to see if anybody has done it or if there are any templates or tools for doing it, or what are the building blocks.”

Employee development/coaching was defined earlier as “facilitating and supporting the professional growth of others.” The responses differed based on the interviewees’ self-described management talent. Luis, for example, feels that this is not his strength and that he needs to hire to compensate for this:

I look to hire self-motivated people because my management style tends to be either micro-manage or I completely delegate and leave people to do their thing, expecting it to do with the company with questions, problems, and discussions, but I am not good at managing in between of those two extremes. So part of our hiring process is looking for people who can self-manage and be self-motivated.

His response did not suggest a propensity for *him* to develop his people, although he is not opposed to someone else performing that function.

Calvin, on the other hand, is tuned in to needs and motivations based on the experiences in his various companies.

Individually I try to figure out what motivates each one of them. You know, my software team.... I've spent a lot of time with guys that code, and understanding their needs is very, very different than salespeople. But I've also managed hard sales organizations.... I've just recognized ... where salespeople are at, where administrative are at, and where particularly technicians are – that's probably my forte – understanding that group more than any other.

He was reflective about his strength in working with technical people, but just as enthusiastic about the need for development at all levels.

Fred made an important distinction about developing people as leaders as opposed to leading the staff.

There's a difference when you're leading someone to be a leader, as opposed to leading the manager. You want to do it differently. You want to give leaders a lot of opportunities to think and move the business along the way *they* think, but managers, you want them to manage within the confines of the structure of the company. Obviously, they can make suggestions to improve them, but for the most part they're rigid people and appreciate having a box to work their magic within.

Fred reflected that he may not always develop people as effectively as he would want to, but understands the individual needs: where you can give leeway, where people need more structure, etc.

To summarize this section, the respondents provided insights in terms of many areas, in particular, in terms of goal achievement and employee development.

Competencies are more difficult to capture, because they are self-reported rather than

observed. Behavioral styles can be substantiated based on *how* someone communicates; motivators can be substantiated based on probing into *why* they react in various ways. It is harder to establish a full understanding of competencies without observing directly or receiving feedback from other observers.

Summary of Finding Number One

The assessment resulted in an entrepreneurial profile that includes behavior, motivators, and competencies. Chapter V provided the overview of the assessment results, and this finding illustrates the ways in which these results appear through the individual entrepreneur's responses to the interview questions. Based on the researcher's professional expertise in working with this assessment for years, her conclusions are (1) the interviewees' responses affirmed the assessment results; (2) *how* the interviewees responded further reinforced the assessment results; and (3) the examples used in the responses were consistent the assessment results. To summarize the interviewees' leadership profile, please refer to Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 . Overview of Interviewees' Leadership Profiles

Name	Generation	#1/#2 Behaviors	#1/#2 Motivators	Top 5 Competencies
Monique	Veteran	Influencing/Dominance	SOC/UTL	Interpersonal skills, Presenting, Leadership, Customer Service, Persuasion
Fred	Leading Boomer (Veteran)	Dominance/Influencing	UTL/IND	Goal orientation, Leadership, Management, Decision making, Presenting
Paul	Core Boomer	Dominance/Influencing	SOC/UTL	Presenting, continuous learning, conflict management, Creativity/innovation, Empathy
Rob	Core Boomer	Influencing/Dominance	UTL/AES	Employee development, Teamwork, Leadership, Customer Service, Creativity/Innovation
Luis	Core Boomer	Compliance/Steadiness	UTL/IND	Presenting, Written communication, Customer service, Goal oriented, Leadership
Frank	Core Boomer	Dominance/Influencing	UTL/IND	Personal effectiveness, Goal oriented, Creativity/innovation, Leadership, Persuasion
Jim	Core Boomer	Influencing/Dominance	SOC/TRAD	Persuasion, Creativity/Innovation, Personal effectiveness, Empathy, Futuristic thinking
Mary	Trailing Boomer	Influencing/Dominance	SOC/UTL	Creativity/innovation, Goal Oriented, Leadership, Presenting, Persuasion
Elaine	Trailing Boomer (Gen X)	High trust/Rule breaker	UTL/SOC	Goal oriented, Teamwork, Decision making, Flexibility, Presenting
Calvin	Gen X	Dominance/Influencing	UTL/THE	Goal oriented, leadership, Persuasion, Creativity/Innovation, Management
Jeff	Gen X	Steadiness/Influencing	UTL/THE	Employee development, Creativity/ innovation, Continuous learning, Analytical problem solving, Management
Samuel	Gen X	Influencing/Dominance	UTL/IND	Goal oriented, Teamwork, Decision making, Flexibility, Presenting
Nate	Gen Y	Steadiness/Influencing	UTL/THE	Written communication, Personal effectiveness, Planning/organ., Interpersonal skills, Persuasion
Heather	Gen Y	Dominance/Influencing	UTL/IND	Personal effectiveness, Persuasion, Negotiation, Teamwork, Presenting

Finding Number Two

The interviewees are passionate about being entrepreneurs, regardless of their professions of origin.

Generally speaking, entrepreneurs are very passionate people. It is important to point out that passion comes in various forms; a person does not need to be verbally expressive to express his or her passion. This was certainly the case in the interviews conducted for this research. In reviewing the audio files and transcripts from the interviews, it is notable that the most enthusiastic part of the conversation was when the entrepreneur talked about his or her business.

Whether extroverted or introverted, everyone was at ease talking about their businesses, how they got started, and how they came up with their idea. Of note, most of the interviewees had started more than one business. The researcher did not know this ahead of time.

This finding's section will begin by discussing stories of origin, which provide insights about the interviewees' entrepreneurial origins. Next, will be a discussion of the importance of vision and how this ties to entrepreneurial passion. Finally, the section will conclude with some comments related to selling their businesses.

Stories of Origin

The businesses originated for different reasons. Some were founded as a way to do a better job of something that has been done in a large corporate setting. Others were ideas that emerged as outgrowths from previous work in corporate America. Some of the entrepreneurs are second or third generation in a business, who have the passion and enthusiasm (as opposed to simply having an obligation) to carry on the business. The majority, however, came as a result of finding a gap in the marketplace and a way to

provide a product or service that did not previously exist. Stories of origin are the foundation of organizational narratives.

It is striking to see the degree to which the entrepreneurs do not think their ideas of origin are especially unusual or spectacular. In reading the comments that follow, note that the entrepreneurs do not speak with grandiosity or egoism. Instead, they are matter-of-fact when they speak of the roots of their businesses. Frank commented, for example,

One of my definitions of an entrepreneurial opportunity is any business where the median level of service is more or less negligible. It doesn't have to be brand-new. You don't have to be the first to market. You just have to be better. And the great thing about my market, where most people are not good at, at least, you don't have to even be great to stand out from the crowd. You may really have to be good and if you are great at it, you *really* stand out from the crowd.

Similarly, Rob observed:

I believe that if you provide the best service, sort of like [the movie] *Field of Dreams*: if you build it they will come. And that was my model in this business and reputation I wanted to have, the legacy I wanted to leave behind ultimately. So when I left [prior company] and started this firm, that was my mantra for everyone to follow: You are going to provide the best service possible.

Luis articulated, "It's to bring a level of service to our clients that the larger *Fortune* companies are accustomed to and smaller companies could not get anywhere. That's what we try to deliver: a level of service, a level of personal attention."

All three of the previous examples underscore the idea that an entrepreneurial idea does not need to be new and exciting. Rather, outstanding service layered on to an old idea can result in successful businesses that are a new variation on an old theme.

Monique's idea arose from observing friends and family, providing an amateurish service that inspired her to create her business:

Friends and family working backstage ... they don't want to do it. They want to sit out and *watch* a fashion show. So I came up with the idea that I could dress your models, which I feel is one of the most important steps in producing a fashion show. You agree to have the greatest director, greatest music, the greatest runner, assistant, stylist and those girls are not properly

dressed the way the designer wants that girl to look as long as she doesn't have on the outfit at the right time or she's ready on time or if the bracelet is not there or she forgot the hat.

In story after story, the entrepreneurs expressed great pride in how they created something from a humble idea, have built it and created and maintained a strong clientele.

Jim was clear that as an entrepreneur, he focuses on projects that interest him:

They include my historic involvement in real estate development and community development ... a renewable energy initiative that incorporates solar power installation, primarily for nonprofit organizations ... assisting a group of nonprofit organizations, who are doing community-based care for seniors, deal with the changes presented by the changes in health care law and the increased concentration of managed care organizations, in the design and implementation of our national health care policy.

His success over the years comes from a starting point of taking something that interests him, researching the market and the gaps in the market, and then creating a new business in a niche.

Frank shared his story of diving into his current business during the middle of the recession:

And so, at the end of 2010 in an absolutely insane time – because the economy was miserable and people weren't spending money – we both left relatively safe and good paying jobs to start [his company]. But I am both a contrarian and an opportunist, and even though intellectually it may not have made sense, emotionally it felt like once we had made the decision to do it, we just couldn't wait until the timing got better. We just needed to spring forward and give it our best shot.

Some stories of origin captured the transition from corporate America to becoming an entrepreneur. Mary had the opportunity to be an intrapreneur at her company with the blessing of her former boss. He saw it as a way for her to be on her own without the financial risk:

So I did that ... and then it became a dotcom. I spent a year developing content, and then it never saw the light of day. I got a severance package for a year, and I thought, "This is when you are supposed to start your business." And that's how I did it, because I really had a lot of financial fear. I did not

want to go out and get angel or VC funding, so I completely funded [my company] myself.

She had not seen herself as an entrepreneur when she worked in publishing, but increasingly she became frustrated by the limited upside as well as the fact that she could not profit from her efforts.

Elaine also exited corporate America, but her path to entrepreneurship was more accidental:

I made amazing money, worked with really smart people, loved what I did and probably would have done it had I not – I went through a downsizing when I was three months pregnant. It was one of those things I thought ... by the time I'm able to get a job back at my level, I'll be close to having delivered my baby and "am I really going to find the loyalty to want to go back to another corporate company?" and I never did.

Elaine has tremendous entrepreneurial passion; however, she misses the collegiality that she had with her co-workers. She is eager to grow her current business and begin to replicate what she previously had.

Nate was working for an entrepreneurial company, where his title was "entrepreneur's apprentice." He didn't feel that he had the skills to start a business.

So I went to work for a guy, tried a couple of different businesses, and I actually hired my business partner in one of those businesses; he was the second employee. [We] got a chance to work together for about five years before we started our own business.

Nate's prior experience was framed by the small entrepreneurial company he previously worked for, and his current business is an extension of the work he did for this other company.

Whether it was an improved way of doing something that had already been done or slipping into a market niche that was previously untapped, these entrepreneurs found a way to create something from an idea.

The Question of Vision

The entrepreneurs were very clear about the vision for their business. Most of them commented that vision is an anchor for them as well as for their employees. Some of the visions were explicit, numbers-driven, and specified growth oriented markets, such as Fred. Others, such as Luis, have the vision to remain as a small company. Nearly all of the interviewees made some reference to excellence in service when referring to their vision.

Jeff, Mary, Calvin, and Fred have an interest in expanding their businesses to a national or international scope. One of Jeff's areas of law practice is federal, so he envisions a nationwide practice. Mary has her eyes on China as a market ripe for her educational services, since so many Chinese want to come to school in the U.S.

Calvin wants to find a strategic partner that can help scale the business to reach people on a far greater scale than he can on his own. Fred expressed interest in having "at least 10,000 small businesses in [his state] as members of our association ... and because the information is not specific to [state], I expect to have members in other states or even in other countries."

Heather and Monique referred to legacy issues. Heather is committed to "protect and build the family legacy and to be the company that people rely on for solutions to people challenges." This concept of protecting the legacy of the family is central to all strategic decisions that Heather makes. Her company is currently undergoing a growth spurt, and she is mindful that they need to stay focused on the vision as they make this next leap.

Monique, on the other hand, wants to preserve the legacy she has created by finding a buyer who will carry on the work she has done and maintain the reputation she worked so hard to develop. The idea of finding the right buyer to carry on the legacy is in some respects more important than the financial gain from selling the business.

Samuel and his partner are building more than one business, so his vision relates to expanding into other ancillary businesses they have started and are considering as future endeavors. Jim, as previously mentioned, ties his entrepreneurial pursuits to his personal interests. He refers to his vision as idiosyncratic. “Actually, I follow what is interesting to me and try to draw some kind of synthetic connection to other things that I’m doing.”

The only interviewee who expressed a desire to keep his business small was Luis, who wanted it “to remain a small, very, very service-oriented company with long-term very satisfied clients.” This perspective is more like that of a business owner than an entrepreneur. That said, his entrepreneurial mindset takes him out of the business owner category. In many respects, Luis has created a lifestyle business. His wife is his business partner, and his daughter also works in the business. He has a loyal staff with little turnover and has the luxury of taking on clients that he *wants* to work with, rather than those he *has* to work with.

An entrepreneur’s vision represents a beacon for the entrepreneurs themselves and their people. Clarity of vision helps them move their businesses forward and is integral to their business success. Each of the interviewees had clearly articulated visions, which express their core values.

Helping Others

As mentioned in Finding One, 4 of the 14 interviewees had social/altruistic as their number one motivator, which represents an interesting outcome. This merits commentary because of the intertwining of the motivator, the vision, and the entrepreneur’s passion.

For example, Monique stated that her underlying business concept is to help everyone look great. “We work together as a team, and we really help people whoever they are and make them look good. That’s one of my mottos: let’s make you look real good.... I’m here to help you.... We’re not there to take over and try to run your business.

We're there to make your business look better." Everything that her people do for the designers leads to the fulfillment of that objective.

Paul drew the connection between business and social change:

Business is going to be the primary driver of social change, and if we entrepreneurs do not understand that we don't have a birth right to the planet, were to the food we eat, nor to the employees we have, and nor to the community we work in, that we have to take the ownership responsibility of the resources we are given and shepherd them, steward them properly, or else we won't be having any business in the next few years if we don't leave it better off than the last generations work.

Again, the vision is directly tied to an others-oriented focus.

Even some of the interviewees who did not have a high social/altruistic driver made comments that indicated an orientation to others. Luis drew an analogy between his work and healing: "The IT consulting that we're doing [also provides healing], but not healing for the computers as much as it is healing for the people who are under stress and needed to rely on these computers and the anxiety that they were experiencing in the business interruption that they were experiencing."

Selling the Business

Five of the people interviewed were very specific about their intention to sell their business when they talked about their vision. In fact, two of the five were in some stage of selling their businesses at the time of the interviews, and the other three were preparing to sell. From this perspective, the business is an economic enterprise, one that has been conceived of, grown, and nurtured for the purpose of providing an economic return on investment at the right point in time. This of course differs from entrepreneur to entrepreneur. Several others commented about the future opportunity to sell the business but did not mention it within the context of vision.

It was interesting to observe that these entrepreneurs are clear that they don't want to sell their businesses to "just anyone." In some cases, as CEO, they will stay in place as

a consultant to the new owner; therefore, the continued quality and service levels are essential. In other cases, the CEOs are interested in selling to companies that can take their product or service and massively scale the business to a level that would not have been possible under their leadership and capital structure.

Importantly, while the ability to scale is a factor, it is also equally significant to these entrepreneurs that the purchasing companies maintain the integrity of their idea and, to some extent, give them the opportunity to create a legacy to a larger company.

Summary of Finding Number Two

This finding began by sharing stories of origin, which provided insights about the interviewees' entrepreneurial origins. These stories of origin showed how some entrepreneurs engineered new and improved ways of doing something that was already offered in the market. Others entered market niches that were previously untapped. The importance of vision was discussed next, in particular in terms of how this ties to entrepreneurial passion. Two sub-themes were identified as part of the discussion of vision. The first was a further exploration of the passion behind the social/altruistic motivator, and the second was about the importance of selling the business to someone who is committed to carrying forward the entrepreneur's vision.

Finding Number Three

The interviewees self-identified more as entrepreneurs than as leaders; however, they demonstrated high levels of leadership acumen.

The concept of leadership can be ambiguous for entrepreneurs. They think of themselves as drivers of businesses, ideas, and people, but don't necessarily equate this to leadership. This finding will discuss this dichotomy between high levels of leadership acumen in contrast to not relating to being a leader. It will delve into the interviewees'

self-reported leadership styles, how their styles evolved, and the importance of mentors in their leadership development.

“Accidental” Leadership

Overall, the interviewees’ comments about leadership were more intellectual than the dialogue that occurred in the discussion about their businesses and the stories of origin. Samuel, for example, summed it up like this:

You can’t aspire to necessarily be a leader. I think you really are or you’re not. I think you can develop leadership skills, but I think you’ll find a lot of people who are “leaders” who weren’t seeking to become leaders. It just so happened that they were effective and wound up becoming heads of the organizations that they built, and all of a sudden they were a leader.

My aspiration was never to become President of the United States or become some heavy hitter leader, but it just so happened that because I think I’m good at what I do, I’m effective and I make things happen and I have a track record to show for it.... For me, I really backed into the leadership role that I have.... I think I built, I think I created, but being a leader wasn’t part of my vision.

His description of his “accidental” leadership is consistent with other responses and embodies the spirit of what many expressed.

Self-reported Leadership Style

The researcher asked a single, simple question, which was “How would you describe your leadership style?” Since the question was open-ended, it offered the interviewees to answer as briefly or expansively as they wanted to. A few thought the question was too broad and asked for direction. The researcher’s opinion was that in these cases, the interviewees were more interested in giving the “right answer” rather than going with the rhythm of the question.

Each interviewee answered the question; however, some were more tentative and hesitant than others. The ones who were more hesitant were the ones who did not self-identify as leaders. The researcher observed a difference in response that was age-

related. Older respondents were more comfortable answering this question, while younger respondents were somewhat more cautious in their responses. They were transparent in their discomfort answering the question, resulting in the researcher's need to be probe a little more in order to elicit a response. Please refer to Table 6.3 for brief descriptors of each respondent's self-reported leadership style.

Table 6.3. Interviewees' Self-reported Leadership Styles

Name	Generation	Self-reported Leadership Style
Monique	Veteran	Bold, brash, loud, "follow me"
Brad	Leading Boomer (Veteran)	Attraction; lead by enthusiasm, example, courage
Paul	Core Boomer	Collaborative; removes obstacles for team
Rob	Core Boomer	"Control freak", but not "in your face"
Luis	Core Boomer	Lead by example
Frank	Core Boomer	Visionary, collaborative, idea generator
Jim	Core Boomer	Lead by example
Mary	Trailing Boomer	Visionary, incisive, practical
Elaine	Trailing Boomer (Gen X)	Collaborative, team oriented
Calvin	Gen X	Situational: from fun to petulant
Jeff	Gen X	Changing. Strategic thinker
Samuel	Gen X	Effective, clear, doable
Nate	Gen Y	Most effective one-on-one
Heather	Gen Y	Transparent; lead by example

"Leading by example" was a leadership style mentioned by a number of the respondents. In some cases, such as Luis, there was difficulty self-identifying as being someone else's employer. "I view myself as really much more part of the team and as the business has evolved my roles and responsibilities have changed, but I also still don't

think of myself so much as a boss.” He views leadership as hierarchical from a workflow perspective and roles and responsibilities perspective, but not specifically hierarchical from a leadership or power perspective.

Jim echoed similar comments:

I think I have to lead by example because I don't know how to do it any other way. I don't consider myself to be a particularly good leader, although I do have habits that are good work habits. I think I can create appropriate pathways for employees, but I don't think of myself as a good leader in the sense that I don't have a described methodology.

Fred distinguished between leadership and management style, indicating that he has been successful as a leader when his enthusiasm has attracted people to follow him. “I would much rather be in front as opposed to being behind pushing people, so I would not be a pushy leader. I would be an ‘attraction’ kind of leader and lead by example, lead by enthusiasm, and lead by showing courage if necessary; lead by defending my tribe when necessary. That would be my basic leadership style.”

Elaine has used her leadership role to gather information from her team in the field. In her previous business, comprised of home sales associates, she used a collaborative style to learn what was going on from the perspective of prospective customers as well as challenges that needed to be overcome in selling the product.

Nate was one of the people who did not see himself as a leader. “If leadership is leading a group, I wouldn't say that that is actually a strength of mine, so I don't know if I have a style.” He did see himself “thinking multiple steps ahead and keeping an eye on the big picture and actually driving the business as a whole in terms of our position in the marketplace and customer acquisition.... I struggle with the concept of leadership style, but I'm able to zoom out and see the big picture.”

“Vision” was a term used by several of the interviewees in the context of their leadership style. Mary, for example, commented that she would describe her style as “pretty visionary, incisive, and also very, very practical.... I am probably more fast-paced

than most leaders.... I think if there is one word that describes my leadership style it is ideas that can really be huge. I have stronger leading capabilities than I have managerial capability.”

Frank, too, sees himself as a visionary. “I think I’m a visionary. I think I’m collaborative. I think my style is a generator of ideas. I have a fast mind, but people who have fast minds often come up with stupid ideas too, so I’m a leader who likes to have others weigh in, although at the same time I’m pretty decisive on when to make a decision.”

Evolution of Leadership Style

Across the generations, the entrepreneurs felt that their leadership style had evolved over the years, and they see their styles as works in progress. Commenting on his leadership evolution, Jeff said, “I’ve developed over the years from holding a mop and bucket every single day, sleeping on messes, and putting out fires, which was very useful in learning the business, to learning how to better delegate, to try to communicate my kind of vision, and provide the resources for people, to provide accountability, and the follow-ups.”

Paul felt that earlier in his entrepreneurial career he did not have a strong group of people working for him and didn’t know how to develop them as well as he does now. He felt that he needed to be more directive and controlling in those earlier days. “I didn’t understand that when you give people a clear vision and a role, that they can direct themselves much more than I realized they could. So [now] I’m much less directive, much less needing to be involved in the details, and much more of a guide, a mentor, and a steward of systems and people than when I was younger.”

Jim commented that when he started his entrepreneurial career,

I didn’t understand that I did not have the leadership skills to lead by governing. And so I attempted to govern and did so poorly, and over time I realized that I had to do what I knew how to do, and *not* try to do what I

don't know how to do. But that took a little time to figure out that I'm not actually qualified to govern. I'm just qualified to lead by example.

Likewise, Calvin said that over time people told him he had become “a little more gracious in the way that I work with people and have become more encouraging and understanding of my team. I feel like I have a much better team dynamic with this start-up than any other business I have ever been a part of.”

It is notable that entrepreneurs whose behavioral style falls into the high dominance category felt that they almost needed to justify being more mellow than their earlier leadership styles. For example, Frank said, “I actually think I've become softer – not in a negative way – but the positive way, over time ... [at times] it can be a little scary and disconcerting to think I've mellowed.” Monique commented, “I know that I'm loud, trying to be less loud, and I don't think that's going to happen.”

Having “grown up” in corporate America, Mary observed, “I went from being able to lead within this gigantic structure where influence was all I had to leading in a way with my own company where I'd be out talking to school districts in different people who were necessarily even aware or interested in what I was doing.” Rob, also coming from corporate America, agreed that his style has evolved over the years. “In the early years of those previous companies, as well as my current business, I viewed myself as the mentor or teacher: lead by example and show people. Learn how to do everything myself first, and then teach others and develop them and get them motivated.”

The Importance of Mentors

Nearly all of the interviewees spoke with enthusiasm about their mentors. Whether they were mentors from corporate America, earlier jobs, family members, or people they admire in the public arena, the interviewees absorbed many elements of who they would become by modeling their mentors.

Some mentors are important because of being able to model general business practices. For example, one of Nate's important mentors is someone he used to work for

and still works with. Nate was [his prior boss's] first employee in one venture, and this man has mentored him in terms of general business practices as well as marketing.

He's probably been the person I've had the most contact with and learned the most lessons from, as much from his mistakes in our mistakes together as for my successes.... One of the things that I think I may not have had if not through the experiences with [this boss] is just having the urgency to get things done quickly, get data quickly, run tests, and just move very quickly.

Many interviewees mentioned mentors from the early stages of their careers. Rob had the privilege of being the protégé of the CEO of the major financial services company he worked for early in his career. Fred had two mentors early on, both of whom passed along important lessons. One in particular was someone who encouraged Fred to go into business for himself. "He was very, very fair in the way he treated people. He believed in giving people opportunities, which I see as a huge virtue and feel the same way myself." Frank spoke of the principal of another business in his industry. "She had the patience to work with me and help to develop me, and she did amazing things, and I will always respect her for that." Of note, this mentor was influential to him 17 years ago, and he commented that he was already 20 years into his career before he had a "real" mentor.

Family and friends also played important roles for these entrepreneurs. In addition to the previously mentioned CEO, Rob spoke of his father being an essential mentor and charismatic leader. Calvin and Luis also pointed to their fathers as meaningful mentors. Paul talked about family members as well: "I had my uncle, my grandfather growing up, and people working in their businesses who were mentors for me when I was younger." Heather spoke about her grandfather, who died when she was young but made such an impression on her that when she make certain decisions, she asks herself, "Would he be proud of my doing this?" She also spoke about her aunt, who always told her the truth, regardless of the message. She worked in her aunt and uncle's business when she was a teenager and absorbed a lot about how to do business from those experiences.

Jim talked about his grandfather:

Because he was a businessperson who lost his business during the Depression, his advice was very sobering because it made me think in a very practical way about the efficiencies associated with it. He was my number one mentor. I did not have any long-term mentors that I would consider teachers, but I did interact with clients in a way that I learned best practices from them, and also, I guess what I would call worst practices, things to be avoided.

Jim has been a keen observer of what to do and not to do, and was forthcoming in sharing the variety of people who have inspired him.

Some mentors provided value based on nuances, habits, and behaviors that they provided to the entrepreneurs. Elaine, for example, learned from two mentors from her days in corporate America. One gave her the gift of being decisive. She would tell him that she didn't know if the decisions she was making were good or bad because she wasn't experienced. This mentor said, "You're right; you [aren't]. You have to make a decision with what you have today, and then you will have the information of what you learned from your position at this stage to make your job more efficient." Another mentor helped Elaine by reinforcing her self-confidence. "He listened to my words, and he allowed me to feel my words have meaning, and because of that I became very vocal and really stated my opinion while being very kind and polite to others and collaborative in a team-like way."

One of Luis's key mentors was someone important to him in business, if not in life. What he learned from this mentor was "a whole other way of looking at myself and in communication and interactions with other people; he was just a very meaningful mentor." This mentor gave Luis perspective on how to be more effective in how he saw himself and how to develop clear and effective communication skills. Heather also spoke about the patriarch of the family business she works in. This man formed a lot of who she is as an adult and, therefore, has been a very influential person. Some of the behaviors

she learned from him included not to judge others. He did not judge her, and she has tried to emulate that in her young stature as a leader.

Monique has a very interesting perspective on mentors and spoke about someone who had been a mentor from when she was a teenager until she died several years ago. She commented,

I tell women today that they not only need a mentor; they need an advisor and they need a sponsor. And [the mentor] was all of the above for me. She was my mentor. I could always talk to her about anything, anytime, anywhere. She was my advisor; when I wanted to move on to the next step, she advised me. And then when I needed somebody to support me, she got on the phone and made a phone call for me to get me into that next-door, to open that door. She could do that. So I had [the mentor] as one person.

Monique feels these three components – mentor, advisor, door opener – are somewhat different. If you can find them in one person, great, but otherwise, Monique advises her young employees to seek them out individually.

Other interviewees were not as fortunate in terms of mentorship. Mary, for example, feels that she has not had good mentors and that this has been a big blind spot for her. She now works with two coaches who have been very successful in business and are working with her on both macro and micro issues in her business.

Summary of Finding Number Three

This finding began by describing “accidental” leadership, which is an impression that the interviewees sought entrepreneurship, not leadership, and became leaders only as a consequence. The next area of discussion was the entrepreneurs’ self-reported leadership styles. This was followed by understanding how these leadership styles evolved from earlier positions. Finally, the importance of mentors was discussed. Mentors have played important roles as guides to most of the entrepreneurs who were interviewed.

Finding Number Four

The leaders self-reported their perceptions of how their staff views their leadership style, revealing both strengths and weaknesses.

People are a blessing and a curse to entrepreneurs. When they employ great people who are accountable and effective, the entrepreneurs are the first to praise. When they need to be managed or don't do their jobs, the entrepreneurs want to fire everyone. This finding begins by discussing this dichotomy and then covers the responses to six questions the researcher asked with respect to how the entrepreneurs' employees would likely describe aspects of their leadership style.

From Phenomenal to Accountability

The entrepreneurial leaders who were interviewed expressed both positive and negative aspects of being people leaders, and, in effect, this dichotomy represents two sides of the same coin. Many of the interviewees expressed that their greatest pride in being a leader was their people. The word "phenomenal" recurred in the answers. Luis, for example, commented, "The fact that I've got a phenomenal staff that does great work for our clients, that gets along well with each other, and likes each other and that takes as much pride in what they're doing." Calvin echoed, "We have phenomenal people.... I refer to them as our 'seal team six.'... Everybody is just really well-suited for their job, and it's a pleasure to be part of it."

The introduction to this finding is significant because, anecdotally, perceptions exist that entrepreneurs are very self-focused and are not necessarily perceived as being people-oriented. Throughout the interviews, most of these entrepreneurial leaders talked about the importance of their teams and how they would not be where they are today without them.

The negative side of the people issue largely pertains to managerial issues, and these points arose in response to questions related to negative challenges and what they liked least about being a leader. More than half of the interviewees (including the same

ones who expressed great pride in their people) stated unequivocal frustration in managing them. Frank talked about how unpredictable they were; Rob stated the challenges in keeping people motivated and happy.

Accountability is a big issue. Calvin stated it appropriately: “Whenever myself or my team make decisions that get us into trouble or put a customer in jeopardy – with that responsibility is accountability.” Jeff said it somewhat differently: “Getting the right people and making sure I trust them and that they have accountability.”

Note that these comments were made by the same people who glowed about how proud they are to have phenomenal people working for them. The people issue is definitely two sides of the same coin.

Self-reported Responses from the Employees’ Perspective

This finding covers six questions that were asked in the interviews. This research did not have a separate component of interviewing the direct reports of the entrepreneurial leaders, primarily because no matter how great the relationships might be, subordinates are reluctant to speak openly about their bosses if they think their feedback will in any way create discomfort or backlash. As an alternative, the researcher asked a series of questions that the entrepreneurial leaders answered from the perspective of their people, using the first words that came to mind.

Again, the challenges related to self-reporting are apparent with this method. The researcher minimized this issue by: (1) not sharing the interview questions in advance, and (2) asking the leaders the six questions in rapid succession, requesting that they give the first few words that came into their minds. Notably, all of the interviewees were willing to cite examples where they are not particularly effective with their people in addition to positive impressions; therefore, the researcher felt the responses represented a reasonably fair accounting of their strengths and weaknesses.

How the entrepreneurial leaders communicate and give direction. Many of the entrepreneurial leaders initially answered by describing their self-perceived communication strengths, but then shared the “down side” of their strength. Most of them thought their employees regarded them as strong communicators. Elaine, for example, commented, “I can be very thorough in my description of what it is that I want someone to do.... The negative can be that because I’m very fast talking, 'figure it out,' I often have the expectation of those around me can do the same.... I can be intimidating because I move at a fast pace.” Similarly, Mary said, “They probably feel like I am at certain times very prescriptive, and other times I don’t give them much of any direction.”

Overall, their responses were consistent with their primary behavioral style. Fred observed that he hasn’t necessarily given “as clear direction as they wish, but at the same time, teaching them to be leaders themselves because they had to think for themselves.” Calvin was self-aware about how his style shifts when he is under pressure:

I think many of them would comment that they are often surprised about the kind of breadth in the areas that I cover.... I think back to my comment earlier when things are going really well, they’ll talk about “fun-loving” and “humor” and “encouraging” and all of those things, and then I have become self-aware of being petulant when things get stressful.

This is a highly self-aware comment, because behavioral style usually shows extremes when people are under pressure. Luis’s comment reinforces this point: “They would probably view me as being guarded, as being overly optimistic, as having a clear vision of where I want to be, and assuming that they understand it at the same level that I do.”

In most cases, these entrepreneurial leaders had the desire to be better communicators but were realistic about their shortcomings. Jeff reflected, “I think people would definitely say we’ve gotten clearer in expectations and how we communicate. Sometimes there is some resistance were some confusion. I think people think of me as fairly laid-back, pretty open to what’s going on, not hands-off but certainly not micromanaging what happens.”

How would your people describe how you influence them to get things done?

Responses to this factor were interesting in that most of the entrepreneurial leaders had very positive views about how they influence others. Some comments were idealistic, such as Paul saying that he hoped they would describe him as a mentor, bringing out the best in them, and helping them to overcome obstacles. Others reverted to the “lead by example” reference of earlier. Monique responded, “By watching me, because I am a results person,” while Rob replied, “Motivated by example, by intellectual knowledge of the topic, or if that doesn’t work, demand it.” Calvin also talked about “roll up your sleeves, get alongside, and get it done with them. I demand a lot, I set really high goals – often some would say unrealistic – but we work together to meet them.”

Jeff felt that his people would describe him as positively influencing them. He indicated that over the past few years, he has influenced his people not to come into his office to ask a question unless they have at least one or two answers (and one of the answers can be that they don’t know). His point is that he desires to influence them to think through questions before coming to him.

Fred acknowledged that he was demanding in the way he influenced his people. “They might be thinking, who does he think he is to want me to get *that* done? But then, down the road, whether years or months, they all would say, it was amazing how much we got done when we worked with him.... They talked about how much they learned at the time.”

Nate felt that people would describe him as courteous, “but also with flashes of urgency of ‘this needs to get done now’ ... a combination of calm and panic depending on the day.” Heather felt that her people follow her wherever she goes because they trust her, and Samuel felt that they would see him as hands-on, high-energy, and that they have faith in him.

This concept of “having faith” and “trusting” is consistent with the high trust that is characteristic of the high influencing behavioral factor that many of the respondents have.

The interesting thing is that high trust reflects the respondents' behavioral style, not necessarily the style of the people reporting to these leaders. Luis felt that his people perceive him at times as influencing them by kicking and screaming. "I believe that I'm expecting more from them than they can do, particularly from the standpoint of time constraints, and then our surprise that they actually get it done." This response intrigued the researcher, since this particular style of influence is inconsistent with his more detail-oriented, non-emotional behavioral style.

Others, such as Mary, did not focus on trust or faith; rather, she simply expects her people to be able to follow her. "If people aren't comfortable with ambiguity, if they are not comfortable in their own abilities, it can be uncomfortable without structure, and fortunately I have a group of people who really thrive on challenging themselves, and that hasn't been the case."

How would your people describe how you communicate your vision? The importance of vision was established in Finding #2, so the researcher wanted to have a glimpse as to how effectively they perceived that they communicated their vision to their people. Elaine felt this to be her strongest ability, that is, that she clearly communicates vision. She also acknowledged the flip side of this equation, as the quintessential entrepreneur: "It can be challenging to work with me, because there is that new idea, and how do we reprioritize based on what we learned last week?" Jeff acknowledged that he was getting better at communicating vision, implying that there was room for improvement.

Jim feels that he communicates vision clearly, although he conceded that he may tend to be more abstract and leaves room for his people to interpret what he's saying. "[We do] knowledge work, and I'm asking for creativity." Luis also feels that he communicates vision very clearly. "I think they would say I communicate not only in words, but in action and attitude, in demeanor; everything about who I am communicates that vision."

Rob admitted that he had been criticized a lot about ineffectively communicating vision, and “I don’t communicate enough, that I don’t keep people close to what we want and how we’ve done in the past.” He feels that he communicates vision during the interview process and that it isn’t at the top of his mind after that. He definitely feels this is an area for improvement. Monique feels that her people understand her vision: “They understand it. It’s not complicated. I keep it simple.... My vision is simple: get it done.”

How would your people describe how you exercise power? Luis gave an honest self-assessment, “I think that I am loathe to exercise power, and I think they would say that I exercise it more than I think I do, but perhaps from the standpoint of stubbornness as opposed to power.” Several variations on discomfort of exercising power came out in the responses. Elaine and Nate use the word “gentle”; Jeff and Samuel said “judiciously”; Jim said “reluctantly”; and Frank said “benevolently.” These responses are interesting in light of their assessment responses. Samuel’s and Frank’s responses, in particular, are surprising considering that their second highest motivator is “individualistic,” which is about power and influence. The other responses were more consistent and predictable.

Fred provided a direct comment: “They would say that most of the time it wasn’t abused, although if anyone ever crossed him, look out.” That response is much more predictive of somebody with a high individualistic motivator, which he has. Mary had a similar answer: “Probably they would say I’m fairly authoritative. I mean we don’t have a ton of meetings, sitting around brainstorming for a week and cogitating.” This answer interested the researcher, because it is more in alignment with the high individualistic motivator, which Mary does not have.

Heather expressed her desire to achieve consensus rather than to exercise overt power, which is interesting given the very high individualistic score that she has. Paul also conveyed his preference for consensus; however, the way he phrased his answer, it appeared to be his perspective rather than his people’s perspective.

The last two questions in this sequence did not offer major incremental insights or perspectives that were otherwise observed and noted from the previous questions. A brief summary follows for each.

How would your people describe your degree of involvement with their work?

Answers to this question ranged from “hands on” to “hands off” to something in the middle. Mary made an insightful observation: “I think it really depends on the individual people. For some of the people I’m a lot more hands-on . . . this woman who does all of our media who is super talented, I’m very hands off with her.” Calvin also talked about the situational aspect of this, for example, hands-off as it pertains to infrastructure needs and hands-on when it comes to client development and product development. Overall, responses to this question reinforced the responses to other questions, as opposed to providing new insights.

How would your people describe the degree to which they feel that they are an integral part of your business? All of the entrepreneurial leaders felt their people would feel they were an integral part of their businesses. Although this is an impressive level of unanimity, of all of the questions asked, this would be the most difficult to decipher on a self-reported basis from the leader.

The researcher has no doubt that their employees are engaged in these jobs; after all, in small businesses, in order to have great results, you need to have some degree of engagement and high retention. Generally speaking, people do not continue employment in small company environments where “you cannot hide” unless they are challenged, engaged, and treated well. These factors in themselves, however, do not constitute feeling like one is an integral part of the business. This is not to say that the researcher distrusts the answers given by the interviewees; rather, it is her interpretation that validating the answers to this question is somewhat more difficult than for the other questions.

Summary of Finding Number Four

This finding began by discussing the dichotomy between the entrepreneurs' pride in their teams while wishing they didn't have to deal with the more distasteful management issues. The finding then discussed self-reported answers to how the leaders' staffs would describe them in six areas:

- How they communicate and give direction
- How they influence them to get things accomplished
- How they exercise power
- How they communicate vision
- How involved they are with their people's work
- The degree to which their staff feels integral to the company

In general, the responses reflected both positive and negative elements, and in most cases were reflective of their behavioral styles.

Finding Number Five

Generational differences among entrepreneurial leaders are nuanced rather than overt.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the assessment sample had age diversity, with all generations adequately represented. Similarly, the interview participants had generational diversity, with the majority of the people interviewed being Baby Boomers and Generation Xers. The findings reported in this segment reflect answers to generational questions as well as overall observations from the interviews.

Entrepreneurs are driven by the passion of growing successful businesses, making money, and having fun in the process. These were consistent themes across the generations, although there were nuances that emerged during the interviews. One "consistent inconsistency" occurred when some of the entrepreneurial leaders made carefully crafted statements in response to specific generational questions; however,

when speaking about other issues, they expressed opinions with generational overtones that diverged from their answers to the formal questions.

Feeling Connected to a Generation

In general, people didn't identify with being part of a generation; however, the Veteran, Leading Boomer, and Core Boomer cohorts identified more easily with being part of a generational cohort than the Trailing Boomers, Generation X, or Generation Y. Curiously, several respondents who reported that they did not feel a particular generational affinity made comments that music tied them to their generation.

As discussed in detail in Chapter II, generations are formed by shared events and experiences that happen when people come of age. Furthermore, although there are lines that "bracket" the generations, one can expect an overlap particularly when a person is on the "cusp" of a generation. As mentioned in Chapter IV, several people fit this category. If Fred had been born a month earlier, he would have been categorized in the Veteran generation, rather than Leading Boomer. Elaine, born at the end of the Baby Boomer generation (Trailing Boomer), was born a month earlier than the beginning of Generation X. Heather and Nate are early Millennials, and Heather, especially, identifies more with Generation X.

Elaine commented, "I don't resonate with the Baby Boomers much. So I've not really felt like I am part of a generation at all.... I have never paid much attention to all of the generational language, so I don't know [the distinctions]." Luis said, "Although I see generational differences of work styles for sure, I don't think of myself as being part of a generation. I don't think of myself as being at any particular age."

This brings up an important observation, which is that the discussion about generations triggered certain *age*-related responses as opposed to *values*-related responses. This was particularly evident with the Core Boomers, where similar to Luis's answer, others brought up age issues. Rob said, "I chronologically view myself as a Baby

Boomer in motivation and energy, and I don't feel that I'm that old. I feel like I'm still pretty young." Paul echoed this: "I psychologically often think of myself as way younger than [a Baby Boomer], because I, compared to a lot of my peers, do things that they'd never do and that are more like a much younger person would do." On the other hand, Monique, who was the oldest respondent, is very comfortable with her age and experience. "I love it. You know, because I talk about 'back in the days.'"

This distinction between age-driven responses and generational-driven responses is meaningful. Sometimes overlap will exist between age and generation, and other times they will be separate. Either way, it is important to understand especially when the opportunity for stereotyping emerges.

Generational Nuances

Work ethic. The generational differences are nuanced, rather than explicit. For example, the Veteran generation and the older Baby Boomers talked about having a very strong work ethic. As they described the work ethic, there was a sense of pride as well as a feeling that this was part of who they are and part of their generational profile.

The Trailing Boomers and Generation X respondents, on the other hand, did not use the expression "work ethic," but did talk about "working hard." Jeff observed, "I think a lot of the older generation wants respect: where is the work ethic? They want to see a leader who has been around or seems to be tuned into what's going on. A lot of the younger ones [want to know] 'are they hip or not?'"

It is notable that all of the Generation X and Generation Y interviewees recognized that the "older generations" had a different perspective on work ethic than they do. They referenced the fact that Baby Boomers were nearly always willing to sacrifice their personal lives in order to advance professionally, something that they are not as willing to do. Of course, the Baby Boomers agree about the work ethic but bristle at the idea that they sacrifice personally.

Experience. Another nuance relates to the degree of experience of the entrepreneur. Older respondents, who have owned, operated, and sold multiple businesses over the course of their careers, were comfortable in the basic elements of running and growing a business, and the accompanying leadership challenges. Their experience was the factor that gave them a higher level of comfort as entrepreneurial leaders, as opposed to specific generational factors.

Similarly, younger respondents, who were relatively new entrepreneurs, were less confident in their leadership skills, but that appeared to be as a result of experience rather than discomfort with being a leader. One Generation X entrepreneur had the maturity and presence of an older respondent, but at his relatively young age, he has already bought and sold five businesses. It is clear to the researcher that comfort in leadership correlates to experience, whether it is derived from prior entrepreneurial or corporate experience.

Making meaning as part of a generation. Although not everybody felt a conscious connection to being part of a generation, their perspectives consistently reflected aspects of worldview, world events, or popular culture. Jeff (Generation X), for example, felt that “being part of a generation has shaped my worldview on how I think about things. I like to think of myself as pretty progressive and forward-thinking, but I’m also clearly influenced by how and when I was raised, and then what my generation kind of views that certain things as.”

Fred, bridging the Baby Boomer and Veteran generations, felt that being part of a generation meant nothing to him during his life, especially because, as a leading edge Baby Boomer, he has nothing in common with the Trailing Boomers. Frank, a Core Boomer, did not easily express the ability to make meaning around being part of a generation, but certainly had much to say about “the younger generation at work.”

Trailing Boomer Mary observed, “I definitely have expectations that the people I work with are similar to the people I worked with when I was all out of college, which was hard-working, a lot of ingenuity, and they got a lot of leeway to do a lot of things.”

Just as generational perspectives are formed during someone's late teens/early 20s, the concept of work ethic also seems to trace to that time in a person's life. Monique (Veteran) is completely comfortable comparing what she did as a young worker with what her Generation Y employees do today. "You know, they think they are fabulous. When I was a girl, I was doing better than them."

The youngest participants, Heather and Nate, both leading-edge Millennials, do not connect to being part of a generation. Nate said, "I'm not sure if it means anything," while Heather emphatically hates the stigma associated with being a "lazy professional" and, therefore, has no interest in being connected with stereotypes of her generation.

Jim, a Core Boomer, makes meaning about his generational context from the perspective of social and political events in the U.S.:

My professional career started at the beginning of the Reagan administration, and I've seen the continual decline of the middle class all during that period and it's been frightening. I've also watched the decline of education, the decline of the quality of its deeply embedded that we call race and gender equality. Right now, I look at things ... and take responsibility for part of that generation.

This quotation is important generationally, but also from the perspective of his motivators, social/altruistic and traditional. Note that he is clearly concerned about making the world a better place, and it also reflects a strong expectation about a code of living.

Calvin (Generation X) also had a strong perspective on meaning making with his cohort:

I'm an Xer, and we are an odd group. I think that we are odd because of our very small size. We really have to prove our identity and our worth by pushing out there, and making known our opinions in what we are doing, etc., because will be swallowed up by the Boomers and Millennials otherwise. So I try to encourage Gen Xers to really respond and be passionate about the things that are unique about their generation. They are a very transitional generation, and to a certain extent have been somewhat caught in the middle of these two massive generations on either side.

Calvin actually looks at the generation from the perspective of opportunity and has proposed various ideas related to the generational uniqueness. He feels that the size and positioning of his cohort “affects everything. It affects our politics, our national debt, our gouging prices, our culture, everything we have is affected by the shrinking, the fact that we are half the size of the Boomers and a third of the size of the Millennials points to a tremendous numbers problem.”

Values and Beliefs

Some of the entrepreneurial leaders relate to values and beliefs of their cohort from the perspective of individual or personal values, rather than generational values. Elaine, for example, spoke about “many of my values of wanting to do well in the world and provide for my children and show up as a good person ... and enjoy a quality of life ... those are values that are important to me ... but I don’t attribute them to being a Gen X or a Baby Boomer trait.” Similarly, Paul felt class and race to be more defining than age. That said, he made some specific comments that bridged the Baby Boomer and Veteran perspectives:

But given the fact that age is certainly a filter, coming from a generation where we actually thought, at least the White upwardly mobile kids I grew up with, thought we could change the world and understood that things like the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement were really important and that we could contribute to that. I definitely feel I’ve learned a lot from that and have not given up that idealism.... Having ... an older father (44 when I was born), I actually know a lot secondhand about the beginning of the 20th century, and so the ability to understand an arc of 100 years. I think that gives you a certain amount of insight; that creates a certain amount of wisdom younger people may not have.

Jim also connected being a Baby Boomer to parents who grew up during the Depression.

We probably grew up with a pretty consistent expectation that our lives would be easier and better than our parents, and that our children would have better lives than we have. As it turns out, we probably do have better lives

our parents; probably our children will not have better lives than us. We may have squandered opportunity.

Rob talked about generational values from the perspective of going through several economic cycles. “We know when they are our downturns in the economy. There have been booming years, and you’ve learned to take your losses, and I think that’s the common theme among Baby Boomers.”

The topic of work ethic and work/life balance arose when discussing values. The Baby Boomers and Veteran were clear about how committed they have been to making business success a priority. Nearly all of them express concerns over their younger generation employees’ willingness to go the extra mile the way they did.

It is notable that when discussing the work habits of their employees, the Baby Boomers and Veteran often put themselves in the place of their employees and compared what they did at the earlier stage of their careers. For example, Jim has always been a complete self-starter and always figured things out on his own from when he started working. He gets frustrated with employees who need to have everything “laid out for them.” Although he realizes that not everyone is like he is, he (like the other more experienced interviewees) projects on to his employees what he would have or what he would do now.

Leadership Challenges Related to Generation

Most of the discussion on this topic was from the perspective of the leaders communicating with younger employees. In fact, several of the leaders made the immediate connection between their children and people in the workplace. Jeff, Paul, and Frank commented that having children who were in their teens and 20s helped them understand younger employees in the workplace. Others stayed firm with the perspective of connecting to their employees “as people” and not thinking about it generationally.

Fred and Monique, the oldest interviewees, are comfortable with their age and how they communicate with younger people. Monique commented, “I call myself an ‘old

broad,' but I like being around young people because they keep me young in spirit.”

Although Fred wishes ideally that he had leaders on his staff who would interact with the youngest employees, he disclosed that he has an affinity with younger generations.

“Many people who want to do recreational activities with me, such as playing golf, are all people who are 27-30 years younger than me, so I must not be the old [fogey] who can't relate, or that probably wouldn't happen.”

Rob (Core Boomer) makes a conscious effort to connect by understanding language and styles. “I have to be age appropriate, but I do try to stay fairly young at heart and have people comfortable around me at all ages so that they don't view me as a crusty CEO type, but rather likeable.” Mary (Trailing Boomer) takes a pragmatic view: “I try to observe them, and I try not to judge them.” She has one group of employees who are middle-aged and another group who are Millennials, but the two groups work in different areas of the business.

Calvin (Generation X) is passionate about mentoring Millennials and wants to teach them to be entrepreneurial, to understand the business world. “I think they are lost by the hubbub around us that is happening, and I see tremendous potential with this generation. I believe that it's our job to help set the example and mentor them along.”

The topic of hiring arose as a leadership challenge. Luis (Core Boomer) observed that younger people whose résumés look very different from his did at a comparable point in time. “It's very frustrating to look at a résumé of someone who has had five different jobs in the last six years, because it doesn't fit with my worldview of paying your dues to get to where you want to go.”

The interviewees generally agree that people look for different things in their leaders based on generation. That said, some commented that it might be more about life stage, which is age-driven, as opposed to generational. Elaine described it well: “I think it's where you are in your life regardless of your generation.” Luis echoed this: “I would think and hope that they look for things based on their own needs without necessarily an

awareness of generation.... I need to be sure we're providing what they need, whether it's because of generation or personality or experience or whatever combination of things that might be."

Technology

The subject of technology arose as a generational challenge in several discussions. Several Generation X employees viewed technology across the generations by saying that Veterans are enthusiastic, but baffled; Baby Boomers are comfortable with technology; Gen X is very comfortable using it; and Millennials are obsessed with it.

Luis discussed generational issues around technology from a consultant's perspective. Using the iPad as an example, "in my mind, it's not so much a piece of technology as what it represents and how it's used differently by younger people and older people ... what does this represent from a work style and lifestyle standpoint?"

Monique talked about the younger generations' obsession with technology, whether it is keeping your phone on the table ready to take a call when you're out to dinner or texting instead of meeting face-to-face. She expressed her own basic challenges with handling email and attachments, for example.

Technology is a generational challenge in many respects because it changes so frequently. Nearly everyone agreed that Millennials are certainly comfortable being early adopters, even if the technology doesn't have an expected long-term lifespan. Other generations adopt new technologies based on their need for using technology in their businesses, their comfort level, and their self-directed ability to adopt new technology. It was also clear that older interviewees with children may be driven into new technologies because of their children and grandchildren.

A key leadership challenge related to this is understanding when and where to use different communication technologies. When is it appropriate, for example, to text rather than talk or to email rather than phone? These issues are generationally relevant because

the younger generations are more likely to automatically adopt newer form of communication and assume that the older generations are immediately in sync. As with any communication choice, leaders need to be clear about preferred forms of communication and make sure that everyone is aligned with these preferences.

Summary of Finding Number Five

This finding covered many aspects of generational nuances. The finding began by discussing whether people identified with being part of a generation, and this was followed by some specific generational nuances, such as perceptions of work ethic and experience. Next, the finding discussed how the entrepreneurial leaders make meaning through generational identity. After this, the discussion turned to values and beliefs, leadership challenges, and ended with technology.

To summarize, although generational distinctions are more nuanced than overt, they do exist. The researcher concludes that the strength of entrepreneurship overshadowed the “weight” of the generational issues that arose. The 14 interviewees have a consistent entrepreneurial leadership profile, which may diminish the degree to which generational perspectives enter the conversation.

Summary of Chapter VI

This chapter discussed the five key findings that emerged from this research.

(1) The assessment results produced an entrepreneurial profile of behaviors, motivators, and professional skills. (2) The interviewees are passionate about being entrepreneurs, regardless of their professions of origin. (3) The interviewees self-identify more as entrepreneurs than as leaders; however, they demonstrate high levels of leadership acumen. (4) The leaders self-reported perceptions of how their staff view their leadership

style, revealing both strengths and weaknesses. (5) Generational differences among entrepreneurial leaders are nuanced rather than overt.

As mentioned in the beginning, the depth of responses from the interviewees added great depth and texture and expanded meaningfully on the assessment results. In each of the findings, the respondents' assessment responses were nearly always substantiated, resulting in a much more vivid picture than assessment descriptors alone. For example, the responses reinforced the individual assessment responses in terms of behaviors, motivators, and competencies. Most of the entrepreneurial leaders make more meaning from being entrepreneurs than leaders, but their leadership acumen is strong in spite of this. They expressed candor when speaking about what they thought their people would say about them. They are self-aware and seem to have a fairly good assessment of their strengths and weaknesses as leaders. Finally, generational differences exist, but they are overshadowed to some extent by the power of their entrepreneurial perspectives.

We now turn to Chapter VII, where the findings will be analyzed and interpreted.

Chapter VII

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

*“All meanings, we know, depend on the key of interpretation.”
- George Eliot*

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify implications for entrepreneurial leadership by better understanding leadership characteristics of entrepreneurs from different generations. The leadership lens of entrepreneurial leadership informed the study, which explored how, if at all, leadership characteristics differ with respect to generational bias. Through a mixed methods study comprised of qualitative interviews and responses to an assessment measuring behaviors, motivators, and competencies, the study identified those factors that distinguish the entrepreneurial leaders' styles.

To review, 76 people completed the assessment, which created a leadership profile comprised of behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies. Fourteen people were then selected for interviews in which the researcher learned more about them as entrepreneurial leaders and expanded upon their experiences as entrepreneurs, as leaders, and substantiated what had been identified in their individual assessments.

The literature reviewed was directed by the central research question: *In what ways, if at all, do entrepreneurs exhibit a leadership profile based on their generation?*

The questions derived from this central research question were:

- In what ways do the entrepreneurs' leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?

- In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation?
- How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

These research questions were addressed through the five findings, as described in Chapter VI, and through the selected literature.

The combination of the assessment and the interviews revealed more depth in the findings than would have occurred by using only one method. The findings reflected that interview commentary enhanced and added dimensions to the results of the assessment. This was particularly important in the cases where anomalies surfaced in the assessment, as the variances were explained and understood more clearly as a results of the industries.

In Chapter V, the researcher presented an entrepreneurial leadership profile based on the results of the assessment taken by the participant sample. Through interviews with 14 entrepreneurs, the researcher identified and substantiated the entrepreneurs' values and beliefs, which are reflected in their leadership profile. A discussion of the entrepreneurial leaders' perceptions of how they interact with their employees resulted in an understanding of the way they approach employee development. Finally, the interviews also revealed information on the entrepreneurial leaders' self-reporting perspectives on how they influence their teams. From a generational perspective, the differences that were uncovered in the interviews reflected nuanced differences, rather than overt differences based on generations.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze and interpret these findings in the context of the research questions and the literature. The chapter will begin with a recap of the entrepreneurial leadership profile that was revealed in Chapter V and will analyze this profile generationally and in the context of other data provided by the assessment originator, Target Training International, Ltd.

Following this analysis, the research questions will be evaluated and analyzed, with the entrepreneurial leadership profile providing a frame for the analysis. Examining each research question will integrate the findings and tie back to the literature. It will reinforce what is definitively known from the study, what we think we know from the study, and identify what is unknown and undetermined from the study.

The Entrepreneurial Leadership Profile

The assessment of the 76 entrepreneurs in this study sample resulted in an entrepreneurial leadership profile as follows:

- *Behaviors*: High influencing, high dominance
- *Motivators*: High utilitarian, high individualistic
- *Professional competencies*: Leadership, goal orientation, employee development, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication.

Entrepreneurial Traits

It was demonstrated in the findings that the interviewees maximize efficiency and practicality in their drive for economic gain. Sixty-eight percent of the assessment respondents (and 72% of the interviewees) had utilitarian as their primary motivator. Spranger (1928), whose work provided the source of the Workplace Motivators[®] component of the assessment used in this research, described the utilitarian motivator.¹

The economic man is, in general, he who in all the relations of life prefers utility to all other values. He sees everything as a means for self-preservation, an aid in the natural struggle for existence and a possibility to render life pleasant. He economizes goods and forces, time and space in order to gain the maximum of useful effect for himself. As moderns we might call this the 'practical type,' partly because ... the entire technical

¹Note that in the original text, "utilitarian" was referred to as "economic."

field is included in the economic point of view. But the value of practical activity lies not in the depths of a value determining disposition but in the wholly external useful result. (pp. 132-133)

The respondents who scored high on utilitarian seek a return on investment of time, talent, and resources. This is consistent with the need for achievement as described in Cunningham and Lischeron's (1991) review of six entrepreneurial schools of thought. The school that resonates closest to the assessment is the psychological characteristics school, which indicates that entrepreneurs are driven by unique attitudes, beliefs, and values. These include personal values (such as honesty and ethical behavior), risk-taking propensity, and the need for achievement (p. 48).

The three dimensions of the assessment used in this study included behaviors, motivators (attitudes), and professional competencies or skills. These dimensions are consistent with a discussion of competency theory by Mitchelmore and Rowley (2010), who wrote, "Competency theory is based on studying successful leaders, breaking down their behaviours, attitudes and skills into measurable aspects, and looking for ways of bringing them together in order to create individuals who demonstrate superior performance" (p. 97).

This high dominance (competitiveness) behavioral factor and the high utilitarian motivator that is characteristic of the entrepreneurs in the current study are consistent with Begley and Boyd's (1987) reference to Type A behavior, which is one of their five psychological traits that occur commonly among entrepreneurs. They describe Type A people to be "competitive, restless strivers who constantly struggle against the limits of time" (p. 79).

The behavioral factors of high dominance (competitiveness) and low compliance (rule breaker) are consistent with Sexton and Bowman's (1987) identification of dominance, independence, and low need for conformity and support (p. 131). The behavioral factors of low steadiness (fast-paced) and low compliance (rule breaker) correspond to their factor of tolerance for ambiguity. The utilitarian motivator is

consistent with their identification of the need for achievement and their moderate risk-taking propensity. Finally, the individualistic motivator corresponds to their factor of the need to be in control.

Entrepreneurial trait literature also links to the entrepreneurial leadership profile. The utilitarian, individualistic, and theoretical motivators from the assessment are in line with what Bhattacharyya (2006) refers to as different individual motivation, including “money, power, curiosity or a great desire for fame and recognition” (p. 108).

Research from Target Training International, Ltd. (TTI). In addition to the literature, it is instructive to compare the results of this study’s entrepreneurial profile to data provided by TTI. Two sources of data will be introduced. The first is a study of serial entrepreneurs, and the second is the overall TTI database. A brief description of each source follows.

Serial entrepreneurs. A study on serial entrepreneurs (Bonnstetter et al., 2010) assessed entrepreneurs using the TTI TriMetrix[®] DNA, the same instrument used in this research, measuring behavior, motivators, and professional competencies. This study was conducted as business research, and although general results were reported in the aforementioned article, the actual data have not been published. One of the key criteria for inclusion in this study was that the entrepreneurs had a demonstrated track record of owning/operating more than one entrepreneurial business.

This research showed that the primary behaviors were high dominance and high influencing, similar to this study's results, although reversed in proportion. The dominant motivator was utilitarian, with 62% of the participants selecting it as their #1 motivator, slightly lower than the 68% of the current study. Finally, the top competencies were leadership, goal orientation, presenting, employee development/coaching, interpersonal skills, persuasion, and personal effectiveness, representing an overlap of six out of the seven top competencies with the current study.

It is worth noting that TTI's research indicates that if they only used behaviors to predict serial entrepreneurs, they would be correct 60% of the time. If they used only motivators, they would be correct 59% of the time. If they used both behavior and motivators, the accuracy went to over 80%. If they added the professional competencies, the success rate went to 92% (TTI Technical Report, 2013).

TTI database. The TTI database includes assessments from adults who are employed in professional workplace settings and took the assessment either in the context of applying for jobs or for professional development. It is not appropriate to compare the results of this study sample with this database for several reasons. First, the populations are entirely different. The population for the current study is entrepreneurs who were invited to participate as opposed to thousands of people who come from various professional backgrounds. Second, we do not have demographic information, such as age, professional position/title, etc., to use as a means of comparison.

That said, the value of including the means from the TTI database is to show how the unique population of this study compares as a subset of the larger entity. Later in this chapter, the means from the TTI data will be included in the competency graphs. These inclusions will not be analyzed; rather, they are included simply as data points.

It is important to point out that other categories of superior performers will have characteristics similar to those of entrepreneurial leaders. High-performing salespeople, for example, will reveal a similar profile. They are essentially self-employed in that they are commission-driven and, as such, would possess similar characteristics to the entrepreneurs in this study.

Superior performers in all positions will gravitate to the profile that reflects the high standards of their professions. A high-performing architect or designer will have a different standard from the one discussed in this study, as it integrates what constitutes top talent in those industries.

The operative expression is “high-performing.” Average and below average performers, whether entrepreneurs, sales professionals, corporate managers, or non-profit directors, are not going to exhibit the profile of the superior performing individual.

To summarize this section, the study sample yielded an entrepreneurial profile comprised of three dimensions. The behavioral factors are high influencing and high dominance. The motivators are high utilitarian and high individualistic. The top seven competencies are leadership, goal orientation, employee development, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication. A comparison of this study sample with the serial entrepreneur study indicates that the two studies share essentially the same characteristics.

Generational Distinctions

As described in Chapter VI, the generational differences discovered in this research were more nuanced than overt. Beginning with the entrepreneurial leadership profile, we know that, overall, the generational differences in the assessment results were subtle. It is meaningful that a relatively consistent entrepreneurial leadership profile overrode many of the generational aspects. Simply put, the entrepreneurial elements trumped the generational ones.

That said, specific differences were observed in the three components of the assessment, the behaviors, motivators and professional competencies. As this is an exploratory study, the results noted below are descriptive rather than projections.

Behaviors

The behavioral inconsistency occurred with the Generation Y respondents. In contrast with the other generations that led with “high influencing” followed by “high dominance,” the Gen Y population led with “high dominance” followed by “high

influencing.” Although this is not a radical difference in results, theoretically, it suggests that Gen Y may have a more direct or aggressive communication style than the other generations.

We know from the literature that Millennials seek direct and immediate feedback (Chou, 2012) and also like to provide immediate feedback. Although the style with which this happens may vary based on the individual, it is possible that “direct and immediate” may stylistically match the descriptors of “direct and very competitive.”

Table 7.1. Generational Comparison of Primary Behavior

	Overall	Veteran	Leading Boomer	Core Boomer	Trailing Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y
Dominance	23	2	2	6	2	7	4
Influencing	38	4	3	9	8	11	2
Steadiness	8	0	1	0	2	2	2
Compliance	7	3	1	2	1	1	0
Total	76	9	7	17	13	21	8

Table 7.1 details the behavioral breakdown by generation. Starting with the entire study sample, 78% of the respondents had high dominance or high influencing as their primary behaviors. High influencing captured more results than high dominance, and this was consistent across the generations (with the exception of the aforementioned Gen X anomaly).

Motivators

Generationally, the results reflect uniformity in the utilitarian drive as the primary motivator. The percentage of utilitarian as the number one occurrence ranges from 60% in the Veteran generation to as high as 78% in the Leading Boomer segment. A difference occurs when looking at social, the second highest motivator. Like the utilitarian, each generational segment has people who selected social as their number one

motivator; however, the strongest proportion occurred with Core Boomers, which will be discussed shortly. Table 7.2 compares the overall results for the number one motivator to the generational breakdown.

Table 7.2. Generational Comparison of Number One Motivator

	Overall	Veteran	Leading Boomer	Core Boomer	Trailing Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y
Theoretical	5	1	0	0	1	3	0
Utilitarian	52	6	7	10	9	15	5
Aesthetic	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
Social	12	1	1	4	2	2	2
Individualistic	3	1	0	0	1	1	0
Traditional	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Total	76	10	9	15	13	21	8
% UTL as number one	68.4%	60%	77.7%	66.7%	69.2%	71.4%	62.5%
% SOC as number one	15.8%	10%	11.1%	26.7%	15.4%	9.5%	25%
% THE as number one	12.6%	10%	0%	0%	7.7%	14.3%	0%

The number two motivator overall is individualistic, indicating the respondents' drive to control their lives and/or the lives of others. This is consistent, given that entrepreneurs have founded, grown, and sold their businesses. The generational breakdown follows in Table 7.3. It is notable that the individualistic drive represents a greater proportion in the Veteran and Leading Boomer segments at 50% and 55%, respectively, dropping to 33.3% in the Core Boomer segment, and in the 20% range for Trailing Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y. Although this may be anecdotal, this may reflect a shift from a command and control leadership style to a more collaborative style in the younger generations.

Table 7.3. Generational Comparison of Number Two Motivator

	Overall	Veteran	Leading Boomer	Core Boomer	Trailing Boomer	Gen X	Gen Y
Theoretical	20	1	3	3	2	8	3
Utilitarian	9	0	1	1	4	1	2
Aesthetic	8	1	2	2	1	4	0
Social	10	1	2	2	3	2	1
Individualistic	25	5	5	5	3	5	2
Traditional	4	1	2	2	0	1	0
Total	76	10	9	15	13	21	8
% IND as number two	32.9%	50%	55%	33.3%	23.1%	23.8%	25%
% THE as number two	26.3%	10%	33.3%	20%	15.4%	38.1%	37.5%
% SOC as number two	13.2%	10%	22.2%	13.3%	23.1%	9.5%	12.5%

In Chapter II, it was stated that the mere existence of the Baby Boomer generation brought the concept of generations into the mainstream. Seventy-eight million Baby Boomers were born between 1946 and 1964, representing the largest population growth during any comparable time period. They became politically active; they were defined by major social changes, such as the civil rights and women's rights movements; and that optimism and idealism spilled into their character.

Although the utilitarian driver dominates as the primary motivator across all generations, the generational breakdown reveals that the social/altruistic motivator was selected with mentionable frequency by Baby Boomers. Sixteen of the 37 Baby Boomers selected this motivator as their first, second, or third choice, as seen in the Motivators Wheel in Figure 7.1.

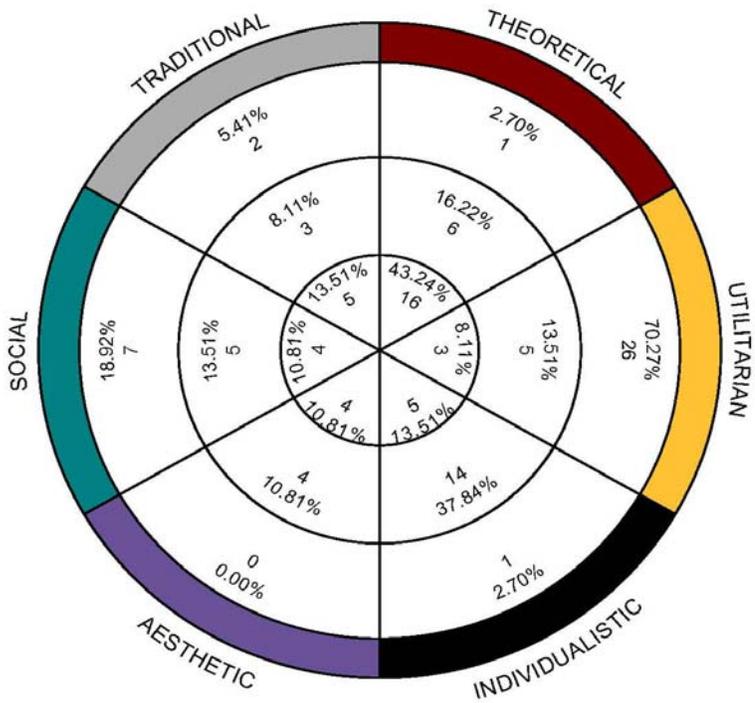
Figure 7.1. Baby Boomer Motivators



MOTIVATORS WHEEL™

All Baby Boomer Statistical Report

N=37



Outside ring = #1 attitude
Middle ring = #2 attitude
Inside ring = #3 attitude

Given the literature, then, we may remark that some of the Baby Boomer entrepreneurs in this research, especially at their current stage of chronological midlife, are motivated by altruism and desire to be involved in businesses that are an extension of

that driver. Of course, this does not mean that Baby Boomers have an “exclusive” on altruistic motivation or that Baby Boomers as a group trend toward the altruistic motivator. Rather, it is a way to explain the higher percentage of responses to this motivator. This is a reflection of the idealistic and optimistic characteristics that define the Baby Boomer generation (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Smith & Clurman, 1997; Zemke et al., 2000).

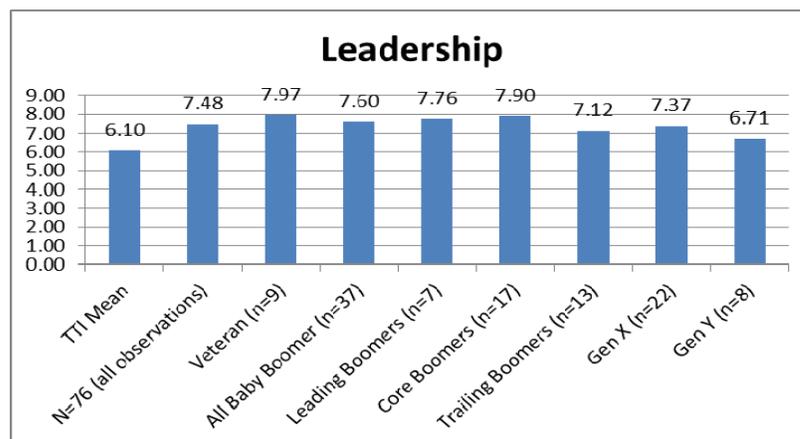
At least in the case of the entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for this research who have the high social driver, all but one of these individuals (Jim) evolved into an others-oriented focus after having led more conventional businesses. Jim, it will be recalled, has been involved in altruistically oriented businesses throughout his career.

It can be surmised that having had other successful business endeavors, these mid-life entrepreneurs are more inclined to be mentors, to serve others in their business pursuits, and to focus on improving society, thereby fulfilling their social driver. As observable in the Motivators Wheel, utilitarian was still by far the strongest driver for this population.

Competencies

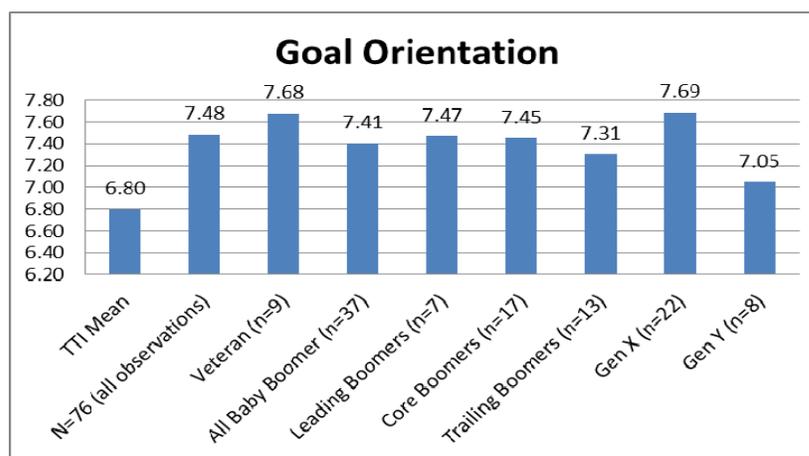
The professional competencies reflect some subtle generational differences as well. Each of the top competencies from this study (leadership, goal orientation, employee development, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication) reflected generational differences. These distinctions are reflected in Figures 7.2 through 7.8.

Figure 7.2. Generational Comparison of Means for “Leadership”



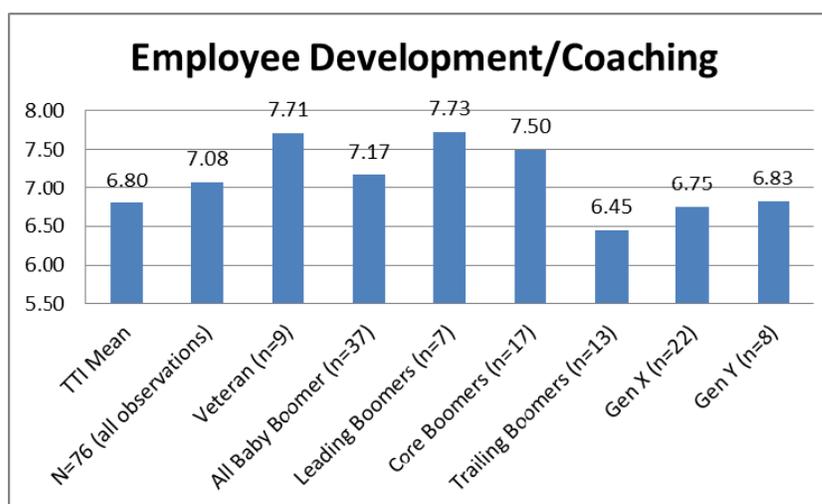
As seen from the Figure 7.2, the mean from this study is higher than the TTI mean, indicating that the respondents have a higher capacity for leadership than the professional population as a whole. In viewing the generational breakdown, the Veteran, Leading Baby Boomer, and Core Baby Boomer respondents are above the mean, while the Trailing Baby Boomers, Generation X, and General Y are below the mean. This may be directly related to age rather than generation *per se*, as it would be predictable that older respondents have more experience as leaders.

Figure 7.3. Generational Comparison of Means for “Goal Orientation”



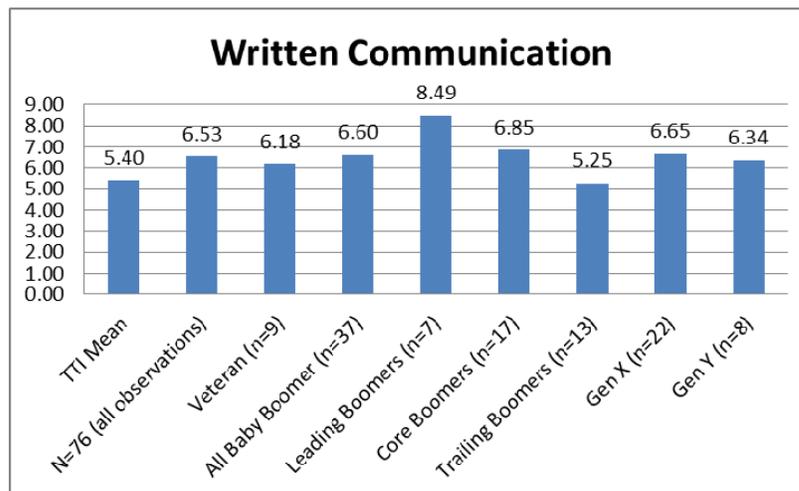
The results of goal orientation are intriguing. The Veteran results are above the sample mean, with Leading Baby Boomers and Core Baby Boomers hovering around the sample mean. The trailing Baby Boomers and Generation Y dip below the sample mean, and Generation X essentially ties with the Veterans.

Figure 7.4. Generational Comparison of Means for “Employee Development/Coaching”



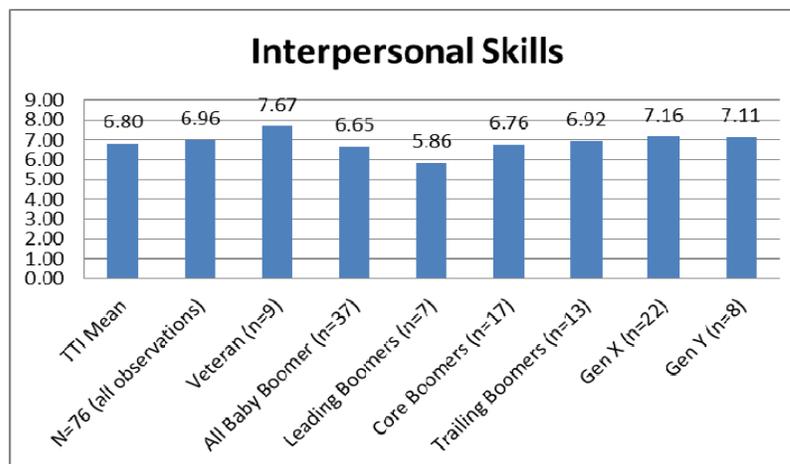
The results for this competency are similar to the leadership competency results: Veterans, Leading Baby Boomers, and Core Baby Boomers score higher than the sample mean, while Trailing Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y fall below the sample mean. Without more substantiation, it is difficult to generalize; however, the lower scores in the younger generations may simply reflect less experience in employee development. Alternatively, it could mean that the younger generations have less interest in employee development.

Figure 7.5. Generational Comparison of Means for “Written Communication”



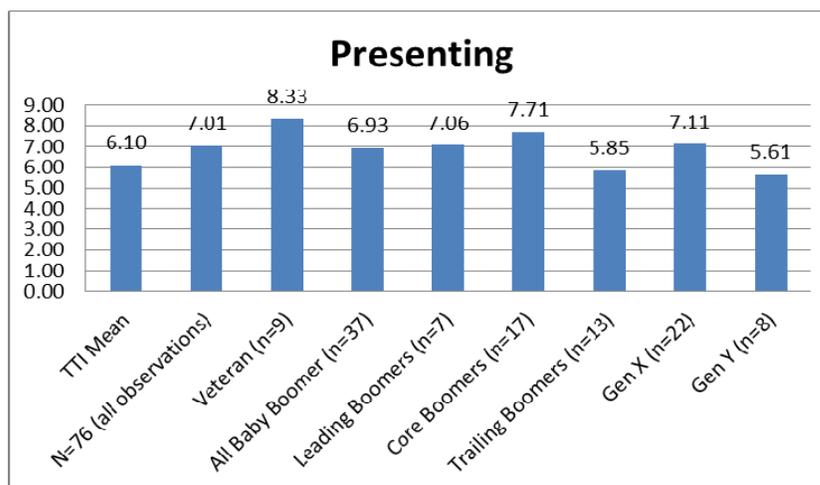
The written communication competency is interesting for several reasons. First, the fact that it ranks so high in the sample is curious. It is difficult to pinpoint why this is the case, unless it reflects the fact that today many entrepreneurs write more articles, blog posts, and other marketing-related activity. Second, the Leading Baby Boomers have the highest rank by far, and it is unknown why this occurs.

Figure 7.6. Generational Comparison of Means for “Interpersonal Skills”



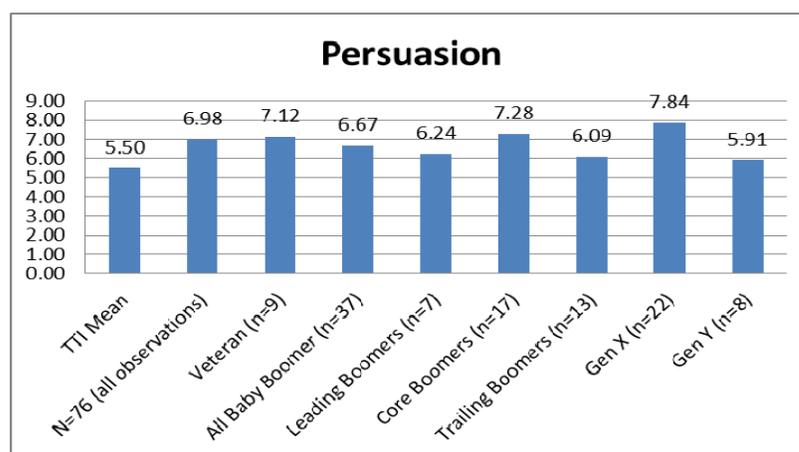
The results of interpersonal skills are interesting in that the Veterans, Generation X, and Generation Y exceed all three segments of the Baby Boomers.

Figure 7.7. Generational Comparison of Means for “Presenting”



In this case, the Veterans exceed each of the other segments in their score for presenting, while Trailing Baby Boomers and Generation Y have meaningfully lower scores.

Figure 7.8. Generational Comparison of Means for “Persuasion”



In this last competency, persuasion, Generation X comes in the highest by a meaningful margin, followed by the Core Baby Boomers.

Discussion

The leadership, employee development, and presenting competencies reveal that the Veterans, Leading Baby Boomers, and Core Baby Boomers have higher results than the Trailing Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. It is possible that this is age- and experience-related, rather than generational from a values perspective. As discussed in Finding #5, issues of age and experience may be more reflective of differences among these entrepreneurial leaders rather than generational issues.

How do we account for some of these “spikes” in the Generation X responses? Recall that Generation X is achievement-driven and independent (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2007). They are direct and curious, and as entrepreneurial leaders in this study, their results may reflect more pronounced aspects of these characteristics.

Papenhausen (2006) comments that Generation X came of age in a more fragmented society (p. 164), which may have an impact on their self-direction and determination.

Meredith et al. (2002) comment that as a cohort, members of Generation X are poised to be entrepreneurs, especially because of their critical eye. “The Gen-X quality that is sometimes labeled as negative cynicism can be very positive and helpful if it’s harnessed to the cause of innovation.... Those of this cohort who wish to are likely to play entrepreneur roles effectively, and are capable of bringing vision and imagination to the role” (pp. 224-225).

This is worthy of further study, particularly as members of Generation X transition into more leadership roles.

Summary of Profile Analysis

To summarize this section, the predominant behaviors are high influencing and high dominance, which are consistent across the generations, except for Generation Y, where dominance precedes influencing. The primary motivator across the generations is high utilitarian, reflecting a desire for practicality, money, and efficiency. The second highest motivator is individualistic, reflecting a desire to control one’s own life and/or the

lives of others. The combination of utilitarian/individualistic reflects a typical leader profile, so the entrepreneurial leaders who participated in the assessment portray leadership motivators consistent with leaders in other disciplines.

The top competencies show some distinctions when analyzed generationally. The interesting curiosity in the competency analysis is the relatively high scores for Generation X in the factors of goal achievement and persuasion. These results are consistent with the literature, and they represent an area that merits further study.

Finally, as mentioned earlier in this discussion, profiles of superior performers will have similarities based on the standards for high performance in the particular position, company, and industry.

Analysis of the Research Questions

As the research questions are reviewed in the context of the literature, recall that Leonard (2003) referred to contemporary approaches to leadership development that focus on the individual leader, not only the organization. This is particularly applicable for a study on entrepreneurial leaders, since the founder/owner's personality is imprinted on the organization.

Many people entering management today owe their success and promotion to individual rather than team or organizational achievement. The lack of interpersonal and leadership skills has not been a barrier for them. In fact, their ability to focus their energies on the technical side of the job, ignoring the interpersonal, has been an advantage.... For many high-achieving individual contributors, the primary motivation to take on a leadership role is the reality that they cannot achieve their personal vision or mission—whether it be achieving a major technological breakthrough or running their own company—by themselves. (p. 10)

All of the entrepreneurs interviewed for this research achieve results in this fashion. They have a strong personal vision or mission, and they accomplish it by rallying the forces of

their people. The next sections further delve into the research questions from the perspective of the literature.

In what ways do the entrepreneurs' leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?

We know from the assessment and subsequent interviews that their profiles do reflect their values and beliefs. The Workplace Motivators[®] component of the assessment measures the relative ranking of six attitudes, or drivers of behavior. As detailed in Chapters V and VI, the predominant motivator is “utilitarian,” which reflects a drive to receive a return on investment of time, talent, and resources. As reviewed earlier, this is consistent with the Bonnstetter serial entrepreneurs study (2010).

From the discussion of the findings, we received qualitative insights about the entrepreneurial leaders' values and beliefs during the discussion about their businesses, in particular, how they got started. The interviewees expressed their most passionate comments when they discussed their businesses, their visions for growth, and how they evolved to their current positions. They shared their *stories of origin*, which anchor their professional identity to entrepreneurship.

The literature on narratives and organizational discourse comes into focus here. “Discursive pragmatism,” discussed by Alvesson and Kärreman (2000), goes beyond text and conversations and “involves working toward interpretations beyond this specific level.” Specifically, it “acknowledges the multiplicity of possible meaning, the complexities of social practices, and that any attempt to complete or exhaustive understanding of the phenomena under investigation is unsustainable” (p. 147).

Although the stories shared by the interviewees about their entrepreneurial journey are individually unique, universally they are understandable in terms of the quest to create, develop, and build independent businesses. Some of the interviewees, such as Monique and Fred, are very clear on their stories and the paths that they took, while others, such as Nate and Heather, are less clear. It may be coincidental, but worth noting,

that these are two oldest and two youngest interviewees, respectively. We don't know the degree to which age and identity factor into one's self-reported "story of origin" and as such, how that factor drives the leader to move the business forward.

Heather repeatedly raised how her vision is tied to furthering the legacy of the founders of her organization and how she sees part of her role as perpetuating this. As described by Barrett et al. (1995), "The very act of communicating is the process through which we constitute experience. Habituating this meaning over time provides the background of common experience that gives organizational members a context for organizing their behavior" (p. 353). When entrepreneurial leaders share their stories, it adds to the team's ability to understand the context and perspective of the entrepreneurial leader. Perhaps because Heather is now the steward of that legacy, she has such strong affinity to its accomplishment.

Although the interviewees for this research did not speak in terms of proactively soliciting their team members to share vision development, they did feel that it was important to share their visions so that their people had a clear understanding of what was ahead. As mentioned in the findings, some of the interviewees accomplished this more effectively than others. Clarity of vision is central to the entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for this research, and vision is a reflection of values. Carland and Carland (2012) discuss shared leadership in entrepreneurial ventures in the context of having "members of the entrepreneurial team to share the vision development" (p. 76). What we don't know is the degree to which shared vision development affects the growth and development of a firm, and how it affects the way in which leaders interact with their people.

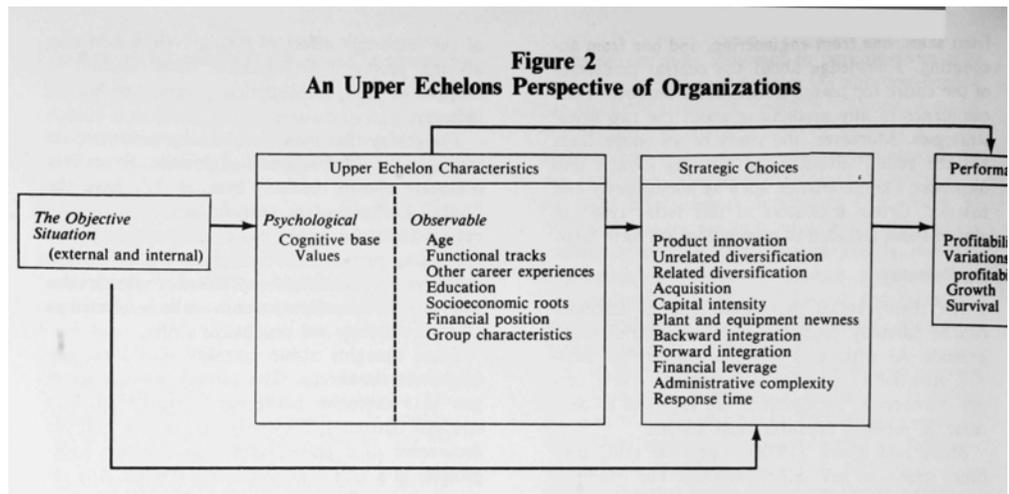
Some of the interviewees self-reported that they could improve in how they communicate vision to their people. They may benefit by focusing more on "why" rather than "how." Darling and Beebe (2007) indicate that solidifying the vision becomes the central focus for an entrepreneurial organization. They specify the importance of "placing

communication-based *knowing-why* ahead of *knowing-how*” (p. 82). Knowing why pertains to vision and values. If the leader understands and effectively communicates the “why,” it provides a compass to the organization. “How” is more pragmatic, and follows comprehending “why.”

The entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for this research had high levels of self-knowledge, personal beliefs, and values. McCleary et al. (2006) discuss the personal preferences that are “intrinsic and refer to a person’s knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values [and] perceptions” (p. 563). They identify that entrepreneurs’ motivation can be “socially relevant, politically correct, client-centered, or profit seeking” (p. 563). These descriptors, in particular “socially relevant” and “profit seeking,” align with the social/altruistic and utilitarian motivators from the assessment in this research.

The interviewees’ stories of origin provided insight about their personal experiences and a foundational understanding of their frame of reference. In their discussion on upper echelon theory, Hambrick and Mason (1984) comment that “executives carry as part of their cognitive and emotional gifts the experiences they have had during their careers” (p. 200). The more diverse the career, the more that contributes to the person’s ability to address strategic challenges and initiatives. Age, education, socio-economic factors, and values are upper echelon characteristics, as illustrated in Figure 7.9. Although the authors’ focus was corporate executives, the theory applies to entrepreneurial leaders.

Figure 7.9. Hambrick and Mason's Depiction of Upper Echelon Theory



From Hambrick and Mason, 1984, p. 198.

In each of the interviews in this study, the clarity of the entrepreneurial leader's vision and values was articulated as the guiding force for the direction of the business. An important take away from Hambrick and Mason is that leaders' vision and values influence their organizations, and this supports entrepreneurial leadership, where the entrepreneur's vision and values drive the business.

Although they had entrepreneurial predispositions, two of the Generation X interviewees candidly commented about becoming entrepreneurs for lifestyle reasons. One was related to starting her family, and another was because of the lack of meaningful jobs available. From a generational perspective, Seaton and Boyd (2007) discuss how Generations X and Y will continue to evolve away from the Baby Boomer way of doing things. They comment that Generation X "grew up seeing their parents being more focused on work and less family oriented than generations in recent history. These individuals saw a very strong change in the way that people perceived work, entertainment, ethical behavior, war, racial diversity, and the government, just to name a few" (p. 71).

Although the Veteran and Baby Boomer interviewees were somewhat illusive in their comments about Generation Y, they did infer that their younger employees were not as willing to sacrifice their lifestyles as they had been when they were at comparable stages of their careers. Across the discussion, the interviewees alluded to a different type of work ethic with the Millennials. Generation Y, Seaton and Boyd (2007) describe, has experienced public demonstrations of unethical behavior (e.g., President Clinton's impeachment, Enron), violent video games and TV programming, and sexually explicit content. They expect instant gratification, as they are products of the internet and related technologies. "Generation X and Y have developed a lower value on work, are less willing to sacrifice personal life styles and career for the organization, and hold less loyalty to the firm" (p. 71).

The topic of work ethic differed across generations, and even Generation X and Y interviewees felt that the Veterans and Baby Boomers place a higher emphasis on work ethic than they do. The researcher observed language distinctions: Veterans and Baby Boomers referred to themselves as having a strong work ethic, where Generation X and Y referred to "working hard." Seaton and Boyd (2007) discuss entrepreneurial differences based on generation. They attribute the entrepreneurial innovation of Baby Boomers for growing the U.S. economy. "With their strong work ethic, they conceptualized and brought to fruition many new business ideas and concepts that made this country's business environment the envy of all who saw it" (p. 72). They go on to say that Generations X and Y will continue the entrepreneurial drive by being catalyzed by technological innovation. They distinguish among the generations as follows:

Most of the entrepreneurs of the Baby Boom generation started their careers working for a company. After acquiring knowledge and experience, their confidence in their own ideas and their abilities to contribute something meaningful by starting their own company increased. They then moved into their own companies in order to pursue their entrepreneurial ideas.... The newer generations are more confident in themselves and much quicker in their careers. (p. 73)

They continue describing that Generation X and Y believe they can do anything they put their mind to and expect instant gratification in the process. “The newer generation is also more likely than their generational predecessors to become dissatisfied and uninterested in the present idea if a newer seemingly more interesting or meaningful idea arises (Eisner 2005)” (Seaton & Boyd, 2007, p. 73).

The researcher agrees with these impressions based on the interviews. Calvin, for example, has focused on building and selling technology-based businesses and is already a serial entrepreneur before the age of 40. Nate is still in his first substantive entrepreneurial venture; however, the direction of the business has changed several times in the three years that he has been in business. Heather is eager to try new directions within her company, as long as they are consistent with the overall vision and mission of the business.

With the exception of Fred, Paul, and Luis, the interviewees did not make reference to public figures as models of leadership preference. Although this was the case, the descriptions of generational leadership preferences used in Arsenault’s (2004) study are consistent with the language the interviewees used when describing their preferred leadership styles.

The differences in favorite leaders by generations fit each generation’s preferred leadership style. Veterans’ favorite leaders such as Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower or Winston Churchill fit their preferred directive style because they were leaders of large organizations and respect this type of authority. Social movement leaders such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King certainly encapsulate Baby Boomers’ preferred leadership style of being against hierarchies and respecting a passionate leader. Leaders such as Bill Gates and Tiger Woods are examples of leaders who exemplify Xers and Nexters’ preferred leadership qualities of being competent and change agents. (p. 136)

We don’t know the degree to which public figures influence entrepreneurs. One challenge is that when a public figure “falls from grace,” such as President Clinton or Tiger Woods, the role model immediately disintegrates.

The entrepreneurial leaders interviewed in the study had clarity about their values, personal beliefs, and overall, what they stand for. Darling et al. (2007) emphasize the importance of values for entrepreneurial leaders. They discuss “value programming,” which refers to “the extent to which forces outside the individual shape and mold leadership values. An important factor to keep in mind is the fact that although a person’s values can change throughout one’s life, these values are relatively firmly established relatively early in life” (p. 14). Through their research, they identify that “there is a paradigm of four basic values that comprise the keys to strategic success and achievement of organizational excellent – joy, hope, charity and peace” (p. 14).

These words are not ones that arose specifically during the researcher’s interviews, but they are consistent with the meaning described in many of the interviewees’ comments. The authors elaborate their meaning behind these four values:

Joy is defined as the reflection, from within a person, of a spirit of genuine friendliness, cheerfulness and positiveness. Hope is defined as the basic belief that one can set goals, determine how to achieve them, and generate the appropriate motivation to accomplish them. Charity is defined as one’s reflection to other living things of a spirit of patience, kindness, appreciation, acceptance and support. Peace is defined as a general freedom from unnecessary self-imposed conflict, as well as a sense of personal worth, well-being and security. (Darling et al., 2007, p. 15)

Taking these in turn, the researcher observed “joy” from more than half of the interviewees. It was reflected by a positive and optimistic attitude, and by those who expressed the importance of having fun in their businesses. “Hope” is central to all of the interviewees, who have demonstrated their ability to set and achieve goals. “Charity” was expressed by more than half as well. This was expressed through the passion for their people as well as, using Calvin as an example, the commitment to mentoring the next generation. “Peace” is more intangible, and the researcher’s observations, while completely subjective, would agree that most of the interviewees reflected personal worth and well-being.

Although this analysis from Darling et al. (2007) provides a different and unique way of describing values for entrepreneurial leaders, the researcher believes that the use of language such as joy, hope, charity and peace would not be comfortable for many entrepreneurs who are focused on growing their businesses and making money. Such language may arise in more intimate moments when these leaders take time to reflect and critically think about their businesses. The researcher does not feel this is typical, certainly of the entrepreneurial leaders in this study.

To summarize this section, the literature emphasizes the importance of values and beliefs, even though the discussions come from different perspectives. To review, the research question under consideration has been: *In what ways do the entrepreneurs' leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?* It has been expressed in the findings and through the literature that the profiles do reflect their values and beliefs. The generational aspect, however, is open to question. As previously mentioned, entrepreneurial traits trump generational values. The one exception to this is the discussion about the social/altruistic motivator of the Core Baby Boomers. This is worthy of further research for additional evaluation.

In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation?

As described in the findings, employees represented both joy and agony to the entrepreneurial leaders. Overall, some of their greatest satisfaction came from how their teams coalesce and add to their business success. At the same time, the frustration of managing was also consistently reported.

It is also significant to comment that nearly all of the interviewees were emphatic that their teams would say they are integral to these businesses. As mentioned in the findings, this area of self-reporting is difficult to substantiate. The perception that employees would say that they are integral is central to employee engagement. The distinction that will recur in this analysis is the differentiated role of leaders and

managers. Leaders typically determine the vision and set the direction, while managers execute on the leaders' visions. Most of the entrepreneurs interviewed for this research act as both leader and manager. As such, employee engagement is necessary and important in order to achieve results that are consistent with the organizational goals.

Overall, the interviewees would say they could improve in how they manage their employees. Cunningham and Lischeron's (1991) "leadership" school of entrepreneurship focuses on the need for the entrepreneurial leader to engage others to accomplish their business objectives. "A successful entrepreneur must also be a 'people manager' or an effective leader/mentor who plays a major role in motivating, directing, and leading people" (p. 52).

Cunningham and Lischeron (1991) make a distinction between getting the job done and concern for the staff that does the work, but they don't comment specifically about employee engagement. Instead they state, "Entrepreneurial leadership involves more than personal traits or style in relating to others. The role can be a focal point for change and inculcating values, and it can involve the skills of setting clear goals and creating opportunities" (p. 53). As described in the findings, the challenge with this arises under pressure when the entrepreneurs are consumed by different priorities, and people management diminishes in priority.

Most of the interviewees in this researcher's study felt they did a very good job of communicating vision to their people. Although vision does not equate to engagement, an understanding of vision and perspective on how their jobs contribute to the overall vision and organizational results leads to and enhances employee engagement. In their research, Darling et al. (2007) describe the importance of the leader's ability to engage people:

What makes a truly successful entrepreneur is not intelligence, education, lifestyle or background. The principal factor that seems to determine success is the entrepreneur's ability to effectively deal with opportunities through the dynamics of an organizational setting, thereby enabling the people concerned to be actively and enthusiastically involved and successful. (p. 6)

They observe that many entrepreneurial companies are “over-managed and under-led” (p. 6). This is consistent with the comments from the interviewees. They varied across the spectrum in terms of how involved or detached they are once they assign tasks. No one wanted to self-describe as a micro-manager, which carries a negative connotation. Rather they made distinctions depending on the task at hand and the needs of the people to whom the tasks were delegated.

This issue of over-managed and under-led is one of the “growing pains” that entrepreneurial companies endure. The challenge centers around the multitude of roles the entrepreneurial leaders have: leader, manager, and in most cases, “doer.” Many entrepreneurial companies emerge as the result of an idea that goes from concept to execution, and the entrepreneur/owner/founder typically begins by being the doer. The findings reveal a struggle in this duality, although it was never explicitly stated using this language.

Although the interviewees did not specifically discuss how they help their employees become successful, their pride for what their people have accomplished dovetails into elements described by Darling et al. (2007). These researchers purport that one of the measures of successful entrepreneurial leadership is reflected in how the leader helps his or her people to be successful. “This success is measured by such factors as personal achievement, professional satisfaction, job fulfillment, emotional health, and perhaps even the ability to cope with illness and other hardships or disappointments” (p. 15).

The interviewees were forgiving about their staff’s shortcomings as long as they did not perpetuate the same mistakes. In observing their responses, the more experienced entrepreneurs seemed more comfortable with this concept, while the less experienced ones are more tentative. This is not a generational observation *per se*; rather, it is one related to age and experience. Darling et al. (2007) comment about the importance of entrepreneurial leaders’ willingness to let their employees make mistakes, “thereby

establishing a safe/fail rather than a fail/safe organization, as a key regarding the difference between a leadership-dominated and a management-dominated enterprise” (p. 16).

All of the entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for the study felt strongly about the importance of their teams and felt that they imbued a strong sense of entrepreneurial spirit to their people. Soriano and Martinez (2007) posit the benefits of sharing entrepreneurial spirit with the team, rather than having it reside solely with the leader. “Businesses would profit from creating the conditions of leadership in the organization that are conducive to enabling the transmission of entrepreneurial spirit from the single, individual (entrepreneur) to the group or collection (work team)” (p. 1103). They observe that the entrepreneurial leader “affects the attitudes and behaviour of team members, creating the necessary conditions for relations of collective entrepreneurship and, therefore, enabling the transmission of the entrepreneurial spirit to the work team” (p. 1104). They reinforce that relationship-oriented leaders are more likely to get results through people and are characterized by their willingness to develop, recognize, and consult with their people (p. 1105).

The findings indicate that more than half of the interviewees are inclined to follow these tenets. Most of them value the concept but are less experienced with employee development. The larger the organization, the more likely the leader is willing to let go of managing and ease into leading, based on size, if nothing else. Many of the interviewees talked about leading by example, but this does not necessarily mean engaging their people and instilling them with the confidence and tools to be as entrepreneurially focused as they are.

The interviewees were comfortable with the idea of changing course and redirecting if particular strategies are not effective. This relates to the “creative destruction” construct that Schumpeterian followers believe. Betta and Latham (2010) take a slightly different tack by discussing Schumpeterian creation and destruction from the

perspective of the individual. They put forth a theory that “the creation/formation of a person enterprise is a form of entrepreneurship embedded in a technology of the self-based on self-care and self-knowledge” (p. 240). They feel that the changes entrepreneurs make when focused on their development result in a “new personal order.”

This work is a form of entrepreneurship, in so far as the individual who decides to transform a given destiny, or activate a personal change that will ultimately create the condition for innovation, is reflected in development and personal growth. To this purpose, we argue that the process of change is entrepreneurial, in Schumpeterian terms, because it is characterised by two phases: first, the creative destruction phase, which is determined by strategies and events that unfold when the individual challenges or changes a given life order, and second, the creative construction phase which occurs when the individual installs a new personal order or enterprise. These two phases form the entrepreneurial action. (p. 237)

The focus of this study is on the entrepreneur, not on the employees. An area for further discussion may be whether entrepreneurs who proactively work on their own development and personal growth would consider applying this thinking and perspective to their people.

Taking the time to understand and appreciate employees goes a long way toward more effective influence, as well as more enhanced employee engagement. As described in Chapter VI, one of the greatest sources of pride for the interviewees was the teams they had developed and what they accomplished. What the literature does not address is the dichotomy mentioned in the findings of employees being concurrently fabulous and frustrating. Intellectually, it is useful to describe the benefits of how employee development and engagement will enhance the overall results of an entrepreneurial organization. The most talented entrepreneurs can embrace this concept; however, the reality of functioning in a time-compressed, highly competitive environment often results in the entrepreneurial leader being focused on something other than the employees.

To summarize this section, the research question under consideration was: *In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all,*

based on generation? The literature substantiates the importance of entrepreneurs engaging their people; however, it appears to be a less robust area of literature than the literature supporting the first research question.

As with the first research question, the generational differences were not as marked as distinctions made with regard to age and experience. The more experienced the entrepreneurial leader, the more comfortable he or she was with engagement. This is consistent with the employee development competency in the earlier discussion on the entrepreneurial leadership profile.

How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

The findings reflect that the entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for this study influence by example and through collaboration. Moreover, the manner in which they influence ranges from friendly enthusiasm to direct prescriptiveness. This section will begin by exploring “the influence of the influencers,” that is, the mentors and role models who were critical in shaping the interviewees' perceptions. Following this will be a discussion of the ways in which entrepreneurs influence.

Mentors and role models. As described in Chapter VI, many of the interviewees were influenced by their own mentors and absorbed elements from these mentors into their own styles. Although this study did not examine literature related to entrepreneurial mentors in the literature review in Chapter II, it is selectively introduced at this time because of the importance that mentors played in the development of the interviewees.

Terjesen and Sullivan (2011) researched developmental relationships of entrepreneurs and reinforced the importance of mentorship. Their findings indicate that entrepreneurs who had mentors valued these relationships in positive ways. “Those entrepreneurs with mentors, whether these relationships were direct transfers from a corporate mentor-protégé relationship or were relationships with former clients or

co-workers which transformed into mentoring relationships, readily described the value of the mentoring they received” (p. 497).

The interviewees felt strongly about how and what they learned from these mentors and through modeling – taking the positive aspects and modifying aspects they didn’t like – helped to craft their own style of influence. In some cases, family members – parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles – were role models or mentors.

Chlosta, Patzelt, Klein, and Dormann (2012) used social learning theory to study the influence of familial mentors in entrepreneurial families. They studied alumni from eight German universities and tested hypotheses related to the relationships between parental self-employed roles models and their children. Their findings support the conclusion that children of entrepreneurial families are motivated by their familial situation to become entrepreneurs, but the children’s personalities are equally important. “However, the role model impact depends on individual personality, and those individuals who are less open experience a stronger impact” (p. 135). Their research supports the findings. Heather, Luis, Paul, Rob, Samuel, and Jim were profoundly affected by their entrepreneurial families. A grandfather was a strong model for Heather and Jim, while Luis, Paul, Samuel, and Rob looked to their fathers for guidance.

Other influencers include the market, clients, and the competition (Jones & Crompton, 2009, p. 337), as well as professional advisors and venture capitalists. Jim mentioned that some of his best practices emerged from learning both best and worst practices from clients and other advisors. Mary indicated that she uses professional advisors on an ongoing basis, and indeed most of the interviewees have sought professional guidance at various points in their careers.

Entrepreneurial influence. As previously mentioned, the entrepreneurs interviewed for this research influence through leading by example, by collaborative initiatives, and by using styles ranging from enthusiastic to directive. Darling et al. (2007) observe that “today’s entrepreneurial leaders have an agenda – a vision that takes their

organizations beyond the horizon. The intensity of a leader's vision, coupled with commitment, is exciting and contagious" (p. 10). This excitement and contagion are powerful as a manner of influence. Calvin commented,

I don't think there is a more rewarding field than really finding something you are passionate about and finding a problem that you can solve and bringing a solution to it. I don't think there is anything much – other than my marriage and my kids – there is really nothing that's nearly as interesting or exciting to me as that.

This returns to the subject of vision and the ability to articulate vision, mission, and purpose, and to engage employees to insure that it can be carried forth.

The entrepreneurial leaders in this study have great clarity about setting the direction of their companies and doing what they need to do, whether it is with their employees, clients, or other stakeholders, to influence a positive outcome. Citing Yukl (2002), Cogliser and Brigham (2004) state that "the influence process occurs naturally within social systems, whereby leaders influence the choice of objectives and strategies to pursue, the motivation of organizational members to achieve those objectives, the learning and sharing of knowledge among followers, and the enlistment of support and cooperation from external constituencies" (p. 778).

The interviewees have a preference for employees who are self-directed. Although this is not specifically a characteristic of employees of entrepreneurial ventures, self-direction implies the ability to at least try to figure out things on your one's before soliciting the boss. Soriano and Martinez (2007) note that "a strong entrepreneurial leader should influence the organization, thus making it more entrepreneurial as a whole" (p. 1103). They draw on social learning, commenting, "The team leader affects the attitudes and behaviour of other team members, creating the necessary conditions for relations of collective entrepreneurship and, therefore, enabling the transmission of the entrepreneurial spirit to the work team" (p. 1104).

The interviewees felt their employees would say they were integral to their organizations. As mentioned in the findings, this was one of the more subjective observations and difficult to substantiate. Assuming the employees do feel integral, the question to pursue in additional research may be *why* they feel integral. Are they influenced by their leaders to the extent that they are swept up in the aforementioned entrepreneurial spirit? Collective entrepreneurship is an interesting concept in theory, but more challenging to institute in practice. The mere fact that employees are not owners makes the idea intellectually creative but, on a practical basis, challenging to institute.

The predominant behavioral characteristics of the interviewees are competitiveness and fast-paced and high trust, which exemplify the concept of proactivity. Prieto (2010) discusses Bateman and Crant's (1993) development of the proactive personality concept:

Defining it as a relatively stable tendency to effect environmental change that differentiates people based on the extent to which they take action to influence their environments. Individuals with a prototypical proactive personality identify opportunities and act on them, show initiative, take action, and persevere until meaningful change occurs. (p. 109)

The concept puts forth that proactive personalities will be more effective influencers, while non-proactive personalities are much more passive and less likely to effectively influence, especially in times of change. It is clear from the assessment results and subsequent interviews that the interviewees fall into the proactive personality category. This includes the few who did not have the predominant behavioral style of competitive, enthusiastic, and high optimism compensated for their more introverted behavioral style with strong motivators and professional competencies.

The interviewees saw themselves as strong communicators and felt that their employees would agree with that characterization. Darling and Beebe (2007) reinforce the importance of effective communication styles in entrepreneurial firms. The findings described in Chapter VI demonstrate that the interviewees are realistic about when they are effective, and when they need to demonstrate improvement. Fernald et al. (2005)

describe key characteristics of entrepreneurial leaders. The characteristic of drive speaks to the ability to influence effectively.

Command and control. The Veteran generation was characterized by using more of a command and control style of leadership. The question of using power to influence created some discomfort in half of the interviewees. They were not comfortable perceiving that their employees would think of them as exercising power to achieve results. The researcher scanned earlier literature from the 1970s and 1980s that made reference to the importance of using power to influence. This literature was excluded from this study because its relevance is questionable in a contemporary entrepreneurial leadership discussion. To make the contrast, however, research by McClelland (1976), who studied participants in managerial effectiveness workshops, concluded:

The top manager of a company must possess a high need for power, that is, a concern for influencing people. However, this need must be disciplined and controlled so that it is directed toward the benefit of the institution as a whole and not toward the manager's personal aggrandizement. Moreover, the top manager's need for power ought to be greater than his need for being liked by his people. (p. 101)

McClelland's observation is included, because the drive for power has changed since this study was done. Putting this in context, the oldest of the Leading Boomers were 30 years old, and in the workplace ± 10 years. Their managers were in the Veteran generation, and most exercised the command and control style.

Authentic leadership. Influence today is handled in more of a collaborative or team-oriented fashion. In fact, in developing the findings in Chapter VI and analyzing the results of the research in this chapter, it is appropriate to reference the concept of authentic leadership. Periodic mentions of authentic leadership appear in some of the literature related to entrepreneurial leadership, and the researcher observes a connection between entrepreneurial and authentic leadership tenets.

Citing Atkinson (2007), Jones and Crompton (2009) comment that "the need for 'authentic' leadership is particularly pronounced in smaller organizations where regular

contact between leader and employees reinforces high-performance relationships” (p. 337). It is not within the scope of this analysis to do a review of authentic leadership, but two points are worth including.

First, entrepreneurial leaders whose behavioral style is “what you see is what you get” are more likely to receive a level of buy-in from their people simply based on the fact that they bring one personality to the office. Even if it is a personality that is difficult to get along with, it is predictable and familiar. Second, consistency in communication style is an element of authenticity. The entrepreneurs interviewed for this research admitted that in some cases they are clear in their communication and other times they are not. Clearly, *what* is being communicated is important to this consideration, but the overall consistency is valuable for team understanding.

Although not necessarily great managers, the interviewees were committed to the growth and development of their people. Jensen and Luthans (2006) define an authentic leader as “one who is not only true to him/herself, but behaves in such a way that followers are also able to gain self-awareness and psychological strength” (p. 256). They surveyed 148 business founders/owners in the Midwest and concluded that the “entrepreneurs’ reported levels of optimism, resiliency and hope. [E]ach demonstrated a significant positive relationship with the perception of their authentic leadership” (p. 266).

To summarize this section, the research question under consideration was: *How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?* The analysis began with reviewing the “influencers of the influencers,” discussing the importance of mentors, role models, and other advisors who may influence the way in which the entrepreneurs approach influencing. This tied into the findings in Chapter VI, referring back to the comments on the interviewees’ mentors. The discussion continued with ties to the literature related to different styles of influencing.

Summary of Chapter VII

The purpose of this chapter was to review the findings described in Chapter VI in the context of the research questions and the literature. The chapter began with a recap and analysis of the entrepreneurial leadership profile that was revealed in Chapter V. It was analyzed generationally and in the context of other data from the assessment originator, Target Training International, Ltd.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Profile

The analysis supported the initial presentation of the profile introduced in Chapter V. This profile embodies behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies and reflects predominant factors based on the 76 entrepreneurs who took the assessment. This includes a behavioral style reflecting competitiveness, enthusiasm, high trust, and rule breakers. The primary motivator, chosen by 68% of the respondents, is “utilitarian,” which personifies practicality and efficiency and is driven by a return on investment. The second highest motivator is individualistic, reflecting a desire to be in charge and to control. The top seven professional competencies are: leadership, goal achievement, employee development/coaching, presenting, persuasion, interpersonal skills, and written communication.

Some generational differences were evaluated in the analysis. Although the utilitarian and individualistic motivators were #1 and #2 across the study, Baby Boomers also selected the “social/altruistic” motivator with some frequency. This reflects two primary factors: (1) Baby Boomer idealism and (2) a focus on more altruistic businesses later in life after having owned and operated more conventional businesses.

Generation Y demonstrated a slightly more aggressive behavioral profile than the other generations. The components are the same as the overall responses, but the emphasis is more on the high dominance (competitive, driving) style.

In the area of professional competencies, Generation X had the highest scores in goal orientation and persuasion, which was supported by references to the literature. Although employee development/coaching ranked as the third highest competency, the Trailing Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y had lower scores than the Veteran, Leading, and Core Boomer cohorts. As previously mentioned, this may be more related to age and experience than to generation. Finally, Generation Y had the lowest scores in the top two competencies, leadership and goal orientation, which may reflect their less seasoned development as leaders.

Following the analysis of the entrepreneurial leadership profile, the research questions were analyzed, with the entrepreneurial leadership profile providing a frame for the analysis. The researcher believes that the research questions were answered in the context of the literature and tied back to the findings in Chapter VI.

- In what ways do the entrepreneurs' leadership profiles reflect their values and beliefs, and do they vary by generation?
- In what ways do entrepreneurs approach employee engagement, and how does it differ, if at all, based on generation?
- How do the entrepreneurs self-report on how they influence their organizations and teams, and how, if at all, do they differ based on generation?

Values and Beliefs

The entrepreneurial leadership profile reflects values and beliefs, as previously discussed. In addition, personal values and beliefs were discussed based on other demographic factors, such as family background, prior experience in corporate America, lifestyle issues, etc. What we don't know is the longer-term perspective of values and beliefs of the two younger generations, Generation X and Generation Y. At the time of this submission, they are under the age of 50 and have not fully come into their own as leaders. Generation X has some interesting aspects that will be interesting to follow (as

described earlier with regard to having the highest scores in the competencies of goal achievement and persuasion). Generation Y is a work in progress, and we do not have enough to speculate on their entrepreneurial leadership contributions.

Employee Engagement

The literature supports the importance of engaging employees for effective entrepreneurial success. This is consistent with the interviewees' enthusiasm and pride over the accomplishments of their people. As mentioned in that section, however, the literature does not address the real world aspect of engagement in time-compressed, competitive environments. This dichotomy was explored in Chapter VI, where the interviewees both adore and abhor their employees. It is easy to have agreement with the intellectual arguments related to engagement, and what we don't know is how to approach this dichotomy in a systematic manner to offset the managerial challenges that entrepreneurial leaders face.

This issue is not as pronounced in corporate America, because hierarchies are established to allow for layers of management to do just that: to manage. Entrepreneurial leaders are in different situations. They set the vision, execute the strategy, grow the business, develop relationships with key clients, deal with financial issues, especially cash flow, *and* manage their people. Most of the interviewees commented that they prefer hiring self-directed employees to minimize their need to manage. The challenge with that tactic is that even the most self-directed employee needs guidance from the entrepreneurial leader.

Influence

In addressing this question, two new areas of literature were introduced, one related to mentorship and the other related to authentic leadership. The literature on mentorship was added because of what emerged from the interviews and the importance that mentors have had on entrepreneurial leaders. Authentic leadership was introduced because it ties

into the entrepreneurial leadership, especially with regard to small to mid-sized enterprises.

The way in which interviewees influence is a combination of their entrepreneurial leadership profile, the impact of their mentors, role models, and other advisors, and the nature of the market. It is difficult to make definitive statements about how they influence because of the multiple factors, as well as the self-reporting nature of the interviews. That said, leading by example and collaborative leadership were two prominent ways of influencing that were shared among the interviewees.

As this chapter concludes, the central research question will be restated: *In what ways, if at all, do entrepreneurs exhibit a leadership profile based on their generation?* The researcher concludes that the entrepreneurs do exhibit a specific leadership profile, with certain nuances based on their generation. Entrepreneurial characteristics dwarf the generational differences. Where distinctions occur, age and experience tend to be the drivers rather than values-based generational characteristics.

Chapter VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*“Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment, full effort is full victory.”
- Mahatma Gandhi*

As indicated in Chapter I, the researcher’s perspective on this topic emerged from her experience as an entrepreneur, her corporate leadership experience, her work with entrepreneurial companies, and her long-term interest and experience with multigenerational generational issues in the workplace. All of these perspectives merged to inform her perspective on this exploratory study.

The researcher set out to better understand entrepreneurial leaders and to gain insights about their core characteristics. The purpose of this exploratory study was to learn about their leadership characteristics and to see how these traits differ, if at all, across the generations. Understanding the characteristics that make these entrepreneurs effective, such as their specific behaviors, attitudes, and professional competencies, can inform our understanding of how entrepreneurial leaders get results. A generational overlay potentially adds to the dimension of a leader’s worldview, which influences his or her leadership perspective.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify conclusions that were derived from the research in this exploratory study and to provide recommendations for practice and for further research.

Conclusions from the Research Study

Based on the findings from Chapters V and VI and the analysis from Chapter VII, five conclusions emerged from this study. (1) A consistent entrepreneurial leadership profile, comprised of behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies, was established through the assessment. (2) Although differences exist among the generations, in the context of entrepreneurial leadership, these differences are more nuanced than commonly stated in the popular practitioner literature. (3) People project and reflect their own experiences on to others, which may blur the generational dialogue. (4) In spite of a stronger self-identification with entrepreneurship than leadership, the interviewees exhibited strong leadership profiles. (5) Perceptions of their employees reflect a dichotomy between being fiercely proud of team accomplishments and frustration over managerial people challenges. Each of these conclusions will be explored in turn.

Conclusion #1

A consistent entrepreneurial leadership profile, comprised of behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies, was established through the assessment.

The assessment yielded a consistent profile reflecting the following dimensions:

- (1) behavioral factors of competitiveness, high trust, fast-paced, and rule breakers,
- (2) motivators of high utilitarian (practicality, efficiency, and seeking a high return on investment in their activities) and high individualistic (being in control); and
- (3) professional competencies of leadership, goal orientation, employee development/coaching, interpersonal skills, presenting, persuasion, and written communication.

Multiple dimensions of evaluation are important when studying something as complex as leadership. Any of the three components of the assessment used in this study, behavior, motivators, or professional competencies, would not have provided as robust

and thorough a snapshot as the one reflected in this study. Three of the 14 interviewees would not have qualified based on behavioral style alone, and one of the 14 interviewees, Jim, would not have fit the profile based on motivators.

As described in Chapter VII, other categories of superior performers will have characteristics similar to those of entrepreneurial leaders. Superior performers in all positions will gravitate to the profile that reflects the high standards of their professions. As such, other high-performing professionals, such as high-performing salespeople, may have a profile similar to the entrepreneurial leadership profile described in this study.

Analyzing leadership acumen through multiple lenses results in a more robust image. A further breakdown by generation added another layer to the understanding of the data of the participants. Although the generational divisions did not reflect dramatic differences in the overall profile, they added a dimension that helped to understand the nuances that will be described in Conclusion #2.

Conclusion #2

Although differences exist among the generations, in the context of entrepreneurial leadership, these differences are more nuanced than commonly stated in the popular practitioner literature.

As indicated in the findings, the generational distinctions that emerged from the study were more nuanced than overt. The researcher believes this is because the entrepreneurial characteristics were more pronounced than the generational ones. The distinctions that emerged were attributable to age and experience and did not necessarily map to generational values.

The findings and the analysis captured the main examples related to generational differences; however, more subtle examples, such as those related to tone or innuendo, were difficult to document. One of the (undocumented) observations is that many of the interviewees inadvertently expressed concerns about the work ethic of Generation Y.

More specifically, several of the Generation X interviewees expressed concerns about working with Generation Y.

When these comments were revisited during the generational section of the interview, those interviewees pushed back and did not elaborate on earlier incidental comments. People are uncomfortable “going on the record” and memorializing what may be perceived to a critical point of view. As such, their pushback was predictable.

One of the interesting areas to watch is how Generation X will come into its own as entrepreneurial leaders. In some respects, they are better prepared to do well than their Veteran and Baby Boomer predecessors as a result of their generational perspective and their willingness to question, challenge, and critically reflect proactively. The oldest members of Generation X will turn 50 in 2014, so we will see increasing instances of their leadership, both in potential and in actuality.

Conclusion #3

People project and reflect their own experiences onto others, which may blur the generational dialogue.

People have different frames of reference reflecting their own unique experiences. Some are generational; others are based on other demographical information such as age, race, gender, or economic status. As indicated in Conclusion #2, the lines may be blurred when identifying whether something is a generational difference versus another demographic factor, especially age. Obviously, leaders need to be mindful of how they communicate to avoid the challenges that can emerge from differences in these perspectives.

The entrepreneurial leaders interviewed for this study were inclined to project their beliefs and values onto employees based on their perspective when they were at a comparable stage in their career. For example, a leader who is working with a mid-20s Millennial is going to have a point of view related to when he or she was mid-20s. This

view will differ based on their actual generation, such as Veterans or Leading Boomers, who feel they have had a strong work ethic throughout their career. They will expect Millennials to work with the same level of vigor and commitment as they did when they were in their mid-20s. Monique, for example, uses the expression “back in the day” when she makes such references. It highlights that she is speaking from her perspective from when she was a working professional at that age.

The experience levels of the Veterans and Baby Boomers reflect more confident and consistent leadership styles. This was evident through the interviews, not necessarily from actual responses to the questions, but from the tone of voice, hesitations, and certain tentative language choices that were more frequent from Generation X and Generation Y, and even from the Trailing Boomers. In this instance, for example, age and experience may supersede generational factors.

Conclusion #4

In spite of a stronger self-identification with entrepreneurship than leadership, the interviewees exhibited strong leadership profiles.

As indicated in the findings, the interviewees related much more to being entrepreneurs than to their roles as leaders. In spite of this leaning toward entrepreneurial self-identification, all had strong leadership profiles. These profiles did not mimic each other factor by factor, but in the aggregate, they shared a composite profile as described in Conclusion #1.

More important than the profiles themselves, however, is the fact that they demonstrated strong leadership acumen. Whether they are serial entrepreneurs building and selling companies like Calvin or desiring to stay intentionally small and provide outstanding service to a select group of clients like Luis, their leadership styles are intentional and effective. Specifically using this example, the two entrepreneurs have

opposite behavioral styles, overlap on the motivators, and overlap on certain of the professional competencies.

The entrepreneurial leaders share the experience of growing something from an idea into an enterprise. That cannot be accomplished without leadership acumen, without a vision that acts as a beacon, or without the ability to engage people to achieve results. They may see themselves as entrepreneurs first, but they never would have accomplished the results without leadership skills. In this sample, their leadership skills tied to their performance.

The entrepreneurial leaders who were interviewed have clarity of vision and values. They know who they are, what they want, and how to get there. This self-knowing not only provides them with an internal compass, but it helps in how they convey their organizational direction to their employees, how they do business with their clients, and how they make decisions about whether to pursue new opportunities. Their perspectives trace back to their stories of origin and the paths they took to arrive at their current situations. A combination of clarity about their personal history and self-awareness results in this cognizance.

Conclusion #5

Perceptions of their employees reflect a dichotomy between being fiercely proud of team accomplishments and frustration over managerial people challenges.

In the findings, we learned that the entrepreneurial leaders were fiercely proud of their employees. In fact, this was cited repeatedly as the answer to the question of what they were most proud of as leaders. At the same time, as much as they had such strong attachment to the accomplishments of their teams, they struggle with frustration over how to handle day-to-day managerial issues.

Simply put, they love their staff when things are going well and fall out of love when their employees aren't doing what they're supposed to do. Clearly, entrepreneurial

leaders have areas for improvement in how they engage their employees, and this engagement becomes overwhelming when myriad challenges happen. This dichotomy is likely to continue as long as the entrepreneurial leaders feel they have options, help, and/or support to navigate away from the problems associated with this.

As leaders, they know they need to deal with this. They don't focus as much on the managerial aspects of their roles, and this is one of the challenges they face. Of course, this is mitigated in larger companies, where the leader/owner can delegate to managers, such as in Rob's company, where he conscientiously developed his managers to deal with the day-to-day people issues.

Summary of Conclusions

These conclusions weave together to form an understanding of the findings and analysis in this study. The assessment yielded a consistent entrepreneurial leadership profile comprised of specific behaviors, motivators, and professional competencies. Generational differences among these leaders are more nuanced than what is described in the popular practitioner literature. The researcher believes that age and experience are more relevant in this study of entrepreneurial leaders than generational values *per se*. This is because the entrepreneurial characteristics trump the generational ones.

Their self-awareness about vision and values forms a bridge between where they began and where they currently are as entrepreneurs. Although they identify more closely with being entrepreneurs than being leaders, they have strong leadership acumen. This acumen contributes to their tremendous pride for the accomplishments of their people, but falls short on a managerial level when it comes to day-to-day management issues.

Recommendations for Practice

Five recommendations for practice emerge from this study. These include:

(1) Helping entrepreneurs understand the best approach to lead their companies based on their leadership profile; (2) How we can teach entrepreneurs more effectively; (3) How we can help entrepreneurs in terms of their professional development; (4) Helping entrepreneurs close the gap between the pride of their employees' accomplishments and the frustration of day-to-day management; and (5) Understanding how to effectively lead across generations.

Match Entrepreneurial Leadership Style to Results of Their Leadership Profile

Entrepreneurial leaders who understand their strengths and areas for improvement are more likely to enhance what they do well and minimize their weaknesses. Over time, they can hire to compensate for their deficiencies. The self-awareness that comes from understanding their leadership profile will result in more effective and authentic leadership.

Teach Entrepreneurs More Effectively

Entrepreneurial education is proliferating in academic institutions. Teaching entrepreneurs through practice-based and peer-coaching relationships is an area of practice that holds promise for helping entrepreneurial leaders. This type of environment allows them to receive as well as give coaching and feedback to peers. Aside from peer feedback, this is a way to reduce entrepreneurial isolation and provide a sense of collegiality.

Professional Development of Entrepreneurial Leaders

Executive coaching to enhance these leaders' professional development is an area of practice that holds promise as a result of the larger numbers of entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs are accustomed to having advisors in different capacities, and this adds the dimension of their own development.

Talent Management for Entrepreneurial Leaders

Based on the results of this study, entrepreneurial leaders are not necessarily the best managers of people; however, the potential for more effective teams and organizational alignment will result from advice in the area of talent management. Entrepreneurial leaders are more likely to respond to practice-based rather than theory-based approaches.

Leading across Generations

Programs that enhance generational understanding can help communication in companies that have managerial and leadership transitions occurring across the generations. The practitioners need to be mindful not to overgeneralize or stereotype in providing such programs. It is the researcher's experience that airing these issues can add to greater communication within organizations.

Summary of Recommendations for Practice

These five recommendations are starting points for practitioners and consultants who desire to broaden their expertise in entrepreneurial leadership. Certainly, other options exist based on the background and expertise as practitioners; these are ones that arose specifically from the conclusions.

Recommendations for Further Research

Six ideas emerge for further research related to entrepreneurial leadership:
(1) Explore the entrepreneurial leadership potential of Generation X; (2) further research on the connection between Baby Boomers and the examples of the socially conscious

businesses that emerged from this study; (3) a longitudinal study on Generation X and Generation Y to observe their coming of age as leaders; (4) gender analysis among entrepreneurial leaders; (5) further study on how entrepreneurial leaders learn; and (6) assess across generations in different industry/demographic segments.

In addition to these ideas related to entrepreneurial leadership, an additional research opportunity is to conduct the same assessment across generations in a different demographic segment to see if the generational differences are more pronounced.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Potential of Generation X

A study of entrepreneurial Generation X leaders would provide additional insights as Generation X moves into their 50s and are more experienced and mature as entrepreneurial leaders. It would be interesting to see further analysis on the competency areas in which they scored high in the assessment in this study, such as goal orientation and persuasion.

Research on Baby Boomer Cohorts

Specific research on entrepreneurial Baby Boomers would provide additional insights on leadership differences as well as entrepreneurial direction. It would be interesting to see, for example, whether there is a continued pattern of socially conscious businesses for Baby Boomers as evidenced in this study. Are Core and Leading Boomers more likely to evolve into entrepreneurial ventures that make the world a better place, thereby reflecting the idealism that influenced Baby Boomers as they came of age?

Longitudinal Study on Generation X and Generation Y

A longitudinal study in one or more companies that have large, relatively stable populations of Generation X and Generation Y that are destined for managerial and leadership roles would provide additional data on leadership development. It would be

interesting to see how they come into their own as leaders and track their progress over a 7- to 10-year period of time.

Gender Analysis of Entrepreneurial Leaders

Gender was not a factor that was considered in this study; however, a fascinating gender-related element emerged from the assessment. The women demonstrated a higher proportion of “rule breaker” tendencies in their adapted behavioral style over men by a factor of nearly two to one. The researcher probed about this with those female interviewees whose results included this factor. Most of them don’t think of themselves as rule breakers and how it impacts their leadership style. Instead, they take this aspect of themselves for granted because they’ve “always been this way.” Are they adapting this way because they feel that “have to” to get ahead, or are the reasons more subtle?

Research on How Entrepreneurial Leaders Learn

Many of the interviewees were self-taught, and some did not have formal education after high school. It would be valuable to conduct in-depth research to gain a better understanding of how entrepreneurial leaders learn and make meaning from that learning. Although mentors and role models are a factor in how entrepreneurs learn, there are more avenues to explore. When asked about how they learned particular things, the interviewees did not have immediate responses. An in-depth study where researchers could observe them over a period of time would add to greater understanding of how they learn.

Assess across Generations in Different Demographic/Industry Segments

The researcher believes that one of the reasons the generational differences were more nuanced than overt is because the entrepreneurial characteristics were so dominant. Further research across generations by using the same research methodology would help

determine if the generational differences would be more pronounced, for example, in corporate or non-profit settings.

Summary of Recommendations for Research

The six recommendations provide starting points for additional research in entrepreneurial research and/or further understanding about cross-generational issues. The entrepreneurial leadership potential of Generation X, the exploration of social entrepreneurship among Baby Boomers, a deeper look at leadership development of Generation X and Y, a look at gender issues in entrepreneurial leadership, and studying more about how entrepreneurial leaders learn would each make contributions to the literature. In addition, evaluating generational differences through the lens of segments other than entrepreneurs may reveal additional insights.

Researcher's Final Reflections

I began this study with an interest in determining if an entrepreneurial leadership profile could be identified. Based on my experiences in practice, I believed it was possible to create a profile of behavior, motivators, and professional competencies. I was pleased that a profile did emerge from the respondents, and to be able to garner further insights through interviewing 14 talented entrepreneurs.

At the beginning of the study, I expected to see more generational distinctions and did not realize that such differences would be overshadowed by the strength of the entrepreneurial leadership dimensions. Learning more about generational nuances has informed my perspective on generational distinctions.

I was impressed and humbled by the creativity and innovation demonstrated by the interviewees. Being exposed to how they think, what they see, and how they process added to my understanding of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial leadership. It was a

privilege to get better acquainted with these individuals and to understand them better as professionals, as entrepreneurs, and as leaders. My perspective going into this research informed my outlook on the study. As this study draws to close, I can say that their perspectives and the analysis that emerged from the assessment data have informed and expanded my outlook.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

1. To get started, can you tell me about your current business?
 - a. How did you get the idea?
 - b. How did you get started?
2. What is the vision for your business?
3. Tell me about other businesses that you started prior to _____?
 - a. Can you describe anything that you learned from those businesses that made a difference for what you do now?
4. When did you first think about being in business for yourself?
 - a. Did you ever think about or start a business when you were younger?
 - b. What was that experience like for you?

The next few questions are going to be about your leadership style.

5. How would you describe your leadership style?
 - a. What, if anything, do you now do differently as a leader from prior positions?
6. Who have been meaningful mentors to you, and what did you learn from them?
 - a. Are there lessons you learned from your mentors that you have adopted as an entrepreneur?

I'd like you to respond quickly to the next few questions, with what comes to mind right away.

7. As an entrepreneurial leader, what has challenged you – positively and negatively?
8. What are you most proud of as a leader?
9. What do you like most about being a leader?
10. What do you like least about being a leader?

The same thing with the next group of questions: I'd like you to respond quickly to the next few questions, with what comes to mind right away. Let's talk a bit about your leadership style from the perspective of people who currently work for you or previously worked for you.

11. How would *they describe you* in terms of
 - a. How you communicate and give direction?
 - b. How you influence them to get things done?
 - c. How you communicate your vision?
 - d. How you exercise power?
 - e. Your degree of involvement with their work, such as being hands on/hands off?
 - f. The degree to which they feel like an integral part of your business?

[The following are custom, and tie to the interviewee's assessment results.]

12. Anomaly question (from assessment) – if appropriate
13. Question about behaviors
14. Question about motivators
15. Question about competencies

The next few questions are about generational issues.

16. On the assessment, you indicated [ref the generational question]. What does being part of a generation mean to you?
17. In what ways do you think your values and beliefs are the same as others of your generation?
18. How do you handle generational issues in your capacity as a leader? What might your people think are the gaps between your style and their needs if they are from different generations?
19. Do you think that people look for different things in their leaders based on generation?
20. Is there anything else important about your experience as an entrepreneur or entrepreneurial leader that you'd like to share?
 - a. (or) Is there anything else that you would like to bring up or think would be valuable for me to know before we finish?

Appendix B

Informed Consent

The following text was included electronically at the beginning of the on-line assessment:

By responding to this instrument, your responses will be part of a research study that is part of Lisa Aldisert's doctoral dissertation work at Teachers College, Columbia University. The research is about leadership characteristics of entrepreneurs and how they may differ by generation.

There are no direct benefits from participating in this study. The study will be used to further leadership development training by better understanding leadership characteristics of entrepreneurs. There are minimal risks in participating, however, should you find the survey problematic, you may withdraw by not completing it.

Both you and your organization will be assigned pseudonyms in any report or publication that results from this research. Any data shared for the purposes of coding will be coded with a pseudonym as well.

At the completion of this study, all data from this research will be kept by the researcher in a locked file cabinet in her home office, to which only she will have access. After the dissertation process is complete, the researcher will maintain the data in the aforementioned locked file cabinet in coded form only for any post doctoral research.

The results of the study will be used to complete the researcher's doctoral dissertation. In the future, the information may be presented at conferences and meetings, included in articles published in journals, or used for education purposes. You will not be identified as a research participant in any of these venues.

The IRB-approved protocol number for this study is 11-356.

Appendix C

Participant's Rights

TEACHERS COLLEGE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

ADULT LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP/AEGIS

Participant's Rights

Principal Investigator: Lisa M. Aldisert

Research Title: *Leadership Characteristics of Entrepreneurs and How They May Differ by Generation.*

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (212) 332-3242. Her faculty advisor, Lyle Yorks, at Teachers College, Columbia University, can be reached at (212) 687-3820.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Teachers College, Columbia University Institutional Review Board /IRB. The phone number for the IRB is (212) 678-4105. Or, I can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY, 10027, Box 151.
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If video and/or audio recording is part of this research, I () consent to be audio recorded. I () do NOT consent to being audio recorded. The written and/or audio recorded materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator and members of the research team.
- Written and/or audio taped materials () may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research/ () may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.
- My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Name: _____

Appendix D
Assessment Input Questionnaire



TTI Performance DNA Talent™

QUESTIONNAIRE

TTI Performance DNA™ Talent

Response Instructions

Every individual has a unique set of talents. When an individual's natural talents are matched to a job's required talents, success and personal satisfaction are the results. This is the goal of Performance DNA™.

The Performance DNA Talent Report is designed to identify the talents you naturally bring to a job. In the next several screens you will be asked to record your responses in three sections:

Section 1: Personal Soft Skills Indicator™

Section 2: Motivation Insights®

Section 3: Style Insights®

Please follow the instructions contained in each section.

Your responses will produce a comprehensive report that will reveal your unique set of talents.

Personal Soft Skills Indicator™

Response Instructions

The Personal Soft Skills Indicator (PSSI) is designed to identify your level of mastery of soft skills. The PSSI report will provide you with valuable information you can use to manage and develop your career.

As tempting as it may be to portray yourself as having more soft skills than you do, the best strategy is to represent yourself as accurately as possible.

When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

The PSSI has three separate sections. Please read the directions for each section carefully before responding.

Section I

*In this section, select the word-sets that others have used to describe you in the workplace.
Avoid selecting too many or too few word-sets.*

Check all that apply:

- Charismatic/Personal Magnetism
- Mentor/Facilitator
- Cooperative/Team-player
- Mediator/Arbitrator
- Personable/Sociable
- Problem Solver/Inquisitive
- Imaginative/Creative
- Writer/Editor
- Helpful/Supportive
- Adaptable/Open Minded
- Tenacious/Motivated
- Organized/Structured
- Diplomatic/Tactful
- Resilient/Courageous
- Speaker/Presenter
- Take Charge/Controlling
- Negotiator/Mediator
- Convincing/Persuasive
- Caring/Compassionate
- Curious/Learner
- Visionary/Entrepreneurial
- Decisive/Certain
- Self-Controlled/Composed

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

1. I know what I want and I usually get it.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. I need more time than most people to adjust to changes.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. I enjoy speaking to large groups.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. It's difficult for me to influence the outcome of discussions.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. I like going out of my way to help others get their needs met.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. I'm not very good at dealing with deadlines.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. I prefer structure in my work.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

8. I would not want the responsibility of getting others to work towards goals, especially if it involved risk.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. I believe results are more important than the process used to obtain them.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. It bothers me when I see others passing up opportunities to learn.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Too much competition upsets me.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. I like to plan my work very carefully before starting.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. I prefer working alone.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

14. People spend too much time dreaming about the future instead of solving today's problems.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. I have difficulty making quick decisions.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. I don't like haggling over prices.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

17. I have difficulty putting my thoughts in writing.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

18. Demanding customers irritate me.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

19. I prefer to be evaluated on my results rather than my methods.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

20. I prefer a tried and true approach.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

21. One thing I am very good at is spontaneity.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

22. It bothers me when people say things that are obviously politically incorrect.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

23. I feel that people on government assistance are just looking for a handout.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

24. One of my greatest fears is getting up in front of a group of people and speaking.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

25. I am grateful for my failures because they have been some of my best learning experiences.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

26. Too often old traditions are discarded in favor of untested ideas.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

27. I would rather wait for someone else to take the lead.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

28. Too much emphasis is placed on learning new things when there is so much work to do.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

29. I go out of my way to avoid conflict.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

30. Meeting new people is hard for me.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

31. I rely on my instincts to solve problems.

Agree					Disagree	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

32. I am not known for being creative or inventive.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

33. I enjoy expressing my thoughts and feelings in writing.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

34. Persuasion is not one of my strengths.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

35. I don't spend time worrying about other people's problems.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

36. Besides being boring, theoretical discussions are a waste of time.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

37. I am shy at social gatherings.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

38. I dislike participating in negotiations.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/>							
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

Section 2

Read each statement and rank your agreement. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

39. I have been criticized for being too emotional.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

40. I feel uncomfortable when working with people who consistently make decisions without a proper analysis of the data.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

41. One thing I am very good at is identifying the best solution to a problem.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

42. I have to work on managing my time continually.

Agree					Disagree		No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

1. I spend time in libraries, bookstores and researching on the Internet.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

2. People come to me for advice on how to handle politically sensitive issues.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

3. What I am most proud of is what others have accomplished as a result of my mentoring.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

4. I have been criticized for being too far out in my ideas.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

5. I am most productive when working closely with others to achieve goals.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

6. In the past, people have taken risks to support my vision, mission or goals.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

7. I have a history of making significant contributions as a member of a high performing team.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

8. I have a gift for resolving conflict.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

9. I have a reputation for keeping up with what's new in my field.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

10. I am known for my ability to build and maintain many relationships with all kinds of people.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

11. I have been recognized for achieving results when others couldn't.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

12. I have been criticized for being too concerned about the difficulties of others.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

13. I am known for making timely decisions even when the risk of an error was high.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

14. People will verify my ability to facilitate win/win agreements.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

15. I am known for taking unique or unusual approaches to get results.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

16. I have been recognized for my ability to get others to say yes.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

17. I have been acknowledged for my ability to write proposals, reports, newsletters, articles, or other business documents.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

18. I have been acknowledged for going the extra mile to satisfy customers.

Descriptive				Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

19. I have been invited back to speak to the same group.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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20. In the past, I have been one of the first to get on board when changes occur.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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21. I have been criticized for being too competitive.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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22. I have been acknowledged for my attention to detail.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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23. I have been criticized for not handling sensitive organizational issues very well.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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24. I have been acknowledged for my ability to handle sensitive organizational issues.

Descriptive

Not Descriptive

No Opinion

<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7
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Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

25. I have accomplished things others didn't believe I could.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

26. I have a reputation for delivering powerful presentations.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

27. I have been recognized for my ability to turn things around financially.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

28. I have been criticized for holding people accountable for their actions.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

29. I have played a key role in negotiating significant contracts or agreements.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

30. It's been said that I could sell ice to Eskimos.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

31. I am known for overcoming significant obstacles to reach goals.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

32. I have been recognized for my contributions to the disadvantaged.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

33. I have been recognized for my ability to resolve conflict in the workplace.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

34. Others consider me a resource for knowledge.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

35. My ability to get along with people has been a key to my greatest accomplishments.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

36. I have a reputation for using a disciplined approach to collecting and analyzing data to define, diagnose and resolve problems.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

37. I have a history of championing futuristic ideas when others predicted failure.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

38. I am known for acknowledging the contributions of every member of the team.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

39. Even outside of work, I am asked to take a leadership role.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

40. I am known for my ability to calm people who are emotionally upset.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

41. I have been acknowledged for my role in training and/or developing others.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

42. I have been recognized for coming up with new ideas, methods or processes that improved results.

Descriptive			Not Descriptive			No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

43. I have been recognized for doing a good job of editing other people's writing.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

44. I am known for standing up for customers.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

45. I have been acknowledged for my ability to adapt quickly to changes.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

46. I have a reputation for always being prepared.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

47. I have been recognized for my ability to maintain my composure in emotionally charged situations.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

48. I have been recognized for my ability to make good decisions under pressure.

Descriptive					Not Descriptive		No Opinion
<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/> 6	<input type="radio"/> 7	

Section 3

Read each statement and select a rank to indicate how accurately the statement describes your record of accomplishments, activities and results. When responding, think in terms of your whole life and work experiences.

49. People will verify that I rarely, if ever, attempt to resolve a problem without a disciplined approach to gathering and analyzing the appropriate data first.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

50. I have been recognized for my ability to manage my time and priorities well.

Descriptive						Not Descriptive	No Opinion
1	2	3	4	5	6		7

Motivation Insights®

Response Instructions

In the following pages you will see 12 categories, each with 6 items for you to consider. For each category, rank the 6 items by indicating your choices as follows: your first choice is 1, your second choice is 2, etc. Each number (1-6) must be used only once and every box must have a number in it. While responding, keep your focus on those interests, attitudes and values which are important to you and help guide your life. Your response must be completed in one uninterrupted sitting.

For each category, rank the 6 items by indicating your choices as follows: your first choice is 1, your second choice is 2, etc. Each number (1-6) must be used only once and every box must have a number in it.

1. My favorite subjects to study:

- Math/Science
- Political Science
- Ethics/Principles
- Fine Arts
- Financial Planning
- Humanitarianism

2. My personal interests are:

- Controlling my own destiny
- Protecting my beliefs
- Appreciating beauty or nature
- Achieving financial security
- Serving others
- Expanding my knowledge

3. Leisure activities that I enjoy:

- Volunteer work
- Studying new concepts
- Mentoring and organizing others
- Investing/Spending money
- Going to museums or exhibitions
- Joining groups with tradition

4. Personal motivators for me are:

- Being a leader
- Continuing education
- Traditional values
- Assisting others
- Increasing my net worth
- Harmony and unity

For each category, rank the 6 items by indicating your choices as follows: your first choice is 1, your second choice is 2, etc. Each number (1-6) must be used only once and every box must have a number in it.

5. My career goals involve:

- Environmental activities
- Research
- Building a business
- Leading others
- Enforcing justice
- Social services

6. My personal improvement plan includes:

- Exploring my beliefs
- Helping others
- Leadership roles
- Security for retirement
- Additional education
- Beautification of personal surroundings

7. If given a large sum of money, I would:

- Beautify the environment
- Join an exclusive club/organization
- Give some to charity
- Save some/Invest some
- Take courses to gain knowledge
- Give to a group that supports my beliefs

8. I think our tax money should be spent on:

- Help for the homeless
- Military/Defense
- New technology
- Funding of the Arts
- Improving productivity
- Justice

For each category, rank the 6 items by indicating your choices as follows: your first choice is 1, your second choice is 2, etc. Each number (1-6) must be used only once and every box must have a number in it.

9. People I admire as role models:

- Humanitarians
- Military leaders
- Entrepreneurs
- Artists
- Scientists
- Ethical leaders

10. The way I would like to contribute to society:

- Helping the sick and disadvantaged
- Being a business person
- Doing what is expected
- Protecting natural resources
- Discovering truths
- Being a community leader

11. My personal goals:

- Helping others
- Elected official
- Economic freedom
- Discovering new technology
- Artistic expression
- Sharing my beliefs

12. My outside interests:

- Research and testing new ideas
- Protecting the environment
- Community projects
- Part-time business
- Politics
- Spiritual activities

Style Insights®

Response Instructions

Rank the phrase **MOST** like you as number 1. Continue ranking until the phrase **LEAST** like you is ranked number 4. When all four phrases are in the correct order please move to the next set of phrases. Repeat the process until complete. While responding, keep your focus on the descriptions that apply to your behavior. Be ruthlessly honest with yourself! Go with your “gut” instinct—do not over-analyze! You should take no more than 15 minutes to respond to the assessment and it must be completed in one uninterrupted sitting.

Rank the items in each list. Number them from 1 to 4, with 1 as the **MOST** like you. Continue to rank until you have ordered all the phrases from **MOST** (1) to **LEAST** (4). Repeat the process until complete.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contented, satisfied</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Positive, confident</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Peaceful, tranquil</p> | <p>2.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Careful, calculating</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bold, daring</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Supportive</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Charming, delightful</p> |
| <p>3.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Expressive</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Daring, risk-taker</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diplomatic, tactful</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied, content</p> | <p>4.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Respectful, shows respect</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pioneering, exploring, enterprising</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Optimistic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Accommodating, willing to please, ready to help</p> |
| <p>5.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Willing, agreeable</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eager, impatient</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Methodical</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High-spirited, lively, enthusiastic</p> | <p>6.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Logical</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Obedient, will do as told, dutiful</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unconquerable, determined</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Playful, frisky, full of fun</p> |
| <p>7.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous, willing to take chances</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Analytical</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cordial, warm, friendly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Moderate, avoids extremes</p> | <p>8.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Good mixer, likes being with others</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Structured</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Vigorous, energetic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lenient, tolerant of others' actions</p> |
| <p>9.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Competitive, seeking to win</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Considerate, caring, thoughtful</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing, fun-loving, socially striving</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Harmonious, agreeable</p> | <p>10.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive, challenger, takes action</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Life of the party, outgoing, entertaining</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Easy mark, easily taken advantage of</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fearful, afraid</p> |

Rank the items in each list. Number them from 1 to 4, with 1 as the **MOST** like you. Continue to rank until you have ordered all the phrases from **MOST** (1) to **LEAST** (4). Repeat the process until complete.

11.

- Stimulating
- Sympathetic, compassionate, understanding
- Tolerant
- Aggressive

12.

- Talkative, chatty
- Controlled, restrained
- Conventional, doing it the usual way, customary
- Decisive, certain, firm in making a decision

13.

- Well-disciplined, self-controlled
- Generous, willing to share
- Animated, uses gestures for expression
- Persistent, unrelenting, refuses to quit

14.

- Sociable, enjoys the company of others
- Patient, steady, deliberate
- Self-reliant, independent
- Soft-spoken, mild, reserved

15.

- Gentle, kindly
- Persuasive, convincing
- Humble, reserved, modest
- Magnetic, attracts others

16.

- Captivating
- Kind, willing to give or help
- Resigned, gives in
- Force of character, powerful

17.

- Companionable, easy to be with
- Easygoing
- Outspoken, speaks freely and boldly
- Restrained, reserved, controlled

18.

- Factual
- Obliging, helpful
- Willpower, strong-willed
- Cheerful, joyful

19.

- Attractive, charming, attracts others
- Systematic
- Stubborn, unyielding
- Pleasing

20.

- Restless, unable to rest or relax
- Neighborly, friendly
- Popular, liked by many or most people
- Orderly, neat

Rank the items in each list. Number them from 1 to 4, with 1 as the **MOST** like you. Continue to rank until you have ordered all the phrases from **MOST (1)** to **LEAST (4)**. Repeat the process until complete.

21.

- _____ Challenging, assertive
- _____ Critical thinker
- _____ Casual, laid-back
- _____ Light-hearted, carefree

22.

- _____ Brave, unafraid, courageous
- _____ Inspiring, motivating
- _____ Avoid confrontation
- _____ Quiet, composed

23.

- _____ Cautious, wary, careful
- _____ Determined, decided, unwavering, stand firm
- _____ Convincing, assuring
- _____ Good-natured, pleasant

24.

- _____ Jovial, joking
- _____ Organized
- _____ Nervy, gutsy, brazen
- _____ Even-tempered, calm, not easily excited