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Understanding One Another: Application of Individual and Generational Behavior in the Organizational Environment

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**Application of Individual and Generational Behavior
In the Organizational Environment**

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ABSTRACT

The co-mingling effect of individuals and generations has a profound impact on organizational behavior. This study focuses on the behavior of individuals and generations in the organizational environment.

Organizations as social systems could not exist without *people*. This creates a complex problem, how to deal with the diverse population that occupies the organizational environment. The interaction between an individual and a generational cohort group provides an exchange point for behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Research shows that each cohort grouping shapes behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes based on their exposure to events and social interactions. Behavioral Science describes how these interactions provide individuals with choices that result in behaviors that are either life enhancing or self-defeating. This study hopes to offer individuals and members of generational cohort groups material to assist in choosing life enhancing behaviors.

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the impacts of generational differences that influence the formation of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Each generational cohort is formally profiled for the purpose of gaining insight to behavioral differences. *People* spend the majority of their time interacting in the organizational environment. Understanding and accounting for differences

among individuals and generational cohort groupings becomes invaluable for those that co-mingle in the organizational environment.

This study contributes to understanding factors that impact the formation of behavioral differences. The adoption process for behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes is illustrated in a model showing how choices result in life enhancing and self-defeating behaviors. The ability to understand one another based on behavioral processes and generational differences presents the opportunity to co-mingle effectively for the success of the organization—and its *people*.

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE OF CANDIDACY:

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DEDICATION:

Generation Next –to all those who will come

Generation X- Greg (my supportive husband and best friend)

Baby Boomers – Vonna, Alan and Geri,
Bob and Judy, Robert, and Dee

Veterans- James and LaVon, and Beverly

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

"Organizations are social institutions. They consist of groupings of people whose activities are directed towards the achievement of a common purpose" (Sadler 9). As more and more organizations search for answers to issues relating to productivity, performance, and team-based work environments, behavior becomes a crucial study to those who have a vested interest in successfully shaping the organization. "Human beings, however, bring their whole selves to work" (Sadler 9). The recognition of the whole self in organizations requires an in-depth look at the patterns that shape behaviors. This study will focus on addressing the co-mingling of generations in organizations as it impacts individual and organizational behavior.

Evolving research leads both individuals and organizations to recognize the role of generations in the workplace. The rise of the contemporary organization faces many issues on the road to success. Most of these issues revolve around individual behavior. Understanding employee behavior requires recognition of the need for people to find answers to questions about *people*. In their book entitled Generations at Work, Ron Zemke, Claire Raines and Bob Flipiczak present new studies on the effects of the generational pull in contemporary organizations. "There is a problem in the workplace, it is a problem derived of values, ambitions, views, mindsets, demographics and

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generations in conflict" (9). Behavior shapes each of the above issues and defines a mix of individuals that compose the organizational environment. Assessment and development of individuals within the organization begins with an understanding of the events that occurred in their lifetime that continue to shape behavior in social settings.

The organization is defined as being a social structure, "a body of persons organized for some end or work" (Rousseau 2). The co-mingling of persons within an organizational environment is not a new phenomenon nor focus of study. The organizational environment has existed long before dictionaries were even in print to offer definition. Professor Edward G. Wertheim of Northeastern University gives an historical background summary on organizational behavior in his online works. He offers a perspective on the Protestant Reformation as a basis for understanding organizations today.

> Over time, the Protestant Reformation provided an ideological foundation for the modern industrial society by suggesting that work is now a profound moral obligation, a path to eternal salvation. The focus is this world and materialism, not the next world. The individual's obligation is self-discipline and systematic work. (Wertheim 1)

Organizations have evolved into social entities where individuals come to perform for the purpose of being rewarded in the end. As in any organization throughout history and continuing to the present, individuals bring a predetermined set of goals to the organization. "Behavior is basically goal

oriented. In other words, our behavior is generally motivated by a desire to attain some specific results" (Hersey 25).

The purpose of the organization as a whole is to identify and achieve specific goals in order to deliver a product or service, ultimately resulting in a profit center to reward individuals through monetary and other incentives. The organization is made up of individuals that exhibit behaviors, stemming from internal and external motives, which are based on individual experiences. Thus, the co-mingling of individuals within the organization forms a melting pot in which behaviors coincide and collide, resulting in dissonance of basic perceptions. Dissonance is defined as being "a state in which cognitive discrepancy is produced between two events, such that one cognition is in direct contradiction to another" (Stratton 80). Therefore, one can draw the conclusion that if the organizational beliefs, attitudes and behaviors are not in line with an individual's beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, dissonance can and probably will occur. Throughout history, many studies have drawn theorists to conclusions on individual behavior inside the organization. In the book, Management of Organizational Behavior, the authors symbolize Kurt Lewin's fundamental equation of human behavior:

Figure1

Formula for Human Behavior

$B=f(P,S)$

B represents individual behavior.
f represents a function of, or is caused by P(person) or S (situation).
B is a *function* of something both inside the *P*erson and outside the person
in the *S*ituation.

SOURCE: <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u> 7th Edition
(Hersey 24 & 25).

This formula reinforces the impact of behaviors in the organizational

environment by focusing on the internal and external factors that shape behaviors.

Individuals may choose to reflect and act according to past experience, therefore

exercising both the (P) person and the (S) situation. Individuals may also choose

to behave differently as the "proper way to behave" in the organization. The

conflicting behaviors then result in dissonance between the *P*erson and the

*S*ituation.

Industrial psychologist, Norman R.F. Maier, offers another formula when

considering individual behavior within the organizational environment. The

Causal Sequence model, noted in Illustration 2, is also depicted in <u>Management of

Organizational Behavior</u> and offers a detailed explanation of performance

behavior.

Figure 2

The Casual Sequence

$$S \leftrightarrow O \rightarrow B \rightarrow A$$

S represents the situation or stimulus
O represents the Person or Organism
B represents the Behavior
A represents the Activity or Accomplishment

SOURCE: Management of Organizational Behavior
7th Edition (Hersey 26).

The Causal Sequence provides an explanation of the internal and external

forces that guide behavior, but also introduces the activity or accomplishment

desired. Individuals and organizations will behave in conjunction with the desired

activity or accomplishment that has been predetermined prior to the conduct of

the behavior sequence(s). In Maier's own words:

> In order to explain behavior, one must include a description of the
> S (Situation) as well as of the O (Organism). The interaction
> between them must precede the behavior that results from the
> interaction. The product of this interaction in psychology is called
> perception. (the resultant) behavior (B) causes changes which alter
> the relationship between the organism (O) and its world. The
> change produced by behavior is an accomplishment (A). This
> accomplishment may be desirable or undesirable. In either case it
> may alter the stimulus-situation....Thus behavior of one person
> may influence that person's world and it may also influence other
> people. (Hersey "The Management of . . .7th Edition" 26 & 27)

The thought that one person's behavior can influence another person's behavior may be construed or misconstrued as control. The motive for the behavior may not be control, but an individual may perceive the motive as a desire to control. As individuals co-mingle in an organizational structure, perceptions and motives play an important role in behavior. A motive is "a specific inferred reason put forward to explain the likelihood of a particular behaviour occurring" (Stratton 173). Motives are essential aspects of behavior in both individual and organizational roles. The motive for behavior on both the individual and organizational level has a direct connection with the role that the individual plays within the organization—or the role of the organization in the relationship to other social systems. One may be motivated to perform in one way based on past experiences where a positive outcome occurred and un-motivated to behave in other ways based on negative outcomes from past experiences. Similarly, organizations may behave in the same manner as the individual: what produces positive rewards may remain in focus and behaviors that support such positive outcomes are rewarded. As with any reversal of fortune, the opposite for both individuals and organizations holds true: the reward for negative behavior may inspire the negative behavior to recur based on the reward of feedback from others within the organization.

"An organizational role can be defined as a set of expectations held by others concerning the behavior of the incumbent of a particular role in a social system" (Sadler 10). More particular than any job description or position statement within the organizational structure, each individual is expected to

perform roles in a specific style of behavior, which may or may not be communicated to the individual. "Almost without exception, organizations have formal status systems which exercise a strong influence on behavior" (10). Perceptions and assumptions often motivate the behavior of individuals in various roles. Individuals have a tendency to adopt such behaviors to attain the status of the accompanying role.

As in any social system, roles play important parts in relationship to the whole. As organizations change to meet the standards set by consumers, to outperform competition, and to survive in a highly volatile society, they are confronted with a multigenerational workforce.

The overall purpose of this study will be to examine the impact of the multigenerational mix in contemporary organizations and the effects that each generation imposes on behaviors within the social system of the organization. The co-mingling of generations inside the organizational environment forces executives, managers, and employees to consider the shaping influences of generations and the consequent behaviors that impinge on both individual and organizational behavior.

"To begin to understand the impact of generations in the organization, one must consider the history of the generational mark. ...we have to start with the building block of generations: the cohort. Derived from the Latin word for an ordered rank of soldiers, cohort is used by modern socials scientists to refer to any set of persons born in the same year" (Strauss "Generations. . ." 44). For the purpose of this study, the cohort groupings of generations will be based on the

works compiled by, Ron Zemke, Claire Raines and Bob Flipiczak in <u>Generations at Work</u>. "Most of us think of ourselves as individuals and underestimate how much we have in common with fellow members of our cohort" (Zemke 13). The earmark of an individual will always remain a primary focus in the study of behavioral science, but the cohort groupings that are focused on in this study bring together a series of events that have lasting impressions on the shaping of individual behavior.

"It's hard to imagine a single event that had a greater instant effect on the collective behavior of an American generation than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor" (Brokaw 1). Tom Brokaw, NBC Nightly News anchor, penned an article in <u>Newsweek</u> describing the sacrifices of the Veteran Generation. The article entitled, "A Generation's Trial by Fire," speaks of the heroic efforts of those who sacrificed many personal freedoms to defend their American freedoms. "The day they heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor they knew their world had changed. They just didn't know how much" (Brokaw 2).

September 11, 2001 the world witnessed the branding of a new generational scar. Terrorists attacked the World Trade Center in New York, and the United States Pentagon outside Washington D.C. The New York Twin Towers housed both national and international commerce, while the Pentagon harbors many facets of American government and military representatives. "None of us will ever forget this day" (Levins 1). These words, and similar expressions echoed throughout the nation as people came to realize that these events were

changing the landscape of existence, shaping individual behaviors, and bringing
new meaning to individuals lives.

Ultimately such events color the social system of the organizational
environment. If an experience impacts behavior, then one cannot help but focus
attention on the events that occur throughout generational cycles and the
importance of these events to the study of organizational behavior. To begin to
understand the cohort groupings, the following chart illustrates the association of
generations in terms of birth years, and assigns generational membership:

Table 1

Categorizing Cohorts in Generations

Cohort	Born Between	Age in 2001
Veteran	1922-1943	79-58
Baby Boomer	1943-1960	58-41
Generation X	1960-1980	41-21
Nexters/Generation Y	1980-2000	21-1

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 3)

Each generation is shaped through the events and circumstances that shape
its behaviors. From the Great Depression to the Internet, history has marked each
cohort and presented the opportunity to shape behaviors and conditioned
responses based on experiences.

> Common beliefs and behavior of a generation show its members to
> be different from people born at another time. They are the means
> by which a generation moves history. No element of belief or
> behavior ever appears uniformly across all members of a
> generation, but conspicuous elements often do appear in a decisive
> majority of members. (Strauss "The Fourth Turning. . . 66)

While no cohort grouping is said to act exactly in the same manner all of

the time, research shows that behaviors of each cohort strongly resembles the

characteristics of each generation. When considering the impact of the cohort on

organizational behavior, one confronts the roles of generations in the

organizational environment.

> To be effective with other human beings, we must know them as
> individuals – their unique background, personality, preferences,
> and style. However, knowing generational information is also
> tremendously valuable; it often explains the baffling and confusing
> differences behind our unspoken assumptions underneath our
> attitudes. (Zemke 14)

For organizational members, there is no better time than now for this

understanding. The organizational environment, for the first time ever, is a co-

mingling of each cohort grouping, resulting in events and experiences that shape

understandings and alter individual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The

understanding of each cohort membership may aid in dispelling the myths that are

associated with a specific cohort.

The understanding of each cohort membership may aid in dispelling the

myths that are associated with a specific cohort. Table 2 represents the number of

individuals by cohort grouping. The cohort groupings are based on information

extrapolated from the January 2001 online issue of <u>Employment Earnings,</u>

sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 2

Cohorts in the Workplace

Cohort	Age	Percentage
Veteran	58-75 and over	22.4
Baby Boomer	58-41	29.5
Generation X	21-41	37.8
Nexters	16-21	10.3
Total		**100**

SOURCE: National Bureau of Labor Statistics
                www.bls.gov/pdf/cpsaat3.pdf

"These four generations—Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters—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 25). The mesh of characteristics of each of the generation cohorts will

leave a lasting impression on the study of organizational behavior. Executives,

managers, and employees are re-inventing the organizational environment by

focusing on behavioral issues and trying to piece together an understanding of

themselves and each other. Organizations are striving for harmony, attempting to reach a level of understanding for the betterment of individual and organizational success.

Historical events, parental guidance, educational experience, and personal situations have lasting effects on the behaviors of individuals as well as organizations. One may conclude that the collision of these past experiences in conjunction with new experiences may change, alter or redefine perceptions of individual and organizational behaviors.

In Chapter II of this study, the reader will be exposed to a wide range of authors and publications that have presented these issues over time. The reader will be exposed to, and develop a broad understanding of individual, organizational and generational behavior. The reader may attain from Chapter II a developed sense of understanding for the importance of this study.

Chapter III of this study will discuss the views and research of a select group of authors that effect each cohort grouping in relationship to individual and organizational behavior. This portion of the study will unfold in a detailed manner and focus specifically on the elements of behavior that shape individuals within cohort groupings. Chapter III will also explore environmental causes and effects, culture, self-defeating behaviors, and learning methods, all of which create an impression on both individual and organizational behavior.

Chapter IV will provide an analysis and evaluation of the research that supports the importance of creating and understanding individual behavior in organizational environments. Chapter IV will suggest that such a perspective

involves a paradigm shift in thinking and the importance of understanding

relationships between cohort groupings and individual behaviors.

Finally, Chapter V will discuss the importance of the role of behavioral

studies. It will offer professional insight on applying this study to all levels of the

contemporary organization. This study will conclude with recommendations for

closing future gaps through a developed understanding of the generational

differences that divide us.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The notion that history repeats itself has been taught by historians for many years. Recognizing that events of generations impact productivity, performance, and the overall behavior of individuals as well as organizations is relatively new. Cohort groupings are realizing the magnitude of influence that their shared behaviors, beliefs and attitudes have on organizations.

The behavioral patterns of a specific cohort grouping are shaped by the events that the cohorts have confronted in their lifetime and the ways they chose to cope with them. The events are catalysts for forming beliefs and attitudes that shape behavior. These behaviors impact the behavior of organizations.

Many organizational environments have not previously considered the dynamics of generational cohorts. The past decades have warranted insight on such studies due to the recognition of *people*. Reliance on studies such as this evolves and transforms the traditional paradigm to focus on improvement in organizational life.

Generational Study

William Strauss and Neil Howe are authors of works dedicated to the understanding, patterns, and presumed fates of generations. Each of them lends expertise in areas that impact the generational studies that they present. William

Strauss and Neil Howe are commonplace names to those who have historical, political, philosophical, and generational interests. Through lectures, publications, and personal works they have dedicated their interests to educating and informing those who take interest in historical events that shape generational behaviors.

In their book, <u>Generations</u>, Strauss and Howe take an in-depth look at historical events. In their preface, the authors provide a valuable contribution to the focus of this study:

> Once you have read this book, we expect you will reflect
> differently on much that you see in yourself, your family, your
> community and the nation.... In this book, we describe what we
> call the "peer personality" of your generation. You may share
> many of these attributes, some of them, or almost none of them.
> Every generation includes all kinds of people.... your generation's
> collective mind-set cannot help but influence you—whether you
> agree with it or spend a lifetime defending it. (Strauss 7-9)

<u>Generations</u> is dedicated to providing an understanding of what shapes the behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of each cohort, through an understanding of the events that contributed to each of the cohort grouping's behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Strauss and Howe offer the reader an understanding of *peer-personality*, the guidelines by which a cohort is formed and expressed. "Peer personality is a generational persona recognized and determined by (1) a common age location; (2) common beliefs and behaviors; and (3) perceived membership in a common generation" (Strauss 64).

Generations provides an understandable layering of events that illustrate the impact of *peer personality* and its effects on individual and collective cohort behaviors. In addition, the book offers an understanding of the social behaviors that work in conjunction with *peer personality* to form the associated behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of generations. "A social moment is an era, typically lasting about a decade, when people perceive that historic events are radically altering their social environment" (Strauss 71). Together the *peer personality* and the *social moment* provide a foundation for understanding generational behaviors.

Strauss and Howe co-authored The Fourth Turning in 1997, to offer further understanding of behaviors, beliefs and attitudes in a specific cohort grouping. Strauss and Howe describe historical events in seasonal cycle formats. As seasons change from warm to cold, so do generations— not in terms of temperatures, but in terms of change in behaviors, beliefs and attitudes adopted by each generation as a result of the events of time.

Strauss and Howe host a World Wide Web site to offer explanation of the The Fourth Turning, and to aid in the understanding of cycles and rhythmic tones that generations hear and respond to in accordance. "Arthur Wing Pinero has written, the future is only the past again, entered through another gate" (www.fourthturning.com 1). Strauss and Howe portray in their work not only the past, but also the future "entered through another gate." The book and the online work offers a rich understanding of the patterns of time and history and its link to behavior.

On September 13, 2001 Strauss and Howe offered insight to the question of a Fourth Turning as a result of the Terrorists attacks. From a cyclical and rhythmic standpoint, the following was offered by Strauss and Howe through a series of questions to aid in the preparation of each cohort grouping, concerning the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that would result in Fourth Turning

> Are the Silent [Veteran], as yet, sufficiently diminished in institutional influence? Are most Boomers any more ready….to leave the shadow of their Silent mentors and assume the Gray Champion mantle? Are Gen Xers truly ready to assume a new midlife role as social anchors, family protectors, and buck-stopping managers? And can Millennials [Generation Y]—the oldest of whom are just now celebrating their 19th birthday—yet to be expected to participate in a collective rite of passage and become fully aware of their new generational role? (www.fourthturning.com/forums/viewtopic.php?topic=195&forum =2)

"Generations catalyze around a defining moment, an event so momentous that all members of the generation can tell you forever after where they were when the event took place" (Zemke 33). Ron Zemke, Claire Raines and Bob Flipczak through their work on Generations at Work, provide a cohort- by-cohort description of behavioral styles. Their work is now considered a pocketguide to understanding cohort behavior and how to manage its existence in the workplace. From Veterans to Generation Y, the authors provide details on behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of each cohort grouping. "In times of uncertainty and anxiety, differences between groups and sets of people, even generations, become tension producing and potential flash points" (Zemke 13). Each cohort grouping is

portrayed through example and summarized with a *how to* guide for dealing with generational behaviors that exist in the contemporary organization.

In the article, What's your Generation?, Bob Dart examines the generations and offers insight on cohort personalities. "Shared historical experiences define values and viewpoints of people born in the same era, and that commonality lasts for the rest of their lives" (Dart).

Consultants Samantha Sannella, Marianne Speirs, Theresa Goosen and Naomi Morshita, all of HOK design and consulting firm in St. Louis, Missouri, write online to offer considerations of workspace design. "Generations of people are linked through shared life experiences from their formative years....this forms bonds between members who develop and retain similar values and life skills" (Sanella 3). The importance of the workspace design study offers insight on attraction, retention and overall productivity to organizations. The recognition of diversity of the needs each cohort calls for as requirements trickles into all facets of organizational studies.

Online one can access www.generations.com a site dedicated to the understanding of generations from vantage-points such as marketplace, salesforce, and workplace. The predominate feature in relationship to this study is offered through the site's comedic viewpoint of generations and the attempt to understand their behavioral patterns.

> Employers have explored workforce diversity issues ranging from
> race to ethnicity and from gender to thinking styles. But they have
> failed to recognize a profound threat that costs organizations
> literally billions of dollars each year— generational differences.
> (www.generations.com/topic.html).

Carol Orsag Madigan of Business Finance Magazine, writes in her online report, Managing Across Generations, "The U.S. workforce is entering a difficult age" (Madigan 1). The overall complexity of the diversity of generations is offered in this article by reporting on the various dilemmas that the generational mix adds to the organizational environment.

A collection of professional responses to the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on America was published in American Demographics, the article titled, What's Next? 9.11.01., offers various insight to behaviors, beliefs and attitudes. Neil Howe submits, "Each generation replaces the vacuum left behind" (Fetto 37). Ryan Matthews a futurist from Michigan states, "the loss of innocence….that's a bill we will be paying for a generation at least" (Fetto 39). The magnitude of the September 11, 2001 events will take years to unfold and then to measure the effects on each generational cohort. What surfaces in the short term will be the effects on individual and organizational behaviors as a result of the September 11th, 2001 events.

While research is showing more and more indicative responses to the impact of generations, the overall understanding of the generational cohorts remains broad and welcomes detail. While no study on generational effects can ever replace the importance of individual characteristics the importance for the presentation of research on both individual and organizational behavior surfaces and prompts insight.

<u>Individual and Organizational Behavior</u>

Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D. and Robert E. Hardy, Ed.D wrote <u>Self-Defeating</u>

<u>Behaviors</u>, to aid in the understanding of why individuals behave in ways that are

counterproductive to a healthy response to both themselves and outside stimuli.

Through recalling case studies, they present cases in which self-defeating

behaviors have worked to offer individuals an opposite reaction to a situation than

the one that was actually desired.

> A true self-defeating behavior is an action or attitude that once
> worked to help an individual cope with a hurtful experience but
> that now works against the individual to keep him or her from
> responding to new moments of life in a healthy way. (Cudney 11)

Dr. Cudney and Dr. Hardy provide reasons for performance behavior and

adopted methods of coping ineffectively with situations that individuals confront

through one's lifetime. Dr. Cudney and Dr. Hardy identify three main

characteristics of self-defeating behaviors: "a self-defeating behavior works to

help an individual deal with a hurtful or threatening situation; it is never the best

behavior that could be used in a particular situation; it guarantees the

consequences that the individual is trying to avoid in practicing it" (Cudney

16&17). Throughout their works on identifying and overcoming self-defeating

behaviors, they present information on the forces that contribute to the individual

adopting self-defeating behaviors in response to situations and ultimately themselves.

Tara Bennett Goleman, psychotherapist and author of <u>Emotional Alchemy</u>, offers insight on self-defeating behaviors in an article for <u>Bottom Line Personal</u>. The article points out that we behave as adults the way we behaved as children to help us cope with situations, but as adults these coping mechanisms may not be useful (Goleman 1). Goleman delivers the understanding of what psychotherapists refer to as schemas. "Schemas—mental filters we use and interpret and react to experiences" (1). Such schemas are a direct result of these past behaviors serving to aid us in present situations, which may or may not prove to be applicable to the situation or experience.

Stephen R. Covey author of <u>The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People</u>, delivers a deep understanding of how individuals shape their own behaviors based on the reactions and patterns to which they have grown accustomed. The book spans a variety of areas, but works to deliver the positive outcome of effectively living life from the perspective of defining and understanding one's self. In reference to the Pygmalion effect or self fulfilling prophecy theory, Covey offers, "we must look at the lens through which we see the world, as well as at the world we see, and that the lens itself shapes how we interpret the world" (Covey 17).

In their book, <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u>, Seventh Edition, Paul Hersey, Ken Blanchard and Dewey E. Johnson offer an in depth look at both the individual and the organization. From behaviors, beliefs and attitudes to the concepts of situational leadership and organizational structure the authors provide

both theoretical and application explanations on contemporary issues in organizations.

"At a time when we should be rejoicing in a golden age of plenty, we find ourselves embroiled in conflict" (Hersey 5). The conflict can be construed, as many conflicts, depending on the angle of the individual inside the organization. The authors provide understanding of concepts and applicable methods that will aid individuals within the organization to gain a better understanding of themselves and others. "Our greatest failure as human beings has been the inability to secure cooperation and understanding with others" (5).

As a follow up to their seventh edition publication, the authors have placed in print the eighth edition entitled <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u>. This edition of the book offers the same concepts as its predecessor with an expansive forum on contemporary organizational issues. Behavioral Science is one area that is refined in this edition, offering an in depth look at the applied science approach to organizations.

> If one accepts the fact that human skill development is important, one may ask what kind of expertise managers and leaders must have in order to influence the behavior of other people. We feel that managers need three levels of expertise. They must understand past and current behavior, be able to predict behavior, and learn to direct, change and control behavior. (Hersey 15)

In reference to this study, the eighth edition offers the reader a description of generational qualities and explores the need for recognition of generations in the organization. "Each generation....has special needs and wants. A one size

fits all approach just does not work" (Hersey 157). The inclusion of this

perspective in the most current edition of <u>Management of Organizational</u>

<u>Behavior</u> suggests the growing acceptance among scholars on the importance of

understanding behavioral sciences on both individual and organizational levels.

In 1997, The Drucker Foundation published <u>The Organization of the</u>

<u>Future</u>. This publication is a collective work by various contributors and offers

perspective on many organizational trends of the future. While the publication

offers many aspects for consideration, the namesake author, Peter F. Drucker,

offers in Chapter 1, a signal of understanding for the future of organizations and

what each as a collective unit must do to prepare for changes ahead.

> The organization is, above all, *social*. It is people. Its purpose
> must therefore be to make the strengths of people effective and
> their weaknesses irrelevant. In fact, that is the one thing only the
> organization can do—the one reason why we have it and need to
> have it. (Hesselbein 5)

The focus of the book, in its abbreviated works by contributors, is on the

core issue of the organization: people. From generation's to an individual's self-

esteem this book raises and offers answers to many questions concerning the fate

of the organization, and the changes that will occur as the organization of the

future evolves.

<u>The Self-Defeating Organization</u> by, Robert E. Hardy and Randy

Schwartz illustrate the patterns of behavior that organizations exercise in

recurring situations. The organization as a body of people, acts similarly to that

of the individual who propels self-defeating behaviors. "Like the character of an

individual, the character of an organization is defined by its beliefs and actions—or more accurately, its core belief system—are based on the organization's past experiences" (Hardy 45). Hardy and Schwartz provide a deep understanding of the beliefs and actions that shape organizations.

Denise M. Rousseau offers insight on both individual and organizational behavior in relationship to one another in her work on <u>Organizational Behavior in the New Organizational Era</u>. The article, published in the <u>Annual Review of Psychology</u>, offers acumen on issues that effect the organization and those that are embodied to comprise the organization. In reference to rewards, Rousseau offers an interesting perspective when it comes to understanding individual behavior within organizations. "Psychological contracts are beliefs individuals hold about the exchange relationship between themselves and an employer, in essence what people understand the employment relationship to mean" (Rosseau 6).

The introductory line in <u>Working with Emotional Intelligence</u>, by, Daniel Goleman states, "The rules for work are changing. We're being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart we are, or by training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other" (Goleman 3). Thus the author suggests that a whole new era of organizational transformation be warranted for consideration —*people*. The ability to navigate the terrain of emotional intelligence is surfacing in organizations as priority for not only leaders, but for front line employees as well.

Jack Hayes supports the people oriented trend in organizational behavior through his work in "People-Focused Organizational Paradigm Lets Staffers Shine". "What I've learned is that New Paradigm thinking is people-focused thinking. It's an organizational attitude that zeros in on healthy communications and supportive leadership" (Hayes 1). The focus of the report depicts the importance of people both as internal and external customers in respect to the organizational make-up.

David A. Garvin presents a host of information in the article, "The Processes of Organization and Management," written for <u>Sloan Management Review</u>, covering three levels of process found in organizations— work processes, behavioral processes, and change processes (Garvin 2). The focus of the article is to uncover the various processes present yet unknown to many organizations. "The underlying behavior patterns are normally so deeply embedded and recurrent that they are displayed by most organizational members" (Garvin 4). The article offers insight on both individual and organizational behavior.

In the article, "Mastering the Organization Culture," Edward Staples provides insight on effectiveness of implementation of processes and productivity.

> Office culture (the behavior of the staff relative to thoughts, actions, beliefs and social structures) plays a key role in determining the extent to which office automation is an effective means of improving the information and decision-making processes of business. (Staples 1)

The article implies the need for *letting go* of the motives that debilitate the organizational culture, such as "Information is power, fear of losing power (formal and informal)....those who control have real power" (1).

For the purpose of this study, focus has been on select materials offering a broad range of information. While each contribution has unique detail and perspective, the overall message of the featured publications focuses on the reiteration of generational, individual and organizational behavior characteristics and patterns. This reinforcement also lends to the overall purpose of this study and provides insight on <u>the co-mingling of generations in organizations as it impacts individual and organizational behavior.</u>

Chapter III

SELECTIVE REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

Understanding how the co-mingling of generations impacts individual and organizational behavior relies on understanding individual and generational patterns that comprise the organizational environment. Exploration of the elements that shape individual behavior encompass environmental causes and effects, culture, self-defeating behaviors, and learning methods. Each of these elements may act in accordance with one another or may be examined separately. This in-depth study will view the elements acting in accordance with one another. Selected material for this portion of the study includes, <u>Self-Defeating Behaviors</u>, by Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D. and Robert E. Hardy Ed.D, <u>Generations at Work</u>, by Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Flipiczak, and <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u>, by Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard and Dewey Johnson. Each author has contributed to behavioral studies through either focus on individual, organizational or generational behavior and their impact on social systems either in part or in entirety.

Investigating generational cohort grouping behaviors focuses on commonalties of each cohort and their behavioral methods. Behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of individuals belonging to a cohort have a lasting impression on

organizational culture, due to the common thread that each organization

possess—*people*.

Individual Behavior

"At each new moment in life, people choose to behave in one of two
ways: They opt for either a self-defeating behavior or a life enhancing behavior"
(Cudney 1). As an individual passes through life-cycle phases, one strives to
achieve life-enhancing behavior. Individuals inherently believe that each new
moment of life brings the opportunity for growth and enhancement of behaviors,
beliefs, and attitudes. Elements that shape the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes are
as unique as a human finger print—no two are ever the same. Each individual
possesses the choice to react to each new moment of life by developing behaviors,
beliefs, and attitudes that inspire growth or result in self-defeat.

As mentioned in Chapter II, the definition of a self-defeating behavior is:

> ...an action or attitude that once worked to help an individual cope
> with a hurtful experience but that now works against the individual
> to keep him or her from responding to new moments of life in a
> healthy way. (Cudney 11)

When an individual makes the choice to react with a self-defeating behavior, the

pattern of behavior becomes ingrained and therefore similar reactions will surface

each time an individual is faced with a similar situation. "The individual's logic

is still working flawlessly—which, paradoxically, leads him or her to repeat time

and again a behavior that simply doesn't work" (12).

In order to understand self-defeating behaviors and their impact on an

individual, an in-depth look at the patterns of behavior that have been formed

throughout his or her life-span becomes crucial to acknowledging both the self-

defeating behavior and ultimately developing new methods for making life-

enhancing choices.

To uncover a self-defeating behavior, an individual must look at how the

self-defeating behavior was adopted in the beginning. The two-step process for

identifying a self-defeating behavior is (1) how the behavior came to be (2) what

can be done to substitute a life-enhancing behavior for a self-defeating behavior

(Cudney 12). As human beings, filled with thoughts and emotions, no one is

immune to self-defeating behaviors. Therefore, it becomes important to develop

an understanding of how behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes are embraced by an

individual.

There are essentially three general characteristics of a self-defeating

behavior as defined by authors Milton R. Cudney, Ph.D. and Robert E. Hardy,

Ed.D in their book Self-Defeating Behaviors.

Table 3

General Characteristics of Self-Defeating Behaviors

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1. At one point or another, a self-defeating behavior works to help an individual with a hurtful or threatening situation.
2. It is never the best behavior that could be used in a particular situation.
3. It guarantees the consequences that the individual is trying to avoid in practicing it.

SOURCE: Self-Defeating Behaviors (Cudney 16 &17)
As noted by italic in cited in text.

Self-Defeating behaviors can be compared to a wolf in sheep's clothing. "Self-Defeating behaviors will, in the end, take you precisely where you didn't want to go" (Cudney 18). The authors illustrate the concept of choosing in a new moment of life. The illustration is based on the work of Professor Ross L. Mooney. "Professor Mooney spent much of his career attempting to identify the sources of growth and creativity" (20). In his article, "Evaluation in Higher Education," Mooney described a pictorial process of new life moments. As a result, the authors adapted a model to present "why people choose either a self-defeating behavior or winning behaviors in new moments of life" (20).

Figure 3

The Life Circulatory System
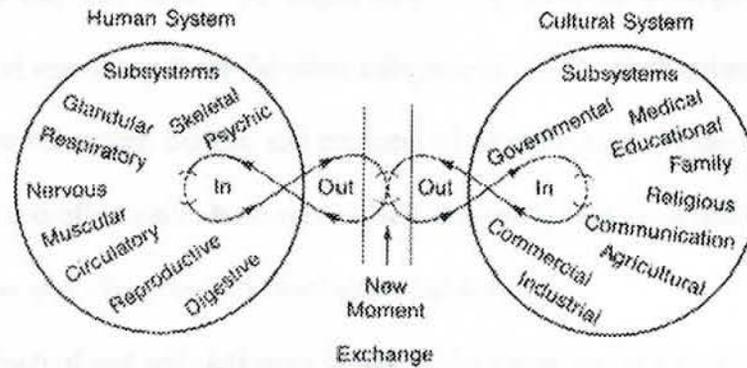
SOURCE: Self-Defeating Behaviors (Cudney 21).
As illustrated in text.

The above model acts to illustrate the environmental causes and effects

that each new moment of life serves to impact behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

The behaviors that are prevalent at the exchange point have the potential to either

become the self-defeating behavior or the life-enhancing behavior, based on the

individual's reaction at the exchange point.

> The role of each of these subsystems is to process what is received
> at the new moment of life. But because the human system and its
> cultural counterpart are linked at the new moment of life, the
> function of each internal system affects not only its own larger
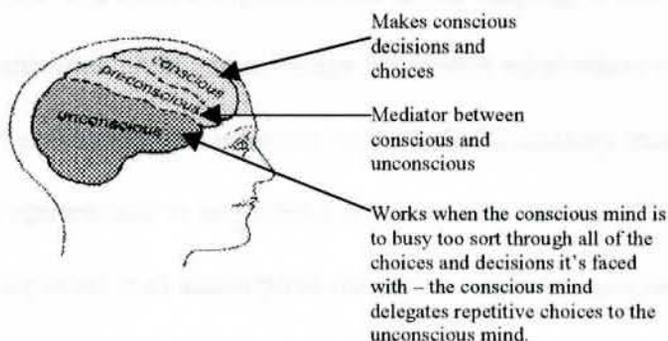> system and subsystems but also the opposite system. (Cudney 22)

Environmental causes and effects are unique to individuals, due to the experiences that each of them undergo throughout their lifecycle. Exposure to various elements of the cultural subsystem has a profound impact on the human subsystem and vice versa. "No single subsystem can do its work properly without support and assistance from the other subsystems" (23). Each subsystem works to form the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of an individual. In the new moments of life, all too often individuals rely on self-defeating behaviors without conscious recognition and, thus, renew a destructive behavior.

"Each of our self-defeating behaviors has what we might think of as its own life cycle: once it is born, it must develop, assert itself, be challenged, and sadly enough, be renewed" (54). The development of such behaviors rises out of, "...a conclusion about what will happen if a particular thought or action is chosen" (55).

One important facet of the Human Subsystem in relationship to behavior is the psychic subsystem: "At this level we make choices and decisions" (Cudney 25). The forces of the psychic subsystem in fact actually *lead* individuals in the choices and decisions made at the new moment of life. The concept of the psychic subsystem has evolved to become known as the conscious and unconscious mind. Each individual possesses the ability to choose and make decisions based on thought processes.

Figure 4

Psychic Subsystem

Makes conscious decisions and choices

Mediator between conscious and unconscious

Works when the conscious mind is to busy too sort through all of the choices and decisions it's faced with – the conscious mind delegates repetitive choices to the unconscious mind.

SOURCE: Self-Defeating Behaviors (Cudney 25&26).
As illustrated and cited in text.

As individuals utilize the psychic subsystem components on a daily basis, they are forming behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Each formation relies on a portion of the mind that has been activated to deal with the choices and decisions of the individual. The authors provide an important note of caution when considering the levels of the mind and their relationship to behavior.

> We do not—and let us repeat the point here for emphasis— believe that any human being comes into the world programmed for a life of discontent, suffering and disappointment…or chooses without cause or motivation to adopt a self-defeating behavior. (Cudney 30)

In order for the psychic subsystem to be activated, exposure to outside stimuli must be present. "Before a person can choose a self-defeating behavior

over a healthier alternative, some sort of toxic input from the cultural system must

work its way into the individual's human system" (30).

Cultural subsystems and their components aid in the shaping of individual

behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. A broad coverage of various subsystems is

offered in Figure 3 above. The cultural equation to the Life Circulatory model

offers the individual an opportunity to experience from outside stimuli. "The sole

concern of a cultural subsystem is to accomplish the task it has been assigned and,

in so doing, perpetuate itself" (32-33). The sum of the whole Life Circulatory

System illustrates the exchange points at which individuals choose or adopt new

behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

One subsystem of the Cultural System is the educational subsystem. The

educational subsystem aids in the explanation of the learning methods of

individuals and their exposure to the various forms of learning. The development

of behaviors, whether self-defeating or life-enhancing, may be related to the

educational environment in which an individual gains and stores knowledge

related to the experience of their educational instruction.

> The educational subsystem hasn't the time or resources to analyze
> each individual's thought processes and personal history for the
> purpose of designing a program of learning that meets the person's
> unique needs. It simply decides in advance what the needs are and
> meets these assumed needs as best it can. (Cudney 33)

It is through this universal learning program that individuals adopt

behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes beginning at a young age and continuing

throughout their educational experiences. As individuals are exposed to situations in the educational subsystem the potential for molding "appropriate" behaviors is reinforced by the subsystem itself. The adoption of these imposed factors may not be in accordance with the individual's personal experiences and therefore dissonance advances.

A second influential subsystem established by Cudney is the family. "In terms of an individual's growth and development, the family subsystem has a profound influence" (Cudney 35). The rearing that an individual experiences serves as a foundation for the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes he/she carries throughout life. Reliance on these **learned** patterns propels and triggers behaviors based on various subsystems. "Through a combination of reinforcement or suppression,…the family subsystem "tells" the individual…" (Cudney 35).

The transmission of messages between the human and cultural subsystems confronts individuals with a multitude of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes to adopt, and adapt, based on personal experience. Executives, managers and employees' behavior is a direct result of responses chosen in any situation. More often than not, *people* choose unknowingly the pattern of self-defeat and therefore through interaction in a social system, a self-defeating behavior transpires. In order to break away from a cycle of self-defeat one of two things must occur. "We can attempt to change either the cultural system or the way we react" (Cudney 39-40).

The authors illustrate a formula for self-defeating behaviors. This formula reveals the arrival of the self-defeating behavior. The formula for creating a self-defeating behavior appears as, *"Experiences + Behavior = Conclusion"* (Cudney 45). The conclusion is drawn by the unconscious mind and therefore the individual displays and acts accordingly based on past experiences, applying those behaviors to new moments of life. "He or she unconsciously consults this formula and chooses a behavior that closely resembles the behavior used to reduce internal tension at the moment the conclusion was reached" (41).

As individuals advance through life-cycle stages, conclusions from the past accompany them. Individuals apply these behaviors to all facets of life, in reaction to all cultural systems. "It is impossible for people to believe what they know from experience is false" (38). Based on this application, self-defeating behaviors assumed by an individual to be an appropriate response often end up becoming the opposite.

"Behind every self-defeating behavior lies a faulty conclusion about ourselves and our world" (Cudney 46). Application of individual behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes accompany an individual in all facets of life. The importance of this detail arises when organizations consider the performance of an individual, development of the individual, and the culture of the organizational environment.

A broad scope of understanding arises when one looks at the generational cohorts and their life-enhancing or self-defeating behavioral patterns. The

melting pot of generations within the organizational environment brings to light a whole new discovery in relationship to life-enhancing and self-defeating behaviors. Their impact on both the individual and the organizational environment is based on interaction.

Generational Behavior

"As unique as individual experiences may be, they share a place in history with their generation" (Zemke 17). In their book, Generations at Work, authors Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Flipczak define cohort groupings and their impact on today's workplace. Understanding behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes expressed by each cohort leads one to the understanding of similar behavioral patterns found in contemporary organizations. The examination of cohorts and their unique characteristics offers guidance in understanding behavioral similarities and differences among cohort groupings. Recognizing the development of cohort grouping behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes allows further understanding of each cohort and their performance in an organizational environment.

> To be effective with other human beings, we must know them as individuals—their unique background, personality, and style. However, knowing generational information is also tremendously valuable; it often explains the baffling and confusing differences behind our unspoken assumptions underneath our attitudes. (Zemke 14)

The organizational environment is a collaboration of generations. From first timers to old timers, the organizational environment is a landscape of personalities and peer groupings that require understanding. While events that shape behavior occur daily, without recognition or publication, there are documented events and cultural experiences that lend to the development of the shaping of behaviors—held uniquely by each cohort grouping.

> Understanding generational differences is critical to making them work *for* the organization and not against it. It is critical to creating harmony, mutual respect, and joint effort where today there is suspicion, mistrust, and isolation. (Zemke 17)

Recognition of generational differences begins with an understanding of the events that occurred during formative periods of life for a cohort grouping. The Veteran generation experienced despair and economic insecurity in the Great Depression. The Baby Boomer generation ushered in the Civil Rights movement. The Generation Xer's can testify to the benefits of technological advances. Generation Next knows first hand the effects of violence in educational institutions. These powerful experiences spanning years between them shape behavior among cohort groupings. The extent to which individuals are impressed by each of these events, among many others, is just that—individual. However, as a collective grouping, the events that shape generational behaviors warrant an understanding. Table 4 illustrates the overview of events, trends, pop-culture

icons and musical artists that surfaced for each cohort grouping throughout

formative years and beyond.

Table 4

Generational Events Overview

Birth Years	1922-1943	1943-1960	1960-1980	1980-2000

Defining Events and Trends	Patriotism
	Families
	The Great
	  Depression
	WW II
	New Deal
	Korean War
	Golden Age 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
				School yard
				  violence
				Oklahoma City
				  bombing
				It takes a Village
				TV talk shows
				Multiculturalism
				Girls Movement
				McGwire and
				  Sosa

Visible Members	Harry Belafonte
	George Bush
	Jimmy Carter
	Geraldine Ferrarro
	Phil Donahue
	Sidney Poitier
	Lee Iacocca
	Gloria Steinem
	John Glenn
		Bill Clinton
		Hillary Clinton
		David
		  Letterman
		Oprah Winfrey
		Jane Pauly
		Bill Gates
		Rush
		  Limbaugh
		P.J. O'Rourke
		Mick Jagger
			George
			  Stephanopoulis
			Douglas
			  Coupland
			Kurt Cobain
			Jewel
			Brad Pitt
			Michael Jordan
			Matt Groening
			Neil Stephenson
			Michael Dell
			Adam Werback
			Meredith Bagby
				Kerri Strug
				Macauley Culkin
				Chelsea Clinton
				Tara Lipinski
				LeAnn Rimes

Music of their Early Years	Swing Big Band Glenn Miller Duke Ellington Benny Goodman Tommy Dorsey Bing Crosby Kate Smith Ella Fitzgerald	Rock 'n Roll Acid Rock Elvis The Beatles Rolling Stones Grateful Dead Beach Boys Jimi Hendrix Janis Joplin	Disco Rap Reggae Elton John Bruce Springstein Tina Turner Bon Jovi Michael Jackson	Alternative Rap SKA Remix Jewel Puff Daddy Alanis Morrisette Toni Braxton Will Smith Savage Garden

	Frank Sinatra	Bob Dylan Supremes Temptations	Gun's and Roses U2 Prince	Spice Girls Hanson Garth Brooks Backstreet Boys

SOURCE: <u>Generations at Work</u> (Zemke 24)
        As illustrated in text.

       Each cohort relies on exposure to experiences and draws upon these experiences to form behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Understanding such experiences allows people to understand the events and each other. "It means an explicit need exists for overcoming and understanding generational and communication differences to create positive ends for the organization and the individuals who inhabit it" (Zemke 13). Analysis of each cohort grouping and their styles allows insight into the differences in experience that shape behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Ultimately, the analysis offers an understanding of experiences that shape behavioral patterns that carry over into the organizational environment. "As unique as people's individual experiences may be, they share a place in history with their generation" (17).

       The analysis of each cohort will begin with the current generation that is entering today's workplace, Generation Next, and conclude with the generation that has occupied the workplace for the longest period of time the, Veterans.

Generation Next

"They just may become the most powerful generation yet" (Zemke 131).

Generation Next, born between 1980 and 2000, the oldest of this generation is

now entering the workplace—equipped with a strong value base and "teaching us

about themselves as quickly as we can absorb the information" (131). Generation

Next sparks the revolution of a new breed of employee in the workplace,

troubleshooting computers for older generations and applying "advanced motor,

spatial, and strategy skills via game technology" (137). Generation Next brings a

perspective to the workplace that to date, no other generation has brought with

such force and personality.

Generation Next is a diverse generation, bound by the commonality of

technology, social commitment and their positive outlook on life. "One of their

strongest assets is their resilience. Perhaps it's because they've known such a

different world from that of previous generations" (Zemke 143). Growing up as

Generation Next, the individuals that inhabit this generation are found to have two

very different family backgrounds. "One-third are born to single, unwed moms;

hordes of others to Boomers who postponed having children until their forties,

and now their parents are determined to do the right thing" (128). As a result of

their parenting, Generation Next has adopted strong core values as noted in Table

5 as follows. The authors provide an overview of Generation Next core values in

their works:

Table 5

Generation Next Core Values

Optimism
Civic Duty
Confidence
Achievement
Sociability
Morality
Street Smarts
Diversity

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 132). As illustrated in text.

In addition to the core values held by Generation Next, it is important to look at the events that shape their behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Generation Next has been reared in times that offered exposure to a variety of events that effect them and their future. They have been introduced to a whole new world in terms of social and political activity. Zemke, Raines and Flipczak summarize Generation Nexter's experience in the succeeding explanation:

> Though they are, in many ways, far more dependent on their
> parents than Mom and Dad were on Grandma and Grandpa,
> today's young people are also very savvy …streetwise …
> sophisticated. By the time they're ten, they know about divorce,
> drugs, AIDS, anorexia, gangs, and guns. (Zemke 136)

The choices of career paths for this generation may, in many cases, be attributed to the events as described in Table 4, focusing on the social

commitments this generation seems compelled to enhance. "Their most popular career choices are education and teaching, medicine, business, computer-related fields, law and psychology" (Zemke 143).

Generation Next, however, besides the positive attributes they bring to the workforce is accompanied by some pitfalls in their behavior, beliefs, and attitudes as a collective entity. Generation Next poses the following assets for today's workplace: "collective action, optimism, tenacity, heroic spirit, multitasking capabilities, technological savvy. Liabilities: need for supervision and structure, inexperience, particularly with handling difficult people issues" (Zemke 144).

While Generation Next has yet to embark full force into today's workplace, leaving unknowns to the fate of time, forecasts on Generation Next's entrance into the workplace shows this generation will be most comfortable in larger organizations. Smaller organizations will not lend to the structure and discipline required of this generation (Zemke 146). The authors offer some "basic principles" for management of this generation, based on the shaping events and collective personality of this cohort group.

Table 6

Managing Nexters

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1. ***Budget Plenty of Time for Orienting*** – Create a clear picture of your work environment…Learn about each employee's personal goals, develop a strategy for interleaving those goals with job performance.
2. ***Throw away all preconceived notions*** – Nexter's are known for "gender bending."
3. ***Teams*** – In areas where you have lots of members of Generation Next, consider expanding the size of your teams, and appointing a strong team leader.
4. ***Possible Conflicts*** – Be sensitive when Generation Next and Generation X work side by side. The gap between those two generations may end up making the one between Boomers and Xers look tame.
5. ***Training*** – Grow training departments. Nexters want to continue their education and develop their work skills.
6. ***Mentor*** – Establish mentoring programs, they work well with Nexter employees. They've likely been part of mentoring programs in the school. Consider matching young workers with your most seasoned people with whom they say they resonate.

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 146&147)
          As cited in portion or entirety.

Overall, Generation Next presents the contemporary organization a chance to embrace the contributions Generation Next has to offer. While this generation is just beginning to "tell its story" in relationship to the workplace, the information gathered shows a positive forecast for this generation's contribution to organizational environments. "At first glance, and even at second glance, Generation Next may be the ideal workforce—the ideal citizens—and generally the kind of kids you want dating your sons and daughters" (Zemke 143).

<u>Generation X</u>

Born between 1960 and 1980, Generation X may well be defined by one word—survival. "Gen X's collective psyche was to be shaped by a survivor mentality…this generation has developed an almost myopic concern with survival, both economic and psychological" (Zemke 94). Generation X stands alone in personality, and defies categorization. There are several phrases associated with the Generation cohort, yet none are adopted by the generation as a whole. "They've been called "Slackers," "Twentysomethings," "Baby Busters," "Post Boomers," and "The Thirteenth Generation" (96). Each label adhered to Generation X is cast aside by Generation X members, and thus they have established a unique position in the organizational environment.

While growing up, Generation X was symbolized by a "parent free childhood, a time to figure it out yourself" (Zemke 98). Independence is a recognizable mark of this generation and members of this cohort share many commonalties that result from their adolescence. Their overall personality is summarized below:

Table 7

Generation X Personality and Core Value Profile

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1. **Self-Reliant** – They were the most attention-deprived, neglected group of kids in a long time. Nearly half of their parents' marriages ended in divorce. They became accustomed to being alone, yet feelings of

abandonment shaped their psyches. They yearned for real attention, and the concept of quality time rang hollow with them.

2. **Seek a Sense of Family** – This generation has learned to create its own surrogate families by assembling a close circle of friends. They'll look for it on the job if they haven't found it elsewhere.

3. **Balance** - Their parents devoted their lives to the religion of work. It looked like workaholism to their kids, who couldn't help but notice that most adults decide their self-worth based on their success on the job. Xer's simply want to "work to live." They don't buy the supermom or superdad theory that you can have it all.

4. **Nontraditional about time and space** – They don't come close to understanding "line of site" management. They show up late, leave early, and appear to be "slackers" because they are keeping their eye on the ball—getting the work done.

5. **Informality** – Being able to go to work in jeans and a T-shirt on Friday, many assert, isn't just a perk. They say it actually makes them work harder and get more done.

6. **Casual Approach to Authority** – Generation X isn't so much against authority, they simply aren't impressed by it.

7. **Skeptics** – They have learned not to place faith in others, to be very careful with their loyalty and commitments, for fear of getting burned.

8. **Technologically Savvy** – They have a natural affinity for technology, Generation Xer's simply have it in their bones.

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 98-102)
          As cited in portion or entirety.

In the workplace, Generation X has impacted organizational culture by displaying their need for casual and personal relations in the organizational environment. For this generation there is no other option or choice in terms of needs for the independent, fun, family-like atmosphere that they demand. "They're not likely to change their perception…Early work experiences shape workers' attitudes about corporate culture" (Zemke 111). This generation does not relinquish easily their behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Generation X

characteristics in the workplace include "adaptability, technoliteracy,

independence, tendency not to be intimidated by authority, and creativity.

Liabilities for Generation X in relationship to the workplace include: poor people

skills, impatience, inexperience, and cynicism" (110).

Generation X occupies the spectrum when it comes to workplace choices.

When looking at Generation X, the authors note that there are essentially two

categories of Generation X workers. The first half of the Xer's known as, "Please

sir, can I have another," and "the gold collar worker" (Zemke 102-106).

The first half of Generation X entered the workforce equipped with

education to offer employers. Tough economic times and downsizing

corporations left this half of the generation working in minimum wage

atmospheres. The promise that education and hard work held for them was short-

lived in the real world. The effects of this experience would not go unnoticed by

this half of the generation. They remain skeptical of economic conditions and

rely on skills attained through experience to move them forward in the

organizational environment.

The gold collar worker had a different experience entering the workforce.

The labor shortage experienced upon their entrance into organizational

environments gave this half of the generation an open opportunity to "call the

shots" when it came to employment terms. Education combined with technology

gave this half of the generation negotiation power when it came to entering the

workforce. While gold collar workers were being enticed with employment

packages, they still as a collective whole know the independence they need for survival in the workplace. "Eighty percent of all new businesses started in the last three years belong to Xers, according to Scott West, director of National Marketing for Van Kampen funds" (Zemke 114). The reliance on independent states of employment and freedom from authority, rules, and regulations entice Generation X into entrepreneurship.

Generation Xers that are employed by organizations, possess a very distinct style when it comes to leading and working in teams. "Generation X managers tend to be fair, competent, straightforward leaders" (Zemke 115). Their contribution to teams is important to them; however, they prefer to perform their portion of the work independently. Gathering on the job, as a circle of friends would, is preferred by this generation. While a strong social atmosphere is preferred, Generation X elects to work alone when it comes to the production of their segment of an assignment.

Managers who are assigned to Generation X employees should be prepared to "create a fun, flexible, educational, nonmicromanaged work atmosphere" (Zemke 117). Recognition of this cohort's independence is of utmost importance. Manager's will be expected to offer constructive feedback, as well as providing necessary education for improvement. Flexible managers will encourage Generation X to solve their own issues in relationship to the overall issues for the organization.

Generation X is maturing in the organizational environments, thus taking over more and more management and leadership positions. It is important to recognize the contribution that Generation X can make to the organizational environment. "Employers and marketers who ignore this group or write them off as cynical slackers unwilling to make a real contribution to the workforce will be buying a one way ticket to business failure in the new millennium" (Zemke 94).

Baby Boomers

"A baby was born every seventeen minutes for nineteen years" (Zemke 64). This surge in the American population brought forward a whole new generation that would enter the workplace years later with a significant presence. The amount of Baby Boomers still outnumber any other American generation to date. Their generation held hope and promise, anxious to carry themselves, their parents and their country into prosperity.

The psyche of the Baby Boom generation proves to remain steadfast throughout their life cycle. "The children of the 1940s and 1950s grew up in optimistic, positive times. For the United States, it was a time of expansion" (Zemke 65). This growth in American culture provided Baby Boomers with opportunities to create a new way of life for them—a different scenario than their parents had growing up in the Depression. Baby Boomers were born to parents that adored them and indulged them in their development. Baby Boomers were reared, for the most part, in a loving, secure environment with a strong sense of

nuclear family. The personality and core values that characterize this generation

are as follows:

Table 8

Baby Boomers Personality and Core Value Profile

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1. **They believe in growth and expansion** – having witnessed many
   first time events, Baby Boomers strongly believe in the statement
   "to boldly go were none had gone before."
2. **Stars of the Show** – They had working fathers and stay at home
   mothers. *Time* magazine gave its coveted man of the year award to
   the Baby Boom generation in 1967.
3. **Optimistic** – they see the world as having infinite possibilities, to
   be shaped and played with aggressively.
4. **Teamwork**- they had to collaborate and cooperate. They
   collectively assumed that the world actively served their needs,
   wants, and whims.
5. **Pursue Personal Gratification** – they turned resurrection and
   self-forgiveness into a high public art.
6. **Personal Growth** – Boomers in their late adolescence pursued
   spirituality, the inner world and the meaning of life. They've even
   encouraged it in the workplace.
7. **Involvement** – Boomer's have always been cool. Boomer's were
   heavy trendsetters, raising the bar. They see themselves as
   immortal – "never, never, grow up, grow old or die."

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 66-69)
              As cited in portion or entirety.

Perhaps the event that held the most impact for this generation was the

Vietnam War, an event that brought uncertainty to the landscape of a secure

generation. "The Boomers reactions to the unpopular war were as complex as the

war itself" (Zemke 69). The war was etched in the minds of the Baby Boom

generation as one of the biggest events that shaped them. Perceptions,

perspectives and attitudes regarding the Vietnam War were mixed among this

generation. The effects of the Vietnam War are confusing for this generation –

leaving no certainty about decisions that were made on behalf of them. As a

result, Baby Boomer's may be apprehensive to trust authority especially when it

comes to politics.

As Baby Boomers grew and joined the workforce, they found themselves

entering a work place that offered many opportunities. "Boomers have been

drawn to all types of industries and organizations" (Zemke 77). Various career

choices have been made by this generation, from blue collar to white collar

positions. "They prefer a workplace where there is a lot of room for relationships.

They are not however, as good at sharing as they'd like to be thought of. The

slogan "all for one and one is me" isn't foreign to a sizable number" (78).

Baby Boomers bring a wide variety of assets and liabilities to the

organizational environment. Contributions of this generation has had great

impact on the organizational environment, as it is known today. Baby Boomers

bring as assets, " service orientation, drive, willingness, relationship building, the

need to please, and team player mentality. In terms of liabilities, Boomers are

against conflict. They place emphasis on process versus results, sensitivity,

judgment, self-centeredness, and they are not known to be budget-minded" (76).

Boomers are highly committed to general education as well as business

education. "Not only do they pursue learning at work, but swarms of them sign

up for evening and weekend classes" (Zemke 78). The following was offered as

a confirmation to their commitment to learning as a cohort:

> The National Center for Educational Statistics reports that 40
> percent of Americans enrolled in adult education classes last year
> [1999], up from only about 10 percent when the Veterans were
> middle-aged, and the bulk of these participants are Boomers.
> (Zemke 78).

On the job, Baby Boomers bring as much diversity, as the cohort to which

they belong. "If they can't be the managers, they prefer to be managed by

someone who is interested in them personally" (Zemke 79). Boomers want

ownership and empowerment in their job duties. When found in leadership

positions, "their tendency is toward a collegial consensual, sometimes benignly

despotic style" (79). Subordinates however, feel differently about their

announced style of leadership. "Those who report to them have found all this to

be rather deceiving, a little disingenuous, and a bit bewildering" (79). Boomers

are known to other generations as possessing the ability to *talk the talk, yet not*

walk the walk when it comes to leadership style.

As organizational growth continues in the millennium, the Baby Boomers

will continue to show their presence among the environments. The workplace

will be dominated by the Baby Boom generation until 2015. The Baby Boom

generation is confident in its workplace position and will remain for years to

come.

<u>Veterans</u>

"They are a generation whose vision and hard work created the United States as we know it today" (Zemke 29). The Veteran generation may be known best as modern day miracle workers for their contribution to all succeeding generations. Born between the years, 1922 and 1943, the Veteran generation has persevered through wars and overcome financial insecurity to offer opportunities for each of the succeeding cohorts.

"It was a do without era...to get things done...to accomplish any goal... to bear any burden, pay any price" (Zemke 31). The Veteran generation knew first hand the meaning of the word *sacrifice*. Many sacrifices were made in conjunction with this generation, from the Great Depression to World War II, hard work and dedication to the cause reigned on high for this generation. "Their mind-set has so dominated our culture that every other set of beliefs is weighed against theirs" (30).

The Veteran generation has a personality profile that is secured by strong values. "They are solid, reliable, no-bull performers" (Zemke 30). A testament to survival and commitment to themselves, their families, and their country. An overview of the Veteran core value and personality profile follows:

Table 9

Veteran Generation Personality Profile and Core Values

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1. **Consistency and Uniformity** – In the 1930's, Birdseye introduced frozen foods—comfortably consistent, uniform, and standardized.
2. **Grand Scale** – With the invention of the automobile, the Veteran generation became mobile. Since then, Veterans are drawn to niftier, more new fandagled, bigger, better.
3. **Conformers** - They learned to "be a regular guy" and "do the right thing." Men were men…left-brained, rational, with confidence in the scientific method. Women took seriously their jobs of creating a wholesome comfortable home for the mister and the kids.
4. **Believe in Logic not Magic** – They prefer appropriate topics in conversation, uncomfortable with conversations that offer "too personal" information.
5. **Disciplined** – Veterans get frustrated, yet suffer silently when it comes to confrontations. SNAFU "situation normal all fouled up" grew out of the Veteran generation.
6. **Past Oriented and History Absorbed** – They look to the past to aid in decision making. They make decisions based on the data taken from the past perspective. The past is an important part of their sociology.
7. **Believe in Law and Order** – they have a definitive sense of right and wrong, "if life wasn't fun, those were the breaks."
8. **Conservative**- Buy American and pay in cash. Veterans are brand loyal.

Additional Core Values noted: Dedicated, Hardworking, Respect Authority, Patient, Delayed Rewards, Work before Pleasure, Believe in Honor.

SOURCE: Generations at Work (Zemke 37-40)
As cited in portion or entirety.

"Veterans are attracted to security and stability" (Zemke 49). As a result of unstable times in their youth, this generation clings to stable environments and secure income levels when it comes to occupations. They possess a strong desire to continue to work even after retirement. They are found virtually in all sectors

of enterprise. "The highest portion of self-employed workers in the United States comes from the fifty-five to sixty-four year old cohort. They are consultants, writers, researchers, and tinkererers" (49). They maintain a strong work ethic, combined with rigid standards of themselves in terms of performance. Veterans continue to contribute to the workforce by offering assets such as: "loyalty, stability, detail oriented, hard working, and thorough. The noticeable liabilities of the Veteran generation in the workplace are resistance to change, reluctance to buck the system, uncomfortable with conflict, and reticent in disagreement" (46). The Veteran generation is accustomed to the phrase "no guarantees" and relies heavily on the slogan, "an honest day's work for an honest day's pay." (Zemke 47).

As leaders, which many Veterans are today, their leadership style is distinct and direct. Veterans may be known to "take charge, delegate, and make the bulk of decisions themselves" (Zemke 52). The hierarchical method of leadership was born out of this generation as a result of military experiences and model's, like the command and control environments of the industrial settings. It is important to note that "current research shows that Nexters are attracted to this style of leadership and may actually emulate it" (Zemke 52).

As team members, Veterans are accustomed to working under rules and regulations. The transformation from hierarchical to teamwork cultures within the organization has provided many changes for the Veteran generation.

"Veterans worked on many teams, but under strong leaders who told them exactly what to do, how and when" (Zemke 52).

Managing the Veteran generation presents diversity for younger generations. For management in positions of authority over the Veteran generation, there are a few considerations to keep in mind. "Always keep in mind the workplace they first joined; it laid the foundation for the way they think of work today" (Zemke 54). Respect is a golden rule when working with the Veteran generation.

> They've seen the changes, adapted to and adopted them, but they are not necessarily enamored of them. Their adaptations are of behavior, not attitude or heart. That in and of itself is important to remember: you can rely on them to change their behavior when requested and required. Do not expect their hearts to follow. Their attitudes and thoughts are their business, not yours. (Zemke 54).

The Veteran generation will continue to leave its mark on organizational environments for years to come. They have built foundations for modern business to cling to and improve upon. This generation leaves its mark and has allowed generations that follow to explore, utilize, and surpass its initial efforts for the improvement of not only organizational environments, but of life itself.

Organizational Behavior

As mentioned in previous Chapters of this study, the overall effects of individuals and genenerational cohorts deems careful study of the effect each has

on the organizational environment itself. The organizational environment that is

comprised of *people* cannot be taken for granted. Cogs in wheels these cohorts

are not; they each possess a personality in the face of the organizational

environment and can be called upon to offer contributions that improve products

services and overall business strategies.

> Managers will face the daunting challenge of leading employees
> who will be the essential resources of twenty-first century
> organization. These employees can be categorized into several
> generations, each with special motivation and needs. (Hersey
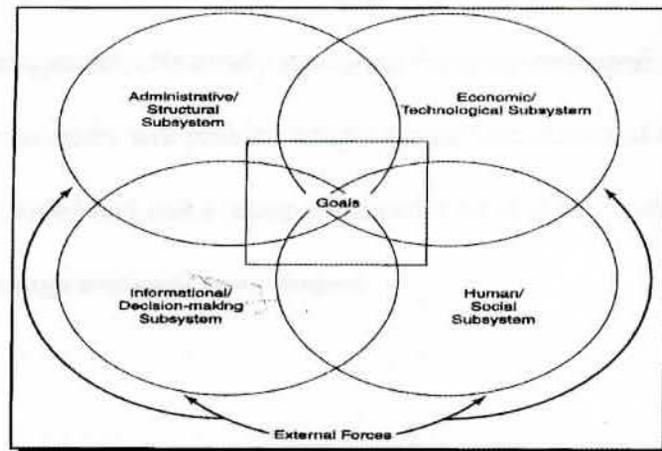> "Management of Organizational. . .8th Edition" 152).

Individual and generational attributes heavily impact behaviors, beliefs,

and attitudes in the organizational environment. As noted in Chapter 2, in their

eighth edition of <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u>, authors, Paul Hersey,

Kenneth Blanchard and Dewey Johnson dedicate a new section to the

understanding of the generational cohorts and their distinct personalities and

offerings to the organizational environment. Emphasis is placed on understanding

an individual and his/her own experiences in relationship to growth and

development within the organizational environment. Understanding cohorts and

their influence on the contemporary organization is recognized as being essential.

The authors cite Rogene Baxter and offer additional comment as follows to

illustrate the significance of the recognition of this study to the organizational

environment:

Managers and leaders need to understand people, whatever their age. They need to find out their skills, strengths, and whatever motivates them. They have to recognize that everyone is different and deal with each employee as an individual. Each generation, for example, has special needs and wants. A one-size fits all approach just does not work. Leaders must tailor their leadership to the followers. (Heresy "Management of . . . 8th Edition" 156 - 157)

As in the description of self-defeating behaviors, a model for understanding the organizational environment is offered for a deeper meaning to the complexity of understanding individual behavior patterns in relationship to the organizational environment. "Understanding past behavior is important in itself for developing effective human skills, and it also provides a framework for the next level of expertise—predicting behavior" (Hersey "Management of.Organizational . .8th Edition" 16). If the recognition of individual and generational behavior requires significant understanding in terms of management and leadership, than one must also understand the relevance of the organizational environment itself. The following illustrates the various subsystems of the organization:

Figure 5

The Interrelated Subsystems of an Organization

Figure 1-4
The Interrelated Subsystems of an Organization

SOURCE: Management of Organizational Behavior 8th Edition (Hersey 16).
As illustrated in text.

Each of these components: Administrative, Economic/Technological,
Informational, and Human/Social provide opportunities for new experiences to
individuals from which they will form behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes based, at
least in part, on past behaviors in similar situations. The importance for
understanding that the organizational environment itself is comprised of
subsystems allows one to understand that different behaviors, beliefs and attitudes
will surface depending upon the interaction between the individual and the
subsystem he or she is dealing with at any given time.

The detailed perspective offered throughout this Chapter allows a deeper understanding of the generational influences on behavior and their impact on both individuals and cohorts in the workplace. For employees, managers, and executives in organizations, understanding generational differences and developing strategies for effectively managing them has remained an oversight. Chapter IV of this study will provide insight on the importance of utilizing the information provided and make recommendations on implementing behavioral studies into the organizational environment.

Chapter IV
Results

Recognizing each individual as well as the generational mix inside an organizational environment offers executives, managers, and employees a basis for understanding how *people* impact the organization. Focusing on individuals as *people* belonging a cohort groupings and sharing similar experiences makes it possible to understand unique behaviors, beliefs and attitudes.

Chapter IV of this study will focus on the co-mingling effects of individuals and generations in the organizational environment. The results of this study will be illustrated for use at all levels of the organizational environment from top executives to front line employees. Gaining an understanding of human behavior coupled with insight on cohort behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes is important for understanding the individual within the social system of the organization. Each individual is unique and it is important to understand how individual experiences impact the interaction and overall development of all individuals in an organization.

Investment for the Future

The development of the organization as a social system largely depends on the development of the *people* that constitute the environment. *People* make up

61

the organizational environment and create the need to understand the development

of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

Roseabeth Moss Kanter offers support through her contribution in The

Organization of the Future and prospective insight in "Restoring People to the

Heart of the Organization of the Future."

> It is time for a new social contract based on new realities. This
> "contract" should show people what the company is willing to do
> to help them build their own futures. It should be an explicit
> statement of how much people are valued. And it should be a
> commitment to specific actions and specific investments in people.
> (Hesselbein 148-149)

Organizations that make investment in *people* will find that their return on

investment (ROI) will not only enhance bottom line potential, but it will

contribute to the community in which they are positioned. Investment in

developing people will not only attract recruits, but will keep them in the

organization. Focusing on the assets of human capital provides a win/win

situation for all who are considered stakeholders in the organizational

environment.

It begins with a commitment from the top of the hierarchical order – the

leaders. Leaders in positions of directing individual behaviors, beliefs, and

attitudes, must first understand their own behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. In the

book The Organization of the Future, Robert H. Rosen, author and assistant

clinical professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Washington University

School of Medicine writes in. "Learning to Lead."

> Learning to lead starts with getting to know yourself. You must
> first dig deep and get your own house in order before you can lead
> others. . . By understanding yourself at a deeper level and closing
> the gap between your ideal and current performance. (Hesselbein
> 304)

Evaluation of oneself can prove to be an overwhelming process. The

process of understanding behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes warrants the guidance of

specialized programs and qualified professionals to offer understanding and

reasons for adopting behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Professional guidance is

known to many as Behavioral Science. The exclusion of professional insight in

this process may result in false understanding and ultimately the adoption of

additional self-defeating behaviors. Once self-defeating behaviors are adopted by

leaders they consequently will be introduced into the organizational environment.

Paul Hersey, Ken Blanchard, and Dewey Johnson offer support in their

eighth edition of <u>Management of Organizational Behavior</u>. "The real test of our

abilities as leaders and managers is how effectively we can establish and maintain

human organizations for the purpose of achieving results" (Hersey 2). The need

for behavioral sciences to be implemented in organizational environments is to

provide opportunity for personal development that concludes with professional

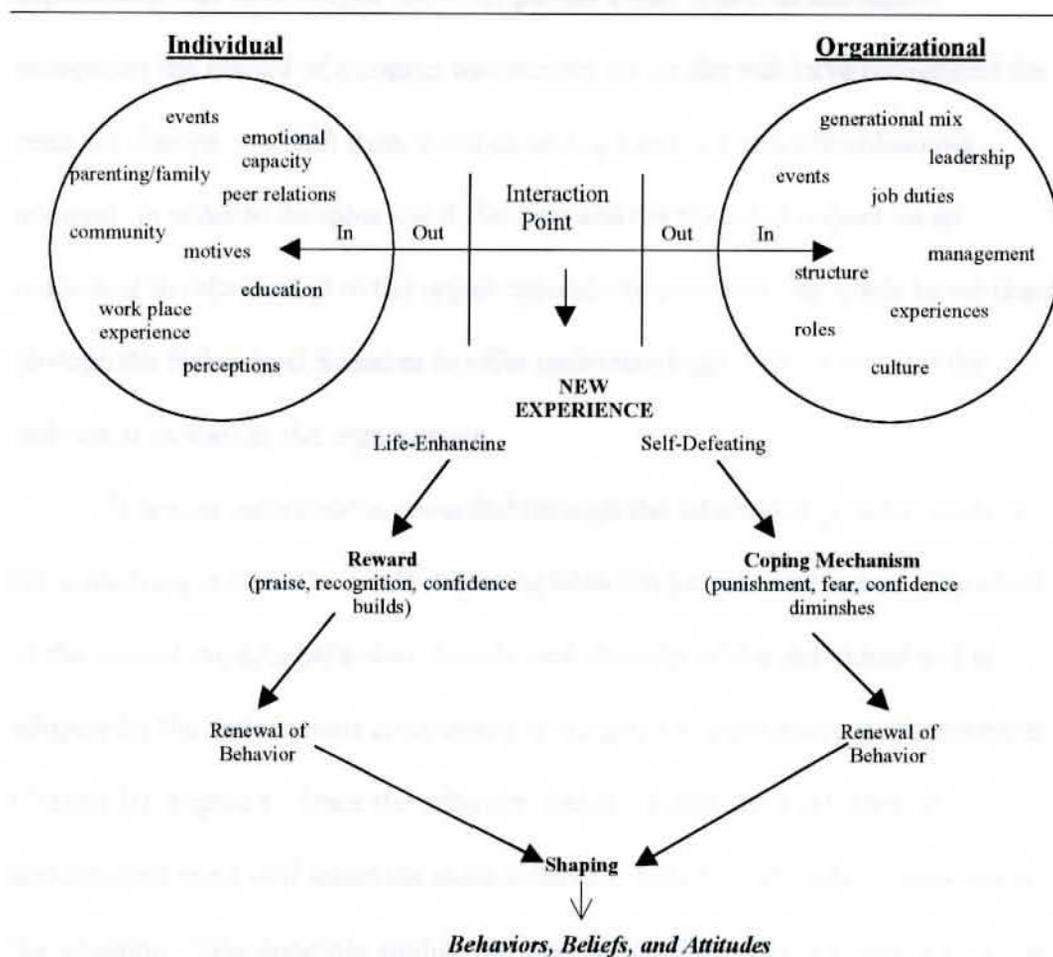success, not only for the individual, but for the organization as well.

Paradigm Shift – Application of Behavioral Circulatory Model

In Chapter III of this study, the model for The Life Circulatory System was presented as adapted by Dr. Cudney and Dr. Hardy in Self-Defeating Behaviors. This model provided recognition of the exchange process between the human and the cultural systems. As a result of the exchange process one of two things occur: an individual adopts either a life enhancing or a self-defeating behavior.

Adapting this model, into a new model shows how the individual and the organization **interact** thus **exchanging** experiences to reshape behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Figure 6 illustrates the dynamic interaction and adoption of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes both for the individual and the organization. The new model recognizes the interaction between the individual and the organization, which results in the forming of new behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

Figure 6

Behavioral Circulatory System

Individual

events
emotional capacity
parenting/family
peer relations
community
motives
education
work place experience
perceptions

Organizational

generational mix
leadership
events
job duties
management
structure
experiences
roles
culture

In   Out   Interaction Point   Out   In

NEW EXPERIENCE

Life-Enhancing   Self-Defeating

Reward
(praise, recognition, confidence builds)

Coping Mechanism
(punishment, fear, confidence diminshes)

Renewal of Behavior

Renewal of Behavior

Shaping

Behaviors, Beliefs, and Attitudes

SOURCE: Created by author, adapted from Self-Defeating Behaviors (Cudney 21).

The Behavioral Circulatory System shows the interaction between the individual and the organization when there is exposure to one another. During each interaction, there is potential for forming a new, or adopting an old behavior, belief, or attitude. One example of this process is the interaction between the generational mix and the events that an individual experiences. The individual

that is exposed to a variety of cohorts in the organizational environment may interpret the interaction as being negative and may not accommodate for the experiences that have shaped the other person's life. Once an individual recognizes the reward of a coping mechanism, he or she will have recognized the need for change—to shift from a self-defeating behavior to a life enhancing moment. In order to decipher the difference and the potential impact on an individual in relationship to the organizational environment one needs to navigate through the Behavioral Sciences to offer understanding of the change for the individual as well as the organization.

When an individual is rewarded through the interaction process, either a life enhancing moment or a self-defeating behavior pattern will occur. The result of the reward impacts behaviors, beliefs and attitudes of the individual and is adopted by the unconscious component of the psychic subsystem as illustrated in Chapter III, Figure 4. Once the behavior, belief, or attitude is adopted, the unconscious mind will select the same behavior, belief, or attitude in response to the situation. This principle applies not only to the life enhancing, but also to the self-defeating behavior pattern.

This principle is a crucial element to consider when leading and managing *people* inside the organizational structure. A behavior, belief, or attitude that is accepted by a leadership or management role becomes the norm for behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes for the organization. It is important to educate and train person's in leadership and management so they can recognize behavioral patterns. The goal for leaders and managers is to aid individuals to switch from self-

defeating behavior to life enhancing patterns. The authors of Self-Defeating

Behaviors provide insight on the challenges that individuals are faced with when

confronting self-defeating behaviors. The same process can be applied to the

organizational environment.

> The two-step process for identifying a self-defeating behavior is
> (1) how the behavior came to be (2) what can be done to substitute
> a life-enhancing behavior for a self-defeating behavior. (Cudney
> 12)

It is imperative for individuals and organizations to utilize the two-step

process in programs to encourage change and implement life-enhancing behaviors

for individuals and the organization. This process is the paradigm shift that most

individuals and organizations avoid. The need for implementing programs

designed to aid individuals and organizations to change behaviors, beliefs, and

attitudes in life enhancing directions is imperative for growth to individuals and

organizations.

When considering implementing such programs there are several things to

consider. A well-educated, well-trained, experienced professional is imperative to

the program. Encouraging leadership and management to begin implementing

behavioral programs, without adequate knowledge would be fatal to both the

individual and the organization.

As organizations begin to adopt Behavioral Science programs for the

purpose of producing life-enhancing moments and growth, the generational mix

in contemporary organizations becomes a key element for understanding

behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. This study has examined the cohort groupings and their unique behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes as shaped by the events and cultures they have experienced both as individuals and as cohorts. Examination of the future of each of the cohort groupings and their impact on the organizational environment is a part of the Behavioral Science program that is suggested in this study.

Generational Mix and the Organizational Environment

The co-mingling of cohort groupings inside organizational environments may result in a life enhancing or a self-defeating behavior pattern based on interactions. The dominant cohort inside the organization usually directs the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of the other cohort groupings. For example, if there are more Generation Xers than Baby Boomers, Generation X will take on the role of implementing their behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

Gaining insight on the future of the cohorts and their relationship to the organizational environment will allow further understanding of the programs that will need to be implemented by organizations, and how these programs will change the landscape of the organization in coming years. Adapting will no longer be a norm among organizations. The adoption process will transform itself into reality if the contemporary organization is dedicated to changing with the times and capitalizing into a well-rounded institution that attracts individuals.

Generation Next

Generation Next is beginning to surface in the organizational environment. Formulating the future of this generation is premature in relationship to their interaction in organizational environment. However, based on the management criteria as shown in Table 6 of this study, one can begin to formulate future needs for this generation. The needs of Generation Next are profiled as a result of their childhood, and adolescent experiences. "Just as early childhood experiences have dramatic effects on how each individual's personality is formed, so too do the early experiences of the workplace" (Zemke 149). Projecting the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of Generation Next directly relates to their upbeat dispositions and confidence as a resulting from parenting and family life. Therefore, it will become necessary for leaders and managers to continue offering the same nurturing experience through personal development in the organizational culture. Working with and not against this generation will benefit all who are exposed to interaction with them. Sensitivity in approach to Generation Next will challenge interaction from other cohorts. Continued education will need to be implemented for this generation as they are showing signs of "loving to learn." Guidance for them through mentorship programs and development early in their work experiences will equip them with skills meet emotional requirement in social settings. The forecasted pitfall of this generation is their deficiency in dealing with conflict between themselves and complex situations dealing with *people*. The need to implement a communication and conflict resolution plan for

this generation may prove to be beneficial for their growth and development. "Welcome and nurture them, and you may prosper beyond your expectations" (Zemke 149).

Generation X

While known for their extreme independence, coupled with the co-dependecy to form family environments, this generation is maturing in the organization environment. Lifting the "handle with care" label from this generation may be the best slogan for their future. While Generation X remains independent in their behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes—they are gearing up for dependent positions in leadership and management. As Baby Boomers and Veterans are preparing for retirement, Generation Xers are preparing to take charge.

Several issues must be taken into account to accommodate the style of Generation X. One of the biggest issues is incorporating structure in their daily routines. The importance of planning and preparation will begin to surface as this generation matures. The important element to keep in mind is that they, as individuals, will need to set their own structure and implement their own planning and preparation processes. Generation X will want to make sure they have included time to spend with family and friends—achieving balance and harmony in their lives.

"It won't be a surprise if, within the next few years, a whole generation rediscovers management by objective (MBO)" (Zemke 100). The leadership

and management style of this generation may resemble the same style they want in being lead and managed. A hands off approach will surface, and independent, confident and balanced individuals may result. Education will be a critical element in developing leadership and management in this generation. They want to learn; they will show up and they want to individualize their format. Generation X doesn't necessarily adopt readily to the teamwork approach, and this will impact a new shift in organizational thinking.

As Generation X has matured, they have not relinquished their inability to trust others in social systems. The need for personal development programs encouraging Generation X to adopt processes of working with others may be in order for this generation.

<u>Baby Boomers</u>

"Hell no, We won't go" (Zemke 88). This is the signature line to the Baby Boom generation in more ways than one, especially when it comes to their involvement in organizational environments. They have climbed their way into the comfort zone of their positions and they are determined to hang on. While they may look at taking a little more time off now and then, working on "letting go" will be one of the biggest obstacles this generation will face in relationship to the organizational environment.

The truth about this cohort is that, "they may have to work, and they know it…financial records show that members of this generation have not saved adequately for their retirement" (Zemke 91) As a result their presence in the

organizational environment will result in longer terms than the Veteran generation. They will have to work into retirement years. As a result the organizational environment, as well as the other cohorts, will have to accommodate their expectations.

While they remain optimistic as a collective whole, their need for recognition may cause turmoil. The personal development of this generation remains highly regarded. They want to learn about themselves and expect to have programs available to do such learning. Programming that will aid not only the Boomer, but other generations as well may need to be offered in cohort groupings.

Baby Boomers want to be involved and will expect to stay involved even as other generations grow and mature in the organizational environment. Pacifying this generation with roles and responsibilities that will offer recognition, rewards, and involvement will need to be a part of the planning and development processes of those "in charge." As Generation X grows and matures in the workplace, one of the important gifts from Generation X to the Baby Boomers will be the art of balance in their lives. This may be a hard lesson for the Baby Boomers to learn as they "let go" of the organizational home and apply themselves to their families and friends to achieve *harmony* in their personal lives.

Veterans

To them we owe all. Accepted or denied, this generation has laid the foundation for each of the other cohorts to prosper and find their unique places in

history. The Veteran generation still embodies the organizational environment and is gifted in experience far beyond any other generation.

On the whole, this generation loves to see the changes that are occurring in organizational environments. ""Veterans like things on a grand scale—niftier, more new fandangled, bigger, better" (Zemke 37). They possess the anticipation of the next thing and welcome changes that are in needed to achieve this process. While they may show reluctance in the beginning, they will accept proof offered by other cohorts that their ideas are just that—bigger and better. "Innovative programs for keeping seniors in the workplace are beginning to emerge" (61). The Veteran generation has proven their hard work and dedication to the organization for implementing new innovative ideas. The Veteran generation has proven their loyalty to the cause of moving organizations forward and keeping up with the changes that are necessary to implement such innovations.

One of the biggest assets of the Veteran generation for the future may be their involvement in mentoring programs. While training and education will need to be a part of this development process, they have the experience, tenacity and dedication to working with other cohorts on development in many different capacities. The Veteran generation possesses the ability to be emotionally sensitive, yet truthful in experiences they have learned "the hard way" and are willing to aid other cohorts in learning from their experiences. "What is learned from the Veteran, who has chosen to keep working, will form a valuable base of learning for the increasingly mixed-generation workplace of the next century" (Zemke 62).

Impact of the Generational Mix

One final illustration to be considered is the generational mix and the

organizational subsystems. The relationship between these two elements is the

foundation from which behavioral processes are adopted inside the organizational

environment. Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between these two elements.

Figure 7

Impacting the Organizational Environment
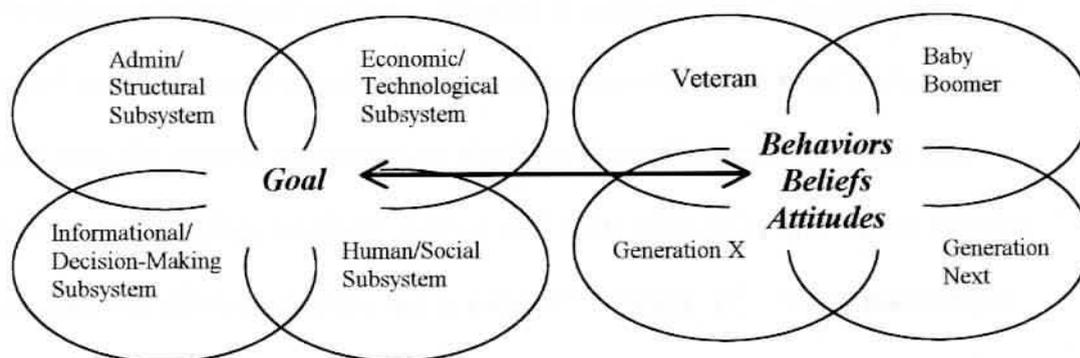
SOURCE: Adapted in part from Management of Organizational Behavior
(Hersey 16).

The result of the above model is the *organizational environment*, which is

determined by behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of the co-mingling cohorts. Each

brings unique characteristics and therefore impacts the organizational

environment in which they are associated.

As contemporary organizations are faced with challenges and opportunities for growth and development of *people* who co-mingle to make up the organizational environment, it is necessary to focus on behavioral issues— to begin to uncover the problems that exist in shaping behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. As a result, it becomes necessary to equip leaders and managers of organizations with the resources and knowledge to guide and direct others' behaviors toward changes that result in life enhancing moments for both *people* and the *organizational environment.*

The ability to direct, change, and control behavior relies heavily on the knowledge of behavioral sciences. In order to properly direct, change, and control behavior, members of the organizational environment must focus on the individual and their past experiences that have shaped behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. "The ability to direct, change, and control behavior also means that the acceptance of influencing behavior is present" (Hersey 17). When one accepts the responsibility for influencing another's behavioral processes, it is crucial that the individual responsible have a complete understanding of behavioral science and behavioral processes.

> Understanding and predicting behavior do not require actions
> involving other people. The key to obtaining results is developing
> the skills needed to direct, change, and control the efforts of other
> people in the accomplishment of organizational goals. That's
> where the manager translates thoughts and intentions into end
> results. (17).

Organizations need to experience care in placing persons in positions to direct, change, and control the behavior of others. They will need to incorporate individual behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes; as well as generational behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. The goal for the leadership position is to achieve life-enhancing behaviors versus self-defeating behaviors for both the individual and the organization.

The best organizational environment will include instruction through behavioral programs, which will allow change to occur in adopted or adapted behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. As times change and the organization becomes the focal point of community as well as enterprise, the need for developing *people* is imperative.

Chapter V

Discussion

Contemporary organizations are faced with many challenges in the ever-changing business world. This study has provided organizations another element to consider when dealing with *people*. "You change a business by changing the behavior of its people" (Breen). Meeting challenges requires organizations to recognize *people* and their impact on the organizational environment.

Chapter V will conclude this study and provide justification for incorporating materials presented in Chapter IV. Its discussion will reinforce the idea that Behavioral Science programming be designed to enhance individual and generational understanding in the organizational environment. As organizations show an increasing need for the redesign of structure, products, and services offered, their first focus should be on that of their greatest assets – *people*.

A Need for Understanding

To know one's reasons for displaying specific behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes allows an individual to begin the change process from self-defeating to life enhancing interactive moments. Identifying behaviors, beliefs and attitudes in response to specific situations allows individuals to create experiences for themselves that allow for personal growth and development. The Behavioral Circulatory model as illustrated in Chapter IV (Figure 6) shows that behaviors,

beliefs, and attitudes are choices. The choice an individual makes en route to the final destination of this model may be based on habit. Many individuals are unaware that the choices they make impact development of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. This model illustrates the choices that individuals make and the consequences of them. The Behavioral Circulatory model provides an understanding of an individual's choices when it comes to forming *behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes* and the elective for change.

Recognition of the two-step process as introduced in Chapter III of this study and reapplied in Chapter IV for the process of identifying a self-defeating behavior is important for one to be able to assist and guide individuals through the conscious adoption of the behavioral process. It is imperative that a leader is able to exercise the process in relationship to his or her own experiences prior to helping others in changing self-defeating behavior patterns into life-enhancing behavior patterns. While no one individual is equipped to change the behavioral patterns of another individual, recognition and change in one's own life allows for understanding, communication, measurement and application of such behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes.

Organizations today have deviated from the appropriate roles of leadership and management. Instead of assisting and guiding, all too often organizations hold positions of forming behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Being allowed to bring individuality to the environment proves to enhance not only the quality of the culture but the quality of the product or service being delivered, as individuals incorporate life-enhancing behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes—as a result, *people*

are more productive. The ability to work with individuals and generational cohorts creates a life enhancing experience for the organization as a whole. All too often, organizations create self-defeating environments, rewarding behaviors, beliefs and attitudes that are, in fact, self-defeating. As a result, performance and productivity are at minimum. Discovering the paradigm shift brought about by the realization of working with individual and generational differences versus against these differences provides opportunities to create life enhancing environments.

The dynamics illustrated in The Behavioral Circulatory Model recognizes the contributions made to the overall shaping of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes by combining both the individual and the organizational elements. Without the interaction point, individual and organizational behavior would be dismissed – one cannot be evaluated without the other.

Incorporating Differences

Co-mingling generations in the organizational environment creates the need for understanding other cohorts and their process of adopting collective behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes based on events that have shaped them as a peer group. The interaction between an individual and a member of another cohort requires identification of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes based on different times and different circumstances. Recognizing and understanding the basis on which behavioral patterns were adopted by one cohort grouping allows another cohort

grouping to understand and accept those patterns of behavior. Otherwise they might dismiss them as not being relevant to their own cohort experiences.

Contemporary organizations deal with contemporary issues. Recognizing generational differences is a contemporary issue that has no signs of disappearing from the organizational environment. Incorporating an understanding of cohort groupings and their associated behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes allows insight into the development of both self-defeating and life enhancing behavioral patterns. What one generation may have experienced collectively as being life-enhancing another generation may have experienced as self-defeating.

As depicted throughout this study and illustrated in Chapter IV each cohort grouping has a definite future to contend with when it comes to the organizational environment. As Generation Next enters the organization and the Veteran generation departs from the organization, there is a lot each cohort can learn from each other—particularly if they are in an understanding relationship to one another. The lines of separation between cohort groupings are often drawn silently, not allowing the positive life-enhancing moments to be shaped in the forefront. All too often, cohorts have a "stick together" attitude and do not condone cross-generational experiences to emerge.

The Future of the Organizational Environment

Chapter IV of this study provides a model for understanding the relationship between cohorts and the organization's subsystems (Figure 7). Each cohort interacts with organizational subsystems differently. In fact, each cohort

interacts with them simultaneously, several times throughout the course of one day. The goal of any or all subsystems inside the organizational environment is heavily influenced by the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of the cohort groupings that are associated with them as a result of roles and responsibilities. What one cohort grouping may hold as a priority in relationship to the goal of a subsystem, another cohort grouping may not even consider.

As organizational environments encounter the co-mingling of generations, the ability to change, direct, and control the behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of any cohort grouping becomes possible. Influencing such behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes requires an understanding of how they were developed in the first place. Dismissing generational understandings as an element in the Behavioral Science process allows for misunderstandings and consumes productive potential.

As noted in Chapter IV of this study, specialized programs that address individual and generational differences need to be offered in the organizational environment. As curricula develop in contemporary organizations, programs such as "Discovering Cohort Characteristics," "You and The Behavioral Circulatory Model," and Communicating across Cohorts" are in need. The focus of these training programs, delivered in workshop settings, would allow organizational members to become aware of the impact their behavior, beliefs, and attitudes have on themselves and each other. One goal through the incorporation of such training programs is to bridge the gaps and build an understanding of cohort differences and their unique contributions. Furthermore, such training programs offered to executives, managers, and employees would allow specific focus on

roles in relationship to the responsibility each one has to the other. Due to the content of the proposed materials, special training or certification in Behavioral Science topics may need to incorporated in a "training the trainer" program.

Finally, organizations must be able to identify their motives associated with behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of both individuals and cohort groupings. The deployment of specialized programming, such as training seminars, designed to aid in understanding life enhancing and self-defeating behavioral adoption processes must be designed with the growth and development of individuals in mind. The incorporation of such programming is for organizations that intend to develop and encourage reciprocity among individuals and cohorts for the benefit of not only the organization but ultimately for the individual to develop life-enhancing moments—choices made at the interaction point.

A Final Note

While this study has remained focused on behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of individuals and their relationships to their cohorts in the organizational environment, it is important to close this study with the following understanding.

The process of working with each cohort grouping and their collective needs bears significance when considering the effects each cohort has on the other. It is imperative, however, to remain dedicated to the development of individuals as individuals. Their belonging to a cohort group is only one factor working in combination with many to shape existing behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes. Individuals are just that—individuals. They should be treated with

respect according to their individuality and the contributions they can make to the

organizational environment.

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